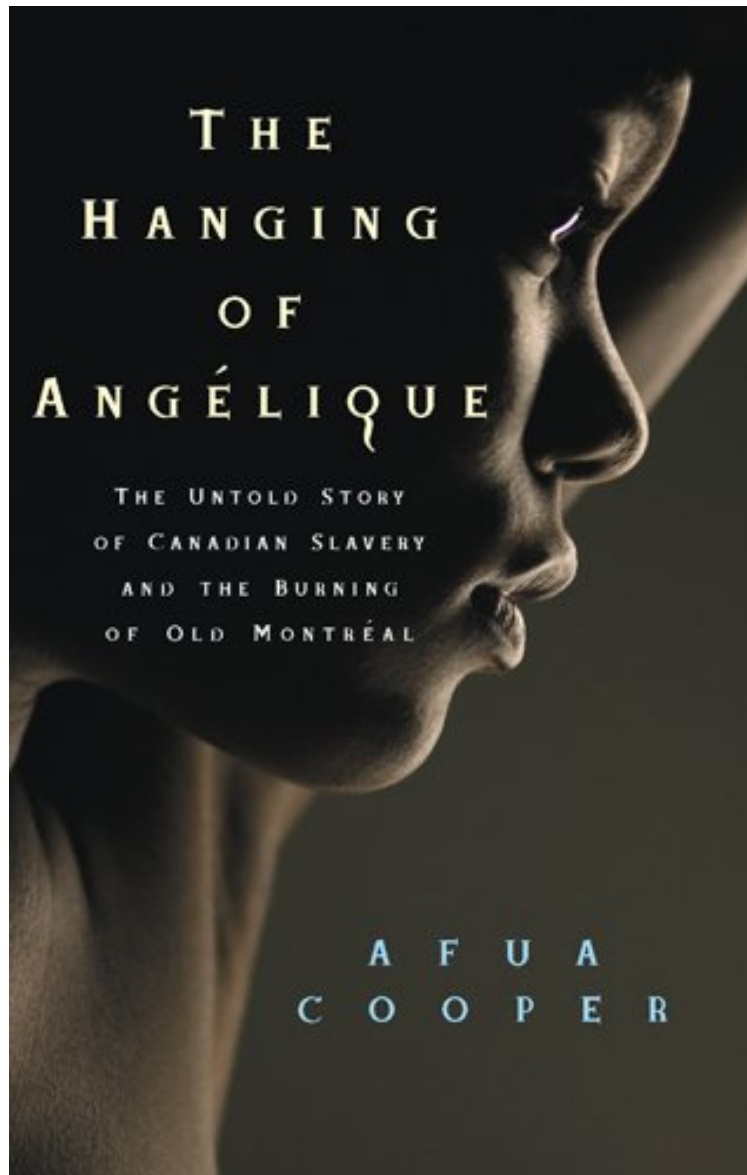


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## The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal (Race in the Atlantic World, 1700-1900)

*Afua Cooper*

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Afua Cooper : The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal (Race in the Atlantic World, 1700-1900) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be

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18 of 20 people found the following review helpful. SHE HAS ARISENBy Paula C. AirdA case had been built against Marie-Joseph Angelique based on innuendo, insinuation, hearsay and Angelique's bad reputation. Under severe torture, the 29-year-old woman, who previously proclaimed her innocence admitted to setting fire to the home of her owner. This fire consumed 46 buildings in Old Montreal. After the grisly execution Angelique's corpse was left hanging for two hours for all to see, then was burnt. That should have been the end of Angelique but 270 years later she has arisen. Thanks to Afua Cooper. In fact through her thorough research Ms Cooper delves into much of the historical occurrences of the time. She puts to rest that myth that there was no slavery in Canada. She opens wide the doors of an unjust justice system. This is not just Black history but Canadian - even world history. It should be required reading for all students of history.

During the night of April 10, 1734, Montreal burned. Marie-Joseph Anglique, a twenty-nine-year-old slave, was arrested, tried, and found guilty of starting the blaze that consumed forty-six buildings. Suspecting that she had not acted alone and angered that she had maintained her innocence, Anglique's condemners tortured her after the trial. She confessed but named no accomplices. Before Anglique was hanged, she was paraded through the city. Afterward, her corpse was burned. Anglique, who had been born in Portugal, faded into the shadows of Canadian history, vaguely remembered as the alleged arsonist behind an early catastrophic fire. The result of fifteen years of research, *The Hanging of Anglique* vividly tells the story of this strong-willed woman. Afua Cooper draws on extensive trial records that offer, in Anglique's own words, a detailed portrait of her life and a sense of what slavery was like in Canada at the time. Predating other first-person accounts by more than forty years, these records constitute what is arguably the oldest slave narrative in the New World. Cooper sheds new light on the largely misunderstood or ignored history of slavery in Canada. She refutes the myth that Canada was a haven at the end of the Underground Railroad. Cooper also provides a context for Canada in the larger picture of transatlantic slavery while re-creating the tragic life of one woman who refused to accept bondage.

Cooper connects Anglique's fate with the wide world of Atlantic, American, and Canadian slavery, and with the intimate world of the household where Anglique worked. An enthralling and important tale. (Natalie Zemon Davis author of *The Return of Martin Guerre*) As rigorous scholarly research, Cooper examines trial transcripts, private letters, and other New World correspondence to produce an academic coup. Her book offers a new perspective on Canadian slavery, altering the image of ourselves as benign: 'Slavery was as Canadian as it was American or West Indian.' As a dramatic re-telling of one slave woman's life of oppression, *The Hanging of Anglique* reaffirms and extends the feminist slogan that the personal is political. . . . [Told] in the decisive language of an historian and with a sense of urgency befitting a poet. (Montreal of Books)[Cooper] convincingly demonstrates that one woman's story can represent larger global forces. The account of Anglique's trial is an important source for Canadian history and the history of the African diaspora. (Toronto Globe and Mail) An evocative, thought-provoking and profoundly accessible work . . . [the] story leads onto the vista of Canada's participation in a huge, often chaotic Atlantic world order and a wider story of African migrations and diaspora. (Calgary Herald) Cooper is to be congratulated for long, careful and thoroughly engaged research and passionate, engaging writing. (Michel Basillieres author of *Black Bird*) The most important piece of Canadian history written in decades, Afua Cooper's *The Hanging of Angelique* shakes the earth beneath the Canadian nation story. Thorough, original, and masterful, this book is a stunning reclamation of one woman's life, but it is also a reclamation of Africans in early North American history. Trenchant and engagingly written, this book is brilliant. (Dionne Brand author of *What We All Long For*) [Cooper] presents us with an enormous range of scholarly research and heartfelt interpretation to explain, contextualize and condemn the slave-owning society of New France, the New World, and Europe. . . . This book is essential. It has the scope of a great historical novel, traversing oceans and cultures, full of sex, romance, betrayal, escapes, sufferings, crimes and tragedies. Cooper's passionate voice punches through dry detail with evident outrage. . . . *The Hanging of Anglique* really is an important and original work. (Michel Basillieres Toronto Star) Cooper's passionate style reflects her commitment to shake Canadians from their complacency about their past. (Winnipeg Free Press) About the Author Afua Cooper is a leading scholar of the African diaspora in Canada. Her many publications include the coauthored collection *We're Rooted*

Here and They Can't Pull Us Up, which won the Joseph Brant History Prize. She has also curated three exhibits on black Canadian history. Cooper taught history and Canadian studies at the University of Toronto and Caribbean studies at Ryerson University. She is a celebrated dub poet, whose work is available in print and audio. Essence has listed Cooper as one of the twenty-five notable international women who have "put themselves on the line to change the world."