Moving Home

GENDER, PLACE, AND TRAVEL WRITING *in the* EARLY BLACK ATLANTIC

SANDRA GUNNING

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Sandra Gunning

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For Hannah
and in memory of
Marguerite

Contents

Preface ix
Acknowledgments xvii

Introduction 1

1. Mary Seacole's West Indian Hospitality 23

2. Home and Belonging for Nancy Prince 55

3. The Repatriation of Samuel Ajayi Crowther 86

4. Martin R. Delany and Robert Campbell in West Africa 120

5. Sarah Forbes Bonetta and Travel as Social Capital 160

Coda 197

Notes 205
Bibliography 227
Index 251

Preface

One of my earliest memories is of a cloudy day (around 1965), when I watched my father stuff crumpled newspaper into a broken windowpane, in anticipation of "spraying." Not long after, a truck drove slowly up and down our street, releasing a fine mist into the air. Years later, I learned that that mysterious mist was DDT. As part of its campaign to eradicate malaria from the tropical Americas, the World Health Organization had doused my island with a chemical no Jamaican at the time knew to be a carcinogen. In those early years of self-government, the administering of a "harmless" insecticide must have seemed an appropriately forward-looking measure. While this advancement put a nail in the coffin of Jamaica's ecosystem, there was a sense, too, in the 1960s and 1970s that the postcolonial condition was already poisoning our new nation. For example, because Jamaica exported bauxite and alumina, as opposed to aluminum, the ore's end product—or better yet, *finished* aluminum products such as cooking utensils, vehicle parts, and metal sheeting—we were far, far away from reaping the full benefit of our natural resources. If you threw in OPEC and the global oil crisis, in addition to the ever-growing national debt, Jamaica's foreign currency reserves rapidly verged on *empty*—or, to borrow my father's favorite metaphor, it was as if we were subsisting on fumes. The only question seemed to be, When would we finally come to a standstill?

Don't get me wrong—there were wonderful things about growing up in Jamaica in the years under Prime Minister Michael Manley: fantastic, if brutally strict, teachers who gave me an outstanding primary education; the amazing National Dance Theatre Company; wonderful, locally produced music by people who were not international reggae stars; Sangster's Bookstore; and the tingling down my spine every time I stood to sing the national anthem. But

even with these precious gifts, there was no escaping the sense that the nation was in an economic free fall. Crippled by predatory loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, Jamaica could afford next to nothing. When the price of petrol and kerosene went up, condensed milk, flour, and cooking oil moved beyond the reach of the poorest Jamaicans. During periods of drought, water shutoffs were a way of life. At home, a steady supply of matches and candles got us through regularly scheduled blackouts. School textbooks from overseas vanished from bookstore shelves. Crucial car parts went from being horrendously expensive to entirely unavailable. When a vehicle owner parked on the street overnight (particularly if they owned a Volkswagen Beetle), by morning the headlamps were missing. But the black market in car parts was merely the benign edge of a horrific crime wave marked by countless armed robberies and home invasions, frequently accompanied by beatings, rape, and murder. Depending on your income, you fought back with an angry dog chained up in clear view, a firearm, a fancy alarm system, or all of the above. Everyone who could afford it welded iron bars and gates across not just doorways and windows, but indeed *any* crack or crevice that might admit even the smallest human being. And everywhere there were guns, guns, and more guns. On call-in radio talk shows, political commentators and members of the public bemoaned the debt, the government, the criminals, the United States, OPEC, the IMF, and on and on.

In search of relief, my parents, my sister, and I regularly made the two-hour winding drive across the Blue Mountains to Port Antonio, home of my mother's aging Lebanese-born parents. Despite the political and economic chaos, my grandparents' shotgun-style house seemed peaceful and constant. Every room emitted the comforting smell of mahogany and bay rum. To accommodate an ever-expanding family (eight children in all), my grandparents had tacked on rooms wherever, so that exterior French doors in the living room creaked open into a large, high-ceilinged guest room. The terrazzo-tiled kitchen sat just beyond a set of dining-room sash windows that once opened onto a side yard. A bathroom trip in the middle of the night required tiptoeing through Grandma's room to access the house's central hallway. The house's two bathrooms were really one gigantic room, partitioned by an ancient beadboard divider. Since the divider had regular gaps where it met the floor, as children my sister and I passed notes and comic books back and forth, while we pretended to take our showers.

Right on the water, where the northeastern foothills of the Blue Mountains ended in the Caribbean Sea, Port Antonio bore the brunt of every weather system coming in from the Atlantic, taking the prize as the wettest spot on the

island. To foreign tourists passing through, the town's mold-stained concrete walls and ramshackle brown zinc roofs must have seemed quaint and bucolic. If they entered my grandparents' country store and saw that all purchases were wrapped in pages of the *Gleaner* and tied with cotton string, they marveled that Jamaicans had the wherewithal to produce a daily paper. One summer while I took a turn helping out in the store, a skinny white American with long hair and a struggling beard ran his hand across the newspaper sheets laid out at the wrapping station. With wide-eyed astonishment, he asked if he could take one of the sheets with him. "Ahmm, we do know how to read and write, you know," I said, with quiet indignation.

None of these strangers had the least interest in the dark secrets of slavery and colonial atrocities behind the breathtakingly green landscape; nor did they care to know how the rich racial and cultural diversity of Jamaica came to be. But it was in Port Antonio that I supplemented my father's family stories of African slaves, Scots-Irish immigrants, and British Baptist missionaries with the much more recent history of my mother's Catholic Lebanese parents, a pair of Arabic-speaking first cousins from turn-of-the-century Choueifat (pronounced *Sch-why-fate* by my mother), who grew up in what was still the Ottoman Empire. Just before World War I, they migrated first to Haiti and then to Jamaica, where they learned to master the local patois, albeit with a very thick Arabic accent. Eventually, as shopkeepers, they began supplying small farmers and town locals with pots and pans, nails by the pound, cloth by the yard, shovels, kerosene lamps, coal stoves, Dutch ovens, handmade brooms, schoolchildren's exercise books, rubber work boots, and, occasionally, dress shoes, both secondhand and new.

Neither British nor of African descent, my grandparents would have learned early on that in Jamaica's complex class- and color-obsessed society, they would never achieve anything akin to racial equality with European whites. Consequently, as with many newly arrived groups bent on success, they took every opportunity to put themselves above the island's Black population: the modestly dressed market women, the ragged small farmers, the United Fruit Company pickers on whom their living depended. However, my grandparents did have several things in common with the people they looked down upon. As with a number of their customers, they could neither read nor write English. And they ate the same food. Indeed, over time their Eastern Mediterranean cuisine merged with local dishes rooted in the experiences of African slaves and Chinese and South Asian indentured workers. To be sure, my grandmother went on making kibbeh, *labnah*, and cabbage-leaf *meshi*, but more often than not we ate rice, yams, avocados, curried goat, roasted breadfruit, boiled green

bananas, escovitch fish, and fried plantains. With seven daughters and one son, they at first hoped to orchestrate marriages among the handful of other Christian Lebanese families on the island, but as happened to successive waves of English, Irish, Scots, Portuguese, German, Chinese, South Asian, and Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants, their children and their children's children married across color, class, and religious lines, the obvious consequence of life on a small island.

To a Jamaican, there is nothing odd about being the product of two or three different ethnic histories. And regardless of how far back you trace your lineage, the journeys embarked upon by your ancestors had much to do with imperial profit seeking and territorial domination. Though at first glance the ability to reinvent yourself would seem to rest with those who were European and free, regardless of race there were limitations, especially with respect to class, ethnicity, and place of origin. Though they were Christian and had always worn Western-style clothing, my grandparents were still regarded by the British as Arabic-speaking "Orientals." As with everyone else trying to fit into Jamaica's colonial society, they had to learn the appropriate colonial script and rub shoulders with Port Antonio's tiny mixed-race and Black colonial elite, while also working hard in their business to establish a class identity that put them above their Black housekeepers and yardmen, from whom they expected perfect obedience, despite paying miniscule wages. If they were upset that their grandchildren ended up being racially mixed (Chinese and Black) it was hard to tell, since all of us had the run of their small garden and the whole house, especially that airy and light-filled guest room, with bay windows looking out onto one of Port Antonio's two natural harbors.

As one of these grandchildren, I witnessed contradictions in terms of class and race long before I had the words to describe them. But none of that prepared me for the moment when I spied a peculiar photograph in an aunt's family album. Black and white and probably dating back to the 1920s, the image featured a short, unsmiling, and apparently white man in a pith helmet, staring defiantly into the camera, his light eyes overhung by thick dark brows that almost met in the middle of his forehead. With thin lips tightly pressed together, he wore a very wrinkled khaki jacket with pleated breast pockets, a pair of shorts, and puttees. Off to his left side and slightly behind him stood a small-boned, bare-breasted Black woman, fabric draped around her waist, as she steadied a clay jar atop her head. She was equally blank-faced, but her eyes were averted, and though tonally distinguishable from the darker tropical foliage behind her, her Black skin created a sharp contrast to that of the man, making him appear almost luminous.

The photograph reminded me of an early silent film still, or an illustration cut from an ancient issue of *National Geographic*. I immediately asked my aunt for an explanation. She replied, "Oh, that's Uncle C in Africa." A little later on she added, "That C was a brute," with no further explanation. The quiet bitterness informing that last detail discouraged further questions. Going to my grandparents was out of the question, since broaching what seemed to be a difficult family topic would have meant a tongue-lashing from my mother. In the intervening years, and after a bit of digging, a few more facts surfaced. Apparently, C visited Jamaica from Lebanon, ending up in Port Antonio, where he fell in love with my grandparents' oldest child, sixteen-year-old R. After they married, C took his Jamaican-born bride back to Lebanon. Having very little money to begin with, C had great difficulty finding employment back home. Perhaps driven to financial desperation, he left R in the care of his parents and set off for the African continent to pursue some moneymaking venture. Ironically, no one in the family seemed to recall where he went or if he made any money. Instead, there was an enduring sadness for years afterward because R had been separated from her Jamaican family, then essentially abandoned by her husband to an unfamiliar household. According to family reminiscences, R may or may not have suffered abuse at the hands of her in-laws, who may or may not have used her as their scullery maid. Looking at a teenaged photo taken on the eve of her wedding, I thought that to her in-laws, R's jet-black hair and alabaster skin must have seemed at odds with her West Indian food ways and her patois, and especially the hint of a Jamaican accent lacing her Arabic. However attenuated, the African diaspora had entered C's Lebanese home, even as he worked hard in Africa to acquire a racist colonial lexicon that might mitigate (at least within the figural boundaries of the photograph) his own nonwhite status.

During colonialism, countless European and American fortune hunters set out to make it in Africa, and Middle Easterners were no exception. Men such as C arrived as peddlers and small shopkeepers to operate as middlemen supplying more or less the same items sold in my grandparents' store, this time to petty white colonial officials and African and South Asian laborers laying railroad tracks or erecting bridges. As an antidote to his own poverty and alienation as an "Oriental" in colonial Africa, C *needed* that African woman to embody stasis, silence, and powerlessness, so as to highlight himself as akin to Richard Francis Burton or Henry Morton Stanley, producers of African "knowledge" and seemingly capable and commanding in any situation that arose on the backward continent. Of course, C could assert a white Western colonial manhood only within the safety of the photograph. And he had the image made not to convince a middle-class European viewer that he was of equal status but

rather to update his family in Lebanon and his in-laws in Jamaica that he had "made it" in Africa. Therefore the photograph functioned as both an artifact of and a commentary on his sojourn abroad. To his two families he signaled that his sacrifice of a stable homelife in Lebanon had paid off because he had embraced imperial racism. Instead of revealing him as (to play on Homi Bhabha's phrase "almost the same, *but not quite*" from "Of Mimicry and Man") a not-quite-not-white Middle Eastern trader, C's photograph suggested that imperial travel had accorded him a new competency, a new freedom to remake his identity. In this way, he may have replicated the same racial maneuvers enacted by my grandparents when they arrived to the Caribbean in the first years of the twentieth century.

But what of the carefully posed African woman? Reduced to a colonial cliché, she functioned as the feminized continent ready for takeover. As the object rather than the subject of the image, she lacked the means of shaping and broadcasting her own story. However, though C's centrality depended on silence, that silence did not mean absence. As a teenager, I couldn't abide the suggestion that she had no story, so in her African face I imagined the Jamaican faces of my teachers, my public-school classmates, female cashiers in the local corner shop, elderly ladies in church, and women selling produce and household goods in the market. Having grown up in the violent context of early postcolonial Jamaica, I also wondered if C had done her any harm before or after the staging of the photograph. However, from my own temporal and geographical location, I was as much an outsider as C. And, as a part of the family to which C had directed the image, I too consumed her through the superficialities of race and gender. Even today, because of my own diasporic position as a Jamaican immigrant to the United States, and my fantasies of what long-dead Uncle C might have been like, I risk projecting a history of my own design onto who that African woman might have been. That projection assumes a colonial-era African woman automatically dispossessed and immobile, even as her presence helped C to prove his apparent social advancement.

It would be simplistic to make C the clear villain of this narrative because I, too, am entangled in a neocolonial script that highlights my education and agentive mobility as a "successful" immigrant to the United States and a privileged global traveler. Still, the thought of both individuals, and especially the unequal relationship staged in the image, continues to elicit a range of questions, not least of which are: Can travel be transformative for the racialized and sexualized Other? How do racial regimes change or shift for an immigrant versus a sojourner? What impact does the phenomenon of intersecting migratory patterns have on the individuals involved? What essential powers are gained

or lost as the regimes of race, ethnicity, and class subtly shift and recombine, depending on location? How does gender identity shape strategies for agency in relation to stasis or mobility? What valence does national identification have, in the absence of the nation-state?

These early musings proved to be the seeds from which *Moving Home: Gender, Race, and Travel Writing in the Early Black Atlantic* has emerged. Writing as a scholar on a range of nineteenth-century Black American, West Indian, and West African travel literature, I still feel the imperative to provide a space for that African woman standing behind my uncle. This book marks a step, but it is certainly not a resolution.

Acknowledgments

The idea for this book first came to me in the mid-1990s, while I was working on an article on the Jamaican healer Mary Seacole. That burst of post-tenure energy was short-lived, however, since for the last decade and a half the particular turmoil of family life (in this case illness, and then more illness) threatened repeatedly to derail my writing and research altogether. Thankfully, the act of completing this project eventually became a refuge. Here and there I stole thirty minutes in a hospital waiting room to write a paragraph. On good days, that paragraph turned in a page, and despite long gaps of time, that page eventually became a chapter. As I look back now, I'm so very grateful for the help I received from family, friends, and home care staff: their collective contributions enabled me to carve out chunks of time to visit archives in the United States, Canada, and Britain. I especially want to thank my successive research assistants, including David Shih, Emma Garrett, Kyle Grady, Amanda Healey, and Latara MacLamore, for their assistance, in large and small ways, at different stages of my writing and rewriting of chapters.

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Introduction

Qualities traditionally associated with travel writing include leisure, choice, curiosity, love of the exotic, and wanderlust. Indeed, the term *travel* suggests a world of cosmopolitan privilege where one is free to leave and return to a place called home or settle on a whim in some new location. Additionally, the credibility of travel writers rests on the public belief that they have actually been to the places described in their narrative, signaling once again the assumed power of class, personal agency, literacy, and access to publication, all in the service of captivating an audience by transporting them to "exotic" locales. Though travel narratives are, to some extent, semiautobiographical, the (usually white) narrator operates as a guide, becoming the eyes and ears of the (usually white) reader, transforming the latter, at least imaginatively, into something of a sympathetic companion. The luxury of travel writing for its own sake also gestures to the form's assumed unavailability to anyone deemed marginal to the nation—that is, the politically disenfranchised, the destitute, and the persecuted. Consequently, far from being an innocent pastime, travel writing has always been shaped by a specific political, social, and historical subject position, one that requires the objectification of a sexualized, classed, ethnic, and racial Other. How in the world, then, could such an exclusionary genre possibly have served the purposes of nineteenth-century African diasporic subjects in the age of transatlantic slavery, when the majority of these subjects were legally defined as someone else's movable property, rather than as human beings who might have traveled in their own right?

A leading figure in the critical demystification of European and American travel writing, Mary Louise Pratt has long argued that nineteenth-century European explorers saw with "imperial eyes" when they visited the continents of Africa and South America—and we might add the earth's polar regions, the Caribbean, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, the American West, the territories in and around the Pacific Ocean, and so on.[1] According to Pratt, as representatives of particular national interests, white male tourists, explorers, and ethnographers tended to belittle the presence of nonwhite populations, often by imagining them outside of modernity or removing them from the narrative altogether, so as to render the landscape completely available for imperial consumption.[2] To accomplish this goal, suggests Pratt, the Euro-American male writer might choose to represent himself as the disembodied omniscient narrator, or he might include himself in the larger plot of the narrative as the protagonist who survived to the end of the journey, managing to outlast the barbarity seemingly characteristic of undiscovered territory. One of her most effective examples is the late eighteenth-century Scottish physician and explorer Mungo Park, who in *Travels in the Interior Districts in Africa* (1799) represented himself as a figure deeply caught up in the action, enduring destitution, starvation, and even capture at the hands of hostile Africans, all for the sake of scientific knowledge. A sampling of narratives that in part or on the whole fall within Pratt's arguments include John Franklin's *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea* (1823), Dixon Denham, Hugh Clapperton, and Walter Oudney's *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa* (1826), Richard Francis Burton's *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah* (1855), and David Livingstone's *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (1857).

Nonetheless, there were several nineteenth-century Black American, Afro-West Indian, Americo-Liberian, and Christianized Yoruba men—some freeborn, others ex-slaves—who wrote about their exploration of West African territory, revealing a relationship to both the land and its peoples that could be very different from the kind of dramatic contact articulated by their white counterparts. These men especially had to confront the meaning of "return" to an imagined ancestral homeland or, in the case of Christianized West Africans who were themselves former slaves, "return" to the geographical location of familial and physical trauma. Of particular interest to missiologists and to cultural anthropologists studying Yoruba ethnogenesis is the Yoruba slave turned Anglican clergyman, missionary, and early Nigerian linguist Samuel Ajayi Crowther. Indeed, Crowther's first published work was one half of the *Journals of the Rev. James Frederick Schön and Mr. Samuel Crowther: who, with the Sanction of Her Majesty's Government, Accompanied the Expedition up the Niger, in 1841, in Behalf*

of the Church Missionary Society (1842). As a young catechist, Crowther and his senior white colleague, Schön, accompanied a royal naval expedition on the Niger River so as to assess the "heathen's" receptiveness to the establishment of Christian mission stations. So many sailors died of malaria and other tropical fevers that the project was aborted mid-journey, but Crowther's resulting narrative walked a perilous tightrope: as a Christianized ex-slave, he had to demonstrate his worth to the English men and women whose contributions were paying for his sustenance, even as he looked with new eyes upon populations and locales that were familiar to him during his pre-slavery boyhood. After the success of his first project, Crowther went on to publish *Journal of an Expedition up the Niger and Tshadda Rivers* (1855) and *Niger Mission: Bishop Crowther's Report of the Overland Journey from Lokoja to Bida, on the River Niger: and Thence to Lagos, on the Sea Coast* (1872).

The period of Crowther's missionary travels coincided with a journey of "return" made by American Black Nationalist Martin R. Delany, in search of land for Black American settlement in what is now Nigeria, among Africans whom he hoped would be unsullied by contact with whites. Delany's *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party* (1861) is rarely addressed, perhaps because he put his African adventure behind him once the American Civil War broke out, devoting himself instead to the recruitment of Black soldiers for the Union and later to Black American political engagement during and after Reconstruction.[3] Often overlooked, as well, is the work of Delany's traveling companion on the journey, the Jamaican Robert Campbell. Because of Campbell's ancestry, his sojourn in the United States, and finally his permanent move to Lagos, his *Pilgrimage to My Motherland: An Account of a Journey among the Egbas and the Yorubas of Central Africa, 1859–60* (1861) stands at the intersection of early African American, early Caribbean, and early West African literature. How did his combined identities shape his role as an African explorer, in the early years of an increasingly British colonial Nigeria? Meanwhile, the recently anthologized narratives of two Americo-Liberians—James L, Sims's 1858 *Scenes in the Interior of Liberia: Being a Tour through the Countries of the Dey, Goulah, Pessah, Barlain, Kpellay, Suloany and King Boatswain's Tribes in 1858* and Benjamin J. K. Anderson's 1870 "Narrative of a Journey to Musardu, the Capital of the Western Mandingoes"—shed light on how Black American settlers in newly created Liberia regarded their contentious relationship with the indigenous populations whose land they and the American Colonization Society had claimed. In contrast, as a late nineteenth-century Black American traveler to the Belgian Congo, George Washington Williams inserted himself within the controversial frame of European colonial expansion after 1884 in *An Open Letter to His Serene*

Majesty Leopold II, King of the Belgians and Sovereign of the Independent State of Congo (1890), in an effort to protest slavery and genocidal atrocities committed against indigenous peoples.

As representatives of different diasporic communities across the Black Atlantic, these men each wrote to achieve particular group agendas, but by virtue of being African and of African descent, as well as ex-slaves or the descendants of ex-slaves, they might just as easily have become the objects of study for white race scientists, ethnographers, missionaries, and protoeugenicists. Yet, by claiming the genre of the exploration narrative for themselves, they fruitfully complicate Pratt's insightful theses and the very question of what constituted early narratives shaping the perception of the African continent. Writing as they did in the age of American and internal African slavery, and before the end of the transatlantic slave trade, each traveler witnessed and in many ways participated in American and European colonial expansion on the continent of Africa. Though they came from vastly different backgrounds and fell into exploration for a variety of reasons, all were concerned on some level with a sense of loss—a sense of displacement and disenfranchisement in the land of their nativity, in the organizations that might have employed them, and in the communities on whose behalf they traveled. Ironically, their narratives discuss West Africa in registers tinged by a poignant desire to find a resting place, a refuge-as-antidote that might overcome the soul-crushing legacies of slavery and discrimination, especially for those born in the United States. At the same time, regardless of their nativity, these Western-educated Christians necessarily reproduced some of the same Eurocentric assumptions about West African "heathens" that white male explorers exhibited. As such, these writers embraced Western notions of modernity, nation building, and territorial expansion.

Such complications require us to think carefully not only about oversimplified notions of "resistance" but also about the misleading dichotomy the term encourages against its opposite, "complicity." These men felt that their interest in the African continent was different from that of white Europeans. However, any oppositional stance they might have taken to white imperialism, any declaration they might have made that Africa should become the *home* of the formerly enslaved as opposed to being merely a resource for white acquisition, would have been conditioned by a broad range of intraracial, and at times dissimilar, cultural assumptions and allegiances. Additionally, their sense of themselves as male travelers and writers would have been in conversation with, rather than merely in opposition to, nineteenth-century Euro-American ideas of "masculine" pursuits such as scientific observation and discovery. After all, these men were products of the West, even as they were lifelong critics of and

activists against the racially discriminatory practices of majoritarian American and European societies. Consequently, an analysis of their African exploration narratives reveals their challenges to and deep entanglements with nineteenth-century imperialist discourse.

Thus far I have used the example of travel writing by early African diasporic men. Now I shift to a discussion of writing by their female counterparts and, consequently, the difference made by thinking about not just women's writing but gendered subjectivity for men and women. Indeed, in *Moving Home* I argue that Christianized African, British West Indian, and African American women were as deeply invested in travel writing as their male counterparts.[4] Tim Youngs defines travel writing as "predominantly factual, first-person prose accounts of travel that have been undertaken by the author-narrator."[5] Youngs's definition allows us to observe ever more closely how the literary landscape changes with the inclusion of Black and African women as nineteenth-century traveling subjects within the Atlantic African diaspora. As we have known for some time, early Black and African women reworked traditional forms to tell their own unique stories in an age when Blackness synonymized both immorality and captivity. Concerned primarily with freeborn and ex-slave female subjects of the African diaspora hailing from vastly differing social circumstances, the following chapters explore women's travel writing from the United States, the British West Indies, and Anglophone West Africa. Travelers discussed include the American reformer and small-businesswoman Nancy Prince, the Jamaican sutler and hotelkeeper Mary Seacole, and the West African ex-slave Sarah Forbes Bonetta, who became Queen Victoria's ward. The published works of both Seacole and Prince are by now well known as both Black female autobiography and travel texts. Nevertheless, the lack of similarly published material from Anglophone West African women in this period requires an examination of alternate materials, including unpublished letters and diaries. Such materials reveal that mission-educated African women throughout the period of European empire were often traveling writers and interlocutors. Only through archival materials, then, is it possible to see Bonetta as both a representative of the Anglophone West African elite and a unique female voice who assigns meaning to her own subjectivity as she travels between Lagos, Freetown, and the south of England.

ENSLAVEMENT, ESCAPE, AND THE FUTILITY OF "HOME"

Even though Crowther, Delany, Campbell, Seacole, Prince, and Bonetta appear in their writing to be free from any nation-based constraint, their travel has to be gauged against transatlantic slavery, which in both its practice and its aftermath

appeared to fix Blackness as a state of physical immobility and intellectual and moral deficiency. Though various West European nations, along with the United States, eventually banned their citizens from engaging in the Atlantic slave trade, captive Africans still made the Middle Passage to Cuba and Brazil until the 1860s. Before the American Civil War, the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 extended the authority of slaveholders to northern states, while the 1857 US Supreme Court ruling on *Dred Scott v. Sandford* declared American citizenship off-limits to anyone of African descent. In the nineteenth-century Black Atlantic, then, freedom to travel from place to place without threat of violence or capture would have been a crucial, constitutive element of personhood and self-ownership. Among others, Lisa Brawley, Michael A. Chaney, and Stephen Lucasi have argued that African American runaway slaves indexed the theme of flight in their autobiographies as they sought to characterize the agonizing separation from family in bondage, the risk of torture or death if caught, and the challenge of running in extreme heat or cold with nothing to eat and in fear of any white person claiming to be a friend.[6] These horrific conditions require a redefinition of the word *travel* to include not just "the action of traveling or journeying" but especially the term's original Middle English meaning of *travail* or work, as in "labor, toil, suffering, trouble."[7] Thus, whether for nineteenth-century slaves, or for free Black people in settings that still denied them political, economic, and social self-determination, the ability to seize and exercise the right to physical mobility was often equated with self-protection, with the ability to keep oneself alive.

Key African American slave texts that, in one way or another, thematize physical escape along a North-South trajectory include Frederick Douglass's first two narratives, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) and *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855); Josiah Henson's *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada, as Narrated by Himself* (1849); Henry "Box" Brown's *Narrative of the Life of Henry Box Brown, Written by Himself* (1851), so called because he managed to mail himself in a wooden crate from Richmond, Virginia, to abolitionists in Philadelphia; and, of course, Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861). Perhaps one of the best examples of how an American slave narrative could transform the themes and purpose of a genre traditionally associated with white writers is William and Ellen Craft's 1860 *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom; or, The Escape of William and Ellen Craft from Slavery*.[8] Written by William Craft, the narrative describes how the light-skinned Ellen used men's clothes and extensive bandaging around her face to pass as a white male invalid traveling north from Georgia in 1848. Cross-dressing and racially passing as a well-to-do white

man, Ellen received no resistance from white travelers for being accompanied by an enslaved body servant played by William. The Crafts disguised themselves to take advantage of socially acceptable, upper-class, white male privileged mobility to achieve their flight to freedom. Thus, their ability to plan a successful escape depended on a keen understanding and manipulation of the gendered proprieties of public travel for whites. Their ruse confirms that travel in the nineteenth century was completely shaped by the politics of gender, race, and power and that when it came to millions of enslaved Black Americans, agentive mobility was a significant right denied. Seizing that right would mean danger and possible death. Ironically, even if a slave escaped north, the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law required anyone who failed to reveal information about or was caught assisting a runaway slave to be punished with fines and a jail sentence. Consequently, simply crossing the Mason-Dixon Line did not make one safe. How, then, might *escape* function as a tool of resistance and self-making, if runaways were unable to control the conditions and direction of their journeys?

According to the Crafts' narrative, they faced intense racism in Boston, ironically the cradle of American resistance to British imperialism and the heart of the American abolition movement. Traveling across the US-Canada border to Halifax in hopes of catching a transatlantic Cunard steamer, they were further rebuffed, this time by a white ticket agent. When the Crafts finally boarded a Britain-bound vessel, Ellen fell gravely ill from sheer anxiety. At the very end of their narrative, William Craft writes, "It was not until we stepped upon the shore of Liverpool that we were free from every slavish fear. We raised our thankful hearts to Heaven, and could have knelt down, like the Neapolitan exiles, and kissed the soil."[9] Here William draws a parallel to a well-publicized 1859 incident when the tyrannical Ferdinand II of Naples forced all would-be revolutionaries out of his kingdom, packing them off to Spain by ship. After the Neapolitans landed at Cadiz, the Spanish refused them permission to disembark, causing the exiles to remain virtual prisoners aboard ship for over three weeks. It was only after being transferred to an American frigate that the dispossessed were allowed to land in Ireland. Homeless and denied citizenship in their land of birth, the Neapolitans nevertheless set about making the best of things, as did the Crafts once they arrived in Britain. By creating a parallel between those Italian refugees and the repeated escapes he and Ellen had to engineer, first from Georgia, then from the United States, and finally from British Canada, William gestures to multiple displacements on an international scale that not only equaled that of the Neapolitans but surpassed them. The Crafts, after all, had escaped slavery and so literally marked every one of the thousand miles between their American enslavement and their freedom in Britain.

While their story brings attention to the larger issues of Black escape, refugee status, and exile in the age of slavery, there is something more to be said about Ellen Craft having to become a man in order for the couple to achieve their emancipation.[10] Her pale skin allowed her to pass for white, but if Ellen had escaped as a woman, she would have only courted disaster by traveling with her male "slave." In almost any era, as Gary Totten reminds us, both white and Black female bodies were policed differently from Black male bodies, such that the conditions and experience of escape were vastly different.[11] Likewise, the meaning of freedom gained could also be different for men versus women, as in the case of Harriet Jacobs in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. For Jacobs, the literal, physical escape from slavery came with the requirement that to rescue herself and her children, she first had to hide for seven years in a tiny crawl space in the ceiling of her grandmother's cabin. By having letters sent from the North to her family in North Carolina, Jacobs tricked her master into thinking she had actually departed from the state, leaving her two enslaved children behind. Interestingly, the two times Jacobs left her crawl space and exited her grandmother's cabin she disguised herself as a Black sailor: first when she visited the young white lawyer who had fathered her children, to beg him to have them sent north, and second when she left for Philadelphia to join her son and daughter. Like Ellen Craft, Jacobs had to take on a male identity, in this case one tied to a legitimately peripatetic form of Black male labor, to move about town without attracting attention. Still, at the heart of Jacobs's narrative was the danger that she might never escape the slave mother's enforced stasis. Finally, after reuniting with her children in the North, Jacobs's definition of freedom took on a particularly female-centered emphasis:

> Reader, my story ends with freedom; not in the usual way, with marriage. I and my children are now free! We are as free from the power of slaveholders as are the white people of the north; and though that, according to my ideas, is not saying a great deal, it is a vast improvement in *my* condition. The dream of my life is not yet realized. I do not sit with my children in a home of my own. I still long for a hearthstone of my own, however humble. I wish it for my children's sake far more than for my own.[12]

In referencing "freedom" versus "marriage," Jacobs highlighted the complete inappropriateness for enslaved Black women of the traditional late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century plotline where, to reword Samuel Richardson, white female virtue would be rewarded with matrimony and domestic bliss.[13] Because she and her children had been legally purchased and her own bill of sale handed

to her for safekeeping, Jacobs did not seek refuge in Canada or Britain. However, hers was a simmering anger that "home" for the runaway had to be continually delayed. Thus, her story registered a deep frustration at being denied a home that should have been hers in the first place. In the era of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law and onward into the Jim Crow era, home as a place of belonging and as a symbol of self-protection and of local citizenship was repeatedly denied Black Americans.

The struggle for agency endured by the slave women Ellen Craft and Harriet Jacobs clearly articulates a complex set of issues when compared to the struggle of white women travelers who sought to compete with their male counterparts. Many nineteenth-century narratives of exploration by white men were commissioned by geographical societies, Christian evangelical groups, and interested governmental bodies. Some narratives were the work of white women travelers who sought to gain intellectual legitimacy, such as Mary H. Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa* (1897). Other white women wrote ostensibly to share the pleasure of being wholly iconoclastic among the seemingly exotic, as in the case of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Ottoman Empire letters (1763). The Englishwoman Frances Trollope published her scathing 1832 touristic observations of the United States in *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. Meanwhile the Yorkshire-born Isabella Bird proved she had the stamina for any trek in *The Hawaiian Archipelago* (1875) and *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (1880). Isabelle Eberhardt, the cross-dressing Swiss author of *In the Shadow of Islam* (1903), and the British aristocrat Gertrude Bell, the so-called modern architect of the Middle East, whose memoir *Amurath to Amurath* was published in 1911, made traditionally masculine roles their own, thereby challenging conventional norms of Victorian femininity. Yet, as revolutionary as all this sounds, sometimes the presence of these white women in "uncivilized" territory also encouraged readers to assume that said territory was already halfway toward domestication, the proof being the presence of the female traveler herself. For example, by the time Mary Kingsley showed up in West Africa, Britain was at the height of its imperial control of large territories that would later become Ghana and Nigeria. The success of her largely ethnographic *Travels* partly relied on her, as a woman, facing the "danger" of racial contamination, rather than being put to death by so-called savages. True, some of these middle- and upper-class white female travelers in the nineteenth century might have lost the respect of their polite middle-class societies, but many also reveled in their independence, their feats of daring, and their intellectual contributions. Many also had a sense of national belonging, based on a cultural citizenship granted at birth.[14]

In contrast, whether enslaved or free, Black women were automatically regarded by whites as the central measure of immorality. At the same time, for those who managed to win their freedom, "liberty" often came hand in hand with complete destitution. Such was the case for the Bermuda-born runaway slave Mary Prince, who in 1828 ended up in London with her physically and sexually abusive master, Mr. Wood. Since *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772) had confirmed the illegality of slavery on British soil, Prince sought refuge with local abolitionists. However, though she had literally reversed the Middle Passage by crossing the ocean from slavery to freedom, her pressing concern soon became finding a means of supporting herself. Though she initially went into domestic service, by 1833 she disappeared from public record.[15] This problem of financial survival after escape was a common one for both male and female runaways, but it was especially difficult for Black female fugitives who were paid less than men. To take an even earlier example, we have no record of what sixteen-year-old Sally Hemings was thinking in 1789 while she was in Paris with her master, Thomas Jefferson. Instead of walking away from her forty-six-year-old owner—who had already impregnated her—she returned with him to slavery at Monticello. As Annette Gordon-Reed has convincingly argued, in Paris Jefferson paid higher-than-average wages to both Sally and her brother James and appears to have allowed them some freedom to explore the city. According to Gordon-Reed, "The feeling of being paid for her work, in a place where she considered herself to be a free person, could only have been empowering to Sally Hemings. For the first time in her life, she had something that belonged to her that she had worked for. Work, and payment for it, tends to foster a sense of independence and encourages thoughts about the future."[16] Certainly, Sally would have been aware of a free Black community in Paris and that French revolutionaries had made it possible for slaves to petition for their freedom. But Jefferson's departure would have left her financially destitute, with few options beyond life on the street. In addition, staying in Paris would have cut her off entirely from her enslaved family at Monticello. Fear of poverty and the need to be with kin as her pregnancy neared its end were probably enough to force Sally Hemings to choose slavery over emancipation.

For freeborn Black women, the challenges might have been somewhat different, but no less difficult. To take another example from the nineteenth-century United States, when the widowed Jarena Lee set out to become a traveling preacher in 1820s New Jersey, she divested herself of all possessions, including her two children, whom she handed over to friends and relatives. Her goal was, no doubt, to make sure they had stable, loving homes since, given her unshakable conviction that she had been called by God to preach anywhere and every-

where, she would have little time for mothering. Lee's story also points to the fact that some free Black women in the Anglophone diaspora authorized their travel as acts of Christian sacrifice. Two other Black women preachers, Zilpha Elaw and Amanda Berry Smith, extended their missionary activities overseas. Lee, Elaw, and Berry all published autobiographies that included discussions of their itinerancy, but only and always in the context of their evangelical work.[17] Importantly, their travel brought them in contact with Black as well as white reformers who were traveling for the same reasons. In this sense, they were part of a much larger, interracial missionary circuit that allowed women's travel, as long as it was in the context of spreading the gospel. Sometimes these Black women preachers and evangelists traveled alone, which generated a negative response even from their own African American communities, as was the case with Jarena Lee. Regardless, the accounts of travel provided by these women focused on their interaction with converts and with the various missionary communities to which they belonged. For them, travel for the sake of adventure, fame, or scientific inquiry was simply unthinkable. Nor did their religious work make them financially stable or, for that matter, immune to racism and ill-treatment during their journeys. Despite setbacks, as evangelical Christians they accepted that travel was a practical way to reach unbelievers, and they thought nothing of relying on themselves to generate food and lodging wherever they landed. In a similar vein, though they also endured poor treatment as Black women, both the Jamaican hotelier Mary Seacole (who was a businesswoman rather than a missionary) and freeborn Black American abolitionist Nancy Prince (who was dedicated to mission) relied entirely on their skills to secure food and lodging in Panama and Crimea and in Jamaica.

BECOMING AFRICAN AND FREE IN THE AGE OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Free Black women such as Seacole, Prince, Elaw, and Berry, along with free Black men such as Martin Delany and Robert Campbell, and Americo-Liberians such as James L. Sims, traveled far and wide to conduct business, spread Christianity, or reconnoiter African land for future settlement. In so doing, these Americans crisscrossed the Atlantic Ocean, revising their enslaved ancestors' experience of the Middle Passage.[18] Often of humble circumstances, they were rarely able to make *Western* sense of what they saw, and they often believed before their arrival that their presence would uplift the African "heathen." The shock that Africans might not necessarily be welcoming, combined with the newcomers' Western worldview, sometimes made it difficult for them to see any

connection with Africans beyond skin color. Therefore, the connection they sought had to be either imagined or, in the case of some Americo-Liberians, entirely tossed aside. In other words, they saw Africans as culturally unchanging over the centuries, in contrast to seeing themselves as the advance guard of Black "civilization." And yet, as numerous historical anthropologists and historians who study Africa in the precolonial and colonial eras have argued, populations on the African continent were often as *diasporic* in nature as their counterparts in the Americas. That is, Africans have always migrated across the continent to pursue trade opportunities and escape warfare, as soldiers in search of conquest, and as slaves. As a result of these migrations, creolization was a given by virtue of contact with other African cultures and with Europeans who had arrived for mission, trade, and the control of land.[19]

A key Black Atlantic text that demonstrates such African transformation is, of course, Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789). Written by the Afro-British abolitionist, entrepreneur, and ex-slave who helped turn British public opinion against the transatlantic slave trade, *The Interesting Narrative* covers Equiano's kidnapping from West Africa, his endurance of the Middle Passage, and his subsequent enslavement in the thirteen colonies, the Anglophone West Indies, and the Royal Navy during the Seven Years War (1756–63). Eventually buying his freedom, Equiano continued his peripatetic lifestyle for a while longer, until finally settling permanently in Britain. At the very end of his narrative, Equiano tells the reader of his ill-fated attempt to join the 1787 colonial expedition to Sierra Leone for the settlement of the so-called Black poor of London. (By 1796, these initial Afro-British settlers had been supplemented by Black loyalists from the new United States via Nova Scotia, followed by a contingent of Jamaican Maroons.) Equiano reveals that he has been dismissed from the project because of a false charge of theft. Nevertheless, he is steadfast in his support of Afro-British repatriation to Sierra Leone, both because of its potential to strike a blow against the African side of the Atlantic slave trade and because of his theory that if Europeans could only imagine Africans as consumers rather than objects of consumption, they could surpass the profits of the slave trade by selling "civilized" Africans manufactured goods from Europe. By the end of the narrative, and despite the charges of theft, Equiano the African comes full circle as the captive who rescues himself from the position of chattel to become the unlikely agent of capitalism in the Atlantic world's triangle trade.[20] If Equiano's text were just a slave narrative, the story could have ended simply with the purchase of his freedom in chapter 7. However, he goes on for five more chapters, detailing his time as a free man at sea, continually involved with a range of

commercial enterprises. In between voyages, he picked up the skill of dressing hair, so that if all else failed, he at least had a trade that would have been viable anywhere in the British Empire. Thus, in addition to functioning as the urtext for the American slave narrative, *The Interesting Narrative* tracks Equiano's keen understanding of empire and the possibilities of travel to achieve his survival.[21]

More recently, though, scholars have been debating the difference it makes to see Equiano either as "African" or as someone born in the Americas. In the opening chapters of *The Interesting Narrative*, Equiano identifies himself as Igbo and provides an ethnographic account of his life before capture. At the same time, he calls himself "the African" on the title page, a European term for anyone from the continent. The literary historian Vincent Caretta has unearthed records that seem to confirm Equiano's birthplace not in West Africa, but in colonial South Carolina. This discovery has turned our attention somewhat away from what Equiano said about himself, about slavery, and about his life at sea, to whether he was "authentically" African. In a 2006 response to Caretta's findings, the historian Paul Lovejoy argues vigorously that, in fact, Equiano was born in West Africa: "I think that there is sufficient internal evidence to conclude that the account is essentially authentic, although certainly informed by later reflection, Vassa's acquired knowledge of Africa, and memories of others whom he knew to have come from the Bight of Biafra. The reflections and memories used in autobiography are always filtered, but despite this caveat, I would conclude that Vassa was born in Africa and not in South Carolina."[22] Regardless of where Equiano was born, this discussion illuminates the category *African*, especially within the context of traditional African American diaspora studies and in the context of early literature of what Paul Gilroy has famously called "the black Atlantic."[23] Generally, *diaspora* has come to mean populations dispersed *from* the African continent, rather than populations dispersed *within* the continent. Lovejoy's description of how Equiano utilizes *African* fits well with Ira Berlin's idea of the "Atlantic creole."[24] According to Berlin, trade, whether in commodities or in the human form of slaves, had necessitated the interaction of small groups of European and West Africans since the Middle Ages. Indeed, Berlin emphasizes the nature of West African slave-coast cultures, where African slave sellers and European buyers created working relationships that generated new languages, new mixed-raced people, and new cultural, political, and religious exchanges. Whether or not Equiano was born in West Africa, Lovejoy's larger point that Equiano's story was "informed by later reflection" and supplemented by an "acquired knowledge of Africa" that he would have picked up along the way, in addition to the "memories of others whom he knew to have come from the Bight of Biafra," is crucial. Essentially, by the time he published *The Interesting*

Narrative in 1789, Equiano's "African" identity signified his experience of an unending process of hybridization and creolization. These processes would have begun even before Equiano set foot on a slave ship, since he describes moving to the coast among peoples with habits increasingly distant and distinct from those of his own community.

A number of Africanists have argued that the invention of diasporic identity did not begin in the crowded hold of the slave ship, but well before that at the moment of capture in the hinterland.[25] This reading of dynamics internal to African communities on the continent should caution against simplistic romanticization of "African culture," since peoples on the coast and in the interior of the continent were continually assimilating, supplementing, reinventing, enforcing, and expanding, as expressed by the hybridity of their political, social, commercial, and religious practices. Building upon Berlin's idea of the Atlantic Creole is David Northrup's concept of the "Atlantic African," which I adopt within *Moving Home* to refer (as Northrup does) to individuals born in West Africa—whether they were free or enslaved, whether they left the continent or not—if, like Equiano, they participated in and were transformed by the creolization processes set into motion by the transatlantic slave trade.[26] While Berlin focuses on individuals he regards as neither European nor African, but rather "middle-men" who could move in the space in between, Northrup argues that Atlantic Africans were not necessarily a mixed-race population, and he takes into account the changes taking shape as nineteenth-century European colonization of West Africa took hold.

Though both Britain and the United States had abolished the slave trade in the first half of the nineteenth century, the practice persisted in the South Atlantic, especially with respect to Brazil, until the 1860s. Consequently, the complex processes whereby the transatlantic slave trade produced hybrid African identities on the West African coast did not suddenly cease to exist once white people decided the trade was immoral. Rather, the processes that had always created creolized African identities simply continued with the advent of colonialism. For example, by 1800 the private, antislavery Sierra Leone Company had engineered the "return" of Blacks born outside of Africa. Rather than perpetuating the cultural mix created by the intermingling of European and African slave traders, this strategy constructed a new vision of who "Africans" could be if they accepted Christianity and made themselves available to the so-called civilizing mission. To emphasize this immigration project's antislavery agenda, the British christened Sierra Leone's capital Freetown. In a parallel move, the American Colonization Society sent American ex-slaves and freeborn Blacks to found a similar beachhead in 1820 that was immediately christened

Liberia. If this were not enough, prior to 1841 ex-slaves from Brazil, Cuba, and even the Anglophone West Indies made their way back to West Africa, now fully Christianized but still seeking a nostalgic "return" to past homelands.[27] Essentially acting as vectors of European colonialism, these migrants moved increasingly eastward, ahead of British occupation, culturally and economically having an impact on the indigenous populations they encountered. Clearly, then, the dramatic effects of dispersal created by the transatlantic slave trade that began in the 1500s were now propelled by abolitionist "back-to-Africa" schemes that further transformed West Africans who would never leave the continent.

If reverse migrations from the New World were not enough, existing nineteenth-century African communities were further supplemented by thousands of displaced ex-slaves who had also never left the continent. In 1807 and 1808, respectively, the anti-slave-trading commitment on the part of the British and the Americans required the creation by each government of special naval squadrons which patrolled the West African slave coast so as to intercept slavers making their way to the Americas. Once the British and American naval crews captured and confiscated their human cargo, the latter were taken to Sierra Leone and Liberia, respectively, for "repatriation" among coastal peoples who regarded them as aliens and among American and Caribbean ex-slave migrants who introduced their particular Creole cultures. In Sierra Leone and Liberia, white missionaries set up shop to minister to newly arrived "recaptives," and when necessary, they solicited slave narratives to energize their lay supporters at home. Thus emerged in an 1837 issue of the *Church Missionary Record* the early narrative of the prolific ex-slave turned Anglican bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, albeit significantly shortened by a heavy-handed white editor. As with Equiano in *The Interesting Narrative* some thirty-two years earlier, Crowther recorded his life before capture, his journey to the coast, and the forced boarding of a Portuguese slaver bound for Brazil. But unlike Equiano, Crowther's slave ship was intercepted by the British, who "returned" him to the wholly unfamiliar environs of British Sierra Leone. Dazed and frightened, he and his fellow "liberated" Africans had to be whipped by their rescuers to get them to walk from the beach to the local Court of Mixed Commission. In Sierra Leone, the intersection of multiple diasporic populations created what many refer to as *krio* (as in *creole*) identity on the African side of the Atlantic.[28] Clearly, the processes that invented Sierra Leone's *krio* identity were not identical to the processes encountered by African slaves in the New World. However, in both cases, the direct impact of the transatlantic slave trade enabled new cultural frameworks on either side of the African Atlantic. Given these nineteenth-century developments, in *Moving Home* I extend the term *diaspora* to include

both sides of the Atlantic Basin, pertaining not only to men and women from the Americas but also to those living on the African continent itself.

In the following pages, I highlight Anglophone writers whose texts emerged from the circuits of commerce, migration, and transatlantic abolition running throughout the Atlantic Basin, writers fostered by whites and Blacks in the Americas, by Anglo-Europeans, and by Africans on the continent. My goal, then, is to think about the slave trade as well as its aftereffects on both sides of the Atlantic, in the context of imperial expansion and the complex "contact zones" which consequently emerged.[29] Toward this end, I have drawn upon both published and unpublished nonfiction by the formerly enslaved Christianized West Africans Crowther and Bonetta. Overall, each individual discussed in this book retained allegiances to the local, even as they engaged the wider Atlantic World, though *local* was itself often a fluid and highly permeable idea even as it appeared to be bounded. These men and women wrote to give personal meaning to their experiences on the road and to create public identities for themselves, in a literary form that in the hands of whites usually cast them as the objects of touristic obsession. These African diasporic figures wrote variously for financial gain, for a communally important purpose, and to accrue valuable social capital that might allow them to move freely within, between, and among different social and geographical contexts. As a result, the dynamics of region, class, gender, and culture at once connected and divided them. Additionally, since their writing was by definition semiautobiographical, they sought to inhabit public personae to which they were normally not granted access; as such, they wrote self-consciously for multiple transatlantic audiences. And, since they lived in the age of slavery and a transoceanic slave trade, their travel writing almost always turned upon questions of exile, citizenship, and belonging. Even though they were all free, they inhabited a world plagued by a brutalizing racism that put their claim to personhood in doubt and exposed them to multiple forms of humiliation and discrimination.[30] To one extent or another, each writer endured conditions of economic privation and political disenfranchisement, and their texts became sources of personal power as they responded to detrimental forces.

Regardless of their birthplace, Seacole, Prince, Crowther, Delany, Campbell, and Bonetta had complex and deeply fraught relationships with the multiple worlds they inhabited, worlds constructed through the interconnection of transatlantic slavery and European and American empire. For example, Martin Delany was both a product of his Victorian age and a proud Black Nationalist. He entertained romantic ideas of a Black empire and a Black version of the civilizing mission, even as he devoted his life to formulating resistant and expansive ideas to defeat racism and improve the status of Africa and people

of African descent in the world.[31] Repeatedly, Delany threatened to cut ties with the United States for good: first he moved temporarily to Canada, and then he made short-lived plans to relocate to what is now Nigeria. In the end, he returned to the United States to support the Civil War and participate in the changes that he hoped would come with emancipation. Meanwhile, the Jamaican Mary Seacole seemed to turn her back on the struggles of ex-slaves at home and instead embraced her imperial subjectivity, using her service to British troops in the Crimean War as the argument for apotheosis as national heroine. Robert Campbell also exiled himself from Jamaica, though more openly as an avowed enemy of racism. Indeed, as a migrant to the British Crown Colony of Lagos, Campbell joined a "new" population resisting the same imperial heavy-handedness he had encountered as a West Indian youth. Finally, as African slaves who were spared the Middle Passage, the early Nigerians Crowther and Bonetta were characteristic of elite Atlantic African populations who were heavily influenced by British Christian missionaries. Indeed, as was the case with Delany, both Crowther and Bonetta embraced the so-called civilizing influences of Christianity, even as they challenged white attempts to curtail the self-determination of their respective West African communities. Regardless of their birthplace, then, what these writers had in common was their contingent, complex negotiation of class, gender identity, place, nation, and empire, as they strove to create stable lives and communities in locations where populations, economies, and the balance of power were perpetually in flux.

In selecting writers for this study, I have chosen individuals who might properly belong to Caribbean, African American, and African studies as well as the study of nineteenth-century empire formation, so as to engage both the limitations and possibilities of defining African diaspora. The travel texts generated by each writer also encourage us to engage the distinctive features of the nineteenth century directly, rather than merely seeing "the past" as precursor to a twentieth-century flowering of more sophisticated Black Atlantic exchanges. I take as a given, then, that in the nineteenth-century Atlantic World, the African diaspora had its own conflicts and conditions; its own particular philosophical, economic, cultural, and technological challenges; and its own discourses of change and progress. These features created possibilities and trajectories that were necessarily different from those of the twentieth century, though no less important. Indeed, this book pushes back against arguments for an intellectual and activist genealogy toward more sophisticated political action in the present.[32] Since academic knowledge making relies on the creation of canons and traditions, there is always the risk that the need for forefathers and foremothers encourages a celebration of the present by way of flattening the past.

Moving Home engages crucial analytical categories, including *gender*, *class*, *color*, *race*, *ethnicity*, *home*, *citizenship*, *nation*, and *empire*. Throughout any century, these categories mean different things to different people, at different historical moments and under varying conditions on the ground. As a group of categories, these terms all gesture to intersecting social processes, each of which are at once nuanced, contradictory, and continually being reinvented in response to changing social, economic, and political conditions. By exploring how and why the travel writers in this book assigned particular meaning to their travel, and how and why they enacted particular public selves through their texts, I engage the unique ways that Seacole, Prince, Crowther, Delany, Campbell, and Bonetta articulated a set of experiences, even as they shared a great deal with the communities they inhabited.[33] Collectively, their work confirms the vitally important connections between and among African American, Caribbean, and African studies. In their differently nuanced complexities, these writers also allow us to work toward a new appreciation of not just Black feminist studies, but also a transnational, Black gender studies.

IN CHAPTER 1, I EXPLORE the travel writing of Mary Seacole, who is usually treated as an early Anglophone Caribbean figure. Born in Jamaica, Seacole worked to cultivate her own special relationship to imperial Britain for the purposes of economic prosperity, exploiting while also reworking colonial stereotypes to her advantage. Seacole deliberately set her path along the trajectories of empire, escaping an economic depression in 1840s Jamaica by relocating her restaurant–cum–boarding house from Kingston to Panama during the period of the California gold rush. When the Crimean War broke out, Seacole picked up and set off across the Atlantic Ocean to the theater of war in Turkey, both to capitalize on an alternate market of male clientele and to help nurse Britain's wounded soldiers. Lest we romanticize Seacole as saintly and self-sacrificing, as some recent biographers are wont to do, her commercial concerns had to be in the forefront of her thinking, since she was responsible for her own survival. Seacole did not simply make money to give it all away in the form of bandages and homemade medicines to sick British soldiers. Rather, she was just as interested in capitalist accumulation as any good colonial subject of the period. Though the general facts in *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (1857) are not in dispute, the impoverished Seacole deliberately used her travel narrative to elicit gratitude for her war service in the form of English pounds, so she could pay off debts incurred in the Crimea and then retire. Thus, Seacole's writing has an unmistakably financial motivation wedded to the establishment of herself as a bona fide Crimean heroine on the order of Florence Nightingale.

Chapter 2's Nancy Prince—the American domestic servant turned landlady, seamstress, and later missionary—could be viewed as something of an American analogue to Mary Seacole, in that her *Life and Travels of Mrs. Nancy Prince* (1850) is also a narrative of foreign travel, published with the hope of generating much-needed income. Emerging from crushing poverty and a troubled homelife in Newburyport, Massachusetts, Prince had no choice but to go into service, as her siblings were scattered to the four winds. After struggling to redeem a sister who had fallen into prostitution, Prince eventually opted to save herself by marrying a Black sailor employed in, of all places, the mid-nineteenth-century Russian court. Such a drastic escape from the hopeless circumstances of Newburyport to Saint Petersburg would not have been possible for a single and cash-strapped nineteenth-century Black woman who wanted to preserve her good name. So, Prince chose marriage to enable redemptive travel as well as domestic refuge. Indeed, Prince's "home" in Russia was a boarding-house she ran for schoolchildren away from home, the income from which she supplemented with dressmaking. As with Seacole, Prince took on the trappings of domesticity in order to survive and even thrive financially, jettisoning national and regional identity as needed to accomplish her independence. But while Seacole relied upon an imperial loyalty that (according to *Wonderful Adventures*, anyway) required perpetual itinerancy as part of a larger strategy to gain the British reader's support, Prince returned to the United States, opting to become a selfless missionary to newly emancipated slaves in Jamaica. Part of her motivation to travel to the West Indies rested in the hope for some kind of racial solidarity, even as she saw herself as the superior of the uneducated ex-slaves. However, both the pressures of economic survival and her alien status as an American in Jamaica made it difficult for her to establish herself. After returning to the United States, Prince continued to make use of her travels via lectures and the publication of her 1850 narrative, which she managed to have reprinted at least twice. Additionally, she engaged with Black American emigration debates, penning a separate newcomers' guide to Jamaica, since the abolition of slavery in the British colonies now opened up new relocation possibilities for Black Americans who could no longer abide life in their native United States. As a woman alone, Prince proved that the African American debate on emigration was as much an issue for Black women as it was for their men.

Chapter 3, "The Repatriation of Samuel Ajayi Crowther," explores writing on African repatriation by a former Yoruba slave turned Christian missionary. Samuel Ajayi Crowther had been rescued from a Portuguese slaver in 1822 by a warship assigned to the Royal Navy's Anti–Slave Trade Squadron. As was the case with slavers intercepted close to the West African coast, Crowther and his

fellow captives were disembarked at Freetown, Sierra Leone, where a Court of Mixed Commission determined their status as kidnapped Africans. In the end, Crowther was released to agents of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), who in turn immediately began the Christianization process. This included literacy for all ex-slaves, so that the latter could begin reading the Bible, and the mastering of a trade, which in Crowther's case meant becoming a carpenter. Very quickly, however, CMS agents realized that he was intellectually gifted, especially with languages. Given the policy championed under the CMS secretary, Henry Venn, Crowther received a careful education, which later enabled him to became a prime candidate for the native pastorate, then in its infancy. As something of a poster child for successful African conversion, Crowther rose to celebrity status among white Britons who were the financial backbone of the CMS. First as a catechist and later as an ordained Anglican minister, Crowther traveled with various British expeditions deeper and deeper into the Nigerian hinterland. Eventually he was assigned the task (along with several white colleagues) of creating a Niger mission, and by the time of his death in 1891, he had become the bishop of all of Anglican West Africa. Crowther's rise occurred in spite of palpable racism from white missionaries in the field and was due in large part to Henry Venn's faithful support. However, after Venn's period of leadership ended, a younger generation of white missionary executives took charge, stripping Venn's native pastorate—and Bishop Crowther—of any real power.

Still, Crowther authored numerous translations of the Gospels into various West African languages, including his native Yoruba. Additionally, he penned a short slave narrative, describing his rescue by the Royal Navy from Portuguese slavery, as well as three narratives describing his subsequent travel with three later expeditions into the Nigerian interior. The focus in chapter 3 is on Crowther's narrative covering the tragic 1841 Niger expedition, reprinted in the *Journals of the Rev. James Frederick Schön and Mr. Samuel Crowther* published a year later. My focus on this text has to do with the fact that it is one of Crowther's earliest representations of himself as an African convert to white CMS supporters in Britain, and it combines not only an eyewitness, observational perspective on the failed expedition but also a self-construction as the obedient and loyal African propagator of Christian mission, who retraces his steps back to the region of his preslavery origin. In a sense, this text becomes Crowther's first public articulation of an "Atlantic African" identity.

Chapter 4 continues the theme of African exploration with a combined discussion of Martin R. Delany's *Official Report* and Robert Campbell's *A Pilgrimage to My Motherland*, both published in 1861 as part of a joint effort to report on the economic, political, and geographic possibilities for Black American relocation to

what later became southeast Nigeria. For his part, Delany's exploration narrative followed the stringent lines of a scientific inquiry. Rarely referring to himself in the *Official Report*, he matter-of-factly made note of everything from wood-eating ants to early morning mists, from malaria to the presence of European missionaries. In many ways, Delany used his narrative not only to democratize for his African American audience bodies of knowledge about their ancestral homeland but also to demonstrate his deserving ownership of said knowledge. Though at the end of his narrative Delany declared his desire to return to Lagos with his family, the final effect of his *Official Report* was less to rehearse the idea of African repatriation than to affirm a Black American right to "knowing" the continent, something that had hitherto been the prerogative of only white explorers.

As was the case with Seacole, Robert Campbell left a financially depressed Jamaica in the late 1840s hoping to make his fortune in Panama. Trained as both a schoolmaster and a printer, Campbell did not fare well in Central America, and by the 1850s he and his family had moved to New York and then Philadelphia, where he gained valuable science training and teaching experience at the Quaker-run Institute for Colored Youth. Still, hemmed in at every turn by American racism, Campbell finally set out in 1859 for southeast Nigeria, coordinating his travel with Delany's to explore possibilities for resettlement in and around the city of Abeokuta. Campbell may have meant *A Pilgrimage to My Motherland* to serve as an ethnographic guide, but the text also articulates his own experience among Yoruba-speaking Africans, both non-Christian and Christian, who seemed to effortlessly take charge of their own destiny in what appeared to be the absence of any substantial white presence. As if anticipating his own eventual move to Lagos, Campbell wrote as a participant-observer and then finally transformed himself into an African adoptive son.

Chapter 4 ends with a discussion of the response to both Campbell's and Delany's narratives by none other than Richard Francis Burton, one of the premier African explorers of the Victorian era. A notorious racist and anti-Semite, Burton attacked both men on racial grounds and in terms of their credibility as explorers. However, the fact that he felt obliged to engage their work at all suggests that both Campbell and Delany had indeed compelled his attention.

Moving Home concludes with chapter 5's exploration of the life and travels of the African ex-slave Sarah Forbes Bonetta, who as a child became the ward of Queen Victoria. Drawing on records from the Church Missionary Society archives, the Royal Archives at Windsor, and the family archives of her husband, James P. L. Davies of Lagos, this chapter provides the fullest biographical portrait of Bonetta currently available, within the context of multiple arrivals and departures that spanned her lifetime. Literally given to Queen Victoria as

a young girl by the king of Dahomey (modern Benin), Bonetta was, of course, freed by her abolitionist benefactor. However, as a royal ward, Bonetta found herself under strict management by a range of paternalist figures who had her journeying from Britain to Sierra Leone and then back again, in the service of imparting "civilization" in the form of the three Rs, piano playing, and Christian devotion. Giving in to royal pressure to accept a marriage proposal from the older Yoruba widower James P. L. Davies, Bonetta moved with him among the Christianized West African elite society of Lagos, Britain's newest crown colony. With a wealthy husband and her royal connections, Bonetta enjoyed a position of affluence and social prestige unavailable to most white Britons. In this chapter, I argue that travel, particularly if overseas, became a hallmark of the West African social class into which Bonetta had married. As she traveled between Britain and Lagos to build and consolidate social and familial ties, she wrote many letters and kept a travel diary. Consequently, in line with feminist arguments that demand a rethinking of genres and archives in order to make women's lives and work more visible, I explore her unpublished writing and the world of colonial travel in which she was vitally engaged.[34] The questions in this chapter are less about the formality of a single genre and more about how Bonetta's required itinerancy speaks to the subtle class dimensions of being simultaneously the index of Davies family respectability and the embodiment of the queen's personal largesse. "Home" for Bonetta was both Lagos and the small Kentish town of her white foster family. However, in Britain and West Africa, different audiences enabled or forbade particular practices, such that Bonetta's agency as a colonial tourist would always be somewhat provisional. Though they differ from the other kinds of writing addressed here, Bonetta's informal letters and diary entries engage questions of persona, place, belonging, race, and gendered agency on a subtle and important scale.

Ultimately, in *Moving Home* I offer a perspective informed by both African and African American studies, from all points of the Anglophone Atlantic diaspora, with a particular emphasis on exploring the subtle impact of gender norms on nineteenth-century Black identities. In many ways, this book decenters the United States not to diminish Black American experiences but rather to highlight the coeval nature of Afro-Caribbean and West African life under colonialism at the moment when Blacks in the United States grappled with slavery, abolition, and territorial expansion. Throughout, for each writer I reveal the twists and turns enabled and foreclosed by Victorian gender norms, as well as the necessity these writers felt to construct transformative and ever-evolving identities for themselves, through the act of writing about travel.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*. The habit of representing a landscape as either "blank," wild, and potentially tamable or strange and unique also appealed to white writers who sought to reimagine towns, the countryside, and populations of their own or similar nations, whether in Europe or in the United States. A Frenchman who became an American citizen, Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur left his readers in no doubt as to the focus of his *Letters from an American Farmer: Describing Certain Provincial Situations, Manners, and Customs, Not Generally Known; and Conveying Some Idea of the Late and Present Interior Circumstances of the British Colonies of North America* (1782). In 1791 Samuel Johnson described his perambulations in *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775), while James Fenimore Cooper turned his eye to Europeans' attitudes in *Notions of the Americans: Picked Up by a Travelling Bachelor* (1828). Meanwhile, Frederick Law Olmsted offered social commentary in his *The Cotton Kingdom: A Traveller's Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American Slave States* (1861). Ironically, the trope of the alien Other was even applied to classed populations in a writer's homeland, as was the case in William Booth's *In Darkest England* (1890). In fact, the title of Booth's book coincided with that of Henry Morton Stanley's *In Darkest Africa*, published that same year. By collapsing "darkest Africa" with poverty-stricken Englanders, Booth championed the civilizing mission as the cure to all ills, and he employed the language of colonialism that was part and parcel of imperial travel writing to construct a particularly raced and classed sense of English identity. In this case, writing associated with the English traveler enabled a flexible worldview that buttressed a range of powerful interests behind late nineteenth-century British nation and empire building.

2. See especially Bassett, "Cartography"; Fabian, *Time*; Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*; Driver, *Geography Militant*.

3. Scholarship that does address Delany's *Official Report* in detail includes Blackett, "Martin R. Delany," as well as Blackett, *Beating against the Barriers*. Additionally, see J. T. Campbell, *Middle Passages*.

4. For a sampling of important work see Grewal, *Home*; Griffin and Fish, *Stranger*; Fish, *Black and White Women's Travel Narratives*; Totten, *African American Travel Narratives*.

5. Youngs, *Cambridge Introduction*, 3.

6. See, for example, Wong, *Neither Fugitive nor Free*. Scholarship that discusses the relationship between slave narratives and travel texts includes Murphy, "Olaudah Equiano"; Brawley, "Fugitive Nation"; Brawley, "Frederick Douglass' *My Bondage*"; Brusky, "Travels"; Chaney, "Traveling Harlem's Europe"; Kelleter, "Ethnic Self-Dramatization"; Lucasi, "William Wells Brown's *Narrative*"; Baraw, "William Wells Brown"; Bohls, *Slavery*. On the general topic of pre–Civil War travel in the United States by freeborn Black Americans, see Pryor, *Colored Travelers*.

7. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "travel," accessed June 7, 2021, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/o/oed/oed-idx?type=entry&byte=507106248.

8. See Brusky, "Travels."

9. Craft and Craft, *Running a Thousand Miles*, 56–57.

10. For a specific focus on Ellen and her masquerade as an ailing white man, see Samuels, *Fantasies*.

11. Totten, *African American Travel Narratives*.

12. Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents*, 201.

13. See Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*, where the fifteen-year-old maid wins over her exploitative male employer by resisting his sexual entreaties until he finally realizes the value of her character and responds with marriage.

14. For useful discussions of nineteenth-century European white women and travel, see Blunt, *Travel*; Lawrence, *Penelope Voyages*; Russell, *Blessings*; Kelley, "Increasingly 'Imaginative Geographies'"; Dúnlaith Bird, *Travelling in Different Skins*; Loth, "Writing and Traveling."

15. For recent work on the slave Mary Prince and travel, see Bohls, *Slavery*; Simmons, "Beyond 'Authenticity.'"

16. Gordon-Reed, *Hemingses*, 239.

17. For a wonderful introduction to the narratives of Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw, and Julia Foote, see Andrews, *Sisters*; see also Smith, *Autobiography*.

18. For an excellent summary of the productive challenges posed by Africanists working on Black Atlantic cultures, see Mann, "Shifting Paradigms." In particular, Mann points out the goals of the Diaspora from the Nigerian Hinterland Project, whose organizers maintain that "persons born in Africa carried with them into slavery not only their cultures but also their history, and that if we understand the experience of slaves and the histories of the societies from which they came, then we will be able to trace these influences into the diaspora." Mann, "Shifting Paradigms," 5.

19. Proponents of this argument include Kopytoff, *Preface;* Matory, "English Professors"; Roberts, "Construction"; Piot, "Atlantic Aporias"; Joseph Harris, "Expanding the Scope"; Zeleza, "Rewriting the African Diaspora."

20. For a sampling of discussions treating Equiano's relationship to capitalism and imperialism, see Hinds, "Spirit"; Pudaloff, "No Change"; Field, "'Excepting Himself.'" The triangle trade is a metaphor that vividly exemplifies the continuous circuits of trade in bodies and goods that linked European imperial designs, the Atlantic slave trade, and the

extraction of resources from American colonies. By the time the Atlantic slave trade had reached its height in the early eighteenth century, vessels from Europe filled with metal pots and pans, woven cloth, beads, and European weapons instantiated the first leg of the proverbial triangle as they plied the African west coast, trading inanimate objects for slaves. The next leg of the triangle was articulated by the Middle Passage, westward from Africa to the Americas, where slaves were sold off at various colonial ports from South America to as far north as British Canada. As they traveled from port to port, slave ship crews gradually replaced human cargo with the fruits of empire, including cotton, tobacco, furs, sugar, spices, hardwoods, rice, and other raw materials. The return to Europe of slave ships now carrying these goods completed the third and final leg of the triangle.

21. For the traditional argument that Equiano is the father of the American slave narrative, see Baker, "Figuration."

22. Lovejoy, "Construction," 8. For a summary of Caretta's argument, see his "Does Equiano Still Matter?"

23. See Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*.

24. Berlin, "From Creole to African." For an updated extension of Berlin's argument, see Law and Mann, "West Africa."

25. See, for example, Northrup, "Becoming African"; Matory, "English Professors"; Piot, "Atlantic Aporias"; Zeleza, "Rewriting the African Diaspora."

26. Northrup, "Becoming African"; see, more generally, Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*.

27. See Matory, "English Professors."

28. For useful discussions of krio identity in Sierra Leone, see Spitzer, *Lives In Between*, and, more recently, Cole, *Krio*.

29. Pratt argues that "contact zones" are "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today." Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 4.

30. The British outlawed slavery in the nation in 1772 with the Somerset case, the Atlantic slave trade in 1807, and slavery in Canada and its West Indian colonies in 1832. Many northern American states outlawed slavery soon after the end of the war for independence. By 1808 the United States ended its participation in the trade, though slavery in the South continued until Abraham Lincoln's executive order (the Emancipation Proclamation) in 1863. Congress finally ratified the Thirteenth Amendment in 1864, ending involuntary servitude permanently (unless you were a prisoner). The Haitian slaves had revolted and freed themselves in 1791, while revolutionaries in France ended slavery in the nation's other West Indian colonies in 1794.

After the Haitian Revolution, most of Spain's colonies in Central America and South America won their independence, whereupon they all abolished slavery by the 1830s. The importation of slaves to colonial Cuba ended officially in 1820, but lack of enforcement meant that kidnapped Africans were still being brought to the island until 1867. Likewise, Brazil still imported slaves, even though the trade was officially banned in 1831. Brazilian slavery did not come to an end until 1888.

31. The topic of African American responses to empire, especially though not exclusively in the context of diaspora, has generated a growing body of scholarship, including

Sanneh, *Abolitionists Abroad*; Gruesser, *Empire* ; Von Eschen, *Race*; Edwards, *Practice*; Stephens, *Black Empire*; Gaines, *American Africans.* This topic intersects as well as with the well-established push among many Americanists to rethink US culture and history in light of westward expansion and foreign policy, signaled in the early 1990s by Amy Kaplan and Pease, *Cultures*; Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity."

32. Studies that use the nineteenth century as a backstory toward the twentieth-century flowering of a radical position include books as varied as Gilroy's *Black Atlantic* and Von Eschen's *Race*. Roderick Ferguson offers some interesting challenges to the way African Americanists have constructed and framed the historical narrative of their subject. See Roderick Ferguson, "Lateral Moves"; Roderick Ferguson, *Reorder*. See especially Goyal, "We Need New Diasporas"; Goyal, *Runaway Genres*.

33. See, for example, studies that trace West African travel back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including Law and Mann, "West Africa"; Berlin, "From Creole to African"; Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*; Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*.

34. For Christianized West Africans as diary writers, see Karin Barber, *Africa's Hidden Histories*.

1. MARY SEACOLE'S WEST INDIAN HOSPITALITY

An earlier version of chapter 1 appeared as "Traveling with Her Mother's Tastes: The Negotiation of Gender, Race, and Location in *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands*," *Signs* 26, no. 4 (Summer 2001): 949–81.

1. In the autobiography, Seacole styles herself a "Creole," and she also embraces her mulatto identity. As Kamau Brathwaite argues, *Creole* is a term that had and still retains a variety of meanings across time and space. For the children of white settlers, it was a specific reference to birth outside of England in the British West Indian colonies. Was Seacole appropriating the term to align herself with Afro-Jamaicans and against Africans? Throughout this chapter, I use the term *colored* or *mixed race* to refer to West Indian–born individuals such as Seacole who were a product of Black-white sexual relations, in line with Caribbean scholars who employ the same term. See Brathwaite, *Development*; Heuman, *Between Black and White*; Beckles, "On the Backs"; Cox, *Free Coloreds*; Sio, "Marginality." For possible shifts in the meaning of *colored* to *brown*, see most recently Edmondson, "'Most Intensely Jamaican.'" For a discussion of the US context, see Horton, *Free People*.

2. There have been a number of scholarly biographical essays covering Seacole, such as the introductions by Alexander and Dewjee and by Salih to Seacole, *Wonderful Adventures*. Seacole's reputation is currently enjoying a strong revival, sparking Jane Robinson's popular 2004 biography *Mary Seacole: The Most Famous Black Woman of the Victorian Age*. Though Robinson's research is thorough, she avoids anything even mildly controversial. In addition to Robinson, see Anionwu, *Short History.* Anionwu is a highly distinguished nurse, public health professor, and community health advocate who has tirelessly championed for full recognition of Seacole's achievements.

3. Alexander, "Let It Lie," 49n.