Black Resistance in an Age of Revolution: Symposium Commemorating the Bicentennial of the 1811 Slave Uprising in Territorial Louisiana

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In January of 1811 at least two hundred and possibly as many as five hundred enslaved Africans and African-Americans living west of New Orleans (in present day St. John the Baptist and St. Charles Parishes) launched the largest slave rebellion in the history of North America and the United States. Like all slave rebellions in the Americas -- with the singular exception of the Haitian Revolution -- this revolutionary struggle failed and dozens of people were summarily tried and executed in the aftermath. Although other slave rebellions have received far greater attention both in popular history venues and in academic arenas, the 1811 Rebellion was both a singular and an emblematic event which occurred in the midst of an age of revolutionary change for enslaved African-descended peoples through the Americas. This era, beginning in the late 1700s, was marked most significantly by the success of the Haitian revolution (1791-1804) but also included the liberation of enslaved black populations amidst independence struggles from New England to South America, and dozens of major slave uprisings which occurred from the 1760s up until the final emancipations of enslaved African-descendants which occurred in the United States, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Brazil between 1861 and 1888.

Beginning in 2009 Tulane University entered into a collaborative effort with Destrehan Plantation (a significant site in the 1811 rebellion) and the New Orleans African American Museum planning a series of events designed to raise the awareness of this major historical event among both popular and academic audiences. Papers are invited on any subject related to the conference theme. However, preference will be given to submissions which focus on armed slave rebellion, rather than other forms of slave resistance. Possible paper themes may include: The 1811 Louisiana slave uprising (sometimes called the German Coast Rebellion); Regional impacts of the Haitian Revolution; Public history, memory and commemoration of slave rebellions and slave rebels; Slave uprisings in Latin
America & the Caribbean in the Age of Revolution; Women, gender and slave rebellion in the revolutionary Americas.

Please email abstracts of 200-250 words to 1811uprising@tulane.edu by Friday, August 12, 2011. Abstracts should be accompanied by a one-page curriculum vita and relevant contact details. Support for airfare and accommodations may be available for symposium participants. Further details will be provided later. Inquiries about the conference may also be sent to the conference email address. The conference will be jointly hosted by Tulane University, the New Orleans African-American Museum, the River Road Historical Society and Destrehan Plantation.