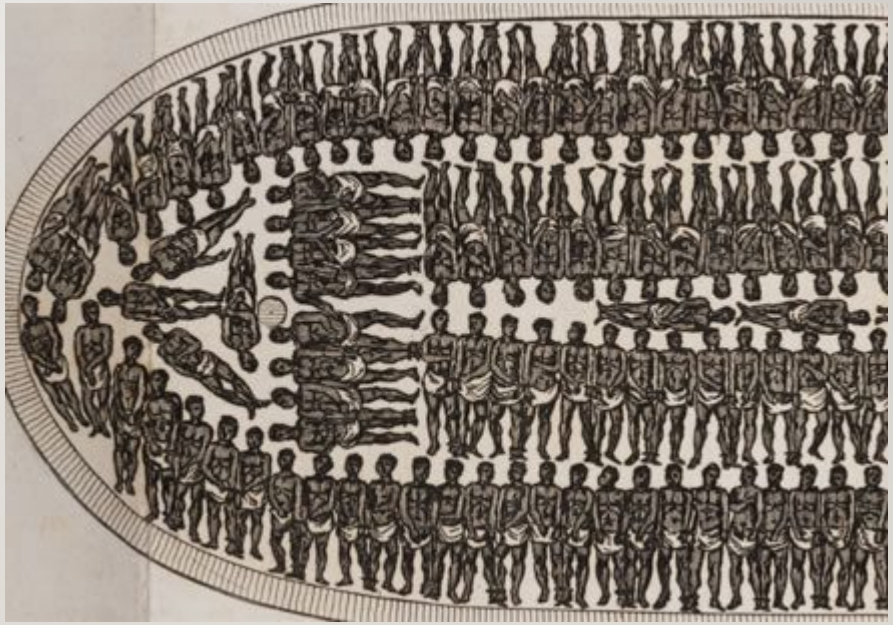
THE CASE OF THE AMISTAD

NICOLLE GOLDBACH

INTRODUCTION

- Slave ship
- Impartial Racial Trial
- Economic and cultural shift
- First step to end of slavery



HISTORICAL CONTENT

- Mid 1800
- Economic system of slavery
- Triangular trade route
- Slave Trade Act 1807
  - British Empire
- Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves
  - United States
- International Treaties



LA AMISTAD

- American-built schooner
- Spanish possession
- Violation of treaties



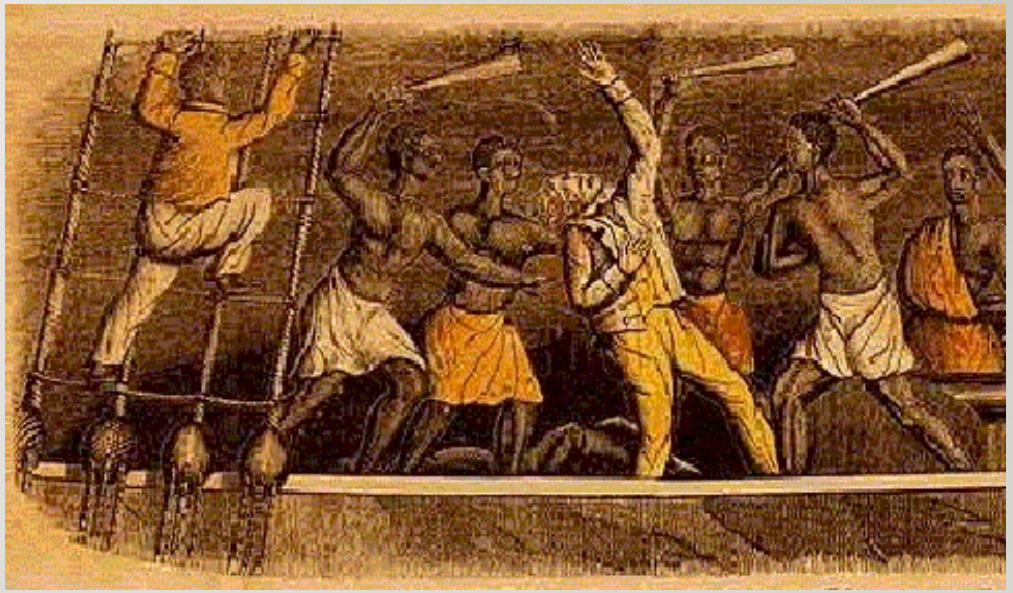
THE CASE

- Fifty-three Africans were kidnapped in Sierra Leone
- Spanish forged documentation
- Havana, Cuba
- June 28, 1839
- Four days after the captives revolted



THE REVOLT

- During night
- Joseph Cinque/ Sengbe Pieh
- Killed the captain and the cook
- Two slaves died
- Spared the crew’s lives
  - Pedro Montes and Jose Ruiz
- Demanded the crew to sail back to Africa



THE REVOLT

- The crew sailed east during the day
- Tricked the Africans by night
- Long Island, New York
- August 26, 1839
- U.S. Navy’s Washington took the Africans into custody



THE CASE

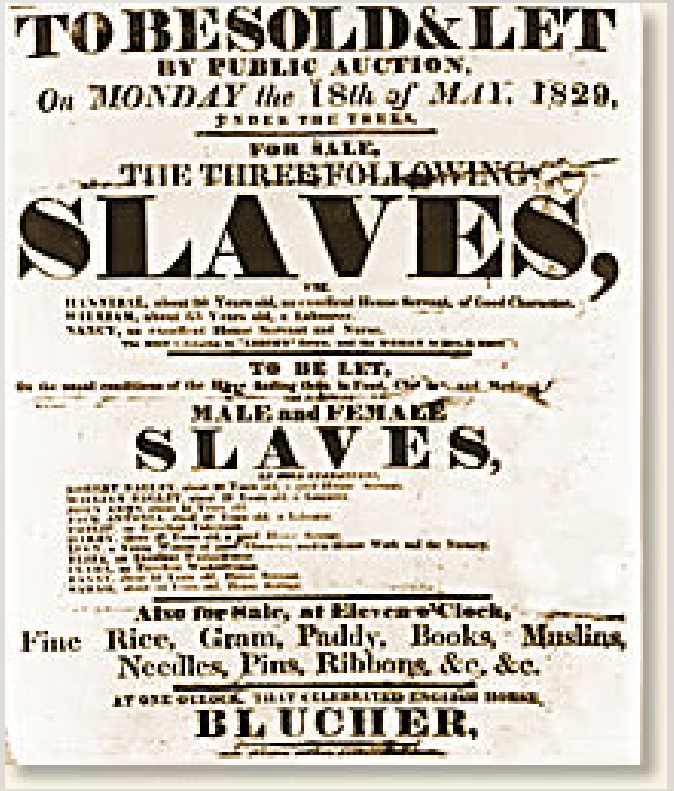
- New London, Connecticut
- First hearing, August 29, 1839
  - Ruiz and Montes presented false documents
- Africans indicted on charges of murder and piracy
- New Haven county jail



(Osagie, 2000)

THE CASE

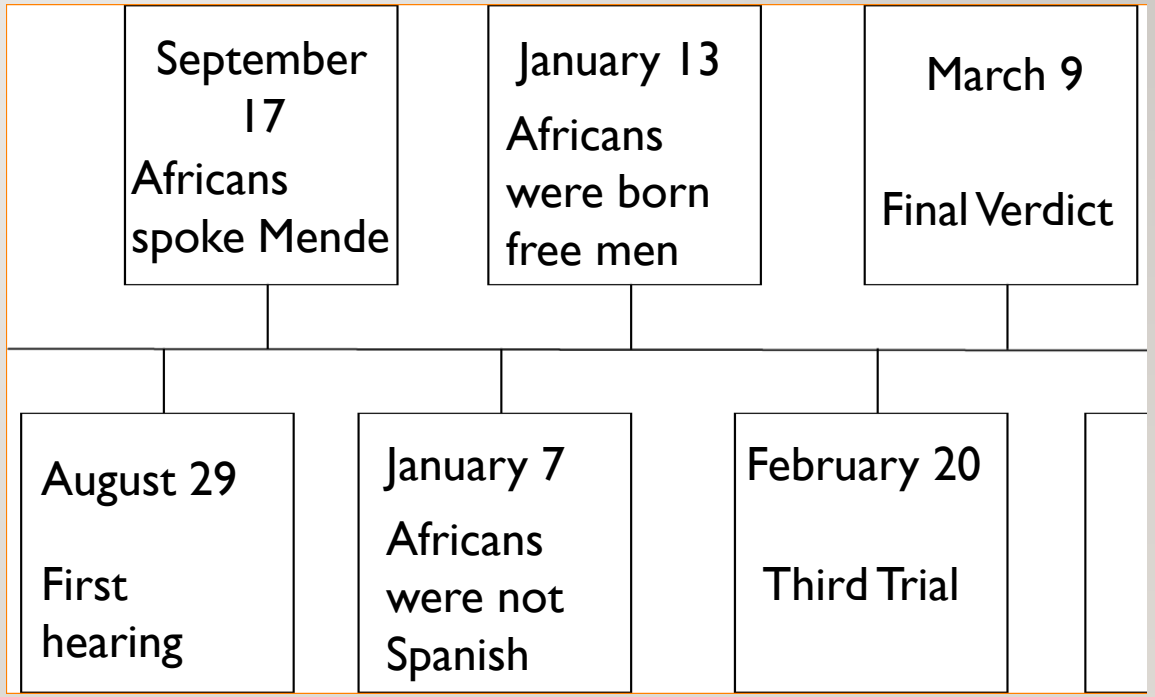
- Dwight Janes
- Amistad committee
  - Meet legal defense
  - Spread awareness
- Dr. Josiah Willard Gibbs
  - September 17
- Released under bail
  - Slave price



TO BE SOLD & LET
BY PUBLIC AUCTION,
On MONDAY the 18th of MAY, 1829,
UNDER THE TREES,
FOR SALE,
THE THREE FOLLOWING
SLAVES,
TO BE LET,
MALE and FEMALE
SLAVES,
Also for Sale, at Eleven o'Clock,
Fine Rice, Ginn, Paddy, Books, Muslins,
Needles, Pins, Ribbons, &c. &c.
BLUCHER,

THE CASE

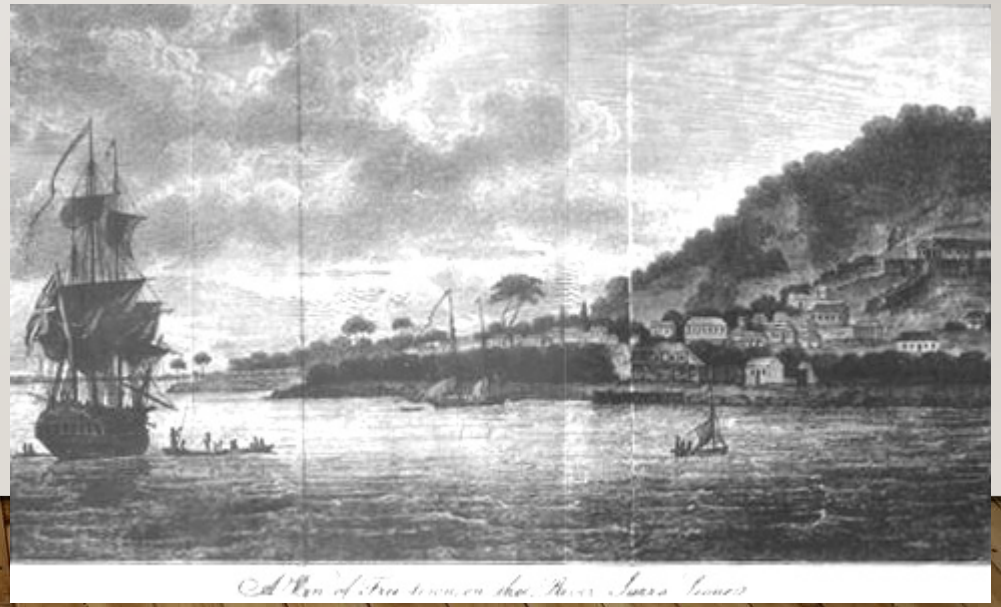
- Second trial on January 7, 1840
  - Africans were not from Cuba
  - International trade violated
- January 13, 1840
  - Judge A. Judson
  - Africans were born free
  - President Martin Van Buren
- Third trial (appeal)
  - February 20, 1841
- John Quincy Adams



(Osagie, 2000)

VERDICT:

- March 9, 1841
- Africans were free
  - Self-defense
- Trip back to Africa as responsibility of the U.S. government
  - Declined
- Raised funds to the trip
- January 1842



(Osagie, 2000)

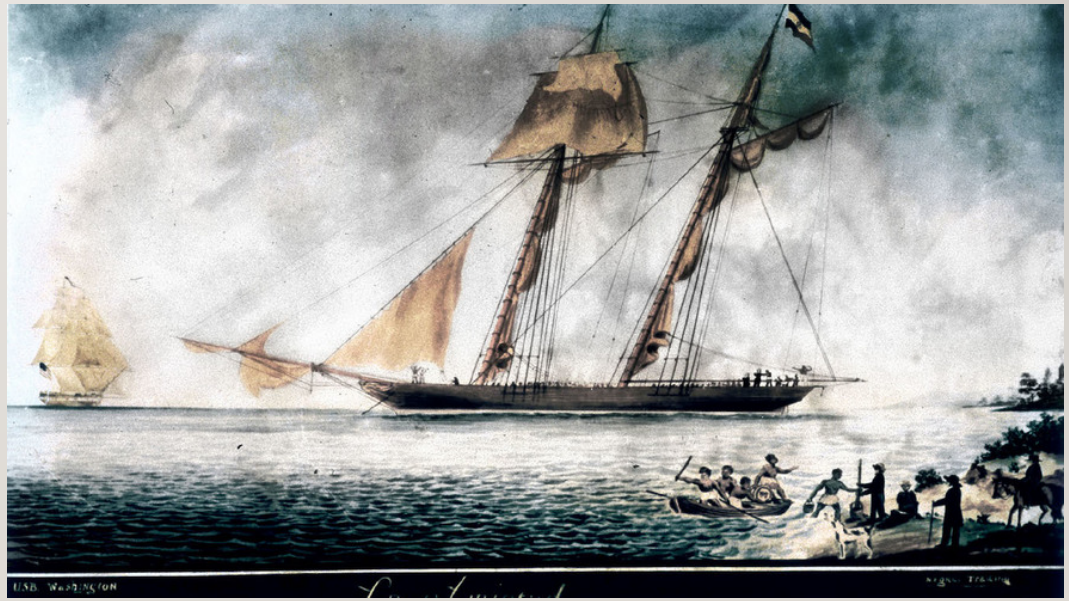
CONSEQUENCES

- Dialogues about race, culture, and law
- Solidification of the Abolition Movement
- Slavery banished
- No more free labor
- New commercial products
- First impartial racial trial
- Negatively affected the South
- New areas of investments



RECAP

- Slave ship that violated treaties
- First Impartial Racial Trial
- Solidification of the Abolitionist Movement
- International Treaties
- New economic system



REFERENCES

- Osagie, I. F. (2000). *The Amistad revolt: Memory, slavery, and the politics of identity in the United States and Sierra Leone*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Kille, J. (2008). Amistad case, the. In R. M. Juang, & N. A. Morrissette (Eds.), *Africa and the Americas: culture, politics, and history*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. Retrieved from http://lynn-lang.student.lynn.edu/login?url=http://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/abcafatrle/amistad_case_the/0?institutionId=1065