cans were not often desirable targets of adoption, especially by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Even as Comanche captive raiding increased steadily over that time, so that adopted captives came to represent 20 percent of their population, that group was made up primarily of Indians (60 percent) and Spanish Mexicans (40 percent). Anglo-Americans like Cynthia Ann Parker, who became the wife of a Comanche leader and the mother of Chief Quanah Parker, who guided Comanches in their transition to reservation life, were rarities despite the popularity of white-captivity narratives based on them.

Native captivity was rationalized by kinship, not race. It sought to meet political and social needs rather than labor and economic ones. Instead of resulting in bondage in perpetuity through an enslaved woman’s children, it culminated in adoption of captives and the integration of their children into the families and communities of the captors. Grounded as it was in social, cultural, political, and religious imperatives, captivity found its greatest importance in maintaining order on cosmological, political, and familial scales. Only with European invasion did Native systems of captive taking become tied to those of Atlantic slavery, and only in the hands of Europeans were Native “captives” transformed into “slaves.”

JULIANA BARR

Bibliography


sions in the Old and New worlds—connected by water—could be conceived as a unified and interdependent community and drawn as such.

This fact, dramatically portrayed in the margins of the earliest maps they produced, which showed spouting sea monsters, exuberant tropical birds, and colorful scenes of plumed Amerindians at work and play, came to life in the expansive cartographies of the Cantino Planisphere (1502), the Miller Atlas (1519), and Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmographia* (1544). As demand for raw materials changed and monoculture came to the fore, Europeans became less dependent on indigenous labor and subsequently more reliant on enslaved Africans. Consequently, such terms as the *Ethiopic Sea* occurred with greater frequency within cartographic representations, demonstrating the increasing importance of the southern part of the Atlantic and its connections to Africa. These images, whether in atlases or loose-leaf maps, pulled together a world that lay beyond Europe and that had previously been imagined in less spatial, and indeed more imaginative, veins, a world as much of geographical uncertainty as littoral specificity.

Nevertheless, the very tangible connections that developed in the centuries that followed European engagement with the Atlantic World were at least conceptually dependent on this early understanding of a unified geographical space, as articulated in the maps that were produced largely in early-modern Europe’s geographically ambitious political and military centers. Maps were central for the conceiving of this space, but the cartographic articulation of an Atlantic World—especially for the Portuguese and Spanish—emerged as a result of very early practical engagement with the geographical features of Europe, the African coast, and the plantation cultures of the Caribbean, none of them predicted, including the northeastern coast of South America. Centuries later, the scholarly impulse to study Africa, the Americas, and Europe from interconnected perspectives of this kind emerged also, by and large, as a result of political engagements, especially within the Anglo-American world, whose historians—including such twentieth-century luminaries as Herbert Baxter Adams and Herbert Bolton—sought to place the historical narrative of the United States into this broader frame. The

*Figure 1. “A Chart of the Gulph Stream,” published by Benjamin Franklin in the late 1700s.*
model received an even stronger impetus in the wake of World War II and the establishment of institutions such as the Atlantic Council of the United States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and other military alliances privileging connections across the North Atlantic.

This geopolitically motivated interest in a North Atlantic history grew out of an earlier, more general interest in imperial history—an approach that followed the colonizing programs of several European powers. This occasionally nostalgic celebration of nineteenth-century economic ambitions would end up dividing the Atlantic conceptually into separated imperial Atlantics: Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English, or French. In turn, this privileging of Atlantic worlds defined linguistically or politically neglected the underlying integrating geography of a maritime core and the connections that it enabled to the interior of surrounding continents, such as the trans-Appalachian west in North America, or the Andes or Amazon regions in South America, or especially to other oceanic spaces, including the Pacific and Indian oceans.

Since representing the Atlantic region as a set of separate linguistic or imperial “Atlantics” obscures the interlinked historical processes built out of its geographical position as connector among the various strands of local and regional histories, we might, as John Brian Harley and other historians of cartography have cogently argued, recognize that our conventional maps—with their neat arrangements of continental masses around an empty blue block of water—frequently functioned in the service of empire. Against this panoptically derived Atlantic, and instead tracing geographical contours following historical actors themselves, we might rather see multiple connections at different scales: from mixing along the docks of port cities to com-
modities that traversed the oceans and individuals—in bondage or not—who circulated on the high seas. Emphasizing itineraries—the movement of peoples, commodities, and ideas across imaginary geopolitical and linguistic boundaries—enables Atlantic history to achieve its proper aim of connecting regions that anachronistic categories have rendered separate and distinct. The result is a more historical and cosmopolitan, and less teleological and nationalistic, Atlantic space, one that accommodates the fine-grained stories that broader and more abstract perspectives tend to efface.

Avoiding the abstract, and often ahistorical, boundaries imposed on an open and fluid Atlantic World allows historical actors—animate and inanimate, including winds and currents—to follow their own courses, just like Franklin’s meandering Gulf Stream, and provides an invitation to historians of other oceanic spaces—the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and the Arctic, for instance—to see the Atlantic region as a model for other interconnections. In addition, focusing on individuals allows scholars to include radically different African and Native American perspectives on geography in the production of cartographic knowledge. Among European forms, the use of individual perspectives includes literary mapping and the use of texts as forms of graphic devices. Traversing the Atlantic World along the itineraries of its makers enables historians to consider spatial representations as social creations expressed in colonial-era legal papers and other texts that reformulated space in the process of encountering collaborators formerly unknown. These new geographies emerged in spaces removed from the ocean itself but nonetheless projected from processes created by its existence.

Such was the case in the Andes, physically nearer to—and approached by Europeans from—South America’s Pacific coast than to the Atlantic Ocean, but nonetheless a geographical region that Spanish silver mining integrated into transatlantic commerce, political claims, and military coercion. Indigenous scribes, notaries, and artists using the spatial and alphabetic literacies of the Inca (Quechua-speaking) masters of those mountains produced a series of hybrid map-grids, artistic frescoes, and traditional scripted texts different from those proposed by the religious and secular logics of the arriving Spaniards. The Relaciones Geográficas, a series of questionnaires sent out in 1577 by Philip II in order to acquire geographical knowledge of Spain’s newly conquered territories in America, also integrated local knowledge systems and communal representations of New World geography.

These geographical concepts of indigenous peoples of the Americas entered the historical record as parts of European cartographic representations, frequently without acknowledging their Native sources. In the Rio Branco region of the Brazilian Amazon, for instance, when the Luso-Brazilian naturalist Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira (1756–1815) encountered an Amerindian on his way from the Atlantic port city of Belém do Pará, he obtained a map from his indigenous source that he passed along to one of the primary mapmakers of the Portuguese. Through mental maps, lived experience translated orally to Europeans, and other forms of spatial understanding such as stick-charts and ephemeral drawings, indigenous peoples from throughout the Americas conceptualized geographic space alongside their European interlocutors, although only some of this knowledge ever ended up being placed on European maps or even described in accounts of European exploration, despite a keen attention throughout the early-modern period to indigenous practices that were represented as icons, toponyms (place-names), narrative descriptions, and cartouche (small oval-framed) depictions.

While only a small minority of Africans made any use of Atlantic coastal waters before the arrival of Europeans, their experience and geographical knowledge also influenced European perceptions of the broader Atlantic World. Angola and Brazil, for instance, were connected in the era of the slave trade by direct mercantile and sociocultural links centered along an axis across the southern seas, which supplements the European fulcrum for triangular transatlantic economic engagements. The eighteenth-century itinerary of an African-born man, who became known as Domingos Álvares, from Benin to Pernambuco and on to Portugal, is a telling example of how human geography can be told through the prism of African healing: his medical practices in Africa and Brazil yielded an “ability to collapse time and space into a unity of human and spiritual power,” which in turn challenged Western ideas about history as “chronologically or-
Center-Periphery Analysis

The sociologist Edward Shils first used the concept of center and periphery to analyze systems composed of unequal parts in an influential interpretive essay published in 1961. Premodern societies, he contended, consisted of a center with a well-formed and charismatic system of values and authority, but that authority was attenuated by distance. Lacking sufficient coercive resources, the center was unable to impose its values upon the distant peripheries, which became pockets of independence within a loosely organized polity. This analytical approach has been prominent among the ways that scholars have thought about the relationships among the regions composing the Atlantic World.

In the 1980s, Jack P. Greene applied Shils’s framework to the study of constitutional arrangements in the early-modern British Atlantic, emphasizing the agency of the peripheries in negotiating those arrangements. Also in the 1980s, the historical geographer D. W. Meinig used the concepts of center, core, periphery, and distance decay to depict the organization of the emerging Atlantic World. Meinig saw the Atlantic World as an integrated sequence: first, the European core regions, which had their industrial hinterlands, Atlantic ports, and outposts; these core regions had parallel communities overseas, which were divided into colonial ports, frontier entrepôts or trading centers, and inland outposts; and these in turn were linked to Indian core areas of powerful intermediary tribes, which had hinterlands of their own, for hunting and trading with partners even more remote from the European cores.

In the late 1990s historians of Atlantic empires further expanded this framework, comparing the processes of secondary colonization by which colonial peripheries developed peripheries of their own. For example, A. J. R. Russell-Wood used the geographic concepts of Umland (hinterland) and Vorland (areas contiguous to a trading center) to describe direct contact between Portuguese Brazil and Portuguese Africa as a linkage of periphery to periphery. Amy Turner Bushnell complicated the typology of peripheries by distinguishing the settled ecumene from the trading sphere of influence and from the ephemeral cartographic claim to sovereignty and by applying the differentiating concepts of strategic or nonstrategic, internal or external, and significant or insignificant to margins and frontiers.

One of the most influential uses of the center and periphery concept was that of historical sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein. In his schema, strong European core-states with complex economies and systems of waged labor presided over an emerging world economy that in turn dominated a

Bibliography