Images from the Slave Experience in Haiti
This painting shows tobacco farming in Haiti.
This painting shows tobacco being processed in Haiti.
This painting shows indigo production in Haiti. This was a toxic substance that could easily injure workers as it went through the chemical transformation to become a dye.
This painting shows slaves producing subsistence crops such as manioc and cotton in Haiti.
Sugarcane became a huge industry in Haiti.
Between 1700 and 1704, 100 sugar plantations were established in Haiti. Sugar was a labor intensive crop, which meant there was a need for more slaves. The production of sugar meant more plantations and more slaves.
On the sugar plantations of Haiti, everyone worked the land: men and women. Only the less robust—newly arrived Africans, women in their 7th or 8th month of pregnancy or nursing infants and children—got the lighter jobs.
This painting shows a boiling house for sugarcane in Haiti. In the boiling house, the cane gets cut, juice squeezed out and then boiled. A batch, which held tons of sugar, could be ruined by one drop of sweat. This was a delicate chemical process.
For the enslaved Africans in Haiti, entire families lived in little huts, like this one. The average lifespan of an enslaved African was 7 years. The working conditions for the slaves were from 5 a.m. to late in the night. For their food rations, they were supposed to receive 2 1/2 pots of manioc and either 2 pounds of salt beef or 3 lbs of fish per week. But they usually only got a few potatoes and a bit of water each day.
This painting shows a slave being branded in Haiti.