Jubah and Nashoba: An Artful History

Theodore Cecil DeCelles

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Creative Dissertation

Jubah and Nashoba:
An Artful History

Submitted by
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ABSTRACT

This creative dissertation unites art and history by writing a play using extensive historical research. The main body of work focuses on events surrounding the Natchez Revolt of 1729. The Natchez nation and colonial Louisianans attempted to accommodate each other by reaching a middle ground. Nonetheless, incivility culminated in a massacre at Fort Rosalie. The Natchez experienced profound sociopolitical changes that resulted in a downgrade of female power. North American history asserts many female chiefs interacted with colonial male leaders. Even so, female chiefs have remained at the margins of history. This creative work focuses on the hidden history behind the subjugation of one female chief named Tattooed Arm.
Dedicated to my strong mother Peggy DeCelles
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Prologue
Good storytellers must do thorough research before they write anything historic in nature. All too often we see potentially good historical plays, novels or television dramas ruined by Native American stereotypes. Well-meaning writers unwittingly create or perpetuate stereotypes doing clumsy research with an absence of facts. When writers are ignorant about the cultures they elect themselves as having authority on, stereotypes are produced, then perspectives about Native Americans become distorted in real life.¹

The film *Apocalypto* is one such film that distorted Mayan culture. Screenwriter Farhad Safinia and director Mel Gibson received major criticism about their portrayal of postclassic period Maya. Mayan people protested the film. Maya Visión, a legal defense firm, explored possibilities of suing the filmmakers. Guatemalan educators devised lesson plans to counter the brutal images that were depicted onscreen.² The film does not dismantle indigenous American stereotypes, even though the filmmakers strove to authenticate Mayan culture by having the entire dialogue performed in the Mayan language. Gibson and Safinia consulted with American archeologist Richard Hansen for cultural authentication.³ Nonetheless, Hansen, Safinia, and Gibson were whitesplaining the Mayan collapse. In the film, a Mayan city resembled a strange Mesoamerican-ish ancient Rome with Indians trembling superstitiously at an eclipse and disposing a massive number of sacrificial victims into a gory dump. Artistic license happens in any creative work, but when misrepresentation becomes the norm, audiences may have difficulty understanding the essence of what makes a Native American.

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¹ I include all North American indigenous nations in the term Native American. This includes Canadian First Nations, Alaskan Natives, Inuit, Caribbean and Mesoamerican natives. I use the term Indian, American Indian, indigenous American, and Native American interchangeably.


On the other hand, Native American playwrights have done a good job of representing themselves. *The Cherokee Night and Other Plays* by Lynn Riggs set the standard of depicting Native Americans as individuals with strengths and flaws. Theater allows the marginalized the means to show their own interpretations including the street grit of Donald E. Two-Rivers, the serious dramas of N. Scott Momaday, the social criticism of William Yellow Robe, the feminist experimentalism of Spider Woman Theater, and heavy contemporary dramas by Diane Glancy and Ranell Collins. Many of these plays would translate well into Hollywood films and animation, so why does Hollywood shy away from portraying Native Americans in a different light?

Perhaps it’s because the essential characterizations of Native Americans in stories remains a daunting task, given the wide variety of cultures, languages, geographies and historical periods that threatens to overshadow individual characters and good plotlines. It’s easy to distort what so many Americans know so little about, whether the focus is on historical Indians or modern Native Americans. Audiences do not know about the historical Chinookan peoples who whale hunted and smartly outtraded colonial shipping expeditions. Audiences may not be ready to have a conversation about Southeastern native villages and their enslavement of black Africans and Indians. Audiences only know about war bonnet Tontos speaking like Tarzan as they hunted, or how they fought the United States Calvary. The basic meaning of artistic license is a deviation from facts and re-arranges and makes alterations to reality. Even so, balancing artistic license and creative aesthetics with historical accuracy is walking a tightrope.

If I was to write an absolutely authentic history on events leading up to the Natchez Revolt of 1729, the actors would be required to speak their parts in French and Natchez. The actors would have great difficulty speaking Natchez, whose last native speakers, Watt Sam and
Nancy Raven, were recorded in the early twentieth century. The people on stage are actors not salvage linguists. Speaking about coming closer to historical truth, why are all the Indians on television wearing buckskin and not mulberry bark, agave fibers or woven grass? Many Indians dressed in combinations of Euro-American and Native American clothing after European contact. Some of them were even naked! Another authenticity I could have included was stage directions specifying topless women dressed in bark. Finding actresses willing to bare themselves adds a layer of behind-the-scenes complexity. When writing about historical events, the best I can do is stylistically present it from a perspective that contemporary audiences will understand. Historians and writers paint historical pictures, but interpreting the past will always include anachronisms. The audience must understand the recreated picture is a mimicry of reality.

Mimesis has never been concerned with creating a carbon copy of reality and often revels in an atmosphere of an era. Mimesis can contain both historical events and elements of the fantastical, thus mimesis can be expressed as mythological stories. Sometimes myths will take a real historical figure and fictionalize their actions. Fanciful lies can spark feelings of patriotism, like George Washington’s cherry tree. Some myths even sparked religious movements. Myths are much needed and not disposable. There are very few modern day Native American myths, because everybody expects Native American writers to be immaculately authentic. I took creative license despite the outsider-imposed authenticity litmus test when writing about Natchez and colonial Louisianans. *Jubah and Nashoba* is a world containing a hooded angel of death, a

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5 Star Wars and the Abrahamic religious texts have inspired religions.
falling red star and demons. *Jubah and Nashoba* is my Native American myth interspersed with real historical events.

Who are the true Native Americans in creative works? On one hand, there is the well-known savage myth, and on the other hand, there is the Indian utopia myth. The latter is twofold. First, it contains superhero medicine men and magical Earth mothers. Second, it includes an Indian Eden destroyed by marauding villains enacting a continental-sized genocide, with Indians having little to no agency over their predicament. What happened to Native Americans was more akin to ethnocide instead: kill the Indian, save the man. Even so, the general ethnocide of Native Americans contained geo-specific instances of genocide. *Jubah and Nashoba* explores how the Natchez and French colonials tried to wipe each other off the face of the earth. Native American history is very nuanced.

*Jubah and Nashoba* explores the people whose voices were never heard and yet they contributed to history in ways that may never be known. Certain people were purposely kept out of history. Therefore, I peppered in fictional characters, the ones who never had the opportunity to tell their stories, and spread them among people who actually existed in history. My artistic license means I created a literary paradox, one that creates a more factual history and one that is fictionalized. Despite this, I feel like I recreated the essence of what happened in the Natchez nation during the early eighteenth century. History usually chronicles the big players. I want to give a voice to those who did not have the power to tell their story.

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6 In *Jubah and Nashoba*, the characters that did not actually exist in history were Father de Virgine, Danton, Jubah, Nashoba, Auntie Louise, the demons, and minor stock characters. Jubah was inspired by real slave named Cecilia.
I remain very sensitive to the possibility of distorting history or creating more confusion. My sensitivity comes from being descended from three different indigenous ancestries. Being from nearly half-French ancestry as well, I set out to destroy Euro-American generated myths about Native Americans and seek to replace them with humanized characters. I essentially correct one part of my heritage from the prejudicial myths generated from the other part of my heritage. By heritage, I am speaking about a collective pan-Indianism or pan-tribalism. No, I am not Natchez, but if tribalism harmed Indians by keeping them from uniting, I will not allow tribalism to sway my own interpretation of history or hinder my research about other tribes.

My research methodology comes from four primary texts written by French colonials. I cross-reference certain events within each text. I use anthropology articles to provide another perspective. History is interdisciplinary in nature. I then chronicle the events that led up to the Natchez Revolt in Part I. The Natchez Revolt of 1729: The Art of History. The primary sources wrote very little about women. Therefore, I found recent sources reinvestigating the role women played in the eighteenth-century colonial period. In Part II: Jubah and Nashoba: An Artful History, I take my research and formulate a story based on the spirit of what happened in early eighteenth-century Natchez country and colonial Louisiana.

Many historian-artists attempt to reveal how history affects the present. Indeed, Native Americans still feel the effects of being historically disenfranchised, despite not being passive recipients of history. Therefore, in the Epilogue, I reveal how the downgraded status of Native American women affects them today. Of course, Jubah and Nashoba is about many issues, but my play primarily focuses on the earliest sexual and gendered colonization of America. My closeness to Native American females inspired this play. I hope to inspire those who feel at the bottom of America’s social hierarchy to tell their own stories. It’s a tough pill to swallow that
female chiefs got in the way of men establishing a masculine geography, so powerful females were marginalized. Nonetheless, we can’t solve a problem until we investigate how the problem started.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) I use the general term female chief, but Native American female leaders had many different titles. I call Tattooed Arm a female chief, but I also refer to her as the Grand Female Sun.
Part I. The Natchez Revolt of 1729: The Art of History
The Natchez and colonial French lived a precarious coexistence at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The two nations lived within beneficial proximity but characterized by misunderstandings and tension. Somewhat paradoxically, both nations were in the early process of co-assimilation, but cultural clashes and political complexities blocked any possibility of lasting peace. The middle ground that American historian Richard White had theorized, was not just a phenomenon of the Pays d’en Haut of New France. Louisianans encouraged accommodation in the form of interracial marriages, but only if Indian wives became Catholic. Nevertheless, despite some social accommodations, the middle ground eventually became an unsuccessful endeavor in colonial Louisiana. Both the Louisianans and the Natchez were greatly hurt by not allowing the middle ground to continue. White says this about the middle ground:

Perhaps the central and defining aspect of the middle ground was the willingness of those who created it to justify their own actions in terms of what they perceived to be their partner’s cultural premises. Those operating in the middle ground acted for interests derived from their own culture, but they had to convince people of another culture that some mutual action was fair and legitimate.

The beginning of the middle ground for the Natchez and Louisianans was based on mutual admiration about each other’s characters, but some of that admiration was based on faulty assumptions.

The colonists exoticized the Natchez and saw them from a viewpoint of superiority. According to them, the Natchez were just primitives that happened to be far more sophisticated than the other tribes surrounding them. The Natchez openly admired the English and the French,

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9 Ibid., 52.
depending on who had the best goods and prices, but they initially underestimated the profound influence the colonials would have on them. The Natchez likely thought the English and French were just two more tribes, not the empires they were. Largely peaceful relations and occasional skirmishes lasted little more than three decades. The early French explorers immediately saw the Natchez political structure as a dominant force compared to other Indian nations around them. Natchez political power was something they feared and romanticized.

The father of French Romanticism, historian and novelist, François-René de Chateaubriand, was enamored by the exoticism of the Natchez, a prevalent fantasy among those who never saw an Indian in person. The French naturalists and historians who lived among the “savages” wrote extensively about them, no doubt seeing parallels between Natchez civilization and their own. Both nations had hierarchical social structures. King Louis XIV was the Sun King while the Natchez had the Sun Chief.\(^\text{10}\) The Louisianans and the Natchez competed for Mississippi River access and control. The Natchez sociopolitical center was the Grand Village. The Louisianan sociopolitical centers were New Orleans and Fort Rosalie. Each nation had a power struggle that ultimately was their undoing. At first, each nation depended on the other, but one became more dependent on the other. An uneasy love-hate alliance developed. In the end, their hatred toward each other nearly destroyed them.

The historical Natchez of the early eighteenth century seduced me, but I needed research to ground any notion of exoticizing them. My fascination with the Natchez and colonial French had to be concrete and based on facts. American anthropologist William Christie MacLeod stated the importance of artists using history as a medium, “And last but not least, the facts will be

\(^{10}\) The Sun Chief was also called the Grand Sun, Great Sun, Sun King and Grand Soleil.
needed by the writers and artists of the new America when, following the almost forgotten lead of Chateaubriand, they appreciate the romance and beauty of Natchez history and Natchez character.\footnote{W.C. Macleod, “Natchez Political Evolution,” \textit{American Anthropologist} 26 (1924): 201.}

The (Nah-Chee) name is a variant of W’nahx’-Chee and means “fast warriors.”\footnote{Natchez Nation, \textit{About Nvculke Wylt Tyvuen Mynv Pumpeyv}, \texttt{http://www.natcheznation.com/About-Us.html} (accessed July 27, 2019).} They called themselves Thelôel.\footnote{A. C. Albrecht, “Indian French Relations at Natchez,” \textit{American Anthropologist} 48 (1946): 321.} Most Native American names are variants of “the people” when referring to themselves. The likely translation of Thelôel means “the people.”\footnote{Today the Natchez Nation call themselves Natchez and not Thelôel. I will refer to them by their commonly known name.} Explorer Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville’s Taensa informant in 1699, spoke about nine villages or settlement districts making up the Natchez group.\footnote{James F. Barnett, \textit{Natchez Indians: A History to 1735} (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007), 41.} Though the earliest report counted nine villages, the Natchez were not immune to the diseases Europeans brought with them thus causing population change. Migrations caused by Indian warfare contributed to in flux populations also. After 1700, most French documents generally recognized only five settlement districts or villages: Flour, Tiou, Grigra, Jenzenaque, and White Apple. Tunica refugees had settled in Tiou and Grigra. The Grand Village was a ceremonial center housing the Great Sun’s extended family and other nobles.\footnote{The term “noble” potentially makes the historical Natchez governing structure sound Europeanized, but that was what the historical sources used.} An early 1723 map, drawn by Ignace-François Broutin, revealed a sixth village called
Duck. A settlement called Corn was briefly mentioned. Flour and Tiou were near the Grand Village and relatively close to the Mississippi River. These two villages and the ceremonial center comprised the Natchez pro-French faction. White Apple, Jenzenaque, and Griga, aligned themselves with the pro-English faction.¹⁷ Archeologists discovered another village in the Fairchild/Coles Creek area.¹⁸ One can only speculate how much more the documents did not report. What we do know is the Natchez political structure was decentralized.

Although functioning independently to a degree, the villages were ultimately under the control of a single leader, or tribal chief, known as the Great Sun. The matrilineal social structure traced the royal lineage through the mothers of the Great Sun. The mother of the paramount chief was referred to as Grand Female Sun. The upper caste was divided into three groups: male and female suns, nobles and men of rank.¹⁹ The Natchez religion was a “solar theocracy.”²⁰ The lower caste were commoners called miche-miche-quipy. The suns were believed to be descendants of the sun thus having political power over the miche-miche-quipy, which means stinkards. This epithet angered those to whom it was applied.²¹

¹⁷ Barnett, 44.

¹⁸ Ibid.


²¹ Le Page du Pratz, 328-329.
The Great Sun appointed all the officers of importance including the master of ceremonies and temple keeper. There were eight guardians of the sacred fire burning in the temple.22 Interestingly, unlike European royalty and nobility, protocol required that members of the upper caste marry commoners.23 Certain chiefdoms had social groups or moieties that would marry and support each other. Sometimes one moiety had a higher status and power than the other. Most likely the French ethnocentrically mistook the Natchez moieties as castes, with one being aristocratic and the other being commoners. The French believed the Great Sun had absolute power in equivalence to a European monarch, but in actuality, though his rule was authoritarian, he was forced to take into consideration the growing power of the lesser male suns. Perhaps one of the biggest differences between the colonials and Indians was gender relations. Though it was not obvious, basing kinship relations down the female line proved difficult for those whose kinship relations were patrilineal. This matrilineal-patrilineal culture clash damaged the sociopolitical power held by the female suns, as will be seen later. Natchez women enjoyed a great amount of freedom and influence in politics. When the Great Sun had both daughters and sons, his eldest son did not inherit his father’s title. The Great Sun’s eldest daughter’s son became the next Great Sun. Since the eldest son did not become the paramount chief, he remained a noble.24

22 Macleod, 203.

23 Ibid., 204.

24 The colonists reported the nobles included men of rank, sun women, honored people and little chiefs. Although anthropologists would consider the two moieties of suns and miche-miche-quipy to be exogamous.
Marriages between nobles and commoners was the norm. Exogamy between social classes was a requirement, thus nobles had no choice but to marry miche-miche-quipy. The rise of social status was a predominant feature for those in a system of social stratification. Suitors often gave gifts and clothing in exchange for access during courtship, and unlike Catholicism, sex before betrothal was an open aspect of culture. Early naturalist and historian, Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz, said grandfathers interviewed suitors and traced the bloodline to see if there were any relations, “for they do not marry in the third degree.”25 The women were left with the decision to keep a child out of wedlock. Miche-miche-quipy raising their social status by marrying nobles, indicated a less rigid class structure than aristocratic European nobility, where tracing noble blood was a requirement. Marrying a commoner was taboo for European aristocracy. Marrying a Natchez female sun might have seemed irresistible to any Frenchman aiming for status and land, except for one problem—he might end up as a human sacrifice. When a female sun died, her entire household including her husband was to be sacrificed.26 This was something a Frenchman needed to contend with if he entertained notions of upward mobility.

Some Louisianan men married Indian women due to a dearth of available females. How many colonial men married Natchez women remains unknown. An Adams County, Mississippi Genealogical and Historical Research document does not state the names of many female citizens. Often, Louisianan women were listed generically as wives to whomever they were married, therefore it is unknown if the wives listed in the genealogical record came from France.

25 Le Page du Pratz, 326-327.

or were natives.\footnote{Adams County, Mississippi Genealogical and Historical Research. “Massacre at Fort Rosalie – November 28, 1729 Natchez Adams Co., MS.” Natchezbelle.org. http://www.natchezbelle.org/adams-ind/ind/massacre.htm (accessed January 14, 2020).} Le Page du Pratz was intimate with a Chitimacha slave woman given to him from a chief. Together they bore children.\footnote{Gordon M. Sayre, “Plotting the Natchez Massacre: Le Page du Pratz, Dumont de Montigny, Chateaubriand,” \textit{Early American Literature} 37, 3 (2002): 385.} Intermarriage was the beginning of colonial-Indian cultural hybridity, primarily the children of colonial men and native women. The mutual accommodation between Indians and French for survival, trade, and acquirement of goods, required cooperation.\footnote{I use the term French, Louisianan, and colonial interchangeably, because there was such a mix of people who had chosen to stay and those who had returned to France. Those newly arrived from France called the colonists “concessionaires” and “habitants.”} Mixed ethnicity children would have likely seen aspects of both colonial and Indian cultures.

Transcultural influences in contact zones is a feature of hybridity theory in postcolonial studies. Cultural intermarriage or hybridity intersects with gender, ethnicity, and class, but the intersection with military power has been neglected. Changing gender roles in Natchez politics influenced how they responded to the encroaching colonists. Unfortunately, the short-lived love between the Natchez and the French followed a path of an unsuccessful marriage: first, the introduction, second, the courtship, third, the marriage, fourth, the honeymoon phase, fifth, irreconcilable differences, then finally divorce and the messy aftermath.

As stated, gender relations proved to be one of the central crises for the Natchez under colonialism. Natchez women and their status as clan mothers or “female suns,” sometimes referred to as Indian princesses by colonists, were abruptly edged out of power by male suns. Male suns were likely influenced by French gender roles. A newly developing Natchez patriarchy interfered with prior gender egalitarianism. Sometimes, when cultural exchange
occurs, more specifically, when cultural intermarriage occurs, traditional gender roles are compromised. In the case of colonial men and native women, their offspring became boundary markers. Indian women became more than just mothers, they were reduced to the position of land bearers without the ability to name.\textsuperscript{30} Mixed-ethnicity children took the name of their fathers. However, there were subtle cultural forces that shaped and influenced colonial-Indian hybridity. Historians can name and document events, but interpretations or reading between the lines, is where the historian expresses artistry. Therefore, what the Natchez likely felt or thought must be investigated. The beginnings of Natchez cultural contact with Europeans began with suspicion and ambivalence, and we can blame Hernando de Soto.

The Cultural Courtship

The first European to encounter The Natchez was Hernando de Soto. Hernando de Soto mentioned a powerful people living on Mississippi River bluffs in 1539, that some have theorized to be the Quigualtam.\textsuperscript{31} The Quigualtam people were named after their chief. Some historians and anthropologists believe the Quigualtam were ancestors of the Natchez. Natchez history tells of contact with De Soto. If perhaps, the Quigualtam were in fact the forebears of the Natchez, the first Natchez impressions of the Spaniards were not favorable. Natchez history recounts how the Spaniards were bringers of diseases and war.\textsuperscript{32} Hernando de Soto demanded


\textsuperscript{31} However, later on, an intimate friend Antoine-Simon Le Page Du Pratz hears a very different oral history.

\textsuperscript{32} Natchez Nation, \textit{About Nvculke Wylt Tvluen Mynv Pumpeyv}. 
total obedience and submission from the various nations living along the Mississippi River. De Soto claimed Christians were immortal and a figure in a glass told him everything the Indians did. He claimed he was the son of the sun and the Indians must give him valuables. Chief Quigualtam refused to bow down or believe De Soto was divine, unless he could dry up the Mississippi River. Chief Quigualtam said to De Soto:

As to what you say of your being the son of the Sun, if you will cause him to dry up the great river, I will believe you: as to the rest, it is not my custom to visit any one, but rather all, of whom I have ever heard, have come to visit me, to serve and obey me, and pay me tribute, either voluntarily or by force: if you desire to see me, come where I am; if for peace, I will receive you with special good will; if for war, I will await you in my town; but neither for you, nor for any man, will I set back one foot.

Of course, De Soto did not dry up the Mississippi, and the skepticism of Chief Quigualtam proved the Indians were not gullible primitives. When De Soto failed to convince the chief of his divinity, military action proved to be his second plan. Before De Soto could plan an attack on the Quigualtam people, on May 21, 1542, De Soto died in the native village of Guachoya. Over a

33 Archeologists theorize the protohistoric ancestors of the Natchez, Tunica, and Yazoo can be traced to a larger Plaquemine culture (circa 1200-1700.) Certain towns De Soto recorded, like Quigate and Palisema, may be traced to the Tunica. Many tribes called themselves variants of “the people” but de Soto often named tribes under their ruling chiefs. That is why the Natchez were probably called Quigualtam. Chief Quigualtam was possibly a sun chief. Other tribal names the de Soto expedition recorded went virtually unchanged. The Chickasaw were referred to as Chickisa. Others like the Casqui and Pahaca, also named after their chiefs, were extinct by the time the French arrived and may never be known.

34 Barnard Shipp, The History of Hernando De Soto and Florida: Or, Record of the Events of Fifty-six Years, from 1512-1568 (Philadelphia: Lindsay), 660.

35 Lawrence A. Clayton et al., De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539-1543 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press), 134.

century later, the French did not believe the accounts of De Soto, because they could not trace his journey. Historians now note that by the time the French arrived, the native people were so affected by disease, they migrated and some simply ceased to exist. Memories of the Spanish were, however, still alive in Natchez oral history, even a century and a half later. French explorers and traders arrived circa 1680s. The lingering unfavorable impression of De Soto, sowed seeds of mistrust for any subsequent arrival of Europeans, despite the French being a different people. The French worshipping the son of God was not dissimilar from De Soto saying he was the son of the sun. For the Natchez, their god was the actual sun. The god of Frenchmen was not the sun, but their deity still looked down upon all from the heavens above. None of the French traders or missionaries demanded to be worshipped like De Soto had, but when the holy Jesuits arrived in 1698, they would have been regarded with suspicion. The Jesuits claimed Jesus had risen to the heavens and would return to the people one day, a narrative very similar to one of DeSoto’s claims. When DeSoto died, his expedition tried to keep his death a secret, since he was supposed to be immortal. When the chief of Guachoya questioned De Soto’s sudden absence, his replacement, Luis de Moscoso, claimed De Soto had risen to the sky and would be there for some days, but would return like he had before.37 The French were not like the Spanish in one regard, they were more interested in learning about and making alliances with the Indians unlike the conquistadores a century and a half before. French expansionism was less about conquest and more about trade and establishing missionary villages.

In the summer of 1698, Fathers François Jolliet de Montigny, Antione Davion and Jean-François Buisson St. Cosme arrived in Quebec as the first missionaries. The missionaries only

37 Clayton, 138.
stayed a few days but contacts with the area tribes were peaceful. D’Iberville did not want Quebec sending missionaries to Louisiana. Instead he brought his own missionaries, Fathers Paul Du Ru and Joseph-Eugène de Limoges. The rivalry between New France and Louisiana missionaries saw the withdrawal of the Quebec Jesuits. However, in 1700, the northern Jesuits returned. Father de Montigny baptized 185 children. Nonetheless, Indian aggressions and a low conversion rate forced Montigny to retire. Father Jean François Buisson St. Cosme then replaced Montigny. 38 By the time Father St. Cosme voyaged down the Mississippi in 1698-1699, some Indians were expecting them as word travelled down the banks of the Mississippi that another expedition was coming. St. Cosme described various friendly tribes ready to smoke the calumet with them. He wrote about missionaries living in an established Indian village and noted intermarriages: “We saw only some women savages married to Frenchmen, who edified us by their modesty and their assiduity in going to prayer several times a day in their chapel.” 39

St. Cosme was a seminarian from the Société des Missions étrangères de Paris who traveled from Acadia to the newly charted rivers including the Illinois, Arkansas and Mississippi Rivers in 1689-1699. He worked on converting the Cahokia and Tamarois. Eventually he ventured to the southern portion of the Mississippi where he lived with the Natchez for six years. St. Cosme might have been our best source of information on the tribe, had he not died tragically in late 1706. 40 The Natchez considered black robed missionaries as oracles with possible

38 Albrecht, 330.


40 Barnett, Natchez Indians, 49.
equivalency to holy men within their own nation, and received St. Cosme with hospitality but with some caution. St. Cosme lived on good charity provided from the Natchez. Missionaries were often unprepared for the extreme climates and unfamiliar geographies of their journeys. In many historical narratives, local natives often gave newcomers food and lodging, often saving their lives. Perhaps the Natchez wanted to establish kin relations with the French when they allowed St. Cosme to live with them. Six years was sufficient enough to establish a mission and to foster personal relationships. Whatever the case for his long stay, he proselytized in the various Natchez villages, where presumably, in some instances, he was bullied by the locals. St. Cosme wrote a letter to the bishop of Quebec asking for burly servants capable of defending him because, “it is awkward for a missionary to have to punch an Indian.”}

St. Cosme’s call for security deromanticizes any notion of Indian exoticism that many Europeans had before meeting Indians face to face. A Jesuit missionary named Jacques Gravier soon joined St. Cosme and wrote about the Natchez character. “The Nachês, Mr. de St. Cosme assured me, are far from being as docile as the Tounika,” Gravier wrote. “They practice polygamy, steal and are very vicious, the girls and women more than the men and boys, among whom there is much to reform before anything can be expected of them.” Gravier’s view of Natchez women enlightens us to the potential mindset of Frenchmen. “Vicious women” revealed his trepidation about Natchez women’s sociopolitical power. A popular historical narrative or American myth championed submissive Indian females being conquered by hypermasculine European men. Natchez women, accustomed to having agency over their own sexuality, were

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41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., 50.
likely the initiators of intimate relations with Frenchmen. Missionaries were supposed to honor their vow of celibacy, but missionaries were men after all. St. Cosme was reportedly very close to the grand female sun named Tattooed Arm. Unlike the missionaries, however, visiting Canadians and Frenchmen made little effort to conceal their dalliances with native women.\textsuperscript{43} Much has been written about colonial males and Indian females, but what about the interactions between colonial males and Indian males, outside of wars? Frenchmen’s relations with Indian men was a complicated alliance.

Colonial and native men’s diplomatic fragility led to ambiguous attitudes at best and physical danger at worst. Complications can be explained by two separate incidents. In the first, two Jesuits priests were killed in the earliest years of Louisiana colony. In 1702, a priest named Nicholas Foucault and two Frenchmen were robbed and murdered by Koroa guides they hired and their Yazoo allies. This almost set off a war, since the Koroa and Yazoo were allied with the English.\textsuperscript{44} In the second incident, St. Cosme was killed by Chitimachas in 1706. It was St. Cosme’s slave who managed to escape and alerted the French, who retaliated with their Indian allies against the Chitimachas. Governor Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville led the swift retaliation. The warriors were captured, scalped and beaten to death, while the murderer of St. Cosme was executed by members of his own nation.\textsuperscript{45} The other Indian, who killed St. Cosme with six arrows, was taken to Mobile where he was bound on a medieval torture device called the

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 51.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 55.
Spanish horse. Then he was clubbed, scalped, and thrown into the water by the French. By the time Father St. Cosme was killed, the fledgling Louisiana colony was only twenty-four years old since its founding in 1682. Attacks from the Koroa and Yazoo, then the Chitimacha, was a harbinger of things to come. The French had to navigate various tribes, each with unique cultures and temperaments, and then there was the English.

Most definitely, colonial rivalry complicated things with the Indians. The European monarchs from afar were playing the new world like master chess players. Most Indians did not see the British and French empires as imminent threats at first. They saw opportunities to exploit, often playing the British and French against each other. The Indians concentrated their military power on offsetting any encroachments by rival Indian nations. By the time the colonists arrived, native nations had confederations, enemies and alliances. If Indians happened to view colonial encroachment as a threat to their sovereignty, they nevertheless traded and established military alliances with them. Indians might have been somewhat concerned about a growing colonial influence from the offset, but the white man’s chiefs were too far away to really care about.

The motivations behind the killings of St. Cosme and Nicholas Foucault, cannot be attributed to just colonial rivalries though. The English were allied with the Koroa and the Yazoo. Perhaps the English encouraged the Koroa and Yazoo to kill Father Nicholas Foucault and his companions, although most sources say he was murdered while his assailants were

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47 Perhaps King William III and King Louis XIV seemed like ghost chiefs to the various Indian leaders. Whatever the case, tribal protocol required a calumet to smoke with the leader of another nation for peace, and without the King of England and the King of France being physically present, it’s safe to say that the various tribal nations did not see much legitimacy in the authority of European kings and their land claims.
stealing cargo. Tribal leaders executed those involved in killing Father Foucault and his party.\(^{48}\) The executions point to the incident as being a matter of crime. Whatever the motivation behind the murder of the Frenchmen, the priest’s death agitated the French, who rendezvoused with around thirty Canadians, Tunica and Natchez, and together planned to retaliate against the Koroa and Yazoo. The attack was called off at the last minute thus averting a war between pro-French tribes and pro-English tribes.\(^{49}\)

The motivation behind the Chitimacha murdering Father St. Cosme was more obscure. The Chitimacha were not allied with either the English or the French. They were the most powerful nation between Florida and Texas and had little use for the colonists. In the earliest years of Louisiana, the French needed labor to grow their colony, so they invaded the area Indian nations for slaves.\(^{50}\) The Indian slave trade contributed to Indian hostilities due to disruptions in the established social order. In 1706, likely as a response to slave raids and French aggressions, the Chitimacha killed Father St. Cosme and several other Frenchmen. Area hostilities made French alliances with the Indians a necessity, therefore, the French befriending a powerful tribe like the Natchez was integral to the success of Louisiana colony. Perhaps that is why the French focused so much on the Natchez.

The French wrote detailed descriptions about the inner workings of Natchez society. Some Europeans progressed from a conquering mentality to an ethnographical mindset,


facilitated by the burgeoning European Age of Enlightenment. Men like Le Page du Pratz, who befriended and lived with the Natchez, were crucial contributors to the early development of ethnography. In 1704, an indentured carpenter named André-Joseph Pénicaud was one of the early figures to describe the Natchez in detail. Pénicaud accompanied his employer Pierre Le Moyne d’Iberville down the Mississippi exploring French holdings. Pénicaud first met Jesuit missionaries living among the Illinois Indians in a village the French called La Petite Riviere de la Saline [Little Salt River]. French sources recorded Natchez beliefs, therefore inadvertently preserving Natchez religion in written form.

In order to understand the Natchez, one must understand their creation story. Here is a brief outline: A man came down from the sun with his wife, because the people needed a master to improve themselves. The man from the sun directed them not to get drunk or steal, as well as providing other instructions as part of a broader moral code. Their word for the Natchez deity was \textit{Coyocop-Chill} or variations of Supreme Spirit. After giving the Natchez the moral code, the culture hero turned into stone. The stone was guarded in the Grand Village temple in front of the sacred eternal fire. The bones of the ancestral suns were kept in the temple nearby. The cosmology of the Natchez was intertwined with the Natchez sun family. The Natchez theocracy made it impossible for St. Cosme to garner converts. Early missionaries realized they needed to tread lightly. Jesuit evangelism did not strive to make Indians into Frenchmen lest they lose potential converts. Discussions occurred in New France about whether or not \textit{frenchification}

\begin{flushright}
51 Le Page du Pratz, 315.

52 Ibid., 31

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should be applied to the Indians. The Jesuits were opposed to assimilation. One of the first Ursuline Nuns in the new world, Mother Marie de l’Incarnation said, “A Frenchman becomes an Indian sooner than an Indian becomes a Frenchman.”

Colonization brought both missionaries and traders around the same time, although the traders brought items the Indians found more useful than Christianity. From the native mindset, there was likely a mixture of acceptance and concern about the encroaching English from the east and the French from the North and South, but the goods they brought with them were too hard to resist.

Several years after the first missionaries and traders, Antoine Crozat voyaged to Louisiana as a licensed proprietor of the crown in 1712. The early French traders had a bad reputation among the Natchez, but how much of that reputation was influenced from the English is up for debate. By the time several trade concessions arrived, English from the Carolinas had already established trade and offered goods at a better price than the French. An economic power struggle became obvious when d’Iberville sent an officer with trade goods to offer the Natchez in 1716. When the trader got there, the English were attempting to create a slave trading alliance with the Yazoo, Natchez and Chickasaw for the purpose of raiding other Indian nations. The Indian slave trade was part of the early colonist-Indian exchange economy, but proved to be difficult to maintain. From the very beginning, the French in Louisiana expected to use slave labor for the backbreaking work of clearing the land and tilling the soil. Attempts to use Indian


slaves captured by tribes allied with the French were usually fruitless—the native slaves simply walked into the forest they knew so intimately and disappeared.56

The Illinois confederation were the middlemen of a bustling Indian slave economy. They lived in the borderlands between the Great Lakes of New France and the prairie west. The Illinois quickly transformed slaver practices from kinship replacement into a merchant slave economy.57 The French began to import African slaves after Indians proved to be elusive. Area tribes sometimes gave refuge to escaped Indian slaves. African slaves were a secure option since they were in an unfamiliar land and did not know where to escape. A low-level clerk named Marc-Antoine Caillot wrote in his private journals that Indians called African slaves “black Frenchmen.”58 According to the French concessionaire Jean-Baptiste Bérnard de La Harpe, over six hundred African slaves arrived in Louisiana in 1719 and 1720, and over thirteen hundred African slaves were brought to the colony in 1721.59 By 1725, the Natchez concessionaires were growing wheat, indigo, tobacco, and cotton, employing a large labor force made up of indentured servants and African slaves.60 The mixing of people from three different continents had thus begun.


60 Ibid., 84.
A new mixed ethnicity called black Indians had developed, even from the earliest days of contact. Black Indians were comprised of half-Indian and half-black ancestries. The earliest pairings brought forth various degrees of mixed European, Native American and African ethnicity. Sexual activities happened along the trade routes. Intercultural coitus happened in between bouts of warfare. Slave masters impregnated their slaves. Sometimes white men ran away from “civilization” and were said to have “gone native,” usually to be near their Indian wives and families. Assimilation was not just a process that went in only one direction.

In an official order in colonial Louisiana, soldiers were allowed to fraternize with friendly tribes nearby. Governor Bienville decided to let his men hunt in the country, or live with the “savages” until enough food provisions could be sent from Havana. About twenty Frenchmen reached the Natchez Grand Village during a dance. Pénicaut described the village as being beautiful with nature paths surrounded by meadows and flowers. Peach trees were outside their homes providing shade. He wrote, “This Grand Chief is as absolute as a king.” The women were dressed in clothes made out of nettle bark or mulberry bark. The men were dressed in ankle length deerskin tops. Pénicaut was with the Natchez long enough to learn about some of their cultural practices, like how the nobility traced their ancestry up to the seventh generation through the mothers. Pénicaut said, “When I asked them the reason for this, they answered me that nobility can come only from the woman, because the woman is more certain than the man about whom the children belong to.”

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61 Pénicaut, 80.
62 Ibid., 89.
63 Ibid., 90.
Matrilineal kinship gave Natchez women political importance. The Grand Female Sun, referred to as Tattooed Arm, was the sister of the Great Sun and the war chief, referred to as Tattooed Serpent. We do not know Tattooed Arm’s Natchez name. The Frenchmen only recorded the names of male suns. Tattooed Serpent’s name was Obalalkabiche and the Great Sun’s name was Yakstalchil. Yakstalchil was the name of the second ranking chief of Flour village also. The French probably had difficulty pronouncing the names, so they referred to the traditional leaders by their titles, like Tattooed Serpent, Tattooed Arm and the Great Sun.

Tattooed Arm was politically powerful among the Natchez. She and her brothers resided in the ceremonial center on top of one of three mounds. Little Sun was their younger brother and his residence was unknown. The Bearded was the ranking sun of Jenzenaque and maternal uncle to Tattooed Arm and her brothers. Old Flour Chief was the ranking sun of Flour and the master of temple ceremonies. As stated, Yakstalchil was the second ranking sun of Flour. Old Hair was the ranking sun of White Apple. Alahoflechia was the ranking sun of Grigra. Old Flour Chief, Yakstachil, Old Hair, and Alahoflechia, had no known genealogical relationship to the sun family.

The French misunderstood the autonomy of each village. Though the sun family had much power, the non-genealogical suns of the other villages provided a counterpower. The Natchez likely misunderstood the French political structure as well. For the Natchez, the

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65 Likely, Yakstalchil was a common name or they just happened to have the same name.

governor of Louisiana had the power of a chief, but a far more powerful grand chief existed somewhere else called the Sun King. The governor, being a subordinate chief to the faraway chief, would have made the governor seem weak. Such misunderstandings affected trade relations. Perhaps for that reason, a French trading post called Crozat’s was pillaged and several French were attacked. Old Hair, the English-allied sun of White Apple, was responsible for the death of four Frenchmen in 1713.67 His alliance with the English may have led to the killings of the Frenchmen.

**Cultural Intermarriage and The Honeymoon Phase**

Tensions subsided after all the suns rejoiced at seeing a tobacco commissary run by Monsieur Hubert. The suns smoked the calumet of peace and asked for M. Hubert to relay a pardon for Old Hair. The pardon was granted by Bienville, most likely because the united suns were in Louisiana’s favor. The suns were delighted and had a dance in all nine villages lasting a week.68 The suns asking the Louisiana governor for a pardon revealed the newly obtained power of the French.

Despite Bienville’s success at gaining favor with every Natchez village, peace did not guarantee automatic success for the colony. The main issue was getting enough labor. John Law’s Company of The West created an advertising campaign, but none of the continental French were interested.69 The colony needed families to reproduce and to provide labor. A group

67 Pénicaut, 167.

68 Pénicaut, 239.

of thirty-three assumed virgins arrived in a ship called The Pelican in 1704. The “filles à la cassette” quickly became dissatisfied with the harsh conditions and gruff men dressed in animal skins. They created a “Petticoat Rebellion” in 1706 when they denied colonial men “room and board” until better conditions were met. Governor Bienville complained that they were pampered city girls and requested hardworking country girls. France decided to provide criminals and prostitutes for indentured servitude in Louisiana. A royal edict ridding France’s undesirable was passed on January 8, 1719. The law was specifically designed to funnel labor to Louisiana under the premise of being a penal colony.

French authorities invented reasons to send their poor to Louisiana. Many were homeless, impoverished journeymen, drunks and common rabble. If they had not yet committed a crime, they were about to. Many were orphans and petty criminals with dubious charges. In February of 1720, a seventeen-year-old orphan arrived in chains named Marie Baron. The crime that got her committed was stealing a piece of ribbon in addition to being falsely accused of being a prostitute.

Even though the colony was slowly becoming populated, many experienced sicknesses and died. For example, most of the Pelican girls died from yellow fever. Most new arrivals were soldiers and company men. Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz was a historian and naturalist, but

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71 Hardy, 207.

72 Ibid., 208.

he was a businessman foremost. Shortly after arriving at Dauphin Island in August 1718, Le Page du Pratz purchased a young Chitimacha slave woman.\textsuperscript{74} In 1720, the Western Company and one of the company directors named M. Hubert, requested Le Page du Pratz to settle two plantations in Louisiana. Before leaving New Orleans, he purchased two African slaves, a man and his wife, to augment his workforce and hired some voyageurs to serve as paddlers.\textsuperscript{75} The slave couple escaped but were captured by the Tunica who returned them to him. Le Page du Pratz moved to Natchez with the Chitimacha woman who had contacts among the Natchez, and she probably became his wife à la façon du pays or “in the manner of the country.”\textsuperscript{76} À la façon du pays described common law marriages between European men and American Indian women.\textsuperscript{77}

Caillot was forthcoming about the blurred line between wives and slaves in the colony. As an unpublished, illustrated manuscript likely prepared for an intimate circle of friends, rather than for administrative or military officials, Caillot’s account was never subjected to censorship by the company or king, making it an exceptional example of a fully narrative account, unhindered by the literary conventions of polite society.\textsuperscript{78} Caillot explains, “Most of the inhabitants buy only female slaves, Indian as well as Negro, in order to more conveniently lie

\textsuperscript{74} Barnett, \textit{Natchez Indians}, 77. Note: Another source alleged Du Pratz was given the Chitimacha slave woman from a chief.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 78.


\textsuperscript{77} À la façon du pays was first used to described marriages between fur traders in Canada and indigenous women. Such marriages were banned by the Hudson Bay Company until 1739.

\textsuperscript{78} Caillot, 164.
with them.” Slave wives, or domesticated sex slaves, were part of the early slave economy where women were in short demand.

Human trafficking was just one of several practices that contributed to the marrying of cultures. Another was land usage practices. New native history focuses on dubious land grabs by Europeans, when Indians became passive victims of stolen land, but the picture was more nuanced and complicated. Le Page du Pratz purchased some land from an Indian who had his own house on an adjacent plot of land. Le Page du Pratz did not specify the land transfer in detail. Nonetheless, his purchase was near the ceremonial center where he befriended the sun family.

The complexity of Natchez civilization impressed Le Page du Pratz, although he had typical biases of his time. For example, all Indians were savages with some exceptions, and even they became barbarous once separated from civilization. He quoted ancient Greek Diodorus Siculus’ descriptions of ancient Phoenicians, Tuscans and Carthaginians, as being the ancient forebears of the Natchez. He theorized ancient civilizations crashed on the coast of South America and then became barbarous. Even more fantastical, he believed Mexicans may have descended from China or Japan. Anything resembling civilization, like Mexican glyphs or a political system containing elements of royalty, evidenced to him that the primitives came from a civilization elsewhere.

79 Ibid., 117.
80 Barnett, Natchez Indians, 78.
81 Le Page du Pratz, 284.
82 Such theories continue even today in the form of the land bridge from Siberia. Although Le Page du Pratz admits that his theories are conjecture and does not insist on them being fact unlike the Beringia migration theorists today.
Le Page du Pratz’s friendship with Tattooed Serpent and the Great Sun enabled him to create the most detailed portrait of the Natchez out of any of his contemporaries. He wrote in *The History of Louisiana,* “Natches, a populous nation, among whom I lived the space of eight years, and whole sovereign, the chief of war, and the chief of the keepers of the temple, were among my most intimate friends.”

One day Le Page du Pratz asked the temple keeper his thoughts about the Natchez coming from a different place, when comparing their culture with the tribes surrounding them. The temple keeper pointed in a direction to what Le Page du Pratz understood to be Mexico. The temple keeper said a prior Great Sun had many enemies in a warm and pleasant land. The Natchez were conquered in the plains of that pleasant land, but their enemies could not remove them from the mountains. The Great Sun sent explorers to a large river rumored to be in the east. Sometime later, the explorers returned and told them about a pleasant land east of the river. The Natchez had split in half, with several groups migrating past the river. The Great Sun eventually decided to leave the pleasant land, after warriors of fire arrived who wanted to make slaves out of their brethren. The rest of the drive left with their slaves and reconnected with the rest of the tribe. When Le Page du Pratz asked who the warriors of fire were, the temple keeper told him:

...they were bearded white men, somewhat brownish in colour, who carried arms that darted out fire with a great noise, and killed at a great distance; that they had likewise heavy arms which killed a great many men at once, and like thunder made the earth tremble; and that they came from the sun-rising in floating villages.

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83 Ibid., 306-307.

84 Ibid., 280.

85 Ibid., 281.
The oral history of the temple keeper was an important look into what the Natchez thought about their origins, as opposed to early anthropologists lumping them in as the last remnant of earlier Mississippian peoples. Anthropologist Andrew C. Albrecht used the term “migration legends,” but to the Indian it was their history. Le Page du Pratz was quite progressive for his time, referring to the Natchez as a “nation,” and describing the Great Sun as a “sovereign,” and calling the natives “naturals” rather than “savages.”

Le Page du Pratz also recorded an oral history of the earliest transcontinental explorer to reach both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, a Yazoo named Moncacht-Apé. He was widely known as a translator since he spoke many languages. Mocacht-apé told Le Page du Pratz about his exploration up the Mississippi River, to the nations of the Ohio valley, the Iroquois confederation, the Abenaki and the “great waters” of the sun rise, the Pacific. Mocacht-apé explored the Missouri River, met with a nation he called the Ottors, and then met with various nations on the Columbia River going westward. The nations on the west coast told Mocacht-apé white men with long beards landed on the coast in floating cities and wore cloth wrapped in their hair.

Le Page du Pratz’s recording of Mocacht-apé’s oral history was used by Lewis and Clark during their explorations in the early 1800s. Likely, Lewis and Clark based Le Page du Pratz’s historical authority on his practical experience of living with the primary sources. Le Page du Pratz’s “intimate friendship” with the royals was likely considered an adoption by them, thus

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86 Albrecht, 325.

87 Quite possibly the “Otters” were the Oto, who were semi-nomadic.

88 Le Page du Pratz, 288.
giving him insider knowledge not available to those from the outside. *The History of Louisiana* is primary evidence showing how the Natchez and French were finding common ground, as trading partners, as military allies, and as sexual partners, but cultural differences complicated their relationship. An exchange of gifts often means different things to different cultures. The Natchez viewed the French gifts as a type of tribute. The Natchez, just like other powerful nations such as the Choctaw, demanded tribute from smaller tribes. Louisiana Governor Étienne Périer bitterly complained about their expectations of receiving gifts:

> I don’t believe that the sum the King has set aside for the savage’s gifts will be enough to satisfy them. And yet it would not be prudent in the present circumstances to make them unhappy or to make new enemies but once we are delivered from the Natchez and the Chickasaws and all the posts in the colony are furnished with good troops, then it would be good to decrease first and afterwards to cut them off completely so that we can free ourselves from this servitude to which we are now reduced.89

French “gifts” were accepted in exchange for accessing the area. The French did not see the Natchez as their overlords at all. Of course, there was an exchange of gifts from both sides for the establishment of good relations. Périer’s complaint indicated the Natchez expected so many gifts, it created a position of French servitude, otherwise known as tribute.

Some of the gift giving happened between individuals. As Frenchmen desired access into Natchez territory, they participated in the custom of giving gifts to the families of the women they wanted to marry *à la façon du pays*. Before Father Pierre François Xavier de Charlevoix’s departure from the Natchez outpost, several colonial residents and their Indian companions asked the priest to marry them “in the face of the church.” These couples had already received civil

marriage contracts from the post commandant and principal clerk. Charlesvoix complained about sexual relations before marriage, so prevalent in the colony, as “this concubinage.”

Even the Grand Female Sun arranged for her daughter to be presented to the Louisianans as a gift. One evening Tattooed Arm visited Le Page du Pratz. She admitted to him her dislike of the mortuary sacrifices and customs of the sun caste. The Grand Female Sun brought one of her daughters as a gift for Le Page du Pratz. By having a Frenchman marrying into the nobility, Tattooed Arm hoped many of the French customs she admired would influence her people, and would change the customs she and her brothers disliked. MacLeod believed the Grand Female Sun was influenced by French endogamy. Maybe Tattooed Arm saw how the two Natchez moieties had parallels with the French classes of commoners and aristocracy. However, the French aristocratic bloodline was not supposed to mix with the peasants unlike the suns requirement to marry miche-miche-quipy. No evidence indicates Tattooed Arm desired a new system of sun-exclusive endogamy. MacLeod, just like the Louisianan men who wrote about the Natchez, fundamentally misunderstood the Natchez kinship system. Moieties are based on well-established kinship descent systems and would require a lot of effort to change. The Natchez nation was already split into political factions and had enough social instability. Tattooed Arm’s gift was her direct attempt at combining kinship ties between the Natchez and French, but Le Page du Pratz respectfully declined her offer which upset her daughter.

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91 Le Page du Pratz did not state what customs the sun family no longer liked.

92 MacLeod, 216-217.
Tattooed Arm was using sexual diplomacy. More intermarriages between Natchez and Louisianans might have created political stability. Le Page du Pratz declining the grand female sun’s daughter might have been because he was already sexually involved with his Chitimacha slave. He had fathered children with the Chitimacha woman. Even so, the chance to produce a bi-ethnic noble child of mixed Natchez and Louisianan heritages would have made peace more tenable. Le Page du Pratz’s friendship with her brothers made him politically powerful in the Natchez nation. His influence as a link between both nations would have quelled instability, if only for a short while. A question remains if any of those intermarriages would have followed the matrilineal or patrilineal descent system. If a Frenchman married into the powerful sun moiety, would he have committed ritual suicide (by allowing himself to be sacrificed), if his “royal” wife died before himself?

When one of the little suns or white women [female suns] died, it was a custom that there were human sacrifices. The mortuary sacrifices included the sun’s wives (or husband in the case of a female sun) and their household servants or slaves. Some volunteered to be sacrificed, which was considered a great honor. In one case, one man sentenced to death protested after a female sun died, so three old women volunteered to be put to death in his place.

It was during their stay with the “savages,” Pénicaut and others witnessed the death of a noble woman. During the mortuary ceremony, her husband was strangled so he could join her in the grand village in their afterlife. Many dead infants and dead servants were offered as sacrifices. Pénicaut described how a corpse march occurred, where those to be sacrificed

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93 Caillot, 113; Dumont de Montigny, 360; MacLeod, 212; Pénicaut, 140.

94 Le Page du Pratz, 337.
marched with the body of the noblewoman. The noblewoman was to be buried in the temple with the eternal fire, burning in front of an image of a rattlesnake. The children that were strangled were marched upon, until their bodies were completely mangled. After witnessing the ceremony, the Frenchmen decided to leave the Natchez a couple of days later. Pénicaut does not state if the mortuary ceremony was the reason behind their departure. However, governor Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville had already given orders for them to stay with the Indians until more provisions came from Havana.95 Otherwise, they might have abruptly left after witnessing killings they viewed as unjust.

Adding to the cultural differences, politics stoked growing divisions. The entire area became unstable by 1715, with various Indian nations definitively choosing alliances with the English or the French. The Choctaw allied with the French. The Yazoo, Koroa and Tioux allied with the British. The Chickasaws tried to influence the Natchez toward the British side. As for the Natchez, the Grand Village, Tioux, and Flour remained allied with the French. The villages of Jenzenaque, White Apple, and Grigra remained allied with the British. The English saw the male suns of Jenzenaque, White Apple and Grigra as decentralized authority similar to Chickasaw chiefs. As stated, the French saw the Great Sun as a monarch, mistakenly holding him responsible for the entirety of the Natchez.96

The English and French paid gifts to their respective allies, thus contributing to the fictionalization of Natchez political structure. Geography had influenced the Indian alliances. The Yazoo, Koroa and Tioux, and the Natchez villages of Jenzenaque, White Apple, and Grigra

95 Pénicaut, 93-96.

96 Barnett, Natchez Indians, 45.
were north and northeast of the Grand Village; all were closer to the Carolinas. The Natchez villages of Tioux and Flour were on both sides of the Grand Village, and due east were the Choctaw; all were closer to the French and to New Orleans. Trade routes and alliances simply followed geography. As a result of having a nation split in two, area tensions had finally come to a head.

The Honeymoon Is Over

A mistake in diplomatic protocol may have contributed to violence erupting between the Louisianans and the Natchez, known as the First Natchez War in 1716. One of the short-term governors named Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, had refused to smoke the calumet with them. No adequate explanation was given about Cadillac’s faux pas. Cadillac’s refusal would have been considered a grave insult for the Natchez. For the English-allied Natchez, Frenchmen would have been met with hostility. Four voyageurs travelling from Mobile to Illinois hired four Natchez paddlers, who in turn murdered the voyageurs and stole their provisions.\(^{97}\) Later, Cadillac ordered Pénicaud to assist a trader named La Loire up the Mississippi River to the Illinois. Pénicaud and La Loire were warned by eight Natchez that a hostile Natchez chief named The Bearded planned to ambush them.\(^{98}\) Later, The Bearded captured six Canadians, but he released them after his nephews convinced him to establish good relations with the colonial French.\(^{99}\) Several Natchez chiefs, including the pro-English faction, sailed to Bienville’s island


\(^{98}\) Ibid., 64.

\(^{99}\) Ibid., 67.
to smoke the calumet with Governor Bienville, who had taken control of the governorship again. Bienville captured the chiefs, placed them in jail, and kept them as hostages until Tattooed Serpent negotiated terms of release. The terms were to capture and behead the four Natchez paddlers responsible for the murder of the voyageurs, and to build a military fort. Some of Bienville’s Canadians executed The Bearded in 1716. Alahoflechia was executed as well. Both were secretly executed to avoid alarming their supporters among the Natchez. The Bearded remained defiant to the end:

The Bearded ceased for a moment singing his death song and sang that of war. He related his great deeds against different nations and the number of scalps he had carried away. He named the five Frenchmen whom he had caused to die, and said that he died with regret at not having killed more.

Tattooed Serpent, who was then the only one of his nation among the French, listened attentively and said to M. de Bienville, “He is my brother, but I do not regret him. You are ridding us of a bad man.” Tattooed Serpent’s remarks indicated tensions existed among the suns before the arrival of the French. Presumably, the cause could have been a family drama, since The Bearded was the Great Sun’s, Tattooed Serpent’s, and Little Sun’s uncle. The three sun lineage brothers told Bienville that the suns of White Apple, Jenzenaque, and Grigra had “assumed so much authority in their nation that they were more feared and obeyed than themselves.” By removing The Bearded and Alahoflechia, Bienville had eliminated two-thirds of the tribe’s pro-English leadership. Tattooed Serpent and his brothers could take heart that an expanded French

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101 Ibid., 70.
103 Ibid.
presence at Natchez returned some measure of authority to the sun lineage. The war concessions supplied manpower for the construction of Fort Rosalie in 1716.\textsuperscript{104}

The construction of the fort proved to be beneficial security for the Louisianans. From 1716 to 1722, no single incident was reported which could be construed as an act of open hostility, even though it was during this particular time the Louisianans began to encroach more and more upon the ancestral grounds of the Natchez.\textsuperscript{105} By 1718, one hundred and sixteen upper-middle class concessionaires, and over six hundred indentured servants, vagrants, orphans, smugglers, prostitutes, and thieves were sent from France.\textsuperscript{106} Six years of peace between the Natchez and French was remarkable, given how many settlers arrived in a matter of years, with many living in close proximity. By 1721, John Law had more success with recruiting thousands of Germans impoverished by the Thirty Years War and King Louis XIV’s wars for the Rhineland. Most of them perished during the sea journey, however around one thousand immigrated to their destinations to take advantage of the lack of laborers for the quickly growing plantations.\textsuperscript{107} Along the path, from the post at Saint Catherines toward Terre Blanche [White Earth], one saw new farms being laid out and built everywhere.\textsuperscript{108} Caillot remarked at the bounty surrounding the Natchez, “From New Orleans, going upriver two hundred leagues, there are as

\textsuperscript{104} Robert Englebert, Guillaume Teasdale and French Colonial Historical Society, \textit{French and Indians in the Heart of North America} (Lansing: Michigan State University), 143.

\textsuperscript{105} Albrecht, 339.

\textsuperscript{106} Barnett, Natchez Indians, 77.

\textsuperscript{107} Ellen Merrill, \textit{Germans of Louisiana} (Greta: Pelican Publishing Company, 2005), 21.

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 224.
many plantations as concessions—one hundred fifty—among which twenty to twenty-five are very rich, including the Tchoupitoulas plantations, four in number. ¹⁰⁹

As the French presence became more invasive, French and Indian relations soured across the entire area, leading to outbreaks of violence. When a trade disagreement occurred between a Natchez man and a Frenchman in 1722, the Frenchman was killed. Both sides retaliated. A year later in 1723, a colonial officer and historian named Jean-François-Benjamin Dumont de Montigny, was part of a scorched earth campaign against the Natchez. However, the villages were already abandoned by the time Dumont de Montigny and the other soldiers arrived. Dumont de Montigny noted that, inside the houses the twenty men had torched, they found cooked maize and baked pumpkins, which the soldiers gathered up and ate. ¹¹⁰

Dumont de Montigny noted they did not attack the Natchez villages allied with the French. They concentrated their attacks on the Natchez villages allied with the British. He described how those civilians who fled, found refuge in the French-allied Grand Village that was spared from French blows. ¹¹¹ At Grigra, Dumont de Montigny and the soldiers burned a temple down. ¹¹² The civilians had good reasons to fear and flee the French. The French had the advantage of firearms and reserves if needed, and that power made them confident to inflict abuses. The French had grown more callous and brutal toward their Indian foes. On one occasion, Dumont de Montigny and other soldiers entered a British-allied village, which they

¹⁰⁹ Caillot, 108.

¹¹⁰ Dumont de Montigny, 198.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 200.

¹¹² Ibid.
found abandoned. The thirsty soldiers looked for a source of water in the village but could not find any. While searching, however, they discovered the sole occupant of the village, who was an old Indian woman, more than a hundred years old, with completely white hair and was scarcely able to walk. She was led back to the soldiers. Commandant Etienne Périer asked her, through Sr. Papin, the interpreter, where there might be some water. She told them where to go, and after rehydrating, they rested. The old woman was not able to follow the army as a captive, so commandant Etienne Périer killed and scalped her.¹¹³

Apparently, the soldiers were looking for more than just water. Dumont de Montigny describes a soldier named Couturier, who wanted to capture some Indian women for slaves.¹¹⁴ A warehouse keeper named Tisserant, however, did not divert himself by battling with the enemies, but went to look under the beds, where he made himself the master of four Indian women, who henceforth became his slaves. He tied their arms behind their backs and placed them among the supplies in the train of the army.¹¹⁵ Couturier did not find any women. He was wounded and his dying body was placed in the cabin, then the soldiers burned the cabin down.

In the midst of the scorched earth campaign, Tattooed Serpent persevered to keep the Natchez and French unified. Tattooed Serpent had long been a peacemaker after the recent bouts of violence historians have called the second and third Natchez wars.¹¹⁶ Commander of Fort Rosalie, Ignace François Broutin, called in Tattooed Serpent to question him about a horse

¹¹³ Ibid., 185.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 182.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 183.

¹¹⁶ The first Natchez war was in 1716, the second Natchez war was in 1722, and the third Natchez war was 1723.
getting his tail cut off and suffering from a tomahawk blow. In a word, Serpent Piqué [Tattooed Serpent] did not give an adequate explanation and went away from Sr. Broutin’s residence very angry and in a pique, and had no sooner arrived back at his village than he called an assembly of his warriors. After the assembly, he told Broutin the culprit was possibly from the Tioux village. This episode was not just about a horse. Tioux was a French-allied village. The attack represented a growing dissention, even among the villages that were favorable to the French.

In the spring of 1725, the death of Tattooed Serpent further deteriorated Natchez-French relations. Le Page du Pratz and other colonists mourned his death, for he was integral in keeping peaceful relations. The war chief was so beloved, Le Page du Pratz had to dissuade the Great Sun from committing suicide while in mourning. The Great Sun disallowed human sacrifices for Tattoo Serpent’s mortuary ceremony, except the war chief’s wives and slaves. A woman and her husband had already strangled their child despite the ban on sacrifices outside of Tattooed Serpent’s household. Then the dead child that was strangled against The Great Sun’s orders, was placed on the ground, and those sentenced to die walked over his or her body until they entered the temple. Once the child was placed in the temple, those chosen for death were strangled. Tattooed Serpent’s wives were killed by male family members, and the statuses of those who strangled them were raised to men of rank.

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117 Ibid., 226.

118 Ibid., 95.


120 Ibid., 338.
Another blow to French and Natchez relations was the death the Great Sun. Caillot explained how the Great Sun was guarded at his head and foot by two guards. The dead chief was then offered food and his weapons and other valuables were placed beside him. After seven days, a dance lasting eight hours was performed. A last supper was served, consisting of dried beef the Natchez called boucané and a stew of roe deer and corn. Then the Great Sun’s wives, servants, relatives and friends were blindfolded. The temple priest made long orations about how those dying would receive glory. Those dying chanted until they were strangled with a long cord. Then they slit the throat of a little innocent one, whom they held by his two feet with his head hanging down, and they sprinkled the coffin with his blood by passing and repassing the little dying infant above and below the coffin.

Irreconcilable Differences

Despite seeing the Natchez as a great civilization among “savages,” the French witnessing the mortuary ceremony were fascinated, horrified and disgusted. The French held the general opinion the Natchez were well on their way toward being civilized in the manner of Europe, but certain practices kept them primitive, wanton and even wicked. Caillot made a fantastical claim of seeing the devil in the flesh while witnessing a Natchez conjuring. He claimed the Natchez had been correct in divining the future after the conjuring. He erroneously believed the Natchez worshipped the rattlesnake rather than the sun. Despite his misunderstanding of Natchez religion, his description of the mortuary ceremony was similar to

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121 Caillot, 112.

122 Ibid., 113.
the descriptions by Dumont de Montigny, Pénicaut and Le Page du Pratz, but with one inconsistency, Caillot reported a child’s throat was slit while the others reported strangulation.

Perhaps because of the horror of witnessing the mortuary ceremony and the repeated bouts of violence, the French feared the Natchez the most. The palpable fear on the plantations was the reason behind Fort Rosalie being constructed in the first place. French leaders did not just have an “Indian problem,” interior problems created inconsistencies in military leadership. Commanding the Louisianan military proved just as difficult as governing the colony. Several commanders rapidly came and went. In 1729, Étienne de Chépart, formally known as Sieur de Chépart, came from France in order to fill a sensitive yet volatile military void. Dumont de Montigny critically described the new commander:

Sr. Chepart was a Basque who believed himself to be a descendant of our kings. He had no sooner become the master here than the officers stopped doing their duty. Orders were followed only as a matter of form by the soldiers and the sergeants; there were no rules, no discipline; everyone did as he pleased.

The motley crew of lackadaisical soldiers resulted in Sieur de Chépart cracking the whip, which made him very unpopular with not only his officers, but also with the settlers and Indians.

Sieur de Chépart involved himself beyond military duty and into the affairs of civilians, applying arbitrary law beyond Fort Rosalie. One day, Sieur de Chépart ordered soldiers to take peas from Dumont de Montigny’s landlords, Marie Baron Roussin and Jean Roussin, without

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124 Sieur means sir in old French, a term of respect equivalent to gentleman.

125 Dumont de Montigny, 213.

126 Englebert et al., 151.
asking their permission. When Dumont de Montigny and his landlords returned from church, they saw the soldiers picking peas in their garden. They protested and took their peas away from the soldiers, which created animosity between the Roussins, Dumont de Montigny and Sieur de Chépart.

In another incident, the Roussins made a deal to buy a horse and a heifer from a trader who tried to cheat them. The dispute was settled by Sieur de Chépart who unfairly ruled against the Roussins. Dumont de Montigny believed Sieur de Chépart harbored animosity against the Roussins from the pea stealing incident. Dumont de Montigny complained to Governor Périer in New Orleans about Sieur de Chépart’s unfair treatment. Jean and Marie Roussin appealed Sieur de Chépart’s decision directly to the governor as well. Sieur de Chépart and the Roussins went to court. Governor Périer ruled in favor of the Roussins. It was during that time, Dumont de Montigny took the opportunity to take Governor Périer aside to warn him about the commander’s volatile demeanor, “If you send Chépart back to Natchez, Messieurs, there will be either a rebellion of the habitants or some other great catastrophe.” Governor Périer paid no attention to Dumont de Montigny’s warning.

Dumont de Montigny’s worry over Sieur de Chépart’s incivility and unpopularity boils down to a question about what authority Sieur de Chépart thought he had. Various sources unanimously painted Sieur de Chépart as a brute and a drunkard. Dumont de Montigny, in particular, was critical of Sieur de Chépart’s character. Sieur de Chépart was relieved of his command because of his unjust actions but was quickly returned to his position as commandant

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127 Dumont’s landlords were Marie Baron Roussin and Jean Roussin. Jean Roussin was killed by the Natchez. Afterward Dumont married widowed Marie Baron Roussin.

128 Dumont de Montigny, 224.
general by M. Périer. Sometime later a confrontation happened. Sieur de Chépart physically attacked Jean Roussin. When Dumont de Montigny protested, Sieur de Chépart put Dumont de Montigny in chains and jailed him for two months. Dumont de Montigny decided to escape the tyranny in the middle of the night. Soldiers were sent to find him. Dumont de Montigny found refuge from the chief of the Illinois nation, who took pity on him, because they had seen him in chains in Natchez. The chief taking pity reveals how contextually nuanced Indian and colonial relations were. Dumont de Montigny does not state a solid reason why the Illinois allowed him to take refuge with them, besides seeing him in chains. Likely, the Illinois were trading within Natchez territory and had seen Dumont de Montigny escaping. For the Illinois, Dumont de Montigny would have been a warrior, but chains and confinement would have been reserved for slaves. A warrior being treated like a slave must have produced the chief’s pity. Nonetheless, the situation had gotten so bad in Louisiana colony, a French soldier had to escape his commander. The disarray proved to be a harbinger of things to come. Sieur de Chépart’s reinstatement by the governor emboldened his ambition to obtain power.

Sieur de Chépart wanted to create a grand city and found White Apple to be a sufficient place. Sieur de Chépart quite directly ordered the sun and the villagers in White Apple to leave or he would burn their temple down. He told the sun he wanted to build two storehouses and that they should find another place to live, since they were the subjects of governor Périer. Le Page du Pratz wrote:

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129 Le Page du Pratz, 73.

130 Dumont de Montigny, 222.

131 Ibid., 227.
The Commandant, doubtless, supposed that he was speaking to a slave, whom we may command in a tone of absolute authority. But he knew not that the natives of Louisiana are such enemies to a state of slavery, that they prefer death itself thereto; above all, the Suns, accustomed to govern despotically, have still a greater aversion to it.132

Dumont de Montigny was exasperated at the attempted power grab:

Never had the lands of the Indians been so brazenly confiscated. Up until then, if one had built on the Indians’ lands, either the Indians themselves had granted the land so as to gain the friendship and protection of the French for themselves and their habitations, or else those who had settled on the Indian lands had paid them in advance with trade goods. What’s more, these Indian inhabitants called Natchez were friends of the French, hunting for them, trading each year some of their poultry, grain, and oil, and working for the French as willing servants (for pay, that is).133

The sun of White Apple village held a council with other suns. The suns spoke about how the threat of the French had grown because their population had multiplied. The suns said the young Natchez did not see the French as a threat unlike the older Natchez. Although the sun of White Apple initially said he would not negotiate with Sieur de Chépart, because he was so unreasonable, eventually they all agreed to honor Sieur de Chépart. They promised to give the commandant one basket of corn and a hen from each village house as tribute. Likely, the tribute was to counter any suspicions of an uprising, and to buy them some time to solidify their military plans. The suns decided to carry the pipe of peace to all the other Indian nations, and asked them to join them in a revolt against the French.134

Two or three Natchez were to go to each Frenchman’s cabin and borrow hunting rifles with promises of returning some meat for their favor. Each sun was told to wait for the signal of a gunshot to simultaneously attack the French. The plan included a creation of a Mississippi

132 Le Page du Pratz, 74.
133 Dumont de Montigny, 227-228.
134 Le Page du Pratz, 77.
River blockade against any Louisianan reinforcements sent from New Orleans. Bundles of rods were given to each sun. Each rod would be pulled out of the piles as countdown to the day. They were to surround Fort Rosalie after the last rod was pulled from the pile. This simple strategy was the main tactic of communication and would eventually prove detrimental to their cause. In addition, another detriment was excluding others from the planned uprising.\(^{135}\)

The male suns agreed to not notify the female suns about their plans.\(^ {136}\) This was a curious decision. Perhaps intermarriages between French men and Natchez women had complicated gender relations from within. Female suns held the power over life and death. When Natchez warriors captured war prisoners, female suns decided whether to keep the prisoners alive or have them executed. Quite possibly, the male suns were doing their own power grab with the establishment of all-male rule over tribal politics from that point on. Le Page du Pratz did not speculate about why the male suns excluded the female suns from their military plans. Le Page du Pratz was sympathetic about the female sun’s sudden loss of power: “The female Suns (Princesses) had alone in this nation a right to demand why they were kept in the dark in this affair”\(^ {137}\) Were the male suns resentful of having Frenchmen as rivals? Perhaps Natchez men saw how the French had quickly grown in power without any input from female authority. Frenchwomen were not in any positions of influence as the French empire expanded.

An obvious question about using the male competition theory happens to be, if female suns desired cultural intermixing, it risked the possibility of demoting female power as well.

\(^{135}\) Ibid.

\(^{136}\) Ibid., 78.

\(^{137}\) Ibid., 79.
However, if Frenchmen adopted Natchez gender egalitarianism, it required sharing power and dropping any patriarchal notions. The Grand Female Sun had already given birth to a child born with dual heritages. From 1728, a manuscript in the Paris Bibliotheque Nationale identified the Natchez chief St. Cosme both as Grand Soleil [Great Sun] of the Natchez and as a child of St. Cosme the missionary.¹³⁸ Historian James F. Barnett explained that there were two St. Cosmes. One St. Cosme was the seminarian and the other was the Great Sun, who was born about the time St. Cosme the missionary was living with the Natchez. There is some debate about whether Father St. Cosme’s friendship with Tattooed Arm was platonic or if Tattooed Arm named her child to honor the missionary.¹³⁹

Tattooed Arm desired to unite the two nations in her bloodline. She birthed St. Cosme and offered her daughter to Le Page du Pratz, attempting to cement kinship relations and diplomatic ties. The female suns must have heard rumors about the male suns meeting in secret. Stung Arm [Tattooed Arm] asked her son, St. Cosme the young Grand Sun, what was transpiring. St. Cosme lied and told her that a peaceful embassy was going to New Orleans, since the French felt neglected. Stung Arm took her son to visit a relation in the Village of the Meal, and said to him that she should be told the secret, both as a mother but also as the Grand Female Sun. She told her son that she would not tell the French about any potentially planned hostilities, even though her son was a Frenchman. The Grand Sun said that even though he was the son of a Frenchman, the other Suns trusted him. Tattooed Arm told her son about her apprehension about the French bringing military reinforcements from their homeland, and they had many resources.

¹³⁸ Sayre, *Plotting the Natchez Massacre*, 399.

the Natchez were without. He told her about their plan to destroy the French and their Tonica and Ouma allies.\textsuperscript{140}

Tattooed Arm was apprehensive because she and the other women loved the French. She betrayed her son. She told a Louisianan soldier about the Natchez and their allies plan to attack Fort Rosalie. The soldier relayed the message but Commander Shepard [Chépart] ridiculed him and put him in chains and called him a coward. None of the sources explain why Chépart did not believe the soldier. Chépart was known to be a drunkard, so maybe his reasoning abilities were compromised by alcohol. His prior actions revealed somebody who did not care about justice. He was not afraid to reinforce any unjust actions with physical violence. Likely, he believed he had more power than he actually had. Chépart’s big ego led him to think the Natchez were so afraid of him, they would not dare defy him. On the other hand, maybe Chépart was purposely trying to provoke a Natchez attack by blatantly taking White Apple. Another Natchez attack would further convince the colonists that the “savages” needed to be completely subjugated or eradicated. Nonetheless, since Chépart did not heed Tattooed Arm’s warning relayed by the soldier, Tattooed arm went into the temple and found the bundle of rods and took a few out. This ensured that the warriors would attack Fort Rosalie on the wrong day. Other soldiers were told about the plot and commander Shepard [Chépart] clapped them in irons as well.\textsuperscript{141}

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An Early Divorce
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\textsuperscript{140} Le Page du Pratz, 80.

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., 81.
That evening Commander Chépart and several others caroused with the Natchez in the Grand Village and did not return to Fort Rosalie until the dawn of November 29, 1729. The Commander, still hungover, decided to press the matter based on what the soldiers had told him. He went to St. Cosme himself and asked him in front of all his warriors if they planned to attack Louisiana. St. Cosme assured him that he and his warriors had no such plans. Several shots were fired into the air to signal the other Natchez and their Indian allies to attack. Commander Sieur de Chépart, still dressed in his bathrobe, went into a garden and blew a whistle to alert his soldiers. The Indians surrounded him but not one of them wanted to kill the “dog” of a man.  

142 The Great Sun decided to have his chief executioner kill Sieur de Chépart.

Dumont de Montigny admitted that he was not there to see the massacre but the survivors told him about what happened. The women who tried to defend their husbands were struck down. One woman was in labor. The Natchez tore the baby from the mother’s womb and then killed her.  

143 Dumont de Montigny said only one man escaped—a soldier who hid in an oven until nightfall and then made his escape to their Tunica allies. Jean Roussin died, but Marie Baron Roussin survived along with several women, children, and African slaves. When the Choctaws learned about the massacre, they sent 600 men to New Orleans to offer the calumet to Governor Périer.  

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142 Dumont de Montigny, 233.

143 Ibid., 223-224.

144 Ibid., 238.
Caillot described finding undressed, wounded and dead Frenchmen. When questioned, a survivor described the surprise attack. Like Le Page du Pratz and Dumont de Montigny, Caillot too, blamed Sieur de Chépart for causing the uprising.\textsuperscript{145}

That is what they did, even though Monsieur de Chépart, who was commanding there, had been warned more than eight days previously about their evil plan, yet nevertheless still refused to heed any warning from anyone at all, and even went as far as putting fetters on some of his friends who warned him.\textsuperscript{146}

Louisianan soldiers suffered two hundred losses. Louisianan women, children and slaves were captured. The Natchez and their allies lost only twelve warriors.\textsuperscript{147} The Choctaw and their Louisianan allies responded on January 1730, and killed eighty Natchez and allied men, and captured eighteen women.

The allied tribes were angered the Natchez had attacked a few days earlier than planned. They thought it was a plot to make them look like fools. They planned to take vengeance on them, not knowing that Tattooed Arm foiled their plans. The Louisianans and their Tonica and Choctaw allies were led by M. de Loubois. The Louisianans arrived at a Natchez fort and negotiated with St. Cosme, who agreed to give up the rest of the Louisianan captives and burn down the Natchez fort. Many Frenchwomen, children and African slave captives were released two months later:

First news of the tragedy reported all the settlers killed with the exception of some twenty men and five or six Negro slaves who had escaped to New Orleans to recount the story. However, as many as fifty-four women and children and one hundred Negro slaves were released from the Natchez when the French, led by Sieur de Louboey, finally reached the

\textsuperscript{145} Caillot, 144.

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 152.

\textsuperscript{147} Mooney, \textit{The End of the Natchez}, 512.
Natchez country in January 1730. Communications proved both slow and distorted with the colonists' retaliation to the attack taking two months.148

The number of slaves that were released is significant. Caillot wrote African slaves manned the cannons for the Indians. The Louisianans believed the African slaves showed the Natchez how to build a European-style military fort. The Louisianans agreed to not attack the Natchez fort, but in the middle of the night, the Natchez quietly escaped. The Louisianans, the Choctaws, and the Tonica were dismayed that every man, woman and child had escaped in the middle of the night. The Louisianans relied on Indian allies until they received reinforcements from France. The Louisianans had promised the Tonica and Choctaws booty if they participated in attacking the Natchez fort. The Tonica were disappointed at not receiving any booty from an empty fort. The Tonica were promised they would be paid a sum from France as a replacement for the missing booty. The Tonica kept a Frenchman and several African slaves as ransom until payment was received.149

The last remaining Natchez warriors managed to assassinate the Chief of the Tonicas. The Louisianans received reinforcement from France thus strengthening their security against any Natchez attacks. The soldiers of Fort Rosalie searched for the remaining Natchez hiding in the hills. The Natchez periodically raided and pillaged area settlers and engaged in guerilla warfare with patrolling soldiers.150

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149 Le Page du Pratz, 84.

150 Ibid., 85.
Although Sieur de Chépart was blamed by his fellow countrymen for being a catalyst behind the revolt, a person known as Madame also contributed to the situation.\textsuperscript{151} Madame was listed in Adams County, Mississippi Genealogical and Historical Research records as “commander of negroes of White Earth.”\textsuperscript{152} White Earth plantation was between the Natchez villages of Tioux, Flour, and the Grand Village.\textsuperscript{153} Madame told some Natchez that the Louisianaans planned to attack them as he saw boats carrying weapons up the river to Fort Rosalie. Tattooed Arm had seen how her nation had planned to attack the Louisianaans in spite of her protestations. She went to throw herself at her husband’s feet, to whom she made yet another long speech, saying that he should not burn the Frenchwomen whom he had taken as slaves. She said to him, “You have killed the Frenchman, who gave you everything you asked for, without any reason, for he was not dishonorable. But,” she said, “it is Madame himself who is more evil than you, and the Yazooos whom you have made strike the blow. Thus it is right for me to make him an oration.” She took a tomahawk and ran off to find Madame and said to him, “You were dishonorable to turn against the Frenchman, who is your brother. I am coming to rebuke you for your betrayal and to make you see that I love them more than you. It is worthy for me to avenge his death.” At that moment, she struck Madame in the face with her tomahawk, and when she struck him, about thirty more Indian women came, each with a pointed length of cane, with which they stabbed out his eyes, and pierced his body a thousand times.\textsuperscript{154}

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\textsuperscript{151} I found no source explaining why a Frenchman was referred to by using a female title.
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\textsuperscript{152} Adams County, Mississippi Genealogical and Historical Research.
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\textsuperscript{153} Barnett, \textit{Natchez Indians}, 80.
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\textsuperscript{154} Caillot, 153.
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Madame and Tattooed Arm are both intriguing since they both betrayed their own nations. Madame betrayed the Louisianans by telling the Natchez about an imminent Louisianan attack. Tattooed Arm betrayed the Natchez by sabotaging the bundles in the temple. None of the sources provided an adequate answer as to why. Madame was only referenced by Caillot and not in any other sources. Caillot was certain that Madame was a man. The only other reference was in the Adams County, Mississippi Genealogical and Historical Research listing those who died in the Massacre of Fort Rosalie. Very few women’s names were listed among the dead at Fort Rosalie. Most women were known as “the wife of” to whomever they were married. Madame was the only madame listed. Most likely, Madame might be referenced as a transgender person today since madame is a gesture of respect for a French woman.

If Madame was a transgender individual and a slave overseer, then why would s/he betray the colonial Louisianans? Perhaps Madame found no dignity in France since homosexuality was still illegal, and those found guilty were imprisoned or could receive capital punishment for participating in sex acts. Madame might have found a certain amount of freedom by living within close proximity to the Natchez where homosexuality was condoned or an alternative gender was recognized:

And while their wives stay to look after the house, the men, as they go hunting, take with them a kind of second Ganymede, who is useful to them when love arouses urges contrary to the craft of hunting. This Indian wears an alconand like the women, has hair like theirs, has altogether the appearance of a woman, and in the village is looked upon as the chief of the women.156

155 All sodomy laws were repealed in 1791 during the French Revolution.

156 Dumont de Montigny, 357.
Madame may have seen a freedom afforded to Natchez alternative genders that must have
endeared him to them. Therefore, the potential motivation behind Madame’s behavior is
revealed. Intriguing evidence points to the prominence of Madame. A hill existed called Hill of
Madame.\textsuperscript{157} The Natchez retreated up to the hill after attacking Fort Rosalie. Natchez snipers
shot at St. Catherine’s plantation from on top of the hill. The Natchez descended the hill at night
to kill cattle and set fire to houses, including Le Page du Pratz’s residence.\textsuperscript{158} Did the Natchez
name the hill to honor Madame? Perhaps there will never be an answer since Madame was likely
scrubbed from the French archives. Those who are ignored by history says a lot about those
deciding who is worthy of being remembered. Madame has much in common with Tattooed
Arm, since they both were influential at pivotal moments leading up to the Natchez Revolt of
1729, but their contributions were ignored by the men of their time. They did not fit patriarchal
stereotypes of masculine leadership.

Tattooed Arm’s actions indicate her delicate approach to diplomacy. First, she literally
tried to keep colonial Louisiana and the Natchez wedded by birthing a half-Louisianan and half-
Natchez Great Sun. Le Page du Pratz credits her as being perhaps the sole person who saved the
colony from complete obliteration. Had she not intervened, the French might have been
completely expelled from Louisiana and the Natchez would have continued on as before.
Tattooed Arm’s bicultural unification would have required the sharing of resources, including
women to birth the next generation. If Natchez females preferred to be with Frenchmen, it may
have caused sexual jealousy for Natchez males. Natchez men were not about to share both
women and power with Louisianan men.

\textsuperscript{157} Barnett, \textit{Natchez Indians}, 80.

\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., 86.
The surviving Natchez had retreated up to a lake and surrendered. Those who surrendered included the Grand Sun, the female Suns, several warriors, many women, young people, and children. Tattooed Arm and her son were eventually imprisoned with the rest of the Natchez. The prisoners were taken first to a prison in New Orleans but then placed on a plantation. Tattooed Arm told Le Page du Pratz all that she had done for the colonists. Nonetheless, she and the rest of the survivors were sold into slavery. The slaves were eventually sent to Santo Domingo, so that the entire Natchez would be eliminated as a people, since there would be very few women capable of reproducing enough children. This was one of the earliest acts of genocide the colonists inflicted on the Indians.

Even so, not all the Natchez surrendered and continued on a scorched earth campaign. Not long after on June 1730, one of the suns called Flour Chief, who was originally allied with the French but had turned against them, marched from a village in the Tonika nation, and attacked the French. Flour Chief and his Yazoo and Koroa allies attacked the French and Choctaw at Fort Natchi-toches, forcing the Choctaw and the French allies to retire. The French managed to procure Spanish and Indian reinforcements and the Natchez were finally repulsed. Colonial records show forty warriors and three hundred and eighty-seven women and children were sold into slavery after the battle.

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159 Le Page du Pratz, 87.

160 Ibid.

161 Mooney, *The End of the Natchez*, 514.

162 Ibid., 515.

163 Ibid., 514
The Natchez proved to be tenacious. After the French nearly destroyed the Natchez, many survivors found refuge with neighboring tribes including the Yazoo, Koroa, Illinois, Chickasaw and Choctaw. A short time after, a considerable party of Natchez carried the Pipe of Peace to the Grand Chief of the Tonicas, under the pretense of making peace with him and the French.\(^{164}\) The Grand Chief’s name was Cahura-Joligo, who was baptized and nearly frenchified.\(^{165}\) The Natchez then attacked the Tonicas, beginning with their Grand Chief, and few Tonicas escaped.\(^{166}\)

The Tunica responded by going on a campaign with the French to locate Natchez warriors. For five days, the Tunica and the French battled the Natchez. Twelve Tunica and thirty-three Natchez warriors lay dead among the wounded. Buffalo Tamer, the war chief of the Tonicas, successfully defended his nation. Natchez women and children were among the captives. The Tunica captured the Old Flour Chief’s wife referred to as La Farine.\(^{167}\) Natchez aggression pushed the neutral Tunica into an alliance with the French.\(^{168}\)

The Natchez attack on the Tunica reveals how those who wanted to remain neutral were punished. An adage that best describes the attack: If you are not with us then you are against us. The Tunica were not the only innocent nation living within the vicinity of the wider conflict. A small nation just outside New Orleans called the Chawasha was swept into the chaos. The French

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\(^{164}\) Le Page du Pratz, 85.

\(^{165}\) Caillot 167; Dumont de Montigny 419.

\(^{166}\) Le Page du Pratz, 85.

\(^{167}\) La Farine should not be confused with Fort La Farine or the Natchez village also called La Farine.

\(^{168}\) Caillot, 167.
feared a possible Indian-African slave alliance to expel them. Their fears were understandable, after news arrived about African slaves manning the cannons for the Natchez and their allies. Caillot wrote five African slaves had manned the cannons for the Indians.\textsuperscript{169} Whether or not there was an actual Indian-African slave alliance remains a subject worthy of debate. One of the victims listed among the dead in the Adams County, Mississippi genealogical records was Monsieur Martin Desnoyers, second commander, and director of White Earth plantation.\textsuperscript{170} As already noted, the Frenchman named Madame was the overseer of White Earth slaves, and had alerted the Natchez about the planned colonial attack. Desnoyer’s wife, Marie-Angelique Chariron, was taken prisoner and sent to Fort Valeur, one of the three forts captured by the Indians.\textsuperscript{171} Some of the escaped female prisoners reported how the African slaves willingly engaged in the brutalities and killed a Jesuit priest. Madame Chariron’s ex-slaves were going to burn her to death, but Tattooed Arm stopped them. Madame Chariron eventually escaped after stabbing a Natchez man and running away. The Louisianans captured four African slaves and burned them to death, including the two who had shot the cannons.\textsuperscript{172} Governor Périer claimed he discovered the leaders of the Indian-African slave plot and executed two slave men and one slave woman to make examples out of them.\textsuperscript{173} The governor also gave orders for Belle-Isle plantation slaves to attack the Chawasha nearby. Nine Chawasha men and a few women were

\textsuperscript{169} Caillot, 166.

\textsuperscript{170} Adams County, Mississippi Genealogical and Historical Research.

\textsuperscript{171} Fort Rosalie was captured and the loot, including the cannons, was sent to Fort Valeur and Fort La Farine.

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 166-167.

\textsuperscript{173} Dumont de Montigny, 250.
killed by the African slaves. Dumont de Montigny said the governor wanted to test the loyalty of the slaves. Some discrepancies exist about how many Chawasha were actually killed. Some believed the entire tribe was decimated to the point of extinction.¹⁷⁴

The attack on the Tunicas and the Chawasha is indicative of a region reduced to brutalities. One incident in Caillot’s description was a Natchez woman burnt on a frame. Caillot describes a punishment where the middle ground resulted in ritualized torture. When cultures adopt the practices of another, people want to see a humanitarian outcome. In the aftermath of the Natchez attacks, the Tunica and the Louisianans tortured and killed a woman together. The Tunica and the Louisianans did not have time to think about how they would burn a Natchez female sun. In France, people were burnt on the stake, while the Natchez and Tunica slowly roasted their victims to death. For French people, the jump from burning at the stake to slowly burning a victim to death with flaming canes was not too dissimilar of a practice.¹⁷⁵ What made the spectacle a bicultural incidence was when widows at Fort Rosalie came forward with sharpened canes and cut off roasted parts of Old Flour Chief’s wife. Vieux Chief de la Farine or Old Flour Chief, a sun and former French ally, was instrumental in negotiating peace after the second Natchez revolt of 1722, but the alliance was severed after relations with the French deteriorated.¹⁷⁶ Beyond being associated with the Natchez, why did La Farine suffer such a fate?

¹⁷⁴ Mooney, The End of Natchez, 512.

¹⁷⁵ The last woman to be sentenced to the stake for witchery was Catherine Cadière for having bewitched a Jesuit spiritual director named Jean-Baptiste Girard of The Third Order, but she was doubly acquitted in 1731. However, death by burning continued in France until the last burning at the stake happened in 1784, when a man was sentenced for the rape and murder of a young boy.

The matrilineal Natchez placed life and death responsibilities on the females. She was the reason a Frenchman had been burned and suffered three days in succession.\textsuperscript{177}

This incident was also revenge for what happened at Fort Rosalie. Reports told about Natchez warriors throwing babies into the air and letting them fall onto sharpened canes, and then roasting them in fire while their mothers watched. There were also reports of Natchez men gang raping Frenchwomen. Frenchmen were scalped, mutilated, and had body parts roasted, while victims were made to sing songs and play a Natchez instrument made from a gourd.\textsuperscript{178}

Every time a Natchez man died, they buried alive a colonial woman with his corpse. The same happened to the children. Caillot repeated what Dumont de Montigny had said about a baby being torn from a mother’s womb. Through Caillot, we learn that the victim was a German woman who had immigrated to colonial Louisiana.\textsuperscript{179} The Natchez beheaded the fetus, sewed it back into her body, then pissed into her mouth.\textsuperscript{180} Other Frenchwomen were going to be burned, but Tattooed Arm stopped them and took them as her own slaves, saving their lives in the process.\textsuperscript{181} Father Murthurin Le Petit claimed all the pregnant women were sliced open, and the nursing babies were killed because their cries disturbed the savages.\textsuperscript{182} Some inconsistencies

\textsuperscript{177} Caillot, 171.

\textsuperscript{178} White S., 527.

\textsuperscript{179} Caillot, 164

\textsuperscript{180} Terri F. Chalmers translation in Caillot’s \textit{A Company Man} literally translated the word pissed.

\textsuperscript{181} Caillot, 164.

happened in the reporting. Notably in the number of pregnant women killed. One survivor, named Marie Baron Roussin, claimed the babies were even cooked on roasted spits.\textsuperscript{183}

All of these reports ignore the traditional practices of Indian warfare. The usual modus operandi for Indian capture practices was to either adopt or ransom slaves. If the reports were not deliberate misinformation or exaggerations, then what made the Natchez violate traditional warfare practices? The Natchez mistreatment of their captives was an extension of a terror campaign designed to end French occupation. The tit-for-tat warfare became gruesome on all sides. In the case of the Tunica and the French, the torture of Old Flour Chief’s wife sealed their alliance in fire and blood.

It happened the day after Easter, on April 10, 1730, nearly a year after the Natchez revolt. Tunica warriors brought three Natchez women and three children.\textsuperscript{184} They offered one of the Natchez women [La Farine] to Governor Périer. The governor declined his gift and left her fate to the Tunica.\textsuperscript{185} Many from New Orleans followed to watch the spectacle unfolding. The Tunica chose a Natchez traitor to perform the slow process of torturing by fire.\textsuperscript{186} The traitor’s Natchez name was Taotal or Ette-Actal, a young man who had fled the Natchez to avoid being a sacrificial victim some years earlier and who had worked for Bienville as a hunter.\textsuperscript{187} La Farine

\textsuperscript{183} White S., 527.
\textsuperscript{184} White S., 519.
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., 497.
\textsuperscript{186} Le Page du Pratz said the traitor and torturer was a Natchez slave who managed to talk his way out of being sacrificed when the Great Sun died earlier and, in his place, three elderly women had chosen to be sacrificed. He eventually escaped to New Orleans.
\textsuperscript{187} Sayre, \textit{Natchez Ethnohistory Revisited}, 424.
recognized him, for she told him that, if he returned to the Natchez, they would make him pay dearly for all the torments she was going to suffer, that he deserved it more than she did, and that at least she had never killed any of her own kind, but as for him, he was a dog for killing her.\(^{188}\)

Caillot described fat and blood spilling out of the woman’s body as Taotal slowly burned her alive. Caillot explained, “What I found most detestable and abominable was a soldier who, when she was dying, cut off a piece of her · · · and ate it. As punishment, he was put in irons and made to run the gauntlet.”\(^{189}\) Caillot did not offer any speculation explaining why the soldier publicly cannibalized La Farine. Caillot self-censored the incident with ellipsis, leaving the reader to speculate about what body part he was referring to. The cannibal’s name was Sergeant La Joye.\(^{190}\) The Frenchwomen, who survived the massacre at Fort Rosalie, took pointed canes and stabbed her repeatedly. Then the Tunica chief scalped the woman, threw the scalp into the air, and it landed on a Frenchwomen who did not recover from shock for more than two months. La Farine’s torture was corroborated by an official record in 1730 titled “Woman burnt on the frame.” The visceral question is why did Sergeant La Joye eat the woman’s body part?

History sometimes takes researchers into unexpected places. One does not usually find themselves questioning the motivation behind a cannibalistic act. A process of elimination is an applicable method in an attempt to understand Sergeant La Joye’s behavior. First, Sergeant La Joye might have been influenced by medicinal cannibalism. From sixteenth century Europe to as late as the eighteenth century, cadaver parts were prescribed for a variety of physical ailments.

\(^{188}\) Caillot, 170.

\(^{189}\) Ibid., 171.

\(^{190}\) White S., 529-530.
Drinking hot blood from executed prisoners was a long-running treatment for epilepsy from the Renaissance to an occurrence in 1865. A question remains about how common medicinal cannibalism was in the North American colonies. Human blood was prescribed to treat epilepsy by a Puritan doctor named Edward Taylor. However, Sergeant La Joye eating a prisoner in front of everyone for medicinal purposes is theoretically farfetched.

Second, Sergeant La Joye’s actions could have been caused from his cultural background. Quite possibly for some European and colonial nations, cannibalism served as a metaphor for enslavement. Therefore, Sergeant La Joye consumed La Farine as metaphorical ownership. Nonetheless, good theories must be grounded in evidence. Historian Sophie White provides a similar theory on cannibalism, “For some Indian nations, the metaphor of consuming human flesh served as a symbol for the very act of enslavement.” However, such explanations remain guesswork.

Third, La Joye’s response was from witnessing the bloody theatrics of war. Both the French and Natchez committed wartime atrocities. The Natchez cut off captive soldiers’ sex organs and placed them into the captives’ own mouths at the Fort Rosalie massacre. La Joye was stationed in the area and might have witnessed Natchez burning captives. Sergeant La Joye was triggered to mimic the atrocities he experienced as an act of revenge.

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193 White S., 529.

194 Ibid.
Caillot was concerned such cruelties inflicted on La Farine would become a new normal for the colonists. Perhaps his fears came true. Sometime later, Governor Périer made a journal entry referencing four male and two female Natchez who were burnt in the vicinity of New Orleans, if not by his blessing then with an acknowledgement that cruelties were occurring in the colony.195

After the Natchez revolt, the Yazoo, and Koroa were decimated. The colonial chess game included the Choctaw, Tonika [Tunica], Attakapa, Caddo, Akana and Illinois as French pawns. The Chickasaw, Creeks, and Cherokee were English pawns.196

Bienville wrote a letter identifying St. Cosme as one of the refugees enslaved in the West Indies. Bienville had travelled to Santo Domingo and had inspected the Natchez slaves:

I have seen here, my lord, the chiefs of the Natchez who are slaves, among others the man named St. Cosme, who had been made to hope that they would be able to return with me. They assured me that it was only their nation that had entered into the revolt and that the harsh treatment that had been given them had forced them to it and that they decided upon it without taking council of the other nations, and if I am willing to believe them about it, my arrival in the colony will restore to it the tranquility that I had left there.”197

Bienville never brought the Natchez slaves back to their homeland. Tattooed Arm and her son remained in slavery.

The Continuing Legacy of The Natchez

People often interpret what happened through the lens of their time period, and let cultural biases affect them, rather than seeing historical events contextually. Native American

195 Ibid., Remarks.

196 Mooney, *The End of the Natchez*, 515.

activists, general readers and even some academics, still question whether these controversial events really happened. The white men who wrote about the Natchez, lived among them, ate with them, traded with them, enslaved them, married them, admired them, feared them, and hated them and vice versa for the Natchez.

French sources witnessed the same event from multiple angles. One can cross-reference Le Page du Pratz’s, Caillot’s, Dumont de Montigny’s and Pénicault’s memoires like I have done. Much of it was factual, but based on the understandings from their time period. Even so, some events were grossly exaggerated, imagined, or outright fabricated. Dumont de Montigny embellished the mortuary sacrifice to enhance French humanitarianism. Dumont de Montigny wrote in an early manuscript that during the funeral of Tattooed Serpent, four hundred Natchez were to be sacrificed, and how the French had to intervene, so the Natchez whittled the dead down to fifty-three.\(^\text{198}\) Dumont de Montigny witnessing Tattooed Serpent’s mortuary ceremony was a fabrication because he was not there to witness it. A letter written by Sieur de Tisne dated the death of Tattooed Serpent on June 1, 1725. At that time, Dumont de Montigny lived in Pascagoula managing a concession owned by the Chaument family.\(^\text{199}\) He had to learn about the mortuary sacrifices from secondary sources. In another inaccuracy, Dumont de Montigny dated his negotiations with Tattooed Serpent in late 1725 and 1726, but by then the war chief was already dead.

Dumont de Montigny had departed ten months before the Natchez revolt, after he escaped Sieur de Chépart’s confinement. Somehow, he miraculously showed up the day before


\(^{199}\) Ibid., 425.
the massacre despite being a fugitive.\textsuperscript{200} Mostly likely, Dumont de Montigny learned about the massacre from his wife Marie Baron Roussin. Roussin was widowed during the Natchez massacre at Fort Rosalie. Roussin was one of two women who were held captive by a female sun [La Farine]. Dumont de Montigny never mentioned his wife by name in his final manuscript; she was mentioned in one of Dumont de Montigny’s earlier manuscripts that Gordan M. Sayre discovered. Dumont de Montigny’s landlords were finally revealed to be the Roussin family.\textsuperscript{201}

Other inconsistencies occurred in the French descriptions of the Natchez. Why was one child’s throat slit, as Caillot reported, while all the other reports revealed death by strangulation in the mortuary ceremony? Dumont de Montigny mentions how the Natchez marched on the bodies of infants until they were mangled but he was not present. History takes a bit of detective work. Of course, there was not a grand conspiracy to defame the Natchez, but misrepresentations happened anyway. Caillot and Pénicaut likely did not know Dumont de Montigny and Le Page du Pratz, however the latter two knew each other. They all knew they were writing for a French audience and for posterity. Caillot wrote his manuscript for his personal friends unlike the others. Many of the allegations they presented can be confirmed or refuted with some simple cross-referencing.

Le Page du Pratz and Dumont de Montigny shared each other’s manuscripts in 1750 in Paris. Their friendship dissolved into rivalry. Dumont de Montigny accused Le Page du Pratz of plagiarizing from his memoire and Le Page du Pratz disputed Dumont de Montigny’s dating of Tattooed Serpent’s death.\textsuperscript{202} Despite the errors and inaccuracies, these Frenchmen were largely

\textsuperscript{200} Ibid., 431.

\textsuperscript{201} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{202} Ibid., 433.
preservers of their time period. They documented many cultural elements of colonial Louisiana and Natchez culture that might have become extinct.

The Natchez were rumored to be extinct but the refugees had scattered. They went to the tribes in the English interest, the Chickasaw, Creeks and Cherokee, or to the English settlers themselves in Carolina. Records are few, but Irish trader and historian James Adair, who lived with the Chickasaw, said the Natchez likely took an active part in the warring between the Chickasaw and French. Adair reported in 1736, twenty-six Natchez requested from the English the right to live in South Carolina. The English granted their request. He also reported the Natchez lived with the Catawba nation in 1743, but had to flee to the white settlements after a drunken quarrel with the Catawba. The Cherokee generally agree that the Natchez came from Creek country. In 1824, one of the census enumerators for the Cherokee Nation found the Natchez then living jointly with the Cherokee in a town called Gti‘laniyr. There were a considerable number on the Illinois River a few miles south of the Cherokee capitol of Tahlequah, several of them still speaking their own language, among whom were Groundhog, John Rogers, and a woman named Kehaka. Among the East Cherokee in North Carolina, about 1890, there were several who claimed Natchez descent, but only one of full Natchez blood, an old woman named Alkini. Anthropologist John R. Swanton found the last five native speakers

203 Mooney, The End of the Natchez, 515.
204 Ibid., 520.
205 Ibid., 516.
206 Ibid., 516-518.
207 Ibid., 517.
of the Natchez language. The last two to survive were Watt Sam (1876-1944) and Nancy Raven (1872-1957). Sam and Raven did not pass on the language to the next generation of Natchez but had it documented by Swanton and linguist Mary Haas.

Natchez cultural continuity has nevertheless prevailed. The modern Natchez nation is a treaty tribe as part of the Muscogee and Cherokee nations with approximately six thousand enrolled members. Natchez are recognized in the Sac and Fox and Seminole nations. North Carolina recognizes two Natchez communities with their own independent governments called Edisto and the Eastern Band Natchez. The modern multi-reservation governing structure consists of a peace chief, a war chief, and four clan mothers. The modern Natchez is testament that any genocidal intentions the colonial French might have had, was a failure, when all women of childbearing age were sold as slaves, as recounted by Le Page du Pratz.

The Natchez people have overcome centuries of obscurity by remaining tenacious. In the end, the Natchez got what they wanted, and that was ouster of the colonial French. At the end of the Natchez War, some two-thirds of the 800 regular French soldiers stationed in the province could be found on the sick or disabled list. For these reasons, the Company of the Indies, unable to make a profit, began negotiating with the French government for a release from control of Louisiana. King Louis XV formally dissolved the company’s charter on January 23, 1731. The directors of the Company of the Indies did not fully approve of Périer’s prosecution of the Natchez, even though he had won a definitive victory. They believed the French troops had acted

208 Ibid., 518.


too savagely against the Indians.\textsuperscript{211} The Company of the Indies went bankrupt and proprietor John Law was run out of Paris by a mob due to the ruin of multiple financiers.\textsuperscript{212}

Governor Périer was blamed for allowing the uprising to happen and lost his post.\textsuperscript{213} Louisiana was secretly given to the Spanish in 1762. The French ended their claims to North America after the Seven Years War and the Treaty of Paris of 1763. Nearly three hundred years later, the Natchez remain a nation, long after the failure of colonial Louisiana.

\textsuperscript{211} Ibid., 54.


\textsuperscript{213} Barnett, \textit{Natchez Indians}, 126.
Part II. Jubah and Nashoba: An Artful History
CHARACTERS

The Natchez

Tattooed Arm.................................................Grand Female Sun, mother of the sun lineage

The Great Sun..........................................................Paramount chief

Tattooed Serpent..........................................................War chief

Saint Cosme..................................................................Son of Tattooed Arm

Old Flour Chief..........................................................Chief of Flour Village

La Farine.......................................................................Noblewoman, wife of Old Flour Chief

Old Hair..........................................................................Chief of White Apple Village

Taotal.........................................................................The Great Sun’s slave


The Colonial French

Étienne Périer...................................................Governor of Louisiana colony

Commander Chépart................................................Commander of Fort Rosalie

Antione-Simon Le Page du Pratz..........................A plantation owner who befriends the Natchez

Father Hortense de Virgine..........................................Jesuit priest

Danton Bonvillian....................................................A smooth talking criminal and indentured servant

Monsieur Tisserant.....................................................A plantation owner

Madame Tisserant.....................................................Monsieur Tisserant’s epileptic wife

Doctor Arsenault........................................................Monsieur Tisserant’s private doctor

Officer Dumont..........................................................Colonial officer

Marie Baron Roussin...........................................Colonial settler and Dumont’s landlord

Sergeant La Joye....................................................Manager of La Blanc-Belle plantation and drafted sergeant
Madame ........................................... Transgender slave overseer of White Earth plantation

Cast also includes: Fort Rosalie soldiers.

Other Characters

Jubah .................................................................A Chawasha Indian slave

Nashoba .............................................................An African slave

Auntie Louise ........................................................An African slave cook

The Jumbee ............................................................A new world demon

Mammon ..............................................................An old world demon

Swamp Thugs ......................................................A renegade freedman, outlaw colonist, and Indian bandit


*Indicates speaking parts
EAST 1

When two tribes go to war
One is all that you can score
–Frankie Goes To Hollywood

[Before the play starts, the song Two Tribes by Frankie Goes To Hollywood plays. After the song ends, a Natchez man and a Natchez woman enter. They lounge beside a river. La Farine gazes at her own reflection. Taotal watches her. Three earthen mounds loom behind them. The Grand Temple and The Great Sun’s residence is on the largest mound. A charnel house is on the second. The third has nothing on it.]

LA FARINE
I wish that I was as pretty as Tattooed Arm.

TAOTAL
[Says overdramatically while posturing.] When she paints her face blue, she is as pretty as a blue-throated hummingbird sipping bluebells.

LA FARINE
Oh, stop your fancy word shit. You men get as sweaty as green treefrogs when you see her, all frog-eyed and croaking.

TAOTAL
Ssshhh! Somebody might hear us talking about her.

LA FARINE
Let them! The sun lineage is setting forever. The Grand Female Sun is losing her grip.

TAOTAL
Shut up. Somebody must be listening, somewhere in the bushes.

LA FARINE
How can Tattooed Arm tell if men adore her? They must never gaze directly into her eyes. Our female sun, mother queen hornet, born to birth the next Great Sun. How we tremble in fear!

TAOTAL
. . . her children are descendants of the sun, chosen at birth to rule, whether we want them shining on us or not.

[La Farine moves toward Taotal. They hold each other.]

LA FARINE
Ssshhh you got a big mouth! Don’t talk about the suns like that. Word will get back to them, Taotal. You’re just a slave.

TAOTAL
You were once a commoner. You used to hate this place just as much as I do. Now you think you’re too good.

LA FARINE
Commoners marrying into the sun family means nothing. They have ways of making me feel less than them.

TAOTAL
If I had trinkets and slaves trembling in fear, I’d love this dump too. Your husband is rich, but he is too old for you.

LA FARINE
The Old Flour Chief wanted a wife who wouldn’t hesitate to kill. I would allow the burning of an enemy without regret.

TAOTAL
Oh bullshit, La Farine, you would drag that poor slave into the bushes instead.

LA FARINE
I would never willingly touch a slave, except for you, well-endowed huntsman.

TAOTAL
Being a noblewoman hasn’t changed you. You’re still a good liar, but I appreciate the support. I don’t know why you choose me.

LA FARINE
The Old Flour Chief has everything but he is a bad lover. You have nothing but you’re a good lover.

TAOTAL
I have to be good. I don’t have the riches to attract a wife. I only attract women who don’t know what they want.

LA FARINE
Don’t dare talk to me like that, slave!

TAOTAL
Yes, I’ll always be Taotal the slave. Just a good time.
LA FARINE
I want to offer you something to remember since your life will be short. I don’t like it when slaves are sacrificed when our chiefs die . . . but that is just the way it is.

TAOTAL
I’ll run away to New Orleans before they strangle me.

[Tattooed Arm enters with two guards holding sharpened canes. She gives a motion for her guards to halt. She eavesdrops on La Farine and Taotal.]

LA FARINE
Taotal, don’t be silly. The Great Sun’s warriors will find you if you run away. I’ll find a female noble for you to marry.

TAOTAL
La Farine, I would rather marry you . . . but you are with that old stag. The Great Sun once said, “After a slave proves his worth, treat him as your own son.” He either lied or I’m worthless.

LA FARINE
You aren’t worthless just an asshole. Your arrogance will keep you a slave. I just heard something.

TAOTAL
Maybe it’s a hungry bear or just another dirty warrior being a voyeur, both drool and growl when unfed.

[He grows at her. They both laugh.]

LA FARINE
Ssshhh! Maybe it’s a spy!

[Tattooed Arm and her guards approach.]

TATTOOED ARM
Maybe it’s just another humid day.

[La Farine and Taotal quickly move away from each other. Taotal bows on one knee with his head lowered.]

LA FARINE
Yes, it’s very humid.

TATTOOED ARM
I have a question. Did you see any French boats sailing upstream today?

LA FARINE
No, we haven’t. Just canoes.

TATTOOED ARM
I was hoping to hear otherwise. I’ve been unhappy with the scant French tributes paid to us. They promised to bring us a fat shipment of goods this time. Oh, and La Farine, don’t do anything I wouldn’t do. I just don’t want your husband roasting The Great Sun’s slave.

[La Farine stares uneasily at the river. Tattooed Arm and her guards exit.]

TAOTAL
See, I told you somebody would hear.

LA FARINE
Be quiet slave.
EAST 2

[Tattooed Arm is sitting with The Great Sun and Tattooed Serpent. Guards surround them. Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz is standing beside them.]

THE GREAT SUN
Our scouts might be wrong about the French military ships.

TATTOOED SERPENT
They’re never wrong. Great Sun, do you doubt our scouts or me?

THE GREAT SUN
I only doubt Frenchmen. They’re sneaky. Sorry Antoine-Simon, you’re different.

TATTOOED ARM
Yes, he’s okay. He’s gone native.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Only a little bit.

TATTOOED SERPENT
Antoine-Simon was with me when I complained about Louisiana’s weak tributes.

THE GREAT SUN
What did the governor say?

TATTOOED SERPENT
He said we always ask for too much.

THE GREAT SUN
He is a condescending twat. We grant the French more land than any of our other subjects.

TATTOOED SERPENT
Their request for more land is a defensive tactic.

THE GREAT SUN
Tattooed Serpent, our scouts must patrol the outer lying lands with caution.

TATTOOED SERPENT
Don’t worry brother, our scouts will blend in with the trees.

TATTOOED ARM
My brothers, the Frenchman’s king must have overindulged them. They never seem satisfied with the amount of land we grant. They will learn to accept our authority. The best way to do it is
for our two cultures to marry. Their children will choose being Indians over French, like my son has done.

THE GREAT SUN
My sister, I’m sorry the French leaders don’t recognize your power.

TATTOOED ARM
I’ve known that from the start.

THE GREAT SUN
To them you’re just a meddling maiden.

TATTOOED SERPENT
Antoine-Simon, why do you think they want to give us less tribute?

ANTOINE-SIMON
Governor Périer is testing you. He doesn’t want to serve two chiefs. The Bible says, “No one can serve two masters.”

THE GREAT SUN
You are wise. For a Frenchman. Thank you.

ANTOINE-SIMON
No, thank Matthew 6:24.

TATTOOED ARM
That flat white bark you read is good for something. And to think how I once wanted to use your Bible to kindle a fire.

[They all laugh.]

THE GREAT SUN
We only have so much land to grant. We didn’t ask for all these squatters coming from New Orleans.

TATTOOED ARM
You see squatters. I see opportunity. Half of them are married to Indian women anyway.

THE GREAT SUN
She’s right. We must continue to negotiate and treat the French with kindness.

TATTOOED SERPENT
They’re our friends. That’s the problem. Sometimes the best friendships can turn into the worst enemies in just one night.
Patience. Friends don’t become family in just one night.

THE GREAT SUN
Sometimes family makes the worst of friends . . .

[The actors stop what they are doing mid motion. In a black void with little light, a silhouette of a demonic creature moves erratically. It is an entirely grey fiend dressed in a robe with two horns on its head. It crouches with sadistic red eyes over high cheekbones. Mammon walks around Tattooed Arm, The Great Sun, Tattooed Serpent and Antoine-Simon. He quietly sniffs around.]

MAMMON
Which one will be mine? That great big fucker or that little cocksucker? How about the whore of the mounds? The nobles call themselves suns, but their people see little light. The stinkard peasants question the power of the nobility. They are losing faith in their leaders. Rightfully so. At the top is the Sun family. They are the richest in their nation. They’re impressed with European trinkets. Look at their queen, she wears gold among seashells. Look at their war chief, a convenient friend of the Frenchmen, bosom buddies. Their chief wears velvet over buckskin. After I collect every Indian chief, I will turn their women into my sex slaves! I will eat their children’s souls in hell! My collection of miserable souls! Beloved dark lord, I will give you tribute. Governor Périer will be my trophy. I can smell his quest for power. He’s conniving a plan with a commander right now as I speak! They will not bow down to Indians. Two nations, two rattlesnakes, waiting to strike when the other one is not looking!

[Mammon walks over to The Great Sun.]

MAMMON
Look at him. The Great Sun, arrogant as an alligator. I need him.

[He walks over to Antoine-Simon.]

MAMMON
Even hell doesn’t respect sycophants. I’ll take him anyway. Antoine-Simon bought a Chitimacha slave and then married her. Slave wives, now that is something I respect.

[Mammon walks over to Tattooed Serpent.]

MAMMON
Tattooed Serpent is the most frenchified savage I’ve ever seen. One time he even wore a powdered wig.

[Mammon walks over to the guards.]

MAMMON
These bucks are the worst, more subservient than dogs, crazier than coyotes, deadlier than wolves. I like them. They’re mine!
[A light flashes and Mammon exits. The actors on stage begin interacting again.]

THE GREAT SUN
. . . The way our chiefs squabble, do we really want to put the French through all that?

TATTOOED SERPENT
At least they’re better than the English.

THE GREAT SUN
I thought they would have adopted some of our ways by now, like good Antoine-Simon here.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Touché! I see you adopted a bit of the Frenchman too.

TATTOOED SERPENT
The poor French, they escaped an awful land full of disease and poverty.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Some seek to move beyond the confinements of proper society. Many were forced to come. They were expelled because they were poor.

TATTOOED SERPENT
One thing I admire about Frenchmen is the loyalty to their king. Even when he does nothing for them. I wish our commoners were as loyal. Tattooed Arm, ask the ancestors about what we should do.

[Tattooed Arm goes into a trance. Her eyes begin to flutter.]

TATTOOED ARM
The spirits of our ancestors advised me. They said we can sway the Louisianans. Their king is too far away. You, Great Sun, must show them a kindness their king will never show.

THE GREAT SUN
I heard about Louis the Sun King! Prancing around his palace dressed in rays of gold. Why doesn’t he sail to meet me?

[A slave enters bringing a plate of fowl. He does not look at the Great Sun. He looks down and walk backwards on his way out.]

TATTOOED ARM
As long as they continue to offer us lace, firearms and slaves, we must tolerate them.

TATTOOED SERPENT

215 It was required of commoners and slaves to not make eye contact and to never turn their backs toward the Great Sun.
and they brought the gift of smallpox.

TATTOOED ARM
Calm down Tattooed Serpent, that is no way to speak about our friends. The governor invited you to Fort Rosalie. What did you see inside?

TATTOOED SERPENT
A bunch of unhappy soldiers. Fort Rosalie’s commander is a drunk. His soldiers despise him.

[The slave enters with persimmon bread and puts it on the table.]

THE GREAT SUN
Slave, what’s your name?

NASHOBA
Oh benevolent and fair Great Sun, I honor you. My name is Nashoba.

THE GREAT SUN
You were once a slave to Frenchmen, what do you think about them?

NASHOBA
They were like any other slave master.

THE GREAT SUN
Why did you run away?

NASHOBA
My wife got pregnant. Something bad was happening. She pointed her finger. I can’t . . .

TATTOOED ARM
It’s okay. You can tell us.

NASHOBA
She pointed her finger at our master’s three sons.

TATTOOED ARM
How sorrowful.

NASHOBA
They gathered up all the slaves. They took turns beating her in front of everybody. They killed the baby inside her.

TATTOOED ARM
Brothers, I warned you about how the French treat African slaves. Now you see.

NASHOBA
A slave can run away but where to? Then your warriors caught me. Here, you treat me like a man not a boy.

*He looks at the Great Sun directly in the face.*

NASHOBA

If other slaves knew your kindness, they would come . . .

*One of the guards grabs the slave’s shoulders.*

NATCHEZ GUARD

Nobody looks directly at the Great Sun.

NASHOBA

I’m so sorry. So sorry.

THE GREAT SUN

Let him be.

NASHOBA

Thank you master. Thank you. I will never look directly at you again.

THE GREAT SUN

You may leave.

*Nashoba looks down at the ground, walks backwards and exits.*

THE GREAT SUN

See, if you treat slaves with kindness, they’ll run to us and we don’t have to pay anything for them.

*They all laugh.*
At Fort Rosalie, Governor Périer, Commander Chépart and Officer Dumont are having a discussion when a Natchez messenger appears.

NATCHEZ MESSENGER
Governor Périer, the Great Sun wants to discuss tribute in seven suns.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
You mean gifts? Give your chief word we will meet.

[The messenger exists.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Officer Dumont, you live next to the Indians. Am I wrong? Gifts are what friends give each other. Friends don’t talk about tribute.

OFFICER DUMONT
They don’t understand when they grant us land, we own the plot until we die.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Ha! Their land belongs to that indecisive womanizer, our king and majesty, Louis the Beloved. Beloved by every harlot bending over looking for tossed coinage.

OFFICER DUMONT
. . . nonetheless, the Indians have deeded plots to us, not granted. The Great Sun is not our king.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Monsieur, you are mistaking deeded with ceded. Louisiana is ours. Pay attention to the details. They want gifts. We want fertile land for plantations. Nonetheless, they are balking at providing more land. Our next discussion will be heated.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I hope they don’t bring the Grand Female Sun. I will not tolerate her to speak to me in any manner whatsoever. She is not my queen.

OFFICER DUMONT
She and her brothers have lost power in their nation. Even so, I suggest we give the empress anything she wants, we must not underestimate her influence.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Ha! You know how I have an innate ability to read these simple primitives? These sonofabitches will continue to think they’re our masters if we don’t do something soon.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
You’re probably right, Commander Chépart. Keep our men on standby. Remember the plan.

OFFICER DUMONT

What plan?

COMMANDER CHÉPART

Never mind. Now go outside and clean off my boots.

[Officer Dumont exits.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Did you find a spot?

COMMANDER CHÉPART

Yes, I found a perfect place to start the greatest plantation of all.

[The actors stop their movements and freeze. Mammon enters. He walks over to Commander Chépart.]

MAMMON

Look at this piece of shit. Tyrannical because he’s always hungover. I saved him from a life of wretchedness. He was remorseful after a night out carousing. He whined, “God, why have you struck me down?” Even God doesn’t like listening to pathetic drunks. I saw a chance. I made a deal with him. Every man wants to be a king!

[The actors begin moving again.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

I don’t know who dislikes the Natchez more, the little tribes paying them tribute or us.

COMMANDER CHÉPART

If we don’t intervene, these savages will continue their blood feuds. Eventually children must end rough play.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Our friendship with the savages is an inconvenience. This colony has gone through governors faster than a whore goes through customers.

COMMANDER CHÉPART

Those who don’t befriend the Natchez suffer their wrath. Remember what happened to governor Cadillac. Four of his soldiers were killed because he wouldn’t smoke the calumet with them.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Make no mistake, I plan on being stronger than any previous governor. I won’t hesitate to behead their chiefs like governor Bienville did. What’s the matter, commander Chépart? You look rather uneasy.
COMMANDER CHÉPART
The Indians don’t trust me, monsieur. The soldiers around here have more respect for the Indians than for me. I fear the Natchez will try to turn them against me.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
When I first came, I realized the colonists had already become half-savages. They no longer listen to authority. That is something I plan to change.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
The more I crack the whip, the more insolent they get.

[The governor pats Chépart on the back.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Take it as a compliment these scruffy colonists have strong opinions about you, you are still freshly civilized.

[Chépart walks over to a table, uncorks a bottle of brandy and pours it into two goblets.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Alcohol is the blood of brotherhood. The Natchez demand gifts of brandy. Good drink makes fighting siblings the merriest family.

[They both take a drink from their goblets.]
EAST 4

[Nashoba is sweeping the courtyard outside the grand temple. He sits down to rest and wipes sweat off his brow.]

NASHOBA

[Addresses the audience.] I don’t know when to leave. So, I sweep. Then I sweep some more. I go down to the river and bring back water day in and day out. I show them I’m a good worker, so they won’t sell me back to the colonists.

[A skeletal black silhouette with large bat wings appears. The Jumbee observes Nashoba talking to himself.]

NASHOBA

One day I will be free with my wife by my side.

THE JUMBEE

It can happen.

NASHOBA

Who said that?

THE JUMBEE

Boo!

NASHOBA

Where are you at?

THE JUMBEE

Right behind you.

[Nashoba turns around. He is about to run away.]

NASHOBA

I better go while I can.

THE JUMBEE

Oh no, you’re not going anywhere.

NASHOBA

I sure am.

THE JUMBEE

Oh no you’re not. You’re hurting my feelings. I’m fragile.
NASHOBA
You’re as fragile as a wild boar in a corn field.

THE JUMBEE
Remember me? You were desperate. You saw your wife bleeding, hugging her body in pain, after they beat her. Poor woman, she was just four months pregnant.

NASHOBA
Leave me alone. I called on the ancestors not you.

But they didn’t answer. I did.

NASHOBA
I thought you were an angel.

THE JUMBEE
Don’t insult me. In the slave barracks during the darkest night, I heard you crying.

NASHOBA
I remember, right beside the plantation. That night I was praying like I never did before.

THE JUMBEE
Nashoba, do you know what your name means?

NASHOBA
I don’t remember, slavers kidnapped me from the Choctaw when I was child.

THE JUMBEE
It means wolf. You are fearless in the night. Don’t be afraid of me. Do you know what I am?

NASHOBA
You’re a Jumbee.

THE JUMBEE
Yes. Why do you think God allowed somebody like you to be forced to breed? Don’t be ashamed. The overseer gave you a room to screw every female slave at the plantation, whether you wanted to or not.

NASHOBA
Stop right there, demon!

THE JUMBEE
Nay, I’m just getting started. Despite having the opportunity to marry any slave woman, you married the one taken by your master’s three sons. You used to be strong. Now you’re just sweeping your life away for the Indians.
NASHOBA
Get away from me! You’re no good.

THE JUMBEE
You could sneak back and burn down the La Moune plantation. But you won’t. You’re weak, you couldn’t even protect your wife when they beat her in front of you.

NASHOBA
Demon, you won’t twist my mind.

THE JUMBEE
Tell me Nashoba, what did I ask you before you and Jubah escaped from the La Moune family?

NASHOBA
You asked me if I wanted revenge.

THE JUMBEE
The offer still stands. I can ruin every master who owned you. They passed you around, plantation to plantation, to breed like a prized bull . . .

NASHOBA
I’m not an animal.

THE JUMBEE
. . . and whipped like an animal. What kind of man are you? After you both escaped, you left her behind in the woods.

NASHOBA
I had to leave her behind. She broke her ankle after slipping on a rock.

THE JUMBEE
Your master’s sons found her again. I don’t like ruining surprises. Jubah is set to become a mother again. Don’t worry, this time you’re the father.

NASHOBA
I haven’t seen her for two seasons. She is getting closer to having our baby. Please, please help me. What do you want in return?

THE JUMBEE
Give me your firstborn.

NASHOBA
You’re being cruel now. . . I need Jubah. My life will never be complete without her.
THE JUMBEE
I won’t wait much longer.

NASHOBA
Oh, I don’t know!

THE JUMBEE
I can smell the fire inside you. You do want revenge.

NASHOBA
Just get her.

THE JUMBEE
Wonderful!

NASHOBA
Bring me Jubah . . . then destroy monsieur La Moune and his three sons.

THE JUMBEE
To make our deal official, you need to give me that superstitious talisman hanging around your neck.

NASHOBA
I don’t take off my gris-gris for anybody.216

THE JUMBEE
Then so long.

NASHOBA
Wait! [Takes the gris-gris from around his neck and gives it to The Jumbee.] You treat my child right.

THE JUMBEE
Like a father.

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216 A gris-gris is a religious Voodoo amulet or bundle which is believed to protect the wearer from evil or brings luck.
COMMANDER CHÉPART
These political card games are all the same. You do this for me. I do that for you. They cheat. We cheat. Sooner or later somebody will win.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Card games get complicated when two players play by different rules, Commander Chépart.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
The primitives don’t even know what card games are. I would teach them how to play, but they would obviously cheat. As for me, I play by the rules of a gentlemen . . . only when convenient.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Oh, so you’re a gentleman now? How about when you flirted with the wife of one of your soldiers last night? What’s the matter, your Indian wife isn’t satisfying you anymore?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I don’t remember. I was a little tipsy. Say what you will, I don’t see a halo floating above your head. Why did you bring that slave woman with you?

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I find my visits to Fort Rosalie to be arduous. She makes my stays here more tolerable.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Oh, I see.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
She’s a good woman. Unfortunately, the La Moune plantation burned down. The slaves scattered but she was caught. Her price was low. Nobody trusts any slaves connected to the La Moune plantation. Rumor is a slave committed an arson there. A father and his three sons died.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
How unfortunate. She is pregnant, are you the father?

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Your foul mind takes you to guttery places. She saved me money. Now I don’t have to buy a slave stud to breed with her, and she gets to wash my undergarments wherever I go.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
We don’t get such comforts. My soldiers are demanding slave women. The women of ill repute sent from France have minds of their own.
GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I didn’t see many Indian women at the last auction. Unless your men want African wives.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
They just might. Why doesn’t France just sail a ship full of ladies over?

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
They already did. Years ago, France sent a bunch of maidens on a ship called The Pelican. The maidens took a good look around after they arrived. They saw nothing but shabby cabins and long bearded men dressed in animal skins. They were so disgusted, they formed a petticoat rebellion, until the men cleaned up and built them better lodgings. They were overly sophisticated city ladies. So weak most of them died from yellow fever. Governor Bienville demanded strong and simple country maidens after that. France’s answer was to send prostitutes.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Half of my men visit Natchez women anyway. Governor Périer, those women will turn our boys into Indians if we don’t do something soon.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I’ll see what I can do, commander.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Good. Some of my men are so lonely, they visit a cabin belonging to the sodomite overseer of White Earth plantation. He dresses in petticoats. He likes it when they call him Madame.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Then it’s worse than I thought. I’ll write a letter to King Louis requesting French women of fine stock. Come now, let’s drink to clear our heads.

[Governor Périer claps his hands twice.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Boy! Did you hear me?

[An African slave timidly scuttles to them. He pours some wine into two goblets.]

COMMANDER CHÉPART
More.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Thank you, boy. We must make the Indians accept the authority of our king.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Forget the king, we must make the Indians accept your authority.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Yes, I am their sole authority. They just don’t know it yet.

[The governor takes a dainty sip of wine while the commander chugs his drink.]
EAST 6

[A priest is walking along the river and stumbles upon Jubah bathing in a stream. She wraps a blanket around her body. He looks away with embarrassment.]

FATHER DE VIRGINE
There was a report of, er, a wayward cock running amok outside the fort. Um, we have a scanty number of chickens left.

JUBAH
Holy Father, I haven’t seen your cock anywhere.

[Father De Virgine walks to the streamside.]

FATHER DE VIRGINE
As you know, the Lord covered Eve’s nakedness for her own good. Get dressed. I won’t look, young maiden.

JUBAH
You called me a maiden.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
I would never call you a slave, madam.

JUBAH
But I’m just a dish scrubber, a washwoman, a scullery maid or anything else a master wants.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
You’re more than just a dish scrubber, you’re a woman. A very fine woman. As pure as the Virgin Mary and as voluptuous as Venus. We are fortunate the governor brought you to Fort Rosalie.

JUBAH
You must be miserable in that black robe. It’s hot out here.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
I’m fine.

JUBAH
You’re sweating. Jump in with me. Cool yourself off.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
That is improper of you to ask. What is your name?

JUBAH
Jubah. What is your name?

FATHER DE VIRGINE

Father Hortense De Virgine.

JUBAH

Oh yes, I heard of you. Yesterday a soldier told me you’re too holy to be with any woman.

FATHER DE VIRGINE

I love women more than you will ever know. Now please, dress yourself.

JUBAH

If God made holy robes wise enough to preach, why doesn’t anybody around here listen to you?

FATHER DE VIRGINE

The devil is leashed to their loins.

JUBAH

Holy Father, have you ever kissed a woman?

FATHER DE VIRGINE

Never.

JUBAH

One day you just might.

[Father De Virgine looks up to the sky with a look of mortification.]

JUBAH

You’re so white and beautiful. Like a marble statue.

FATHER DE VIRGINE

I spend all my time praying indoors.

JUBAH

You’re the expert on all things holy. Am I going to heaven if I’m not sure who the father is?

FATHER DE VIRGINE

You’re baptized right?

JUBAH

Yes, very baptized.

FATHER DE VIRGINE

Then I wouldn’t worry.
JUBAH
I’d like to think the baby belongs to my husband. If not, maybe I’ll give a virgin birth. I’ll be just like the Holy Mary. Mary had to escape a cruel king to give birth to another king. I’ll escape the governor and give birth to a boy who will become the King of Louisiana. He will free every slave.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
You have quite an imagination, but you won’t be like the Virgin Mary if you don’t get dressed.

JUBAH
Father De Virgine, you’re kinder than other men. Too bad you can’t be a husband or a real father.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
Sometimes when I meet a woman like you, so sweet, so innocent, I wish that I never took the vow.

JUBAH
A vow for what?

FATHER DE VIRGINE
A vow of chastity. I promised God I will never engage in any intimate relations with a woman.

JUBAH
That’s too bad. You’re too kind to be alone. Do you have a slave woman taking care of you?

FATHER DE VIRGINE
I had one but she died from yellow fever.

JUBAH
Now you’re all by yourself.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
God keeps me company, madam.
SOUTH 1

[The Jumbee is twisting and flowing in a swamp. Fog moves across the floor. He addresses the audience.]

THE JUMBEE


[Mammon enters. He stands in the background watching The Jumbee. His arms are crossed with a disapproving look.]

MAMMON

Is that so?

THE JUMBEE

Who is foolish enough to question me?

MAMMON

A demon far older than you. It is me, Mammon.

[The Jumbee immediately gets down and grovels.]

THE JUMBEE

I am not worthy. If I said anything out of line, it was out of stupidity.

MAMMON

Oh, stop it, demons never grovel. Let the humans grovel when they pray.

[The Jumbee moves over and kisses the back of Mammon’s hand.]

THE JUMBEE

You’re revered by devilish legions on a biblical scale. I commend the decadence you inspire. I’m nothing more than the Spanish pox on the lips of a concubine compared to you.

MAMMON

Of course! You’re just a coyote while I’m a wolf. You’re a mere salamander while I’m a dragon. You’re a puddle while I’m Noah’s flood.

THE JUMBEE

You can stop now.

MAMMON
You must be wondering why I’m here.

THE JUMBEE

Have I done something good? I hope not.

MAMMON

If you ever fail as a demon, I will be the first to let you know.

THE JUMBEE

Thank you, my powerful president from hell. I am just an ignorant backwoods swamp demon compared . . .

MAMMON

Stop being so pathetic! Show some pride.

THE JUMBEE

Did I get carried away?

MAMMON

Just a little. I came to see what the new world demons are doing. The old world has been rather dreary. I used to have so much fun destroying kings and their lust for gold. I’m slowly being put out of business.

THE JUMBEE

How so?

MAMMON

The peasants are getting too big for their britches. Some are calling for a system of representation.

THE JUMBEE

How sad. I’ve always had fantasies of preying on aristocrats in castles over there.

MAMMON

It’s overrated. The monarchs fight the church for riches blah blah blah. It’s a rivalry I helped to start though.

THE JUMBEE

The dark lord must be proud.

MAMMON

Oh, he is, and he salivated when I brought a greedy pope down to him once. But for some reason, I can’t get any saints.

THE JUMBEE

They’ll be a first someday, Mammon.
MAMMON
The aristocracy is cooking up something marvelous to counter the newfound idealism. It’s a system where land gentry capitalize on the hard labor of others.

THE JUMBEE
So that’s why company men are coming to my swamplands.

MAMMON
Rumor is a lot of naughty and horrible things are happening in the new world.

THE JUMBEE
Well you came to the right place. There are many greedy souls here, both colonist and Indian.

MAMMON
Indeed! The lust for new world gold has attracted demons and men. I’ll find El Dorado before anybody else does.

THE JUMBEE
Good luck, and if you happen to find the fountain of youth, let me know.

MAMMON
Now that I’m here, the first thing I’ll do is change the name the stupid colonists gave this place. I shall call my land New Hell!!!

THE JUMBEE
Wait a minute! What makes you think you can come here naming everything and claiming it as yours?

MAMMON
Don’t question my method! I will banish you into a demon box.

[The Jumbee kneels on the ground and kisses the back of Mammon’s hands.]

THE JUMBEE

MAMMON
Good. At least you can admit your inferiority.

THE JUMBEE
I’m a monkey demon. I’m an impotent incubus . . .

MAMMON
. . . Awe shut up would you?! I’m glad that I came. France is getting weaker with timid Louis XIV. He blows all his money on mistresses when the empire should be getting richer. I
practically built Versailles. It won’t be hard to cause a ruckus in this desolate place. I’ll start with New Orleans. Well, off I go.

[Mammon exits.]

THE JUMBEE

Argh! Until we meet again . . . buffoon.

MAMMON

[Says off stage.] I heard that.
SOUTH 2

[Nashoba enters with Tattooed Arm. Nashoba bows and stares at the ground.]

TATTOOED ARM

Brother, the slave brings a request.

THE GREAT SUN

What do you want?

NASHOBA

Oh, benevolent Great Sun. First, I want to say how kindly you treat me.

THE GREAT SUN

Tell me something I don’t know.

NASHOBA

There is a slave woman nearby. Her name is Jubah. She is my wife.

THE GREAT SUN

What do you want me to do about it?

NASHOBA

Master, please, please, I need to see her. She’s at the fort.

THE GREAT SUN

Who told you?

NASHOBA

I can’t tell you.

THE GREAT SUN

Slaves who harbor secrets don’t last long around here.

NASHOBA

Okay, okay, a spirit told me.

THE GREAT SUN

What kind of spirit?

NASHOBA

A spirit who wanted to help me.

THE GREAT SUN
What makes you think I can take one of my slaves, march over to Fort Rosalie, knock on the door, and ask if Jubah is there?

NASHOBA

I regret that I bothered you.

THE GREAT SUN

Jubah belongs to another man who paid a sum for her. Do you think somebody would just give her up?

NASHOBA

Then there’s no hope.

THE GREAT SUN

[The Great Sun goes over to Nashoba and puts his hand on his shoulder.] Listen here, I’m not a tyrant. I’m humane under all this roughness. If you prove your worth around here, I will treat you like my own son.

NASHOBA

I will do my best, Great Sun.

THE GREAT SUN

One day I might free you. Then you can go to Fort Rosalie, knock on the door, and ask them if Jubah is there. Until then, the fields need to be irrigated.

NASHOBA

Thank you, Great Sun.

THE GREAT SUN

Now go away.
FATHER DE VIRGINE
Nobody deserves to be a plaything.

JUBAH
Governor Périer paid a lot for me. The other slaves are jealous.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
Back in France, I saw destitution in the streets, but it’s nothing compared to the destitution I’ve seen in these plantations. I realized why I came after seeing my first slave auction. I plan to get every slave master on his knees to pray. One by one, day by day, things will slowly change . . . Soon I will leave, Jubah. There is a parish that needs me.

JUBAH
I hope you change your mind.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
Jesuits go where God sends them.

JUBAH
Ask your God to keep you here. I fear for your life. A couple of priests have already been killed by Indians.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
Is there another reason why you don’t want me to go?

[A short silence as they gaze into each other’s eyes.]

JUBAH
Everybody who leaves never returns. Take me with you. I want to be your slave.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
Jubah, if I took you with me, the governor would accuse me of stealing from him.

JUBAH
[Starts to cry.] No man will ever treat me so kindly.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
I’ll pray for your freedom every night.

JUBAH
[Looks at him.] My mind needs to keep a painting of you. I never want to forget the way you look . . . right now . . . in front of my eyes. Holy Father, we’ve known each other for a few weeks, but I . . .

FATHER DE VIRGINE

Please don’t say it.

JUBAH

Hortense, I’m starved for love.

[Father De Virgine closes his eyes and winces when she says his name.]

FATHER DE VIRGINE

I am too.

[They hug each other.]

FATHER DE VIRGINE

Your child does not deserve to be born into slavery. Maybe we should secretly leave together. I will take you to New France. I will raise your son as my own, but we would have to keep our love a secret.

JUBAH

Let’s leave tonight.

FATHER DE VIRGINE

We will. I can’t leave you behind. I would be a coward if I did.

[Governor Périer and Commander Chépart enter.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

What are you two doing?

FATHER DE VIRGINE

I was giving her a biblical lesson about the Jews leaving Egypt.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Is that so?

COMMANDER CHÉPART

Word has gotten around about you, Father De Virgine. You’re a regular holy lecher.

FATHER DE VIRGINE

How dare you!

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Father De Virgine, you must hasten your journey out of here.

JUBAH
Master, he needs to stay. The slaves like him a lot.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
That is why I asked him to go to another parish. Come now, Jubah. You’re going to be auctioned off tomorrow.

JUBAH
Why?

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I doubt you will understand. I never planned on keeping you. You were a bargain. Now I’m reselling you for a higher price.

FATHER DE VIRGINE
Governor, make sure she goes to somebody decent. She’s a good woman.

[Governor Périer, Commander Chépart and Jubah exit. Father de Virgine bows on his knees while facing the audience. He places his hands over his face.]
SOUTH 4

[In a New Orleans slave market, Jubah is in chains. Several Indians and French are scrutinizing her body.]

SLAVE AUCTIONEER
Here is a voluptuous mare. Healthy and strong. She has much energy. She tends house but picks tobacco like no other. She harbors a babe, you get two for the price of one.

CHOCTAW SLAVER
How many months is she?

SLAVE AUCTIONEER
Her last master guaranteed seven months.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
How many have owned her?

SLAVE AUCTIONEER
Two. The best mare I’ve seen in a year.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
I know a cheat when I see one. I already investigated. I was told she escaped after the La Moune plantation burned to the ground.

SLAVE AUCTIONEER
Monsieur, this one is obedient.

JUBAH
Yes, I’m very obedient.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
She looks like trouble. Girl, do you like fire? What’s your name?

JUBAH
Jubah.

CHOCTAW SLAVER
What does your name mean?

JUBAH
Madame La Moune named me, she told me it’s the name of a Syrian queen.

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217 Slaves were called generic terms like filly, boy, gal, buck and wench.
CHOCTAW SLAVER

How much for the slave-queen?

SLAVE AUCTIONEER

1000 livres.\textsuperscript{218}

CHOCTAW SLAVER

I got it on me. On top of that, I’ll add an ox.

Monsieur Tisserant

I have seventy-five Louis d’or gold coins.\textsuperscript{219}

CHOCTAW SLAVER AND SLAVE AUCTIONEER

What?

CHOCTAW SLAVER

Even I don’t got that kind of money.

SLAVE AUCTIONEER

Sold, to the gentleman who knows the value of a fine wench.

\textsuperscript{218} Livres was a coin currency in Ancien Régime France.

\textsuperscript{219} A Louis d’or gold coin was set by King Louis XV at 20 livres.
SOUTH 5

[A party of Frenchmen are drinking and getting rowdy. They are dressed in ragged military gear. Food and wine are on a table. Commander Chépart staggers drunkenly throughout. He swigs wine, sits down and claps to the music. He suddenly stops clapping and looks ornery.]

COMMANDER CHÉPART
We’re a lively stock. Few know how to live. Most are living to die.

OFFICER DUMONT
Monsieur, you had enough to drink.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Of fuck off! I’m your commander.

SERGEANT LA JOYE
Let him be. Drink with us.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Officer Dumont, I don’t want your bastardly scowl ruining the party. Go back home. Your sobriety annoys me.

[He stands up to attack Officer Dumont but the soldiers hold him back. Officer Dumont exits. The soldiers push Commander Chépart back into his chair.]

SERGEANT LA JOYE
Monsieur, calm down. He didn’t say anything bad to you.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Sergeant La Joye, what do you know? Just look at you. Get a haircut. You’re starting to look like a goddamn pale ass Indian.

SERGEANT LA JOYE
Polish off the bottle monsieur, then go to bed.

[Officer Dumont returns.]

OFFICER DUMONT
Governor Etienne Périer is arriving, messieurs.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
That bastard fuck is here?

[Governor Périer enters the stage and points at Commander Chépart.]
GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Look at you, Chépart. Drunk as a skunk. I doubt you’ll remember what I’m going to tell you.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Before you do, drink one with me.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I will do no such thing. You, monsieur, need to get yourself into shape, before I make somebody else commander.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
That’s the problem. Nobody wants to be a commander in this god-awful land. Send for another then. You’ll see.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I’ve received complaints about your questionable treatment of Indians, soldiers and settlers.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
[With hearty laughter.] I’m impartial.

[Commander Chépart takes another swig from his bottle.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Monsieur, you had enough to drink.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I have not!

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Officer Dumont told me about your mistreatment toward his landlords, Jean and Marie Baron Roussin.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
What cruelties is a gentleman capable of?

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I’m requesting for you to defend yourself in court. The Roussins accuse you of ordering your soldiers to steal from them. Furthermore, you have elected yourself judge and executioner in the area.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Ah, the Roussin family hates me because I told my soldiers the truth about them. Marie Baron was a Parisian prostitute. Dumont, I always knew you would be trouble. Get out! Tell Jean and Marie to eat dirt.

[They all exit except Commander Chépart.]
COMMANDER CHÉPART

Hey, where did everybody go?
SOUTH 6

[In a New Orleans courtroom, Commander Chépart is seated in a defendant’s chair. Governor Périer is the judge. Officer Dumont, Jean and Marie Baron sit in the plaintiff’s chairs. Mammon sits with The Jumbee in the back of the courtroom.]

MAMMON
The commander has grand ambitions. Every victim of mine wants two things: to get rich and go down in history as a great man.

THE JUMBEE
Let me take him instead.

MAMMON
He’s out of your league. You’re just a swamp demon conjurers seek in the slave barracks.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Commander Chépart, you should have referred any complaints to me. Instead you have enflamed sensitive relations with your thoughtlessness.

MAMMON
He wants it all. I smell his ambition.

THE JUMBEE
What does ambition smell like?

MAMMON
Burning metal. The malleable stuff that has made civilization great. Coins and firearms.

THE JUMBEE
Let me have him, Mammon. I need to expand my repertoire.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Monsieur, you need to instill trust not fear. The Roussins accuse you of intimidation and unfair treatment. That is why we are here.

MAMMON
You already made a deal with Nashoba the slave. I’m sure he’s keeping you occupied.

THE JUMBEE
Ah, he’s a pushover! I can always take another one.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
You ordered your soldiers to steal peas out the Roussins’ garden. Then after they complained, you had the audacity to rule against them, after a scoundrel tried cheating them out of a horse. I have considered every side of the story. What do you have to say for yourself?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I’m doing my best with what I’ve been given. You ignore my complaints about Fort Rosalie’s shortage of food. My soldiers are hungry. If I decided to cook pea potage, some of the settlers are obliged to help out.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
You should’ve asked their permission. Instead you waited until Jean and Marie Baron were in church, then you ordered your soldiers to steal from them. When Jean complained, you punched him.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I admit it, there was no excuse for my behavior. I lost my temper.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I will tolerate many things but I will not tolerate bullying. Louisiana rules in the favor of the Roussins. You are relieved of your post.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Who is going to command Fort Rosalie? Officer Dumont or any other bootless soldiers?

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
You may go.

[Commander Chépart exits. Officer Dumont walks over to the governor.]

OFFICER DUMONT
Governor, I must offer you a suggestion. Don’t be tempted to reinstate Chépart if you can’t find anybody to replace him right away. If you send Chépart back to Natchez, governor, there will be either a colonial rebellion or some other great catastrophe.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
You made your point loud and clear.

THE JUMBEE
Oh my, I guess Commander Chépart slipped out of your fingers.

MAMMON
Not at all, stupid little Jumbee, the governor is wrapped around my finger too. I’ll convince him to return the commander to his position. After the heat dies down.
MONSIEUR TISSERANT
You certainly don’t talk very much. It’s okay, you can talk about any subject you wish.

JUBAH
I have nothing interesting to say.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Oh, there is more going on in that noggin of yours than you’re letting on. Tell me what you like.

JUBAH
What I like?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Yes, Jubah. What makes you happy?

JUBAH
I like to sit in the sunshine and imagine.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
What do you imagine?

JUBAH
I imagine myself as somebody important . . . I can’t say no more.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Go on.

JUBAH
I’m an opera singer. Sometimes I’m a plantation governess. Sometimes I’m the queen of France, dressed in silk and a tiara.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
You fantasize about being European?

JUBAH
Yes, I imagine what it’s like to be light-skinned.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Do you like light-skinned men?
JUBAH
Oh, Monsieur Tisserant, I don’t know.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Have you ever touched a Frenchman?

JUBAH
I declare!

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
I’m just curious about what slave girls think about their masters.

JUBAH
Master, a man is just a man. They got pluses and minuses in all the different flavors of mankind.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Oh really, what kind of flavor do you like best?

JUBAH
I haven’t thought about it.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Oh, sweet cherry pie, tell me.

JUBAH
Okay, I’ll tell you. I like priests.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Oh la la! I never heard that one before.

[There is an awkward moment of silence.]

JUBAH
When I get to the plantation, will I be working in the house?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Oh, I got a special place for you.

JUBAH
I’m good at everything if shown what to do.

[There is another moment of silence.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Madam, where is he?
JUBAH
Who?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
The father of your baby. What happened to him?

JUBAH
He left me behind. I didn’t know how lonely plantation life was until after he was gone.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Yes, plantation life is lonely. Especially now for Madame La Moune, being the only survivor. How sad those three boys and their father burned to death.

JUBAH
Yes, burnt like they were already in hell.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
A person can be married but still feel alone. My wife is very ill. She’s has to stay in bed all the time.

JUBAH
How unfortunate to hear.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Sometimes I feel like a single tree on a barren hillside. [Another moment of silence.] I’m being cheerless. Enough about me. What kind of Indian are you?

JUBAH
Chawasha. Oh, I felt my baby kick.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
I hope this ride isn’t too bumpy for you or the baby. We need to keep you healthy so you can suckle a good worker.

JUBAH
Monsieur, I hope it isn’t rude of me to ask. Do you have any daughters or . . . sons?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Not anymore. We had only one son but he died from consumption.

JUBAH
Oh good. I meant, oh goodness gracious, luck has gotten you down.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
We wanted more children but our doctor didn’t recommend it. We have a private doctor who lives with us. He takes care of my wife. He’ll inspect you once we get there.
JUBAH
I’ve been inspected twice this year. I’m as healthy as a mare.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Good, because if he finds out there is something wrong with you, you’ll be working in the fields.
SOUTH 8

[At the Tisserant Plantation.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Madam, here is my abode.

JUBAH
It looks just like the La Moune plantation.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
I apologize there is nobody here to greet us. The head house slave is in the brig.

JUBAH
Oh my, what did he do?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
He was getting too big for his britches.

JUBAH
Oh.

[Danton enters.]

DANTON
Monsieur, you’re home early. Let me take your coat off. If I’d known you’d be home so soon, I’d have Auntie Louise cook catfish roulade.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
What’s left in the kitchen?

DANTON
Just cold possum stew. I’ll get Auntie Louise to stir something up.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
That’ll be good. Madam, meet my indentured servant, Monsieur Danton Bonvillian. Give her anything she wants to eat.

JUBAH
Thank you.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
We’ll eat in the dining room after Danton introduces you to the other slaves. [To Danton.] Looks like I invested wisely. Danton my boy, give her a quick tour.
DANTON

As you wish.

[Monsieur Tisserant exits.]  

DANTON

Madam, I can tell right away you’re different from the others.

JUBAH

What do you mean the others?

DANTON

The lady slaves before you. They all died.

JUBAH

They all died!?

DANTON

Keep it down or he’ll hear us. Let’s step outside.

[They go outside.]  

DANTON

Monsieur Tisserant has a devil of a doctor. He will do . . . bad things you can’t imagine.

JUBAH

How bad?

DANTON

The last one . . . I can’t tell you what happened. Maybe you’ll be one of the lucky ones.

JUBAH

Don’t speak to me about luck. I’ve never been lucky once in my life.

DANTON

Sshhhh, I think I hear him coming.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

What are you two doing out here?

DANTON

Jubah was just telling me about her trip.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Good god! Boy! You’re wasting time. Doctor Arsenault has been notified about her presence. Give her the tour.
DANTON

Yes monsieur.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Jubah, leave us menfolk alone for a minute.

[She exits.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Danton, If I ever see you touching her, I won’t hesitate to send you to jail. Debts unpaid. Boy, you got that?

DANTON

I’m engaged to somebody back home.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Being engaged and being married has never made a difference to Frenchmen. It’s in our nature.

DANTON

I won’t touch her. You have my word.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Now go! Clean my boots after you return.

DANTON

Yes monsieur.
SOUTH 9

[Several African and Indian slaves are sitting in the slave barracks laughing among themselves. They turn around when Danton and Jubah enter.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
I do declare we got a new one here. Oh, and she’s with child.

DANTON
She’s as sweet as honey pie. She’ll make a good mother. Tell them where you’re from.

JUBAH
Bonjour, my name is Jubah. I was the head cook at the La Moune plantation.

AUNTIE LOUISE
You mean the plantation that burned down? Oh la la, did your cooking get out of control?

JUBAH
[Smirking.] I don’t know.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Well, I’m the head cook here honey. I can already tell this one’s going to be trouble.

[The slaves laugh.]

DANTON
You be nice, Auntie Louise.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Welcome to your new home. I know its tight quarters but at least you’re not sleeping on the floor.

DANTON
Auntie Louise, take the others outside please.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Are you going to tell her about what’s to become of her?

DANTON
Yes, but I can’t go into detail. It’ll make me sick.

AUNTIE LOUISE
[To Jubah.] I don’t know if he can give it to you gently. Poor thing.

[The slaves exit.]
DANTON
I’m going to tell you before you find out the hard way. Monsieur Tisserant has not treated any of us kindly. He has purchased other lady slaves and they all bled to death. Their doctor uses their bodies for vile things.

JUBAH
I could tell what kind of man he was, the moment he laid his eyes on me.

DANTON
The slaves and I are close. We share a similar disposition. I’m going to help all of you.

JUBAH
Oh monsieur, it’s best you don’t get involved.

DANTON
I know what it feels like when other people look down on you.

JUBAH
Why risk your life . . . just for us?

DANTON
I used to be a thief. I escaped from prison twice. Indentured servitude, slavery, prison, they’re all the same . . . If we don’t escape, this is all there is until we die.

JUBAH
I was already caught once. I can’t escape my lot in life. It was my fate to be a slave.

[Auntie Louise returns.]

DANTON
No, that is something I can’t accept. I don’t know how to tell you this. I have an advantage that will help us out. I can see things before they happen.

JUBAH
How so?

DANTON
I got the gift.

AUNTIE LOUISE
You hear him? He said he’s got the gift.

DANTON
I feel your soul. You will be searching for an emptiness that never ceases, if you don’t escape with us.
AUNTIE LOUISE
Baby, you look confused. Danton claims he can see things ordinary people can’t see. The slaves say they don’t know how he does it.

JUBAH
You mean witchcraft?

DANTON
No, it’s not that. I close my eyes and I can see the future.

JUBAH
Can you see my Nashoba?

DANTON
Wait. I need to touch you.

[He reaches out. He closes his eyes and they hold each other’s hands.]

DANTON
If you go with us, you will find him.

[Janton lets go of her hands.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
We’re leaving tomorrow. Do you want to come with us or not?

JUBAH
I don’t know.

DANTON
You need to get out before Doctor Arsenault touches you.

AUNTIE LOUISE
He’s despicable. Stay if you want, but don’t say we didn’t warn you.

DANTON
There’s a hidden village of ex-slaves.

AUNTIE LOUISE
They’ll never find us there.

JUBAH
I can’t go very far. I already lost one child, I can’t bear losing another.

DANTON
Don’t worry about holding us back. You’ll do okay. [*Danton places his hands on Jubah’s stomach.*] I see Nashoba right now.

[*Jubah cries.*]

DANTON

He is with the Indians.

JUBAH

Oh please, tell me which ones.

DANTON

I see drums. I see three wooden eagles, one painted red, the other white, and the last one black. I see a temple.

JUBAH

It sounds like the Natchez. I need to go there.

DANTON

Don’t. I see a lot of blood. [*He takes his hands off her stomach and then kisses the back of her hand.*]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

[*Yells from off stage.*] Boy, get your ass back in the house and bring Jubah with you.

DANTON

Coming monsieur!

[*They exit.*]
INTERMISSION
After an announcer tells the audience to return after fifteen minutes, a few subsequent musical pieces play: African percussive djembes and sun dun music, Native American songs, and Suite De Symphonies, Première Suite de Symphonies (1729).
[Auntie Louise and Jubah are stirring gumbo in the kitchen.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
Master likes a lot of thick roux in his catfish gumbo.

JUBAH
I make it a special way. I stir in buttered onions right before serving.

AUNTIE LOUISE
He’ll like that.

JUBAH
Auntie Louise, do you really believe Danton has the gift?

AUNTIE LOUISE
At my age, I don’t believe anything anybody says. The gift my ass.

[Jubah sadly gazes down at her shoes.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
Baby, I never asked him about my future, but the slaves say his predictions come true. I’ll take the persimmon cake out of the oven.

[She takes the cake and places it on the kitchen counter.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
Master Tisserant used to be a soldier. He fought against the Natchez. He once captured four Natchez women hiding underneath a bed. Then he burned their cabin down.

JUBAH
What happened to those women?

AUNTIE LOUISE
He sold them, and with the money bought this plantation. He doesn’t like Natchez folks or their food, except this persimmon cake. Here let me test it.

[Auntie Louise takes a bite from the cake.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
Mmmmmm! You bake right! Did the madam at the La Moune plantation teach you how to bake?

JUBAH
She taught me how to make meat pies, chestnut stuffed goose and pretty ice molds. Her sons’ favorites. I sometimes thought about poisoning them.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Why did you burn their place down?

JUBAH
I didn’t do it.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Mmm-hmm.

JUBAH
I saw something in the dark. It looked like a shadow. It whispered for me to be quiet, then it suddenly breathed out fire onto the drapes.

AUNTIE LOUISE
That sounds like a Jumbee.

JUBAH
I was so scared. I knew the Jumbee was going to burn the plantation down. I didn’t warn anybody. I hated the La Moune family. [Weeps.] Sometimes I feel guilty about it.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Hush now. They deserved it.

[They hug.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
I just felt the baby kick. Is this your first time?

JUBAH
I was pregnant once but my baby died.

AUNTIE LOUISE
What happened?

JUBAH
I can’t say . . . it hurts too much. Everything has been taken from me. I’m no longer living a life.

AUNTIE LOUISE
You might live again if you leave with us. Hurry now. The gumbo looks done. Butter the crackling bread.

[They bring out the food. Monsieur Tisserant is sitting at the table. Candles are lit. Danton is standing aside. Monsieur Tisserant stands up.]
MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Jubah, your gumbo better be as spicy as you look.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Oh lord.

[Auntie Louise exits into the kitchen.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Join me for dinner tonight.

JUBAH
Monsieur, I’m covered in flour and smell like butter.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
That’s okay. Come. Sit down.

[Danton pulls out a chair.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Auntie Louise, bring a plate out for Jubah.

AUNTIE LOUISE
Yes monsieur.

[Auntie Louise enters with Jubah’s plate.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Pour her some wine.

[Danton pours her some wine.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Owning a plantation is hard work. That’s why I drink so much.

JUBAH
[Jubah makes a sour face. She looks down at her glass.] It tastes like rotten juice.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
You never drank wine before?

JUBAH
I don’t like it.
It’s an acquired taste. You’re going to drink it.

JUBAH

Okay monsieur.

[She takes another sip.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

[To Auntie Louise and Danton] You can both leave.

DANTON

Okay monsieur.

[Danton and Auntie Louise exit.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

I’ll taste your amazing gumbo.

[He takes a spoonful and tastes it.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

You’re a marvelous cook.

JUBAH

Thank you.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Why are you nervous?

JUBAH

I’m not used to people treating me so kindly.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

You’re different . . . The wine you’re drinking is very expensive. It’s from my birthplace just outside Saint-Mont. Drink it like this.

[He gulps his wine. She gulps hers after she watches him.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Yes, that’s the way to do it, but you only get one glass. We have to think about your baby. This wine is called Clairette blanche.

JUBAH

Clear branch?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
You sound cute. It’s Clairette blanche.

JUBAH

Master, I feel slightly giddy.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

That’s what it’s supposed to do.

JUBAH

What’s in it?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Alcohol. A type of relaxing liquid. I can tell you’re still nervous.

JUBAH

Why are you being so nice?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Every plantation has one special slave. The one who provides more than the others.

JUBAH

Do you want to know what I think?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

[Flirtatiously] Yes, I do.

JUBAH

I think you want a replacement for your wife.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Almost. Madame Tisserant is just upstairs.

JUBAH

Why hasn’t she joined us for dinner?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

She too ill to join us at the table.

JUBAH

Oh, I see.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT

Do you want to know the real reason why you’re sitting here, eating like a European princess?

JUBAH

Yes.
MONSIEUR TISSERANT
You looked like the healthiest girl I could find.

JUBAH
I don’t quite understand.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Medicine is making quick advancements. That is why I’m feeding you so well. My wife’s health depends on you.

[Enter Doctor Arsenault.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Monsieur, your wife is having a shaking fit. She needs the donor right now.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
We’ll finish dinner later. Come with me upstairs.

[He takes her hand and they exit with the doctor.]
WEST 2

[Monsieur Tisserant, Madame Tisserant, and Doctor Arsenault are inside the Tisserants’ bedroom. Madame Tisserant lays on the bed. Monsieur Tisserant sits on a chair beside the bed. The Doctor takes Madame Tisserant’s pulse.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Her breathing is shallow but she still has a pulse.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
I fear for her life every time she falls.

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
The falling sickness can get worse over time, but not always.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
She can’t break another bone. I can’t bear to see her in more pain.

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Madame Tisserant, can you hear me?

MADAME TISSERANT
Yes, I’m sorry. My body betrays me.

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
How do you feel?

MADAME TISSERANT
My head is cloudy.

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
You’ll be feeling better in no time. We have a new donor waiting outside the door.

MADAME TISSERANT
You do?

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Be careful this time Doctor Arsenault. I blame you for the death of our last donor. You allowed too much bloodletting.

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
We will be more conservative with the new donor. Your wife might have to drink warm blood for the rest of her life.

MADAME TISSERANT
Will I get any better?

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Most likely. Boy, bring her in.

[Danton brings in Jubah. The doctor smiles at her.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Don’t be scared. I need to look you over.

[He puts his ear up to her chest and listens to her heart.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Her heartbeat is formidable.

[He takes her pulse.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Her heart pumps a splendid amount of blood. Spread your legs, girl.

[She spreads her legs. He takes a magnifying glass from a table, lifts up her dress, and inspects her.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Everything looks good down here. [He puts her dress down.] Look how rotund she is. Don’t worry about this one dying. And if she does, we’ll lard her and put the fat to good use.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
For my wife’s sake, let’s hope she remains sturdy. I can’t afford another slave.

[He examines her fingernails with the magnifying glass.]

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Her fingernails are thick. Girl, you will no longer trim your own fingernails.

JUBAH
Why?

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Your fingernails will be distilled into a medicinal liquor. I’ll trim them for now on.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Your wonderful body is medicine. The doctor will collect snippets of you and drain your body fluids for his apothecary.

[The doctor examines her hair.]
DOCTOR ARSENAULT
I see no lice. We’ll shave off your hair after the bloodletting.

JUBAH
Bloodletting?

Monsieur Tisserant
My wife will drink your blood.

Madame Tisserant
Give me her blood.

JUBAH
My mother told me I was born weak. I’ve been sickly my entire life.

Doctor Arsenault
We’re smarter than that, girl. You’re as healthy as a mare. Monsieur Danton, bring in the leeches.

[Danton exits and reenters wheeling a table topped with a jar of leeches among other medical instruments.]

JUBAH
Monsieur, please don’t put those on me.

Doctor Arsenault
The leeches will provide better blood circulation before the bloodletting.

[He takes out leeches with some tongs and places the leeches on her forearm.]

Madame Tisserant
I need blood. Give me her blood.

Monsieur Tisserant
Hurry up doctor! My wife is suffering!

Doctor Arsenault
Monsieur, calm down. Can’t you see the donor is in a delicate disposition? You don’t want to upset her or the baby.

JUBAH
I think I’m going to be sick.

Madame Tisserant
Don’t permit her, my husband. She’ll ruin the floor.
MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Jubah, there will be no vomiting in this house!

DOCTOR ARSENAULT
Danton, hand me a knife and a wine glass.

[Danton hands the doctor a knife and a wine glass.]

JUBAH
I’m going to faint.

[The doctor places the knife over her arm and positions the glass to catch the blood. He’s about to cut her skin but Danton grabs the knife and quickly stabs the doctor in the stomach. The doctor falls to the floor. Monsieur Tisserant moves forward to grab the knife away from Danton. They have a struggle. Jubah exits the bedroom. Madame Tisserant puts the bedcovers over her head. Auntie Louise enters the bedroom while holding a flintlock pistol. She points it at Monsieur Tisserant.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
Back away Master Tisserant!

[Master Tisserant backs away from Danton.]

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Auntie Louise, you were always my favorite. I was close to freeing you.

AUNTIE LOUISE
I’m not listening to a lowdown fool.

MONSIEUR TISSERANT
Why do this to yourself? You won’t get very far.

AUNTIE LOUISE
You lorded over us like we were nothing. We fed you! We toiled for your livelihood! In return, you consumed our lives.

[She shoots Monsieur Tisserant. He falls to the ground and dies.]

AUNTIE LOUISE
[To Danton.] I did what I said I would do.

DANTON
[To Madame Tisserant.] Madame, we will leave you to suffer a long and slow decline. You deserve every bit of your sorrow.
AUNTIE LOUISE

I’ll gather everybody up.

[They exit.]
WEST 3

[The Great Sun’s rival, Old Flour Chief, sits with his warriors in the Natchez village of Flour. A Natchez guard enters with Antoine-Simon.]

NATCHEZ GUARD
Old Flour Chief, the Great Sun’s Frenchman has a message.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
Ah, Antione-Simon has finally come to meet.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Bonjour Old Flour Chief! I apologize if I interrupted your day. Governor Périer wants to have a meeting with every Natchez chief.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
Why should I care? The Louisianans favor the Great Sun over us.

ANTOINE-SIMON
A weakness my countrymen have is to only see things from our point of view. For them, the Great Sun has the authority of a French king.

What does the governor want?

ANTOINE-SIMON
It’s about trade.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
We used to be friends with the French but they have shown us two hearts. That is why my village is allied with the English now.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Louisiana’s tobacco plantations have been profitable. They want to share the bounty with you, but to do that, every chief must unanimously befriend the French.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
Oh yes, and then they will behead more chiefs who defy them.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Governor Périer expresses sorrow for the bad behavior of his predecessors.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
The answer is no.
Very well.

My village does not bow down to anybody, not to the French, not to the English . . . How is Tattooed Serpent? I heard he is ill.

He is close to the end. I fear what will happen after he dies.

I would too, if I were you.

He has been the greatest friend to the Louisianans.

Keep giving him trinkets and coins and he’ll be your friend forever.

[Old Flour Chief lets out a gust of laughter.]

Farwell.

Go away.
[In Madame’s cabin by the river. Madame is a Frenchman dressed in all the pomp and splendor of French female nobility. He takes a powder puff and dabs his face. Taotal sits at a table with a glass of wine.]

MADAME

Taotal, I haven’t seen you in a while.

TAOTAL

I’ve missed you. I’ve been busy repairing the Great Sun’s house. I have no choice in the matter. Madame, I’m going away.

Where to?

New Orleans.

MADAME

That place is nice but it isn’t Paris.

What is Paris like?

TAOTAL

A foul place with ruthless people running around like rats.

I want to see France.

MADAME

You’re not missing much. The rich don’t care about anybody else but themselves. They built a grand palace from the sweat of our people.

TAOTAL

I heard about Versailles.

MADAME

A palace the size of city. Housed with the most beautiful ornaments but occupied with inane twits.

TAOTAL

It sounds like an enchanted land.
MADAME
Oh yes, with unicorns galloping in front of castles. The people over there would be afraid of you. You’re just a primitive savage to them.

TAOTAL
They should fear me. I would sing to my own death.

MADAME
Ooh, you’re such an animal, Taotal! If you scalp me, I might just like it. I’m tired of those Fort Rosalie soldiers. It’s nice to have a real warrior from time to time.

I have a gift for you. River pearls.

MADAME
They’re beautiful. Am I worth so many?

TAOTAL
Absolutely, you charm me.

MADAME
Somebody has to be charming around here . . . [sighs] Do you want to know something?

Yes Madame, what have you heard?

MADAME
The governor thinks African slaves are allying with you Indians. They just don’t know what plantations and what tribes. Of course, I’ve been spending extra time at White Earth plantation overseeing the slaves. More wine?

TAOTAL
Please.

[He pours Taotal more wine.]

Why are you helping us?

MADAME
When I first came over, I only came for riches. I heard about how you Indians were savages. I used to be a commander in the military long before I put on my first ballgown. I was ready to shoot any of you. Then I met some of you. That’s when I realized the French are the savage ones.

TAOTAL
How so?
MADAME
I fought for my country, but once they saw me in a petticoat, they caged me like an animal.

TAOTAL
You’re too pretty to be caged.

MADAME
I’ll have to accept that as a compliment. I like how some Natchez men are allowed to be women, and nobody treats them any differently. A handsome warrior like you can have anyone of them. Why are you coming to me?

TAOTAL
You have a certain je ne sais quoi.

MADAME
I have something the other girly-boys don’t have.

TAOTAL
You got everything.

MADAME
Yes, I got everything, but I’m too bitchy to marry. I have to be. I’m a slave overseer.

TAOTAL
Why did you become one?

MADAME
I wanted the money.

TAOTAL
I bet the slaves are really scared of you in your petticoats.

MADAME
I dress like a man at work, dummy. The White Earth slaves respect me. I’m giving them military training. They will join the Natchez when the time is right.

TAOTAL
Madame, you see all the river traffic. Have you seen anything out of place lately?

MADAME
Ask me a secret and I might tell. For the right price.

[Taotal puts coins on her desk.]

MADAME
I’ve seen an entire flotilla carrying war supplies. They were sailing to Fort Rosalie. Somebody told me something about it. I better not say anything else. I’ll get him into trouble.

TAOTAL

What did he tell you?

MADAME

A Frenchman tells his mistress secrets he will never tell his wife.

TAOTAL

How about this? *[He stands up and gives Madame a gentle kiss.]*

MADAME

The French are planning to attack the Natchez.

When?

I don’t know.

I have to go.

Don’t go. Please, stay the night.

I’m sorry.

*[Taotal gives Madame a lingering hug.]*

TAOTAL

Things are going to change. Goodbye Madame. I hope to see you again.

*[Taotal exits.]*
WEST 5

[Monsieur Tisserant’s runaway slaves, Auntie Louise, Jubah and Danton are out in the wilderness.]

JUBAH

How far is the hidden village?

DANTON

Five days from here.

JUBAH

I need to find my husband. I’m leaving.

DANTON

The slave hunters will be coming.

JUBAH

I’m going to find him!

AUNTIE LOUISE

Child, come to your senses.

JUBAH

No!!!

AUNTIE LOUISE

She’s made her decision.

DANTON

Auntie Louise, go with the others. We’ll catch up later.

AUNTIE LOUISE

Oh no, let the girl go by herself.

DANTON

Go!

AUNTIE LOUISE

You better hope that damn gift is guiding you right.

[Auntie Louise and Danton hug. She exits with the others.]

DANTON

I’ll help you find him.
I don’t want to be a burden.

Losing someone is the biggest burden in life.

[Danton and Jubah walk into the aisles of the theatre cautiously looking around. They’re holding hands.]

I can see him right now in my mind’s eye.

What direction should we go?

He isn’t too far. We’ll need to travel down St. Catherine’s Creek. I’ll pose as your master and you’ll be my slave.

Danton, I’m scared.

Ssshhh. Do I hear animals?

I hear voices.

They’re quiet now.

I hope they’re not slave hunters. Oh Danton, I can’t let them take me again.

I won’t let them take you.

Did you hear that? Some twigs just broke.

[They return to the stage. Three filthy looking men enter. One is an outlaw colonist. One is an Indian bandit. One is a renegade freedman. They’re dressed in ragged clothing.]

They don’t look like slave hunters.
DANTON
They’re swamp thugs. They’re not looking for us. They’re hunting for something else.

SWAMP THUG 1
It got away. These two scared it away.

SWAMP THUG 2
Oh la la! She looks expensive.

SWAMP THUG 3
We’re sweet on her.

SWAMP THUG 2
We’re sweet on him too.

JUBAH
Danton, do something!

DANTON
Something is here. I sense it staring at us. Disgusting swamp thugs, you’re in great danger.

SWAMP THUG 2
Danger gets us high.

SWAMP THUG 3
We’re out hunting for a Jumbee.

SWAMP THUG 1
Once we catch it, we’ll be the lords of everybody.

SWAMP THUG 3
See. We got a demon box to trap him.

[Swamp Thug 3 brandishes the demon box in front of Jubah and Danton. The Jumbee appears from behind a tree.]

THE JUMBEE
Hey, swamp trash, over here!

SWAMP THUG 1
[To Swamp Thug 3.] Open the demon box.

[Swamp Thug 3 opens the demon box.]

THE JUMBEE
I’ll tie you with thorns and flog you with whips of fire!!

[Danton jumps forward and knocks the demon box out of Swamp Thug 3’s hand. The swamp thugs run away. The Jumbee appears before Jubah and Danton.]

JUBAH
Don’t hurt us!

THE JUMBEE
Beloved Jubah, search the slave auctions on the piers of New Orleans. There you will find your love tenderly.

DANTON
Jubah, don’t listen to it.

[The Jumbee disappears into the darkness.]

JUBAH
It knew my name. Did you hear him?

DANTON
Don’t believe anything a Jumbee says.

JUBAH
He said to go to New Orleans.
WEST 6

[Antoine-Simon, Governor Périer, and Commander Chépart, stand in a courtyard just outside the Natchez grand temple. Nashoba stands to the side.]

ANTOINE-SIMON
The sun gifted you with good weather while on your journey.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
The sun is making us as tan as you. Monsieur Le Page du Pratz! Look at you! You’re looking more savage every time we see you.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
If the king were to set foot on this land, he wouldn’t be able to tell you from the Indians.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Monsieur, don’t forget your roots. Indianized Frenchmen have a difficult time giving up their wild ways.

ANTOINE-SIMON
This place suits me more than France ever did.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
If the king heard you say that.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Here comes one now.

[Four Indian guards carry The Great Sun on a litter. The Great Sun is followed by Tattooed Arm. The guards lower The Great Sun down to the ground. The Great Sun motions for everybody to sit down except Nashoba.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Honored Great Sun, we bring you gifts of coffee beans, velvet and two Chawasha slaves.  

THE GREAT SUN
We give our friends deer pelts, bear skins and river pearls.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
This is a great honor. Our nations will be friends as long as the sun shines.

[Mammon enters. He walks around the stage inspecting everybody.]

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220 The French variant of Chawasha is spelled Chaouacha.
GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Lately our friendship has been strained. Settlers have told me about a conspiracy between Indians and African slaves.

THE GREAT SUN
Your doubts about the Natchez has always been there. Nothing has changed.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Tattooed Serpent has been a splendid mediator. Where is he?

ANTOINE-SIMON
He is too ill to attend negotiations.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
How unfortunate.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
How sick is he?

ANTOINE-SIMON
Very unwell.

TATTOOED ARM
I take my brother’s duties in his absence.

MAMMON
[Speaking into Commander Chépart’s ear.] Do you want to negotiate policy with an Indian princess?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Madame, we menfolk often engage in heated debates.

TATTOOED ARM
I am very capable.

MAMMON
[Speaking into Commander Chépart’s ear.] She should be at home tending the hearth and mending hearts.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Is there a warrior who can take the duties of the war chief instead?

TATTOOED ARM
[Angrily.] I command the warriors. Accept it now or go away.

MAMMON
[Speaking into Commander Chépart’s ear.] Don’t let her speak to you like that.

THE GREAT SUN
She’s fair-minded and strong. She is our interim war chief and you will treat her as such.

MAMMON
[Speaking into Commander Chépart’s ear.] Your Tunica wife has a new role model. Soon she will be wearing the pants and you the petticoat.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
. . . and I’ll slap her across the face.

THE GREAT SUN
What did you say?

ANTOINE-SIMON
Are you fine monsieur?

THE GREAT SUN
I thought you said you’ll slap Tattooed Arm across the face?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
The heat must have gone to my head. I need some water.

[Nashoba pours him some water.]

THE GREAT SUN
I fear our good relations are fading. You claim your culture is civilized but your king has sent drunkards, criminals and vagabonds. My messengers say New Orleans is filthy and foul.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I object to your mischaracterizations. Many goodhearted families have recently immigrated. Some of them are German workers.

THE GREAT SUN
So that’s what you call those who speak the severe sounds. Germans.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
They are poor and desperate but work just as hard as the slaves, but for a tiny sum. More people are coming, they are skipping New Orleans and heading straight to the countryside.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
You must allow my officers to patrol around the periphery of your land. The security of the settlers is crucial.

TATTOOED ARM
That will not be a good idea. Our warriors will continue to patrol our nation while your soldiers guard the plantations.

MAMMON

[Speaking into Commander Chépart’s ear.] Just look at her. She likes being with Frenchmen. You should go for her.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

We will do our best at keeping law and order.

COMMANDER CHÉPART

[Says gruffly.] We have problems with your people too!

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Chépart, not now!

COMMANDER CHÉPART

[Angrily.] Your people are thieves. I’m tired of settlers coming up to me and saying Indians stole their stuff.

THE GREAT SUN

I will gladly punish these thieves you speak about. Bring them to me.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Commander Chépart! I should’ve listened to Dumont’s warning. I should’ve never reestablished you back to your post.

COMMANDER CHÉPART

I’m tired of all of these fake niceties. I’ll shut up now.

TATTOOED ARM

We abhor banditry. Let’s pray our good relations continue.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Let’s pray for the health of Tattooed Serpent.

[They pass the calumet to each other and take a puff.]
Tattooed Serpent’s body is elevated on an altar in the courtyard. A giant wooden statue of a rattlesnake is behind him. The eternal fire burns in front of his corpse. Flowers and human offerings are in front of the eternal fire. The human offerings are several kneeling members of Tattooed Serpent’s household. Their heads are covered with bags. They silently wait to die. The Great Sun, Tattooed Arm and Antoine-Simon stare at his corpse.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Tattooed Serpent was my greatest friend.

THE GREAT SUN
We lost our greatest peacekeeper.

ANTOINE-SIMON
History will remember him.

THE GREAT SUN
It’s unfair he was taken before me. I will follow him into the spirit world.

[He takes a knife and puts it up to his own throat. Antoine-Simon grabs the knife away and tosses it onto the ground. Old Flour Chief enters. He walks over and pats The Great Sun on the back.]

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
Stay strong. Your people need you now than ever before.

TATTOOED ARM
[Says gently.] He fought until the end.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
Our relations with the French will deteriorate now.

[Indian drums begin beating.]

TEMPLE MASTER
Those who have served the war chief will serve him in the spirit world. It’s a great honor. Let the wind lift their spirits to the highest place, to be forever at peace. We offer Tattooed Serpent’s beloved wife. His sister La Gloriouse. His first warrior. His slave. His slave’s wife. His medicine man and his medicine woman. These elder women and his war club maker.

TATTOOED ARM
[To the people.] We will not accept any children as sacrifices.

TEMPLE MASTER
These parents have already made an offering.
[A man and woman offer a corpse baby and place it in front of the human offerings.]

TEMPLE MASTER
Those sacrificed bring honor to their families. The dead will serve Tattooed Serpent as they did in life.

[The stage lights dim into darkness.]
OLD HAIR
Commander Chépart, what are you doing here?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Chief Old Hair, I come with an order.

[He gives the chief a piece of paper.]

OLD HAIR
What is this?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Old hair, you pathetic limping steer. You have always been friends with the English. You’ve known this for years; the soil you stand on belongs to the French empire. This is a treaty you will sign.

OLD HAIR
What does it say?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
It says that you must cede White Apple village. My plantation will replace it.

OLD HAIR
You just can’t come here and take what you want.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I have legal authority to take your land. You are subjects of Governor Périer.

OLD HAIR
Bullshit, a basketful of dung is what we’ll give you.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Then I will order my soldiers to burn your temple down.

OLD HAIR
The temple contains the bones of our ancestors! If you burn it down, you seal your doom.

MAMMON
[Into Commander Chépart’s ear.] Tell him if he defies you, the entire village will be destroyed.
COMMANDER CHÉPART
If you defy me, I'll destroy your entire village.

OLD HAIR
When you Frenchmen first came, you said there was plenty of space to build plantations far from my people. Now this!

[The Temple Master enters.]

TEMPLE MASTER
He is influenced by an evil spirit. It’s standing right next to him.

MAMMON
[Into Commander Chépart’s ear.] Tell them you are a man of God.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I’m a man of God. You are the subjects of the new king, his royal majesty Louis XV, in the custody of Governor Périer, and this is God’s land.

OLD HAIR
Our gardens haven’t ripened yet. If we go now, our food supplies will not last through the winter.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
That’s not my problem.

OLD HAIR
Give me time to consult with the other chiefs.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I will not wait. You and your people must go away!

OLD HAIR
I see that you are a powerful man. You are right. Just give my people some time. Every Natchez chief will pay you a worthy tribute for your patience.

[Commander Chépart laughs. Pats Old Hair on the back.]

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I finally met a smart Natchez.

[He gruffly exits. The soldiers follow.]
NORTH 2

[The Temple Master enters. The body of The Great Sun lies in the middle of the stage. The Temple Master begins banging a drum. Tattooed Arm, Old Flour Chief and his wife La Farine, Old Hair, and Antoine-Simon stand in front of the body. Nashoba and Taotal stand to the side.]

TEMPELE MASTER
Our beloved leader has passed into the spirit world, joining his recently departed brother.

[Tattooed Arm walks away and motions for Antoine-Simon to come over.]

TATTOOED ARM
I can’t take this. Two brothers in such a short time. Some say it was a suicide. Others say both were poisoned.

ANTOINE-SIMON
You’re the only leader the French can rely on now.

TATTOOED ARM
I don’t know how much longer I can keep relations peaceful. The other chiefs will try to convince me to accept the English as our allies.

ANTOINE-SIMON
You know how to take a punch . . .

TATTOOED ARM
. . . and I don’t easily bruise.

ANTOINE-SIMON
Your son is set to become the next Great Sun. You have more power now than at any time before.

TATTOOED ARM
My son is like his father, he knows how to throw a good punch.

ANTOINE-SIMON
The chiefs don’t trust him.

TATTOOED ARM
That’s because he is the son of a Frenchman.

ANTOINE-SIMON
The blood of two nations flow in the next Great Sun. May he show impartiality for both.
His youth will make him vulnerable to my demands.

[They return to join the others.]

TEMPLE MASTER
In the wake of the Great Sun’s death, we will sacrifice his household. Taotal, you were one of his slaves. You must participate in the mortuary ceremony.

TAOTAL
I will not die!

TEMPLE MASTER
What is this? You will not defy the ways of our ancestors.

TATTOOED ARM
I will not be a slave in the spirit world!

TEMPLE MASTER
You have no choice.

TAOTAL
I talked to these three old women. They decided to take my place. Sacrifice them instead of me.

[Three old women limp forward.]

TEMPLE MASTER
You’re a coward.

TAOTAL
I might be a coward but at least I’m not dead.

TEMPLE MASTER
Leave us!

TAOTAL
Does that mean I’m no longer a slave?

TEMPLE MASTER
It means you’re no longer a man. Don’t ever come back.

TAOTAL
Have a nice day!

[Taotal exits.]

TEMPLE MASTER
Nashoba, you were one of the Great Sun’s slaves. Come and be sacrificed.

NASHOBA
I proved my worth. The Great Sun adopted me as one of his sons.

TEMPLE MASTER
It is true? Is this African a man of rank now?

TATTOOED ARM
It is true.

TEMPLE MASTER
Nobody tells me anything. I’m only the Temple Master. Welcome to nobility, Nashoba man of rank.

OLD HAIR
What has honorable Nashoba done to earn his position?

TATTOOED ARM
He is advising us on how to construct a European-style fort.

LA FARINE
Who taught you how to build a fort?

NASHOBA
Master La Moune lent me out to the soldiers. I helped to construct Fort Rosalie.

OLD HAIR
This African might prove useful.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
Why bother building a fort? Either the French or the English will burn it down before it is completed. I don’t trust either one of them.

LA FARINE
Tattooed Arm, I don’t understand why you continue your friendship with the Louisianans. Look at how Chépart is treating us.

TATTOOED ARM
Don’t criticize me, La Farine. I will speak to the governor myself and get to the bottom of it.

OLD FLOUR CHIEF
You’re a stubborn woman. If you change your mind, the chiefs will be waiting.

[Old Flour Chief, Old Hair and La Farine exit. Saint Cosme enters.]
TATTOOED ARM
My son, our continuing alliance with the French has made us unpopular.

SAINT COSME
I love the French but I don’t love men like Commander Chépart.

Where were you all morning?

SAINT COSME
I was out hunting.

TATTOOED ARM
I am the Grand Female Sun, I know everything that happens around here. I want to hear it from your own lips. You met with the male nobles but not with the female nobles. Why?

SAINT COSME
We discussed how the French felt neglected. We plan on visiting them in New Orleans.

TATTOOED ARM
Don’t lie to your mother. Why weren’t any of our female leaders at the council?

I don’t know.

TATTOOED ARM
You do know. I will answer for you. You have seen the power of Frenchmen without female leaders, now you wish to be like them.

SAINT COSME
Our noblewomen are too attached to the gifts the Frenchmen bring. None of you can be relied on.

TATTOOED ARM
Not so! We keep you tempered, you men would have destroyed our people a long time ago! Are you planning to attack the French?

SAINT COSME
Mother, I can’t lie to you. We contacted every Indian nation. We’re going to destroy the French together.

TATTOOED ARM
What have the French done to you? They have given you everything you wanted. They will send for more warriors from across the waters. What you have done, my son, is sealed our destruction!
SAINT COSME
Tell me what I’ve always wanted to know.

TATTOOED ARM
You won’t like the answer.

SAINT COSME
I deserve to know the name of my father.

TATTOOED ARM
Once a missionary came down the great river. His name was Jean-Francois Buisson de Saint Cosme. That is who I named you after.

SAINT COSME
My father was a missionary?

TATTOOED ARM
Yes, my son. After he found out I was with our child, he went north. The last I heard he was killed by the Chitimacha. He told me to give you this cross after I told you.

[Saint Cosme’s face is incensed. He throws the cross into the eternal fire.]

TATTOOED ARM
Sometimes it’s good to not ask too many questions. Now be calm. We must let the people know who the next Great Sun is.

[She exits the temple. She walks to the edge of the stage and addresses the theater audience. Antoine-Simon, Nashoba, Old Hair, La Farine and Old Flour Chief watch Tattooed Arms’s announcement. The Jumbee lurks behind them all.]

TATTOOED ARM
Noble suns and honored people, men of rank, the death of two chiefs has been hard on us all. As long as the eternal flame burns, we will replace power with power . . .

[Nashoba carefully edges over to The Jumbee.]

NASHOBA
Why are you here?

THE JUMBEE
Your wife is coming for you.

TATTOOED ARM
. . . We once had hundreds of warriors under one sun . . .

NASHOBA
Bring me to her.

THE JUMBEE
Relax. She’ll find you when the time is right.

NASHOBA
Stop speaking to me then.

TATTOOED ARM
. . . The sun shining above planted a seed in me . . .

NASHOBA
They’ll see me talking to you.

THE JUMBEE
They’re too busy paying attention to that yapping thing.

TATTOOED ARM
. . . The leadership is still strong. I give you the next in line. Saint Cosme . . .

[Saint Cosme is brought in on a litter by four warriors. He looks bored.]

NASHOBA
He is the next leader? He is just a child.

THE JUMBEE
Speaking of children. I want what’s mine.

NASHOBA
When will Jubah come?

THE JUMBEE
Soon.
NORTH 3

MADAME

[Singing a bad song totally out of tune.] Oh la la, every night mistletoe hangs over my bed. One, two, three, mon chérie, it’s a holiday, kiss me. Oh la la, it’s Christmas every day. One, two, three, winter nights are gay.

[Tattooed Arm knocks.]

MADAME

Who is it?

TATTOOED ARM

It’s me.

[Madame answers the door.]

MADAME

Tattooed Arm, I haven’t drunk brandy with you for so long.

TATTOOED ARM

I haven’t been feeling like celebrating lately.

MADAME

It’s going to be Christmas in a few weeks. I know you Indians don’t celebrate it. Now I understand why you’re so glum.

TATTOOED ARM

Madame, something horrible is about to happen.

MADAME

Oh?

TATTOOED ARM

The male nobles have secretly met with the chiefs. They never leave female nobles out of council meetings. They are going to attack the French.

MADAME

Who told you that?

TATTOOED ARM

No, the real question is, who would tell you something like that?
I don’t know much about anything. There’s so much gossip around here. Something bad is bound to happen.

TATTOOED ARM
You are the one who has caused trouble.

MADAME
Oh, not me. I love everybody.

TATTOOED ARM
You got a big mouth!

MADAME
You will not speak to me like that in my cabin.

TATTOOED ARM
You told Taotal the French were planning to attack. Taotal told my son what you said. I love the French. They have given me everything. You’re evil.

MADAME
I never said anything to anybody.

TATTOOED ARM
Yes, you did, and because of that you will pay.

[She takes out a knife and stabs Madame in the stomach.]

MADAME
I was only trying to warn you. I love the Natchez more than I love the French. I love you Tattooed Arm.

[He falls to the ground and dies.]
[Saint Cosme and his warriors enter. They carry with them corn, oil and deer skins. They place the gifts in the middle of Fort Rosalie.]

SERGEANT LA JOYE
Monsieur, Saint Cosme is here.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
This early in the morning? That’s impossible!

SERGEANT LA JOYE
Monsieur, it’s true, he’s here.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Out of all the goddamn days of the year, they have to come today. Give me a minute.

[He exits the cabin with messy hair. He is still dressed in his bathrobe. He looks hungover from the night before. He walks stiffly over to Saint Cosme and his warriors.]

SAINT COSME
Looks like you had quite a night.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I’m okay.

SAINT COSME
These gifts will make you feel better. We pay you tribute.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Wait! Wait! I need to sit down for moment.

[He sits down on a log.]

SAINT COSME
Are you okay?

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I’m fine.

SAINT COSME
We offer this calumet in peace.

[They sit down and pass the calumet.]
COMMANDER CHÉPART
Saint Cosme, the strangest thing happened yesterday. Two soldiers came to spoil your plans on attacking the fort.

SAINT COSME
They lied. They want to make two friends look like fools.

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I’ll drink to that. Here’s to friendship!

[He grabs a bottle of wine and swigs it.]

COMMANDER CHÉPART
Hair of the coyote! I chained the liars in the brig. Let’s bring them out here.

[Sergeant La Joye returns with the two soldiers.]

COMMANDER CHÉPART
I don’t believe a word these two fools said. Did you say the Natchez were planning to attack today?

[One of Saint Cosme’s warrior’s fires a rifle into the air. Commander Chépart blows a whistle to alert his soldiers. Several warriors jump out of the bushes and shoot the soldiers with rifles. More French soldiers enter and fire their rifles at the warriors. Loud gunshots and Indian war cries are heard. Commander Chépart runs around in a circle while blowing his whistle and then exits. Saint Cosme chases after him and exits. One Natchez warrior is shot and falls down dead. Every French soldier is shot dead by Natchez warriors who use rifles, not bows and arrows, clubs, tomahawks or spears. The warriors exit. Several shots are heard in the distance. Chépart enters and runs across the stage while being chased by Saint Cosme and his warriors, who are laughing while prodding Chépart’s butt with the tips of their rifles. Chépart trips and falls.]

CHÉPART
I didn’t mean it. I was only doing what the governor told me to do.

[He stands back up and exits the stage. Saint Cosme and his warriors continue chasing after him and exit.]

CHÉPART
[From offstage.] Please don’t kill me. I’ll do whatever you want. Don’t do it . . .

[A rifle fires. All is silent for a moment. Several screams of a female comes from offstage. A pregnant German woman enters. She runs across the stage to the body of a dead soldier. Her palm touches his face. She sobs. Two warriors enter. The German woman grabs a knife from the ground and runs toward the warriors.]

GERMAN WOMAN
Hurensöhne!

[The first warrior knocks the knife out of her hand. The second warrior wraps his arms around her from behind. The first warrior grabs the knife from the ground and stabs her in the stomach. She bends over and falls down to the ground. She immediately starts giving a spontaneous birth. She moans and screams from giving birth and from dying.]

**GERMAN WOMAN**

*Weakly.* My baby is coming. Please don’t harm my baby . . .

[She dies. The warriors take the stillborn and place it on her bosom. The two warriors exit. A hooded angel of death enters. She picks up the corpse of the infant and gently cradles it in her arms. The sounds of gunfire, screaming and native war cries continue in the distance.]

**HOODED ANGEL OF DEATH**

Poor child. This world didn’t give you enough time to feel your mother’s kisses.
NORTH 5

[Old Hair and Old Flour Chief lay dead and covered in blood. Natchez warriors lay dead in front of them. The hooded angel of death gently rocks the dead infant in her arms. The angel has an austere face. Mammon turns around and sees The Jumbee hiding in the bushes. The French soldiers are slumped, exhausted and covered with blood. Saint Cosme, Tattooed Arm, and Nashoba are in slave chains. Governor Périer stands over them. Right next to them stands Marie Baron, Officer Dumont, and Taotal. Marie Baron is hiding her face and crying on Officer Dumont’s shoulder. La Farine’s limbs are tied to two posts in the middle of the stage. Her arms and legs are attached to four ropes, positioning her body into an X formation.]

MARIE BARON
They killed Jean. They killed Jean

OFFICER DUMONT
He died a hero.

MAMMON
[To the audience.] What did the Natchez do?

THE JUMBEE
[To the audience.] They revolted!

HOODED ANGEL OF DEATH
[To the audience.] They had a revolution.

MAMMON
[To the audience.] What did the White Earth plantation slaves do?

THE JUMBEE
[To the audience.] They revolted!

HOODED ANGEL OF DEATH
[To the audience.] They killed their master and brought his wife to the Natchez.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Who killed slave master Martin Desnoyers? Who kidnapped his wife, Marie-Angelique? Who taught their slaves to shoot cannons for the Indians?

OFFICER DUMONT
They were led astray by their Ganymede overseer, the man who likes to be called Madame.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Where is Madame? I want his head brought to me on a silver platter!
OFFICER DUMONT
Somebody already killed the over-perfumed tart.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Who would do such a thing?

TATTOOED ARM
I killed him, governor. Afterward, I sent two soldiers to warn Commander Chépart about the attack, but he refused to listen. I was then forced to sabotage out of desperation.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
How so?

TATTOOED ARM
Every chief was given a bundle of sticks. My son put a bundle in the village temple. Each day he was supposed to pull out one stick. I snuck into the temple and took a few out, so our warriors would attack on the wrong day.

SAINT COSME
Mother, you betrayed us!

TATTOOED ARM
You allowed the chiefs to sway your heart. The Frenchmen held nothing against you for being half Natchez.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I have a difficult time believing your story, Tattooed Arm. This didn’t happen when your brothers were alive.

SAINT COSME
You always resented the Natchez, governor. You waited until my uncles were both dead. You were going to attack because you thought I was just a boy.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Who told you about a French attack?

SAINT COSME
[Pointing.] Madame told our spy, Taotal.

TAOTAL
What he says is not true. I feel nothing for my people.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
He was our spy! Taotal you snake! You have proven to have no allegiance to anybody but yourself.
TAOTAL
No monsieur, I have the body of a Natchez but the soul of a Frenchman.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Prove to me you have no lingering allegiance to your people. I give you the vile La Farine. Burn her the Indian way. [To the crowd] Messieurs and mesdames, La Farine was responsible for the death of a soldier. She had her warriors burn him the Indian way. He suffered over the course of three long days. As punishment, she shall be burned in the manner of her country.

[Taotal takes a burning torch and burns La Farine’s left shoulder. She flinches but doesn’t scream.]

LA FARINE
You dog! Our warriors will find you and make you suffer more than I will suffer!

[Taotal burns her stomach with the torch. Her body flinches but she shows no fear.]

LA FARINE
You think that hurts me? You Indians over there like watching this? Come here Tattooed Arm, join me and get burned too!

MARIE BARON
[To the audience.] Every time a Natchez warrior died. They buried a Frenchwoman alive! They took our children and cooked them on spits! La Farine laughed at us. Look who’s laughing now.

HOODED ANGEL OF DEATH
God will not condone this!

MAMMON AND JUMBEE
[Mockingly.] But we do!

HOODED ANGEL OF DEATH
Bless many different nations united within one tribe. Bless many different nations dancing together on one land.

LA FARINE
Taotal, you never learned how to properly pleasure women, especially me!

[Taotal burns her crotch with the torch. She sneers and flinches but refuses to show any submission or pain.]

LA FARINE
You will all pay for this! I curse this place! New Orleans will flood with your children’s tears!

[Sergeant La Joye enters looking rather slobby while holding a knife. He scuttles across the stage to La Farine.]
SERGEANT LA JOYE
Let me taste it. I got to taste it. I’m going to taste her. Get out of my way!

[He stops in front of La Farine and makes a cutting motion. La Farine lets out a gruesome scream. He takes a piece of her flesh and eats it.]

SERGEANT LA JOYE
[To the audience.] Her tenderloin is too moist, char her gristle some more!

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Sergeant La Joye! You are a disgusting and vile man! Arrest him! Make him run the gauntlet!

[Officer Dumont and another soldier chain up the cannibal and lead him away.]

MARIE BARON
Madam, how does this feel?

[She slams a pointed cane into La Farine’s body. La Farine finally dies and her head droops forward.]

HOODED ANGEL OF DEATH
Many dead as gunfire flashes. Another battle as armor clashes. Cannons heard as dignity crashes. Hatred will amount to nothing but ashes.

MAMMON
The angel of death is morbid but sweet.

THE JUMBEE
So sweet, her angel farts must smell like almond macarons.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
I will ship every Natchez to a slave market in Santo Domingo. I have no use for you anymore.

SAINT COSME
See mother, that is the type of friendship the French know so well.
NORTH 6

[On a New Orleans pier. Tattooed Arm, Saint Cosme and Nashoba are in chains. A slave ship is at the end of the pier. Governor Périer and Dumont watch a slave driver whip the slaves forward.]

SLAVE DRIVER

Move your asses!

NASHOBA

Governor Périer, you are mistaken. I’m a freedman.

SLAVE DRIVER

[To Nashoba.] Hey you, shut your trap!

NASHOBA

I will not! I am just as free as you. Now unchain me.

[The slave driver walks over to Nashoba and is about to whip him. Governor Périer stops the slave driver.]

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Stop! Let the boy speak.

NASHOBA

Monsieur Périer, do you remember me? My master was Monsieur La Moune. He volunteered me when you needed labor to build Fort Rosalie.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Oh yes, I remember you. Louisiana thanks you for your hard work. However, the La Moune plantation burned to the ground, then every slave ran away. How do I know you did not commit the arson?

NASHOBA

What were we supposed to do after our master died? Wait around? The Natchez captured me. I became one of their slaves but the Great Sun freed me.

SAINT COSME

It’s true. My uncle freed him before he died.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Why didn’t you fight for the Indians?

NASHOBA

I went looking for my wife.
[Danton and Jubah enter.]

JUBAH

[To Danton.] That’s him!

DANTON

[To Nashoba.] There you are! How dare you run away.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

And who are you?

DANTON

Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Danton Bonvillian. I’m just a simple farmer who recently immigrated. My slave Nashoba ran away. He is chained right there.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

He told me he’s a freedman.

DANTON

Is that so? He belongs to me. Isn’t that right Nashoba?

NASHOBA

Yes. I belong to him. I was out collecting water for Monsieur Danton when the Natchez captured me.

[Danton walks over to the slave driver.]

DANTON

The Natchez illegitimately acquired him. They had no authority to turn him into a freedman. Now hand him over.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Unchain the slave.

DANTON

Thank you, governor.

[The slave driver unchains Nashoba. Nashoba looks over his shoulder at Tattooed Arm. She gives him a nod. Exit Nashoba, Danton and Jubah. Antoine-Simon hurries onstage.]

ANTOINE-SIMON

Governor! Free the grand female sun! She remains an ally.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER

Your allies burned Louisianan houses down, including yours.
ANTOINE-SIMON
Surely you are an intelligent man. You very well know their nation is split. Tattooed Arm told me everything she tried to do.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Her chiefs did not listen to her. She is neither fearsome or strong. She is the last vestige of her people. Ready the slaves for the voyage!

ANTOINE-SIMON
You have forgotten gentleman’s warfare.

GOVERNOR PÉRIER
Don’t play that chivalrous rubbish on me. We battle in a different theater. Move the slaves forward.

SLAVE DRIVER
[The Slave Driver whips the ground.] Move it!

[The slaves start walking but before they exit, Antoine-Simon runs forward and hugs Tattooed Arm.]

ANTOINE-SIMON
[Weeping] I’m sorry Tattooed Arm. There is nothing I can do to make this right.

TATTOOED ARM
[She looks at him face to face.] Write all that has happened on your white bark. Let the world remember us. One day, they will know the truth deep in their hearts.

ANTOINE-SIMON
So long good friend.

[The slaves exit.]
[Jubah and Nashoba stare lovingly at each other. Danton stands at the back of the stage. Jubah takes Nashoba’s hands and puts it on her stomach.]

JUBAH

It’s yours.

NASHOBA

Look at what our love made together.

JUBAH

There’s a hidden village in the hills. We can have our baby there.

NASHOBA

[Looks down sadly.] I sure am happy.

JUBAH

I almost gave up looking for you.

NASHOBA

You were never the type to give up.

JUBAH

I had help from my friend.

NASHOBA

He’s a real good liar. That story about him owning me sure was something! I like him.

JUBAH

He’s just like us. His people placed him in cages a few times.

NASHOBA

He’s a criminal?

JUBAH

Yes. They didn’t treat him right.

NASHOBA

I’ll take a criminal over a rich man any day.

JUBAH

We need to listen him. He has the gift. That is what led us to you.

NASHOBA
He has the gift?

JUBAH

Yes. Trust him. I do.

NASHOBA

Why did he help you?

JUBAH

He saw a beacon of light in all this darkness.

NASHOBA

Your love for me was so powerful, it inspired a stranger.

JUBAH

It inspired a friend.

[They move forward and kiss.]
NORTH 8

[Jubah, Danton and Nashoba arrive in a small village full of run-down shacks. The dead bodies of ex-slaves are slumped over.]

JUBAH
God almighty a fever got them.

NASHOBA
Don’t touch anything.

DANTON
Hello? Is anybody here?

NASHOBA
Don’t be afraid. We’re not slave hunters.

JUBAH
You don’t have to hide.

[Danton recognizes the dead body of Auntie Louise. He bends down and weeps over her body.]

DANTON
She was so strong. Somehow, I thought she would live forever.

JUBAH
Is there no mercy? They spent their entire lives without freedom, only to come here and die.

NASHOBA
There is no place for our kind in this life.

[The Jumbee enters and walks over to the three.]  

THE JUMBEE
I did what I said I would do.

NASHOBA
Leave us alone, demon!

THE JUMBEE
Tell your wife, Nashoba. Remember the deal we made?

NASHOBA
I made no deal with you.
THE JUMBEE

Give me what I came for.

NASHOBA

Jubah, run.

[She starts running but freezes. The Jumbee claps his hands twice, then makes a motion reeling her back to him. She walks backwards.]

JUBAH

Nashoba, tell him to stop.

[She bends over and screams in pain.]

JUBAH

My water just broke.

THE JUMBEE

Your son is mine.

[Nashoba helps her sit down on the ground. Danton helps with birthing.]

NASHOBA

Leave her alone!

[She lays on her back and screams.]

JUBAH

It’s too early. It’s too early.

NASHOBA

Demon, you tricked me.

THE JUMBEE

I did your revenge. I watched Master La Moune and his sons burn to their deaths.

NASHOBA

You didn’t reunite me with Jubah. Danton did.

THE JUMBEE

I told Jubah where she could find her beloved. I saw you struggling on a New Orleans pier long before the soldiers captured you.

[Jubah screams.]

DANTON
Hold my hand. You can squeeze it if you want.

THE JUMBEE
Your husband promised to give me his unborn, if I could reunite both of you.

JUBAH
Is it true?

[Jubah screams again.]

DANTON
Breathe. Breathe.

NASHOBA
I see its head. Push. Push.

JUBAH
Something is happening. It’s being torn out of me! The baby is coming.

[She gives birth. Nashoba cradles their crying child.]

NASHOBA
It’s a boy.

THE JUMBEE
Your son will become a powerful leader. He will enslave those who have enslaved. He will tyrannize those who have tyrannized.

[Danton takes out an ordinary tobacco box from his bag. He turns and faces the demon.]

DANTON
Jumbee, you might be powerful, but I’ve trapped demons far worse than you. The slaves taught me hoodoo. I will trap you in my demon box.

THE JUMBEE
I’ve obliterated hoodoo practitioners more amateurish than you.

[Danton opens the tobacco box and says a spell.]

DANTON
Ancient ancestors, imprison the evil that wants to snuff out hope. Entrap the darkness that wants to enslave innocence. Trap the ignorant swamp demon in this demon box. Eternally! So mote it be. Oh wait, I almost forgot the magical phrase . . .

THE JUMBEE
Swine hound, you’ll never catch me! I’m getting my hairy ass out of here.
[The Jumbee runs and exits.]

DANTON
. . . arem zizzle zum bugaloo. Ferocious Jumbee, where are you? [To the audience.] Life’s little demons, so ancient, so stupid, so cowardly. One must never fear what one can outsmart.

[He takes out a pipe, takes some tobacco out of the box, puts the tobacco in the pipe and puffs.]

DANTON
An ordinary box of tobacco does the trick.

NASHOBA
Thank you, my quick tonteed friend

[Jubah suckles their child.]

JUBAH
Tell me it’s not true. Did you make a deal with the Jumbee?

NASHOBA
Will you hate me forever if I told you the truth?

JUBAH
It depends on what you mean by forever.

NASHOBA
I made a deal so we could be together again.

JUBAH
You sold our son so you could buy me back into your life?!!

NASHOBA
Yes.

JUBAH
How could you do that to me? To our son!

NASHOBA
Please, please forgive me.

JUBAH
It might take me forever to forgive you!

[Nashoba cries.]
NASHOBA
I just wanted to be with you again! I promise you, I will always protect our son for now on. I would die for him.

DANTON
So sorry to interrupt. We need to leave right away. Your child is in danger. Small pox killed these people.

[Jubah hands their son to Nashoba. They help her stand up. She moans in pain.]

JUBAH
I can hardly walk.

NASHOBA
We don’t have to go far. We just need to get away from the village.

Lean on us. Stop when you have to.

JUBAH
Where are we going?

DANTON
We’ll be safe once we get to the other side of that hill.

There’s no safe place for people like us.

NASHOBA
There is. We’ll find it. One day.

DANTON
Maybe one day, we’ll all live in a cabin together, far away from everybody. Free from the hatred of others. Me, you, our son, Danton, as family.

[A red star appears in the sky.]

NASHOBA
Look up!

DANTON
It’s a red star.

JUBAH
It’s moving!
DANTON

It’s heading west.

NASHOBA

There is a light that will always illuminate the way.

DANTON

We’ll go that way.

JUBAH

What’s out there?

DANTON

I don’t know . . . but if we continue walking, maybe we’ll find freedom.

[One moment of thoughtful silence.]

JUBAH

I wonder what freedom feels like?

NASHOBA

Freedom must feel like family.

DANTON

We’ll always be family if we stay together.

[They walk toward the west.]

NASHOBA

[Laughing.] Danton, you . . . a hoodoo master. Now that’s a good one!

DANTON

I had to think that one up quickly, and I don’t got the gift either.

JUBAH

What?!

DANTON

The only magic I know is smooth talking.

JUBAH

I bet you can talk us out of any situation, right?

DANTON

Right.
[They all laugh and exit.]

The End
Epilogue
The primary sources on the Natchez Revolt of 1729 were more difficult to find than the well-known Indian or colonial massacres, like the Jamestown Massacre or the Mystic Massacre. The revolt should be just as famous as the Jamestown Massacre. Since I was focusing on invisible history, mainstream history has completely ignored Native American females. I was not happy with just Pocahontas and Sacajawea. I knew there were more Native American women who had influenced North American history, perhaps just as much as white men. I spent countless hours rediscovering many different female chiefs who have been almost forgotten in the American consciousness. Quite surprisingly, I decided to write about one of the most obscure female figures in Native American history, Tattooed Arm.

As we know from my play and research, Tattooed Arm betrayed her nation. Then she was captured by the French, sold into slavery and shipped off to Santo Domingo, even after she told the French how she tried to stop her male contemporaries from engaging in war with them. Why did the French sell an important and powerful ally like Tattooed Arm? Colonial men saw a powerful female chief as a threat to patriarchy.

Gender, Race, and Power in Jubah and Nashoba.

Jubah and Nashoba investigates the gender order of the patriarchal and imperialist French versus the gender egalitarian Natchez regional power. Gender equality does not necessarily mean a society extends equality to the rest of the society. The hierarchical Natchez social structure meant certain people did not have agency or freedom. Social stratification existed in some early Native American societies. The sun moiety dominated the commoner miche-miche-quipy moiety and slaves. This means the female suns, just like the male suns, dominated

those with less power. Social stratification existed even when their social order required exogamy between the moieties. Some people believe North American cultures had a kinder, gentler, type of slavery. They argue that since some Indian tribes practiced captive warfare, and since captured slaves were eventually adopted, somehow that made captive slavery better than chattel slavery. Was captive slavery kinder than chattel slavery? If we could go back in time and ask a kidnapped victim, who would likely never see his/her family ever again, what would he/she tell us? In the case of the southeastern woodland tribes, dominant tribes actively adopted chattel slavery. The Natchez were not immune to the slave economy, and therefore, women in power participated in subjugating forced labor.

My preliminary research about gender roles and female chiefs branched beyond what I thought I already knew about Native American history. I truly did not know what I was in store for. The following mentions will be brief. I want other historians, authors and playwriters to add to the reintroduction of female political leaders and warriors into the American consciousness. When anybody mentions influential Indian leaders, only Indian male leaders enter people’s minds, usually Sitting Bull, Chief Joseph and Geronimo. Not much is known about the first mention of a female chief. Historian Valerie Shirer Mathes helped reintroduce women chiefs into the modern conversation. Mathes wrote how in 1540 Hernando de Soto came across a Cutifachiqui cacica, who was the widow of a chief.\(^\text{222}\) She was known as Lady Cofitachequi. In addition to the earliest De Soto record, other North American female chiefs were the following:

**Anacaona** (1474-1503 Taino) Most people know about Anacaona because Christopher Columbus and his brothers were responsible for subjugating her. Anacaona was a Taino born

into a family of chiefs. One Spaniard’s first encounter was seeing her being brought forth on a golden litter by her subjects.\textsuperscript{223} Her husband was a chief in a nearby locality. Her father was a high chief of what is Hispaniola today. Female Taino chiefs were called \textit{cacica}, and Hispaniola was known as \textit{Kiskeya}. Cacica Anacaona and her brother Cacique Bohechio were equal negotiators when Christopher Columbus arrived in Kiskeya in 1496. Columbus agreed to give a tribute of food and cotton to the Taino in order to let his men port and trade on the island.

The Taino were matrilineal and had egalitarian rule between the genders. The property of the Taino was passed down to the eldest children through the female line. At first, Taino relations with the Spaniards were cordial. Not long after, the Spaniards encroached onto the rest of the island. In 1503, eighty caciques met in a council house to discuss the foreigners. Spanish governor Nicolas de Ovando set fire to the council house. Mass burning happened to the caciques. Anacaona was eventually executed by hanging. She was the first recorded instance of a female chief killed for not submitting to European men.

\textbf{Weetamo} (c. 1635-1676 Pocasset) The Pocasset was a band of the Wampanoag. The Wampanoag, like other Algonquians, had women leaders, while it was less common than their male contemporaries. Weetamo commanded an army of 300 men.\textsuperscript{224} Indian female leaders threatened the patriarchal Puritans living nearby. One needs to compare the gender power differentials between Puritans and Pocasset to understand a culture clash that would eventually lead to the social marginalization of Native American women that has lasted centuries.


\textsuperscript{224} Sonneborn, 268.
Weetamo operated in a more gender egalitarian society, not far from a society where the Salem Witch Trials happened only a few decades later in 1692-1693. The Puritans did not have a high opinion of the natives in the area. A minister named Cotton Mather thought, “the deceived Indians” were tricky. He wrote in one of his four hundred books, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, that “the Indians which came from far to settle about Mexico, were in their Progress to that Settlement, under a Conduct of the Devil, very strangely Emulating what the Blessed God gave to Israel in the Wilderness.”

After the English defeated the Wampanoag in 1676, Cotton Mather’s father, Increase Mather, published a book four years before becoming president of Harvard University. The title was *A Brief History of Warr with the Indians in New-England about Chief Weetamo’s beheading and her head being displayed on a pole:*

August 6. An Indian that deserted his Fellows, informed the inhabitants of Taunton that a party of Indians who might be easily surprised, were not very far off, and promised to conduct any that had a mind to apprehend those Indians, in the right way towards them; whereupon about twenty Souldiers marched out of Taunton, and they took all those Indians, being in number thirty and six, only the Squaw-Sachem of Pocasset, who was next unto Philip in respect of the mischief that hath been done, and the blood that hath been shed in this Warr, escaped alone; but not long after some of Taunton finding an Indian Squaw in Metapoiset newly dead, cut off her head, and it hapned to be Weetamoo, i. e. Squaw-Sachem her head. When it was set upon a pole in Taunton, the Indians who were prisoners there, knew it presently, and made a most horrid and diabolical Lamentation, crying out that it was their Queens head.

While Weetamo may have been a nuisance for the Puritans, she was a heroine to the Wampanoag. Puritanical gender inequality still has an influence on American political structures.

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today. America has not produced a female president as of this writing, while the Pocasset had an influential female leader centuries ago.

**Cockacoeske** (ca. 1640 – ca.1686 Pamunkey) After Cockacoeske’s husband Totopotomoi died, she took his place when the Virginia colonial government made her “queen.” This was most likely because she was the first signatory of the Treaty of 1677 or Treaty of Middle Plantation, a treaty that ended hostilities between the Virginians and area Indian groups. The treaty signaled how the Virginian Algonquins sought peace.\(^{227}\) The treaty was between Charles II of England and several tribes guaranteeing them concessions as long as they remained obedient to the royal crown. The treaty states, “That no English shall Seat or Plant nearer then Three miles of any Indian Town.”\(^{228}\) The queen of Pamunkey was recognized in certain special dignities. The Virginia tribes received three arrows and beaver skins as an annual tribute for submitting to English authority.\(^{229}\)

**Isomgosiono** (Queen Ann c. 1637-1715 Pamunkey) Isomgosiono ruled over a large swath of land of what is coastal Virginia today. The Pamunkey tribe was part of Chief Powhatan’s confederacy. Queen Betsy Ann’s non-colonial name was Isomgosiono. Cockacoeske was her aunt whom she succeeded.\(^{230}\) A series of Indian raids from Maryland into Virginia was


the premise for Bacon’s Rebellion. A force of 1000 colonial cavalrymen and volunteers attacked the Pamunkey, and while Isomgosiono was not involved in Indian hostilities, she and her people suffered.

**Tattooed Arm** (died 1731 Natchez) Tattooed Arm was a Natchez grand female sun allied with the French, while other Natchez villages were allied with the English. Tensions between the village factions got to a breaking point. Tattooed Arm tried to keep the French alliance strong but she was not taken seriously after the paramount chief and war chief, who were her brothers, both died.

**Queen Aliquippa** (approx. 1680-1754 Mingo) A Quaker named Thomas Chalkey described a woman leading thirty families and living on several rivers in Ohio country in the early eighteenth century. The Mingo were primarily Seneca and Cayuga migrants. Queen Aliquippa expected the same treatment as her fellow male rulers. Ambassador to Pennsylvania colony, Conrad Weiser, recounted missing her while on a diplomatic meeting in Logtown, PA. Queen Aliquippa demanded Weiser’s presence with tribute. She ridiculed him for not having enough gun powder. In a similar manner, George Washington learned Queen Aliquippa was angry after he bypassed her for a diplomatic meeting. Washington writes:

> ... I went-up about three Miles to the Mouth of Yaughyaughane to visit Queen Aliquippa, who had expressed great Concern that we had passed her in going to the Fort. I made her a Present of a Matchcoat and a Bottle of Rum; which latter was thought much the best present of the two.\(^{232}\)

Perhaps Washington’s and Weiser’s slights could have been from mere ignorance, but they did have some context about how to negotiate with native women. Since the Mingo were

\(^{231}\) J. Mooney, *The Powhatan Confederacy*, 140-141.

made up of Cayuga and Seneca ethnicities, land was associated with women. Cayuga women were in charge of the property. Iroquois clan mothers met every year to distribute communal land tracts to individual families for development. Weiser was involved in land deeds sold from the Seneca to Pennsylvania colony. Washington was a military man who dealt with Iroquois sachems negotiating land deeds on behalf of the clan mothers. Washington and Weiser passed Queen Aliquippa over because they did not want to be submissive to an Indian woman by having to pay tribute.

Tacumwah (Marie Louise c. 1720-c. 1790 Miami) One of the first documented divorce cases in America was between a native woman and a colonial man. Tacumwah and Antoine Joseph Baptiste Richardville reached the stage of irreconcilable differences. Richardville was also known as “the Wildcat” or Peshewa in the Miami language. Tacumwah’s family used to run a portage but the Maisonville family was granted a monopoly by the British crown in 1771. Tacumwah believed she had the rights to her inheritance that she received from her mother in the matrilineal tradition. Richardville believed he had the right to his wife’s possessions and land from the patriarchal tradition. The Maisonville family argued that they were granted control of the portage not Tacumwah. The case went to court at Fort Detroit on September 18, 1774. The court ruled in Tacumwah’s favor.

Nanyehi (Nancy Ward ca. 1738-1822 or 1824 Cherokee) Nanyehi sat in councils with chiefs and made important decisions for the Cherokee. Nanyehi’s name means One Who Goes


About, which accurately describes her role as a negotiator and ambassador. She participated in the Battle of Talwila in 1755 between the Cherokee and the Creeks. Nanyehi was reportedly to have hid behind a log and after watching the death of her husband named Kingfisher, she picked up Kingfisher’s rifle and led her people to victory.\(^{235}\) The act of bravery led her to the status as Beloved Women in the chief’s council. Nanyehi was given an African slave who belonged to the Creeks by her battle companions, then she introduced her people to slavery.\(^{236}\) Nanyehi was a peacemaking diplomat between the colonists and the Cherokee, when she saved the life of Mrs. William Bean, wife of Tennessee’s first permanent settler. She stopped Bean from getting burned by the Cherokee and said, "No woman shall be burned at the stake while I am Beloved Woman."\(^{237}\)

Toypurina (1760-1799 Tongva) Toypurina led six Tongva villages in a rebellion against the Mission San Gabriel Arcangel. She and three men, one of them named Nicolas Jose, went to the mission. A spy, most likely an anonymous Tongva, overheard their plot and alerted the padres who lied in wait until the rebels approached.\(^{238}\) Toypurina and Nicolas Jose were tried and found guilty. Toypurina’s story revealed how Spanish missionaries dealt with powerful native females. The heredity chief system of California’s Gabrielino-Tongva of the Los Angeles basin meant chiefs were either male or female. Toypurina was, by all rights, a hereditary chief and felt


\(^{236}\) Ibid., 357.

\(^{237}\) Ibid., 354.

it was her obligation to protect her people from the misdeeds, broken promises, and ill treatment from the Catholic padres. Toypurina convinced the Padres that she had converted to Catholicism. Padre Miguel Sanchez spared her life and banished Toypurina to a faraway mission in northern California called San Juan Bautista.\textsuperscript{239} Her banishment was indicative of a larger picture. Spanish sailors sometimes abducted Gabrielino-Tongva women and took them away on ships. A padre abducting Toypurina from her people and forcing her somewhere else reflects Catholic gender domination.

On October 23, 2014, the Gabrieleno-Tongva band of Mission Indians performed in the Mission Playhouse the story of Toypurina. Toypurina was co-written by two members of her nation, Matthew Lovio and Andrew Morales. Indigenous history is being reclaimed by tribal members writing about their historical figures.

**Running Eagle** (ca. 1850s-ca. 1878 Blackfeet) Running Eagle was not a chief, but she challenged binary gender roles. Her birth name was Otaki. When young, she only played with boys.\textsuperscript{240} Her father gave her a bow and arrow and taught her to hunt.\textsuperscript{241} Young Otaki was successful at stealing eleven horses from the Crow tribe while on a raid.\textsuperscript{242} She was allowed to go on a vision quest, a spiritual endeavor that was reserved only for Blackfeet boys. Her vision was the sun told her that if she never married, she would become a successful warrior.\textsuperscript{243}


\textsuperscript{241} Ibid., 5.

\textsuperscript{242} Ibid., 124.

\textsuperscript{243} Ibid., 246.
Gouyen (c. 1857-1903 Apache) Gouyen’s husband was killed by a Comanche in the 1870s. To avenge his death, Apache oral history tells about how Gouyen slipped into the camp of her husband’s killer, and tricked him while drunk into seducing her. Gouyen killed him, took his scalp and returned triumphantly to her people. Gouyen and the Apaches were captured by the United States and placed on the San Carlos Reservation. She escaped the reservation with Geronimo but she was caught and imprisoned in Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

The main question I had after rediscovering these women was: Why don’t we see any of their faces on dollar bills? Why was the focus taken away from Native American female chiefs in the first place? One answer is female chiefs re-conceptualizes the status quo of gender stereotypes. America forgot about these women because they were queered, in other words, they did not fit the Eurowestern stereotype of femininity, and therefore not taken seriously. The view that women are warriors but not mothers, as chiefs but not wives, refutes anthropologically invented biologically-based gender roles. Gender myths of gentle, nurturing, docile women upheld male power. All of these women subverted Eurowestern male conceptions of what it meant to be women.

What did Louisianan men, fresh off the boat, expect Indian women to be? Mother Nature meant nature was feminized to the Euro-colonial imagination. “Primitive” people were exoticized and eroticized. The entire natural world has been feminized, since no culture outside of European civilization subjugated mother nature to build their empires on. Gender theoretician Anne McClintock writes how colonization became a sexual fetish for European explorers during the Age of Enlightenment: “Thus, for Rene Descartes, the expansion of male knowledge

244 Henrietta H. Stockel, *Chiricahua Apache Women and Children* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 68.
amounted to a violent property arrangement that made men ‘masters and possessors of nature.’ By categorizing women as nature and men as culture, nature was to be subordinated by culture, thus the subordination of women and primitives was necessary. Descartes dualism influenced the dichotomy of either savage or civilization. Thus, the entire world was one mass property management. Female political leaders in the Americas did not fit the definition of needing male management.

As the European enlightenment influenced the long established Eurowestern patriarchy. Gender stratification became enmeshed in science. Early anthropological studies theorized biological differences between the sexes, which were then equated to binary gender roles. These theories backed long-held patriarchal assumptions of biological determinism. “Facts” eventually developed portraying men-as-aggressors with an intrinsic evolutionary ability to lead, while women were portrayed as nurturers with an intrinsic ability to raise children. Ironically, European women were compared to children. Non-European women were compared to apes or cavewomen, and early anthropology tried to prove it. As McClintock would say scientific racism. Likewise, one can say scientific sexism left the door open for men to downgrade the political power of female leaders into domesticity, needing male managers in teepees, cabins, plantation kitchens, and virgin lands near and far. Scientific sexism was eventually challenged by feminist theorists and cultural anthropologists when a variety of gender roles did not fit Eurowestern dualism.

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245 McClintock, 23.

246 Ibid., 33.
Cultural anthropology noted a diversity of gender roles and sexual behaviors that were different than binary genders. Margaret Mead noted how gender was expressed differently cross culturally after spending two years in Papua New Guinea.\textsuperscript{247} As a result, “gender” and “sex” were theorized to be different components within each culture. An article by anthropologist Carol M. Worthman revises past assumptions confusing the terms sex and gender: “Definitions of “sex” and “gender” confusion and heated controversy. Definitional and, more important, conceptional uncertainties and idiosyncrasies have resulted in well-recognized unevenness in usage of these terms.”\textsuperscript{248} Worthman illuminates two competing definitions of gender in anthropology. First, sex equates to genitalia for biological anthropologists. Second, genitalia does not equate to gender roles for cultural anthropologists.\textsuperscript{249} Biological determinants for behavior was thought to be cased closed, until the late nineteenth century when different fields tried to revisit behavioral foundations for alcoholism and homosexuality.\textsuperscript{250} Alcoholism and homosexuality were studied to find out if there was an inherent biological basis for such behaviors. Elizabeth Segal and Keith Kilty concluded alcoholism and homosexuality are variations of genetic diversity, and to try to find a biological component for such behaviors is unethical because it will lead to eugenics.\textsuperscript{251} Cultural anthropologists do not consider genetics as

\textsuperscript{247} For more information, read Margaret Mead’s \textit{Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies} (1935).


\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., 597.

\textsuperscript{250} Elizabeth A. Segal and Keith M. Kilty, "The Resurgence of Biological Determinism," \textit{Race, Gender & Class} 5, no. 3 (1998): 61-75.

\textsuperscript{251} Ibid.
a basis for sexual behavior. No homosexual gene has been discovered. Despite scientific rumors, there is no genetic cause behind the high rates of Native American alcoholism. The expression of sexuality and ways of consuming alcohol are different in each culture. Gender roles are culturally based. There is no such thing as a gender gene. Historical female chiefs represent the diversity of female gender roles in different indigenous American cultures.

Cultural anthropologists also look at historical research and make an analysis based on intersectionality. All of this acquired knowledge is only beneficial if it could be applied somewhere. Feminist researchers and theoreticians cannot just be hoarders of knowledge in masculinized ivory towers, when women are being kidnapped and trafficked around the world. Practical application of knowledge is being discussed in the social sciences. Feminist anthropologist Ravina Aggarwal writes about listening to a speaker at a lecture in the Ladakh Himalayas. The lecture was about globalization and the effects it had on indigenous cultures. The speaker of the lecture spoke about the futility of feminist anthropology:

Implicit in the speaker’s categorization was a clear demarcation between the goals and objectives of activism and those of anthropology. The former, she had implied, were committed to seeking positive depictions of women in marginalized cultures and finding concrete ways of redressing the material conditions of women’s lives in a world where the distribution of power and resources was glaringly unequal. She characterized the latter as an analytical approach that specialized in the trade of cultural knowledge but failed to comprehend the larger picture or put this knowledge to social use.252

The speaker criticizing feminist anthropology being hoarders of knowledge without action might be unfair. Internationally, feminist activists have enabled positive developments for women around the world. However, how many of those activists dived into their work without knowing the cultures they were trying to help? Do non-Native American feminist activists adequately

understand gender issues in Native American cultures? If not, perhaps an anthropology class on Native American gender issues might facilitate a better understanding. The same argument goes for playwrights, filmmakers, and novelists writing about Native American women: know your subject matter.

On the Changing Status for Native American Women

Since I wrote a play about the intersection of gender roles, power and race, a question I asked myself was, what is race to me? The answer is I don’t know. What I do know is race is a cultural construct that has changed throughout time. Not all cultures have the same definitions of race, and not all cultures recognize the concept of race. I did not want to use the adjectives of white, red, or black in my play. I used French, Indian and African, because that was what they were called. The second question is what is gender to me? The first part of my answer fits neatly into the explanation provided by cultural anthropologists: Gender is a range of masculine and feminine behaviors apart from the body. The second part of my answer is a definitional extension and very Native American: Gender is a range of masculine and feminine qualities expressed by the soul inside the body. Tattooed Arm had all the qualities that would have been stereotypically attributed to male leaders by the colonial French. She defied French categories about what made a woman. She likely threatened French males at the time. The historical writings only made passing references about her despite her status as being the mother of the sun lineage. Tattooed Arm was at the top of a matrilineal, matrilocal and matrifocal culture: Lineage was traced down the female side (matrilineal), males moved in with his wife’s relatives (matrilocal), and females were considered the head of households (matrifocal). By structural

nature, the Natchez allowed women more freedom, autonomy, and power in politics. Tattooed Arm held, if not the most power, then the most status.

The threat to patriarchy did not just sideline or erase Native American female leaders. Hidden history tells more about those telling the non-story. If Louisianan men like Pénicaut, Dumont de Montigny, Le Page du Pratz, and Caillot did not give Tattooed Arm enough page space, therefore remaining ignorant about her power and influence, then somebody like Madame was truly queered out of history. McClintock states how cross-dressing in itself is not necessarily subversive, using the hypermasculinized marines and U.S. military dressing in drag for gags as an example, but when a cross-dresser does so daily, then the effect might not be seen as innocent or hilarious. The contradiction between strict male and female gender roles threatens to abolish power differentials, or the cross-dresser might find the male/female contradiction sexually arousing. McClintock writes, “That fetishism is founded in contradiction does not necessarily guarantee its transgressiveness; that cross-dressing disrupts stable social identities does not guarantee the subversion of gender, race or class power.” If Madame was indeed a colonial cross-dresser, he did not necessarily subvert class power, being the slave overseer of White Earth plantation. Of course, there is a difference between transgender and being a cross-dresser. Caillot used the “he” pronoun to describe Madame. Some people do not self-identify with the labels “transgender” or “cross-dresser,” since the former signifies an identity and the latter a sexual fetish. They identify as “non-binary,” whether or not they dress in the garments of the opposite sex, or a mixing of the two, therefore, androgynous. Madame could have been an

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254 McClintock, 67.

255 Ibid.
effeminate gay male as well. Nonetheless, Madame had a lot of power as a slave overseer. Madame was a liminal figure between Natchez-Louisianan relations. He likely had a larger story, but history marginalized him like Tattooed Arm

Imported patriarchy severely affected male and female Natchez relations. Gender differentials of power became sharply defined. Natchez males began to feel subjugated by French males as the number of settlers increased. When Natchez male power was downgraded, they took power away from their political counterparts, the female suns.

When the male suns did not hold council with the female suns, it revealed how the Natchez were transforming from gender egalitarianism to being patriarchal. Perhaps this was all that was needed for Tattooed Arm to relay information to Sieur de Chépart about her tribe’s impending attack on the Louisianans. Tattooed Arm complicates the most recent fashionable theory: postcolonialism. Postcolonialism recreates a neo-Descartes dualism of “colonizer” and “colonized.” Even so, postcolonialism is good for panoptic structural theory of looking at the loss of indigeneity, however when somebody who is supposedly colonized, actually tries to help the colonizer, that complicates postcolonial theory. McClintock states: “... the singular category of ‘postcolonial’ may too readily license a panoptic tendency to view the glove through generic abstractions void of political nuance.”256 Tattooed Arm was a nuanced leader. Some might say she was a traitor or a villain when she sabotaged the male suns’ plan to attack the French. She had the foresight and wisdom to know the power and numbers of the French military that would nearly decimate her people. Perhaps only Tattooed Arm knew her true motivation for sabotaging the male suns’ plan. Whatever her motivation, her fate was not unusual in the hands of European colonists. Female chiefs ended up in imprisonment, death or slavery paralleling

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256 McClintock, 11.
changing gender roles within their tribes that ultimately did not benefit women. Early on in the colonial era, documentation reveals how Native American gender roles began to change.

Initially, Native American men came from a tradition of not harming female captives because of ritual purity involving female bodies and spirits.\(^{257}\) Ritual purity made it taboo to engage in sexual activities with captive women, and sexual coercion was an extension of that:

Sexual activity by Indian men was curbed socially and within Indian law by custom and respect for the status of women. Sexual violation of white women had been absent through most of the eighteenth century, appearing only at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries; it mirrored the actions of their enemies and was intended to send inflammatory messages.\(^{258}\)

If Native American men did not have any cultural endorsements for sexual violence against female captives, then something must have happened prior to the latter centuries of colonialism that led to the cultural shift. What enabled Native American men to commit gender violence, as in the case of Taotal torturing La Farine?

Evidence exists Native American men adopted the patriarchy. One account reveals an incident when a white female settler died after a battle:

Mrs. Thrasher in Georgia suffered severe injuries at the hands of Creek men. In addition to being scalped, she was “wounded in both her thighs, her right breast, with balls, and stabbed in her left breast with a knife, her left arm cut nearly off, as is supposed with a tomahawk”; she later died from her wounds.\(^{259}\)

Clearly the Creek adopted a type of warfare that violated former gender rules. Native American men experienced a breakdown of social norms caused by apocalyptic stressors: they


\(^{258}\) Ibid.

\(^{259}\) Ibid., 119.
suffered near extinctual plagues, massive war casualties, loss of hunting grounds and geographic dislocation, and finally, loss of self-determination. Swift changes broke interior sociocultural structures down to what may be considered anarchy today. When cultures are torn apart, it is easy to adopt the practices of the dominant group, and misogyny was no exception.

Three blistering accounts of sexual assault were compiled by Felicity Donohoe. The first was a Choctaw gang rape of an adulteress in 1781.\textsuperscript{260} The second was a gang rape by perhaps one hundred and fifty men in the town square of a Chickasaw and Choctaw village somewhere between 1769-1772.\textsuperscript{261} The third was a gang rape by fifty men in the Cherokee nation in 1775.\textsuperscript{262} Despite Donohoe’s misinterpretations, her 2012 article, \textit{To Beget a Tame Breed of People: Sex, Marriage, Adultery, and Indigenous North American Women}, speculates what might lay behind the occurrences, rather than writing them off as the activity of “savages” or “barbarians,” unlike the Euro-American men who witnessed these spectacles. Gender violence committed by Native American men revealed a stark contrast between the scant evidence of sexual assaults in early colonialism compared to the brutality of later colonialism.

In addition to changing gender roles, slavery practices complicated the power structure for Indian nations. Captive slavery, though arguably not softer or kinder, did allow a type of manumission of sorts with adoptive practices. Chattel slavery, on the other hand, legally made slaves into possessions. One cannot adopt an object, but one can always obtain an object. The

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{260} Ibid., 101-102.
  \item \textsuperscript{261} Ibid., 103.
  \item \textsuperscript{262} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
downgrade of power for Native American females parallels tribal adoption of chattel slave practices.

The Effects of Slavery on Female Power

There is no record about who the first slave owner was in the Americas. Slavery was a gradual process in the American colonies. Early indentured servitude in Chesapeake colony did not draw a strict line between white freedom and black servitude. Africans spent a period of indentured servitude similar to those who came from Europe. Anthony Johnson was an early example of an indentured servant who became a successful tobacco planter, and who owned both white and black indentured servants of his own. Many historical rumors have circulated accusing Anthony Johnson of being “the first slave master” in the Americas, to discredit the black American experience. In fact, the situating was more complex. In 1654, there was a legal dispute about the length of time one of Johnson’s black indentured servants should have served. Johnson believed it was for life, but then did not pursue the case. This was at a time when white indentured servitude was gradually being replaced by black slavery in the British colonies. In Louisiana colony, Indian slavery was more common since Louisiana initially had difficulty finding people to populate the colony.

Colonial Louisiana did not officially begin until 1682. While the British colonies were replacing a rapidly depleting white indentured servant population with black slavery, Native Americans went on slave hunting raids to capture Indians for the Carolinas. In the spring of


264 Ibid., 58.
1715, Pénicaut and six voyageurs made their way to the Natchez, where they planned to purchase corn meal and other supplies. At Natchez, Pénicaut was surprised to find three Englishmen negotiating with a slave-raiding party composed of Natchez, Chickasaws, and Yazoos, for the purchase of eleven captives taken in a raid on the Chawasha.265

In 1717 and 1721 two thousand West African slaves arrived in Louisiana. They came from the Bight of Benin, the entrepots at Gore, Juida, and Senegal with slaves from the Wolof, Serer, and the majority were the Bambara.266 The census Tables for the French Colony of Louisiana from 1699 to 1732 included slaves and combined them under one category of Negro/Indian.267 The earliest slaves in colonial Louisiana were a combination of Indian slaves and imported African slaves. Africans, cut from the social fabric of their homeland, did not know the geography of America. Cultural and geographic dislocation led to extreme vulnerability. Since chattel slavery prospered from vulnerability and dominance, African slaves found themselves being subjugated by French colonists and Native Americans.

_Jubah and Nashoba_ focuses on the very beginning of the American south’s slave era. The complex slave economy included sex trafficking, consensual sex, intermarriages and sexual assaults. A fine line existed between Frenchmen marrying Indian slaves, which brings me to the subject of sex trafficking. Sex trafficking benefits men because sex trafficking brings them money, and with money comes a higher status. Monsieur Tisserant actually existed in history. Tisserant was the warehouse worker who captured four female Natchez he found hiding under a

265 Barnett, _Natchez Indians_, 60.


267 Usner, 49.
bed during a French scorched earth retaliation. I found Tisserant fascinating. What happened to those Natchez female slaves? Were they sold to other men in need of “wives” or did Tisserant keep them? Perhaps he put the women to work because he started a plantation. In my play, he married a fine lady named Madame Tisserant who happened to be epileptic. Several of Tisserant’s female slaves died from anemia or blood loss. Their body fluids and organs were collected for Doctor Arsenault’s apothecary of medicinal cannibalism.

Although Jubah is a fictional character, she was inspired by a real person. Many slaves were bought by masters explicitly for sexual reasons. One was Cecilia’s story, who was purchased as a teenager explicitly for sexual purposes: “When Celia fell in love with another slave and asked her master to leave her be, her master attempted to continue the sexual affair by force. Cecilia retaliated by murdering her master and paying his unknowing grandson to dispose of the ashes. In 1885 that state of Missouri hanged her for the offence.”268 Jubah did not kill anybody, but she allowed the Jumbee to commit an arson. She indirectly allowed the deaths of the La Moune family.

The main difference between Jubah and Cecilia was their time periods. Jubah would have existed in the early 1700s, while Cecilia actually existed in the 1800s. Jubah’s character was Native American while Cecilia was African-American. Of course, African-American women were enslaved for nearly a century and a half longer in Louisiana. The black community’s collective intergenerational trauma lasted long after slavery was abolished in 1865.

During the Great Depression, unemployed white-collar workers were commissioned by the government to record the life histories of former slaves as part of the Works Progress Administration. A significant number of slave women, nearly forty percent, according to

268 Ibid., 49.
historian Thelma Jennings’s study of the WPA interviews, reported experiencing or witnessing sexual abuse in the slave system. Harriet Jacobs describes in detail the systematic sexual abuse of a slave girl, when the master and his sons, and the overseer tried to woo her with gifts at first, and since that didn’t work, she was whipped and raped. Others were in relationships with their masters although in a liminal state. Women who happened to be living somewhere between mistress and victim.

Native History Affects the Present

Now that it’s the early twenty-first century, is slavery a relic of the past? The WPA interviews were from the 1930s. Somebody alive today may claim one of the interviewees as their great, great, grandmother. Some of the attitudes from that time period continue to endure, including misogyny and racism. Connecting the past with today is not an easy task, since the data is currently grim. Amnesty International reports the US government has a longitudinal statistical study revealing Native American women have a 2.5 chance of being sexually assaulted than the rest of the population. The human rights organization writes:

Historically, Indigenous women were raped by settlers and soldiers, including the Trail of Tears and the Long Walk. Such attacks were not random or individual; they were tools of conquest and colonization. The attitudes towards Indigenous peoples that underpin such human rights abuses continue in the USA today.


270 Ibid.

271 The WPA interviews were early twentieth century recollections of slave descendants in Oklahoman family histories.

The subjugation is not just a phenomenon in the United States, it’s a continental sized problem. The data is inconclusive for missing aboriginal Canadian women. The RCMP revealed a tally of 164 missing with 111 under suspicious circumstances, but other sources say that number is misleading and underreported.273 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has enacted a formal governmental study after decades of missing aboriginal women have not been investigated thoroughly. The statistics means Native American women and Canadian First Nations women continue to suffer the trajectory of victimization. The message has been made clear. The real reason why the American consciousness only remembers Pocahontas and Sacajawea is America has no use for Native American women, which is in stark contrast to the powerful and influential female chiefs in history.

What I ultimately learned while writing *Jubah and Nashoba* is how America has gotten itself into a mess over race, gender, and sexuality. In 2013, when a Cheerios cereal television commercial showed a mixed-race family (white mother, black father and mixed child), the commercial received a racist backlash on YouTube. White supremacists made a fuss about white genocide while making references about the female as a race traitor. The interracial taboo was constructed from slavery. The taboo has been cemented in America’s collective conscious after the anti-miscegenation laws were struck from the law books in Loving vs. Virginia in 1967 with Alabama being the last hold out in 2000.274

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274 Alabama Amendment 2 in 2000 to repeal a state ban on interracial marriages from 1901 results were 59.49% for repealing and 40.51% to keep interracial marriages illegal.
I suspect there are many more mixed-race people in America than what is currently accepted. This lack of knowledge means many people do not know about their true heritage. Now that the American census finally allows people to check more than one race, time will show how demographics will shift in America. For some, using genetic markers harkens back to eugenic racial theory, but for others, genetic tests like Ancestry.com helps put their ancestry into perspective. Some scholars argue against using any genetic markers paired with race:

Even the suggestion of a genetic component inevitably raises the ugly specter of "genetic determinism." Some scholars still fear that genetically-based actions cannot be modified, and thereby reason that a Darwinian explanation, which by definition assumes a genetic component, provides scientific legitimization for the gender, class, and racial/ethnic status quo.275

One can only see the backlash a person experiences after claiming one drop of another race. 2020 presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren is an example. Warren is being punished for claiming part of her ancestry as Native American. She was ridiculed after she took a genetic test showing strong evidence of at least one Native American ancestor.

In 2019, when the president of the United States regularly uses a racist slur against one of his rivals, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a figure that the Native American female suicide rate had risen 139% from 1999 to 2017.276 What happened continues to affect us today, even if we did not directly experience the original trauma. The long-term effects from centuries of subjugation is still very real, and sociopolitical conditions have not improved. The current situation for Native American women is not all gloom. Recent political advances


reveal a silver lining. Sharice Davids of Kansas and Deb Haaland of New Mexico were the first two Native American women elected to Congress in 2018, therefore making the journey to full circle much more possible.
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