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# ROOTS

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上海译文出版社

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〔美〕阿历克斯·哈利

陈雄尚 沈关荣 龚金保  
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## 前 言

阿历克斯·哈利 (Alex Haley, 1921 ——) 是美国当代黑人作家。他出身于知识分子家庭，十七岁进入美国海岸警卫队服役，即开始练习写作，退役后成为专业作家。除《根》外，他还发表过《无人知晓的哈莱姆区》(The Harlem Nobody Knows) 等作品。《马尔柯姆·爱克斯自传》(The Autobiography of Malcolm X) 也是由他执笔写成的。

阿历克斯·哈利自己说写《根》的目的是为了“拯救黑人的自尊心”，并要让世人牢记黑人和白人“是同一个造物主的子孙”。这就是说，哈利意在争取使黑人和白人有同等的社会地位。从这一意义上来说，《根》不失为一部较为成功的作品。它真实地反映了美国南北战争之前黑奴所处的非人的境遇，歌颂了美国黑人不屈不挠的斗争精神，揭露了奴隶主残暴、自私和虚伪的丑恶嘴脸。《根》告诉读者，美国黑人勤劳、勇敢、忠厚、善良，具有高度的智慧，他们和美国广大劳动人民一起，创造了丰富的社会物质财富和精神财富，所以他们也是美国的当然主人。

作者本人的生活经历和社会地位，使他没有也不可能在这本书中真实地反映南北战争以后依然普遍存在于美国社会中的种族歧视的真相，这是本书的不足之处。

本注释读物所根据的是一九七四年发表于美国《读者文摘》的《根》的节写本，比原著的正式发表早两年，故事情节和原著略有出入。本书适宜具有中等英语程度的读者阅读。

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# My Search for Roots

## — A BLACK AMERICAN'S STORY

My earliest memory is of Grandma, Cousin Georgia, Aunt Plus, Aunt Liz and Aunt Till talking on our front porch in *Henning, Tenn*<sup>1</sup>. At dusk, these wrinkled, graying old ladies *would sit*<sup>2</sup> in rocking chairs and talk, about slaves and *massas*<sup>3</sup> and plantations—*pieces and patches of family history*<sup>4</sup>, passed down across the generations *by word of mouth*<sup>5</sup>. “*Old-timey stuff*,”<sup>6</sup> Mama would exclaim. *She wanted no part of it.*<sup>7</sup>

*The furthest-back person*<sup>8</sup> Grandma and the others ever mentioned was “the African.” They would tell how he was brought here on a ship to a place called “*Naplis*”<sup>9</sup> and sold as a slave in *Virginia*<sup>10</sup>. There he mated with another slave, and had a little girl named *Kizzy*<sup>11</sup>.

When Kizzy became four or five, the old

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1. 美国田纳西州汉宁县。Tenn. 是 Tennessee [ˌteneˈsi:] 的简略形式。 2. 经常坐在。would = used to, 表示过去经常发生的动作。 3. masters 的讹误。作者一家上几代都是没有文化的黑人，发音不准。本书中有许多类似的发音错误，是作者为了使读者有耳闻黑人讲话之感而采用的写作技巧。 4. 家世的点点滴滴。 5. 口头。 6. 过去的事情。old-timey = old-time, old-timy。 7. 她一点也不想参与。 8. 能追溯到的最早的那个人。 9. 纳波利斯。“Naplis”是马里兰州的首府 Annapolis [əˈnæpəlɪs] (安纳波利斯) 的讹误。 10. 弗吉尼亚州。 11. 吉西。本书中被抢到美国的主人公 Kunta Kinte (昆塔·肯特) 的女儿，肯特家族在美国的第二代人物。

ladies said, her father would point out to her various objects and *name them in his native tongue*<sup>12</sup>. For example, he would point to a guitar and make a single-syllable sound, *ko*. Pointing to a river that ran near the plantation, he'd say "*Kamby Bolongo*."<sup>13</sup> And when other slaves addressed him as Toby—the name given him by his massa—the African would strenuously reject it, insisting that his name was "*Kin-tay*."<sup>14</sup>

Kin-tay often told Kizzy stories about himself. He said that he had been near his village in Africa, chopping wood to make a drum, when he had been set upon by four men, overwhelmed, and kidnaped into slavery. When Kizzy grew up and became a mother, she told her son these stories, and he in turn would tell his children. His granddaughter became my grandmother, and *she pumped that saga into me as if it were plasma*<sup>15</sup>, until I *knew by rote*<sup>16</sup> the story of the African, and *the subsequent generational wending of our family*<sup>17</sup> through cotton and tobacco plantations into *the Civil War*<sup>18</sup> and then freedom.

At 17, during World War II, I enlisted in *the Coast Guard*<sup>19</sup>, and *found myself a messboy*<sup>20</sup> on

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12. 用家乡话告诉她那些东西叫什么。native tongue 祖国语言，家乡话。这里指曼丁哥语。 13. (曼丁哥语) 冈比亚河，即 the Gambia River. 14. 肯泰，即本书中的主人公 Kunta Kinte (昆塔·肯特)。上文的 Toby (托比) 是白人奴隶主给他起的名字。 15. 她把家史象血浆似地灌输给我。as if 引导的状语从句常用虚拟语气。 16. 记得滚瓜烂熟。 17. 我们家族此后一代一代的变迁经历。 18. 美国的南北战争(1861——1865)。 19. 海岸警卫队。 20. 成了一名食堂招待。



a ship in the Southwest Pacific. To fight boredom<sup>21</sup>, I began to teach myself to become a writer. I stayed on in the service<sup>22</sup> after the war, writing every single night, seven nights a week, for eight years before I sold a story to a magazine. My first story in *the Digest*<sup>23</sup> was published in June 1954: "*The Harlem Nobody Knows*."<sup>24</sup> At age 37, I retired from military service, determined to be a full-time writer<sup>25</sup>. Working with the famous *Black Muslim spokesman*<sup>26</sup>, I did the actual writing for the book *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

I remembered still the vivid highlights of my family's story. Could this account possibly be documented for a book? During 1962, between other assignments, I began following the story's trail<sup>27</sup>. In plantation records, wills, census records, I documented bits here, shreds there. By now, Grandma was dead; repeatedly I visited other close sources, most notably our encyclopedic matriarch, "Cousin Georgia" Anderson in *Kansas City, Kan.*<sup>28</sup> I went as often as I could to the National Archives in Washington, and the Library of Congress, and the *Daughters of the American Revolution Library*<sup>29</sup>.

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21. 为了解闷。 22. 继续留在部队服役。 23. = Readers' Digest 《读者文摘》，简称《文摘》，杂志名。本书作者由《文摘》资助写成 *Roots* 一书。 24. 《无人知晓的哈莱姆区》。 25. 专业作家。 26. (美国)黑人穆斯林教的发言人。 *Black Muslim* 是美国黑人中一个激进的派别，提倡苦行主义，种族分离和建立黑人国家。 27. 追溯故事的来龙去脉。 28. 堪萨斯州的堪萨斯城。 *Kan.* = the State of Kansas ['kænzəs]。 29. 美国革命女儿图书馆。 the *Daughters of the American Revolution* 是一个民间团体，总部设在华盛顿，成员都是妇女。

By 1967, I felt I had *the seven generations of the U.S. side*<sup>30</sup> documented. But *the unknown quotient in the riddle of the past*<sup>31</sup> continued to be those strange, sharp, angular sounds spoken by the African himself. Since I lived in New York City, I began going to the United Nations lobby, stopping Africans and asking if they recognized the sounds. Every one of them listened to me, then quickly *took off*<sup>32</sup>. I can well understand: *me with a Tennessee accent*,<sup>33</sup> trying to imitate African sounds!

Finally, I *sought out*<sup>34</sup> a linguistics expert who specialized in African languages. To him I repeated the phrases. The sound "Kin-tay," he said, was a *Mandinka*<sup>35</sup> tribe surname. And "Kamby Bolongo" was probably the Gambia River in Mandinka dialect. Three days later, I was in Africa.

In *Banjul*,<sup>36</sup> the capital of Gambia, I met with a group of Gambians. They told me how for centuries the history of Africa has been preserved. In the older villages of *the back country*<sup>37</sup> there are old men, called *griots*<sup>38</sup>, who are in

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30. 到美国以后的七代人。

31. 历史之谜中的未知部分。

32. = went away, 走开。

33. 带田纳西州口音的我。注意

这里的“我”用宾格而不用主格。

34. 找到(某人,特别是要求

得帮助)。

35. 曼丁哥族的。曼丁哥人主要居住在西非冈比亚,一部分住在塞内加尔和马里,信奉伊斯兰教。

36. 班珠尔

(曾叫作 Bathurst ——巴瑟斯特)。

37. 内地。

38. (曼丁哥

语)民间以说唱形式讲解历史的老人。专门讲述族史、村史、家史,很受人们尊敬。

effect living archives. Such men know and, on special occasions, tell the cumulative histories of clans, or families, or villages, as those histories have long been told. Since my forefather had said his name was Kin-tay (properly spelled Kinte), and since the Kinte clan was known in Gambia, *they would see*<sup>39</sup> what they could do to help me.

I was back in New York when a registered letter came from Gambia. Word had been passed in the back country, and a griot of the Kinte clan had, indeed, been found. His name, the letter said, was *Kebba Kanga Fofana*<sup>40</sup>. I returned to Gambia and organized a safari to locate him.

There is an expression called "*the peak experience*<sup>41</sup>," a moment which, emotionally, can never again be equaled in your life. I had mine, that first day in *the village of Juffure*<sup>42</sup>, in the back country in black West Africa.

When our 14-man safari arrived within sight of the village, the people *came flocking out of*<sup>43</sup> their circular mud huts. From a distance I could see a small, old man *with a pillbox hat, an off-white robe and an aura of "somebodiness" about him*<sup>44</sup>. The people quickly gathered around me *in a kind of horseshoe pattern*<sup>45</sup>. The old man looked piercing-

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39. 他们将考虑。 40. 凯巴·坎吉·福法纳。 41. 一生中最为激动的时刻。 42. 鸠弗尔村。本书主人公 Kunta Kinte 的家乡。 43. 从……成群结队而来。flocking 现在分词作状语，表示方式。 44. 头戴圆桶形无沿帽，身穿灰白色袍子，气宇轩昂。 45. 呈马蹄形。

ly into my eyes, and he spoke in Mandinka. Translation came from the interpreters I had brought with me.

“Yes, we have been told by the forefathers that there are many of us from this place who are in exile in that place called America.”

Then the old man, who was 73 rains of age—the Gambian way of saying 73 years old, based upon the one rainy season per year—began to tell me the lengthy ancestral history of the Kinte clan. It was clearly a formal occasion for the villagers. They had grown *mouse-quiet*<sup>46</sup> and stood rigidly.

*Out of the griot's head came spilling lineage details incredible to hear.*<sup>47</sup> He recited who married whom, two or even three centuries back. I was struck not only by the profusion of details, but also by *the Biblical pattern*<sup>48</sup> of the way he was speaking. It was something like, “—and so-and-so took as a wife so-and-so, and begat so-and-so....”

The griot had talked for some hours, and had got to about 1750 in our calendar. Now he said, through an interpreter, “About the time *the king's soldiers*<sup>49</sup> came, the eldest of *Omoro's*<sup>50</sup> four sons, Kunta, went away from this village

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46. 鸦雀无声。 47. 本句是倒装句。正常语序是 *Lineage details incredible to hear came spilling out of the griot's head.* 从老人的嘴里滔滔不绝地倾吐出家族世系中难以置信的各个细节。 48. 《圣经》的格调。 49. 1767年派往冈比亚驻守詹姆斯要塞的一支英军。 50. 奥摩洛。本书主人公昆塔·肯特的父亲。

to chop wood and he was never seen again....<sup>51</sup>

*Goose pimples came out on me the size of marbles.*<sup>51</sup> *He just had no way in the world of knowing*<sup>52</sup> that what he told me *meshed with*<sup>53</sup> what I'd heard from the old ladies on the front porch in Henning, Tenn. I got out my notebook, which had in it what Grandma had said about the African. One of the interpreters showed it to the others, and they went to the griot, and they all got agitated. Then the griot went to the people and they all got agitated.

*I don't remember anyone giving an order,*<sup>54</sup> but those 70-odd people formed a ring around me, moving counterclockwise, chanting, *their bodies close together*<sup>55</sup>. *I can't begin to describe*<sup>56</sup> how I felt. A woman broke from the circle, a scowl on her jet-black face, and came charging toward me. She took her baby and almost roughly thrust it out at me. The gesture meant "Take it!" and I did, clasping the baby to me. Whereupon the woman *all but*<sup>57</sup> snatched the baby away. Another woman did the same with her baby, then another, and another.

A year later, a famous professor at *Harvard*<sup>58</sup>

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51. 我浑身起了象弹子一样大小的鸡皮疙瘩, the size of marbles 是 goose pimples 的定语。 52. 他根本无法知道。in the world 在此用来强调, 无实义。 53. 与……吻合。 54. 我记不得有人下令。giving an order 是现在分词短语, 和 anyone 一起构成复合宾语。 55. 他们的身体紧挨在一起。这是一个独立主格结构, 由 n. + adj. 构成。 56. 我根本无法描写。begin + inf. 作“在最低限度上”解, 且都用于否定句。 57. = almost. 58. 哈佛大学。美国最古老大学之一。

would tell me: "You were participating in one of the oldest ceremonies of humankind, called '*the laying on of hands*<sup>59</sup>.' In their way, these tribespeople were saying to you, 'Through this flesh, which is us, we are you and you are us.' "

Later, as we drove out over the back-country road, *I heard the staccato sound of drums*<sup>60</sup>. When we approached the next village, people were packed alongside the dusty road, waving, and the din from them welled louder as we came closer. As I stood up in *the Land Rover*<sup>61</sup>, I finally realized what it was they were all shouting: "*Meester Kinte!*<sup>62</sup> *Meester Kinte!*" In their eyes I was the symbol of all black people in the United States whose forefathers had been torn out of Africa while theirs remained.

Hands before my face, I began crying—*crying as I have never cried in my life*<sup>63</sup>. Right at that time, crying was all I could do.

I went then to London. I searched and searched, and finally in *the British Parliamentary records*<sup>64</sup> I found that the "king's soldiers" mentioned by the griot referred to a group called "*Colonel O'Hare's forces*,"<sup>65</sup> which had been sent up the Gambia River in 1767 to guard *the then British-operated James Fort*<sup>66</sup>, a slave fort.

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59. 接手礼。 60. 我听到断断续续的鼓声。该地村落居民以击鼓的方式在各村之间传递信息,所以作者每到一村,村民都已从鼓声中获悉他的来临,并出村迎接。 61. 一种越野汽车的牌名。英语中常把汽车牌名用作该牌汽车本身。 62. Mister Kinte 的讹误。 63. 我生平从未如此大哭过。 64. 英国议会记录。 65. 奥黑尔上校的部队。 66. 当时由英国控制的詹姆斯要塞, then adj. 当时的。

I next went to *Lloyds of London*<sup>67</sup>, where doors were opened for me to research among all kinds of old maritime records. I pored through the records of slave ships that had sailed from Africa. Volumes upon volumes of these records exist. One afternoon about 2:30, during the seventh week of searching, I was going through my 1023rd set of ship records. I picked up a sheet that had on it the reported movements of 30 slave ships, my eyes stopped at No. 18, and my glance swept across the column entries. This vessel had sailed directly from the Gambia River to America in 1767; her name was *the Lord Ligonier*<sup>68</sup>, and she had arrived at Annapolis (Naplis) the morning of September 29, 1767.

Exactly 200 years later, on September 29, 1967, there was nowhere in the world for me to be except standing on a pier at Annapolis, staring seaward across those waters over which my great-great-great-great-grandfather had been brought. And there in Annapolis I inspected the microfilmed records of *the Maryland Gazette*<sup>69</sup>. In the issue of October 1, 1767, on page 3, I found an advertisement informing readers that the Lord Ligonier had just arrived from the River Gambia, with “a cargo of choice, healthy SLAVES”<sup>70</sup> to be sold at auction the following

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67. 伦敦的劳埃德海上保险业协会。十八世纪初成立，专事制定船舶保险条款，并出版登载船舶低离消息的刊物。 68. 《列戈尼尔勋爵号》。 69. 《马里兰公报》，Maryland 美国东海岸一州。常简略成 Md. 70. 一批上等强壮的奴隶，cargo 指货物。奴隶虽是人，但遭奴隶主任意贩卖，与货物相仿，故用 cargo 一词。

Wednesday.

*In the years since,*<sup>71</sup> I have done extensive research in 50 or so libraries, archives and repositories on three continents. I spent a year combing through countless documents to learn about the culture of Gambia's villages in the 18th and 19th centuries. Desiring to sail over the same waters navigated by the Lord Ligonier, I flew to Africa and boarded *the freighter African Star*<sup>72</sup>. I forced myself to spend the ten nights of *the crossing*<sup>73</sup> in the cold, dark cargo hold, *stripped to my underwear*,<sup>74</sup> lying on my back on a rough, bare plank. But this was sheer luxury compared to the inhuman ordeal suffered by those millions who, chained and shackled, lay in terror and in their own filth in the stinking darkness through *voyages averaging 60 to 70 days*<sup>75</sup>.

This book has taken me ten years and more. Why have I called it *Roots*? Because it not only tells the story of a family, my own, but also symbolizes the history of millions of American blacks of African descent. I intend my book *to be a buoy for black self-esteem*<sup>76</sup> — and a reminder of the universal truth that we are all descendants of the same Creator.

Alex Haley

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71. 在此后的几年里。 72. «非洲之星号»货船。 73. 横渡大洋。指从非洲西岸到美国东岸，横渡大西洋的航行。 74. 脱得只剩下内衣。 75. 平均为六十天到七十天的航程。 76. 拯救黑人的自尊心。



## Part I

Early in the spring of 1750, in the village of Juffure, *four days upriver*<sup>1</sup> from the coast of Gambia, West Africa, a manchild was born to Omoro Kinte and *Binta Kebba*<sup>2</sup>. Forcing forth from Binta's strong young body, he was as black as she was, flecked and slippery with her blood, and he was bawling. The two wrinkled midwives, old *Nyo Boto*<sup>3</sup> and *the baby's paternal grandmother, Yaisa*<sup>4</sup>, saw that it was a boy and cackled with joy. According to the forefathers, who had followed *Muhammad's*<sup>5</sup> teachings through hundreds of annual rains, a boy firstborn presaged the special blessings of *Allah*<sup>6</sup>.

It was the hour before the first crowing of the cocks. The thin blue smoke of cooking fires went curling up, pungent and pleasant, over the small dusty village of round mud huts. The men filed briskly to the praying place where *the alimamo*<sup>7</sup>, the village's holy man, led the first of *the five daily Muslim prayers*<sup>8</sup>: "Allahu akbar! Ashadu an lawilahala!" ("Allah is great! I bear witness that there is only one Allah!")

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1. 向上游走四天的路程。 2. 宾塔·凯巴。奥摩洛哥之妻。 3. 尼也奥·布托。鸠弗尔村的一名女奴。 4. 婴孩的祖母雅依莎。  
*paternal* 用来强调她是孩子父系方面的祖母，以别于外祖母 (*maternal grandmother*)。 5. 穆罕默德，也可以写作 *Mohammed*，伊斯兰教的创始人。 6. 真主，伊斯兰教信仰的主神。 7. (曼丁哥语)圣人。专司村落中的宗教仪式。 8. 穆斯林教徒每天朝“天方”(在麦加)方向跪着祈祷五次。