

THE AFRO-PORTUGUESE MARITIME WORLD AND THE
FOUNDATIONS OF SPANISH CARIBBEAN SOCIETY, 1570-1640

By

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For Sheila

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Archives

AGI	Archivo General de Indias (Seville, Spain) SD Audiencia de Santo Domingo SF Audiencia de Santa Fe Esc Escribanía de Cámara
AGN	Archivo General de la Nación (Bogotá, Colombia) FNE Fondos de Negros y Esclavos
AHU	Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Lisbon, Portugal)
ANC	Archivo Nacional de Cuba (Havana, Cuba) PN Protocolos Notariales de La Habana, abstracts of notarial records accessed on ANC computer database, February 2005
ANTT	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon, Portugal) MCO Mesa da Consciência e Ordens
CH-LB	Sagrada Catedral de La Habana (Havana, Cuba), Libro de Barajas B Baptisms, 1590-1600 M Marriages, 1584-1622

Citations

n.	número
r.	ramo
s/n	sin número (unnumbered)

Journals

AHR	<i>The American Historical Review</i>
AQR	<i>The Americas: A Quarterly Review of Inter-American Cultural History</i>
CLAHR	<i>Colonial Latin American Historical Review</i>
HA	<i>History in Africa</i>
IJAHS	<i>The International Journal of African Historical Studies</i>
JAH	<i>The Journal of African History</i>
JGSWGL	<i>Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas</i>
JNH	<i>The Journal of Negro History</i>
SA	<i>Slavery and Abolition</i>
WMQ	<i>The William & Mary Quarterly</i> , 3rd Series

Presses and Research Institutions

EEHA	Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos (Seville, Spain)
EHESS	Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales
IICT	Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical (Lisbon, Portugal)
CSIC	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Madrid, Spain)

Published Collections

- CH-LB/B Sagrada Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana, Libro de Barajas, Bautismos, 1590-1600. May be viewed online at Vanderbilt University Digital Collections, "Ecclesiastical Sources for Slave Societies," <http://lib11.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib/esss.pl> (accessed May 1, 2009).
- HGCV, I De Albuquerque, Luís, and Maria Emília Madeira Santos, coords. *História Geral de Cabo Verde, volume I*, 2nd ed. Lisboa: Centro de Estudos de História e Cartografia Antiga, Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical; Praia: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Cultural, 2001.
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- MMA (1) Brásio, António Duarte, ed. *Monumenta missionaria africana: Africa ocidental [primeira série]*, 15 vols. Lisboa, Portugal: Agência Geral do Ultramar, Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca, 1952-1988.
- MMA (2) Brásio, António Duarte, ed. *Monumenta missionaria africana: Africa ocidental, Segunda série*, 7 vols. Lisboa: Agência Geral do Ultramar, Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca, 1958-1991.
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- TSTD *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, eds. David Eltis et al. <http://www.slavevoyages.org> (accessed May 1, 2009).

INTRODUCTION

In late January 1583, in a poor neighborhood of Cartagena de Indias, the prominent free black man Agustín Martín was eating a meal in his home when he heard commotion outside in the street. He ran outside to see what was happening, accompanied by a galley slave who happened to be present. As both men later testified to Spanish officials, they saw several men in María Xalofa's orchard; one lay on the ground, crying out for a priest to confess him; three others—including a local soldier whom they recognized—quickly fled, with unsheathed swords in hand. The story became clearer to local authorities once they spoke with two further witnesses: a scribe who rented a room from another free black man named Antón, and a thirty-eight-year-old widow who had been conducting unspecified “business” in Antón's inn. According to their testimonies, two soldiers, a sailor known as “Guinea,” and a fourth man had been gambling and talking in Anton's inn. Their conversation grew heated when the fourth man wagered, and lost, his last four *reales*. As he started to leave, he gravely insulted the other three, who promptly took out their swords, and chased him out into the street. After a standoff and swordplay in “María Xelofa's corral,” the soldiers and sailor fled, leaving the unlucky gambler fatally wounded. Begging loudly for confession, he lay down and died beneath a lemon tree, in the presence of bystanders including another sailor and “some blacks.” Authorities later discovered that the deceased had been a Franciscan friar in disguise.¹

¹ AGI-SF 62, n.28, “Memorial y testimonio de autos de la ciudad y provincia de Cartagena sobre los abusos y delitos que contra aquellos vecinos cometen los soldados de las galeras y flotas que arrivan a aquella ciudad,” Cartagena, 11 mayo 1583, folios 36r-45v.

Our study begins with this short narrative because it helps to illustrate a basic problem in Caribbean history. Beyond the drama and violence, this story depicts everyday social interaction in Cartagena: non-elites eating in their homes, engaged in conversation, leisure, and small-scale economic activities of the sort that do not typically appear in notarial records. Yet this backdrop of daily life in the post-conquest Caribbean fits uncomfortably, at best, with widely-accepted Spanish American models of colonial society. Early in the sixteenth century, Spanish conquistadors moved from the Caribbean on to Mexico and Peru, in search of Amerindian populations and precious metals. Colonial Latin American historiography has followed in their path, leaving behind “a backwater occasionally brought to life by the passage of the silver fleets.”² Early modern Castilian writers traveling through the Caribbean did express their fears of an unfamiliar, dangerous environment, but modern historians have layered new biases on top of theirs. Over and over again, we find the colonial Caribbean described as a “backwater of the Spanish empire,” or a “colonial backwater.” The Spanish islands, in particular, “slumbered in the backwater” only to awaken three centuries later, with the large-scale cultivation of export commodities such as sugar. Though known to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century observers as “the keys to the Indies,” and even “the two greatest ports in all Christendom,” Cartagena and Havana have been dismissed by all but a few historians as “refuelling stops”; sites “of military rather than commercial importance.” One reads of the “sweltering heat” and “stench” of Cartagena, and that Veracruz, Nombre de Dios, and Portobelo were “unhealthy,” “fever-ridden,” “tropical pest-holes”; “hot,

² James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 65, 76, 178.

sickly, shanty towns” composed of “shacks on an open beach”; “squalid huts” that “came to life only when a fleet was expected from Spain.”³

Returning to our swordfight narrative then, let us consider who is left out of colonial Caribbean history. That is, if we remove the characters associated with the city’s temporary, “floating population”—sailors and soldiers, the scribe who rented a room, a friar in disguise—we are left with women and men who constituted part of Cartagena’s stable population. These include the free black homeowner Agustín Martín; a galley slave; a local soldier; Antón, the free black innkeeper; a young widow who conducted “business” in his inn; and a crowd of unnamed black bystanders. Another individual who appears in the story, though she fails to testify, is María Xolofa—María Wolof—who owned an orchard with fruit trees, a corral, and presumably, livestock. If Iberian passers-through are assumed to have brought “life” to the Caribbean when they arrived on Spanish galleons, then the region’s permanent residents, by default, are denizens of a static “backwater,” peripheral characters inhabiting the “trunk lines” which linked Mexico City, and Lima, to Seville. The fact that most of these individuals appear to have been Africans and Afrocreoles, blacks and *mulatos*, slaves and free people of color,

³ These quotations and similar remarks may be found in Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 30-31; Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 53, 63; Gordon Douglas Inglis, “Historical Demography of Colonial Cuba, 1492-1780,” Ph.D. dissertation (Texas Christian University, 1979), 57; Murdo J. McLeod, “Spain and America: The Atlantic Trade, 1492-1700,” in *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), I: 352-53; Sidney W. Mintz, “From Plantations to Peasantries in the Caribbean,” in *Caribbean Contours*, eds. Sidney W. Mintz and Sally Price (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 129; J. H. Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 129-34; Kenneth F. Kiple and Brian T. Higgins, “Yellow Fever and the Africanization of the Caribbean,” in *Disease and Demography in the Americas*, eds. John W. Verano and Douglas H. Ubelaker (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 244. On Cartagena and Havana as “the two greatest ports in all Christendom,” see Leví Marrero, *Cuba: Economía y sociedad*, (Río Piedras: Editorial San Juan, 1972-1992), II: 147-48, citing AGI-Contratación 5101 (Admiral Cristóbal de Eraso). For reference to Puerto Rico as another “*llave de las Indias*,” see Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Historia de Puerto Rico, 1600-1650* (Seville: EEHA, 1974), 6.

suggests that race is a significant factor in the ways historians have imagined Caribbean social formations.

Our severely limited knowledge of Africans' presence in the Americas during the first two centuries of European colonization (1492-1700) depends almost exclusively thus far on studies of Mexico City and Lima, opulent viceroyalties which thrived mainly at the expense of vast Amerindian populations. These works largely anticipate the formation of racial identities in proto-national contexts, as they often acknowledge with titles such as "Blacks in Mexico" and "Blacks in Peru" (the synonymous terms "Afro-Mexicans" and "Afro-Peruvians" seem to be gaining currency, but this is old wine in new bags). While these vice-regal capitals probably had the largest black slave populations anywhere in the Americas during the first two centuries of European colonization, they were never directly connected to African ports. Thus far, our best studies of transatlantic maritime routes, immigration patterns, and merchant networks trace links between the Americas and Iberia.⁴ We have very few studies of a comparable nature examining similar connections between the Americas and Africa prior to the eighteenth century.

Most work on Africans in the colonial Caribbean continues to focus on the late colonial period, often projecting anachronistic concepts of race, slavery, and national identity onto human beings who lived in places and times about which very little is known. Available scholarship on early colonial Cartagena and Havana, for example,

⁴ Some notable examples include Peter Boyd-Bowman, "Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies, 1579-1600," *Americas* 33:1 (July 1976): 78-95; Carla Rahn Phillips, *Six Galleons for the King of Spain: Imperial Defense in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); *Transatlantic Encounters: Europeans and Andeans in the Sixteenth Century*, eds. Kenneth J. Andrien and Rolena Adorno (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook, *Good Faith and Truthful Ignorance: A Case of Transatlantic Bigamy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991); Pablo E. Pérez-Mallaína, *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets of the Sixteenth Century*, trans. Carla Rahn Phillips (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Ida Altman, *Transatlantic Ties in the Spanish Empire: Brihuega, Spain and Puebla, Mexico, 1560-1620* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

frequently reflects either (1) a top-down, institutional approach, or (2) national narratives describing Colombia or Cuba in the centuries prior to independence. In both cases, the experiences of African women and men in early modern Caribbean seaports are nearly always reduced to those of “blacks” and “slaves.” These port cities, and their African and Afro-descended populations, have yet to be seen in light of research during the past two decades on historical events in Africa, the transatlantic slave trade, or the rise of an interconnected “Atlantic World.” Major synthetic works of Caribbean history which attempt to cover the entire colonial period, however masterfully written, are invariably limited since they are forced to rely on just a handful of published studies for the first two centuries of Iberian colonization in the region.

Rather than a historical study of any nation or nationality, this dissertation explores a region which Ira Berlin has dubbed “the netherworld between the continents” of Africa, Europe, and the Americas.⁵ For most of two centuries, beginning in 1561, Spanish silver fleets regularly crossed the Atlantic Ocean along established sea routes. Scholars of early modern Spain agree that “shipping was the lifeline of the empire,” and that this particular transatlantic circuit, known in Spanish as the *Carrera de Indias*, was “the chain that held the empire together.”⁶ Cartagena, Nombre de Dios / Portobelo, Veracruz, and Havana were principal links in this imperial chain; despite humid climates which often discomforted Castilian residents and passers-through, these fortified port cities occupied strategic positions in the defense of Spain’s transatlantic sea lanes, and played a double role as hubs for the slave trade. Operated and sustained in large part by

⁵ Ira Berlin, “From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America,” *WMQ* 53:2 (Apr 1996), 254.

⁶ Phillips, *Six Galleons*, quote from page 8; Ruth Pike, “Review of *Spain’s Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*, by Pablo Pérez-Mallaina,” *AHR* 104:3 (June 1999): 1014. On “the maritime life-line of the Indies,” see also Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 122-35.

sub-Saharan Africans, as discussed in greater detail below, these and other major Caribbean port cities were key sites in an early modern Iberian world which remains poorly understood.

Though extremely little attention has been given, thus far, to the early colonial Caribbean's African populations, several capable historians have already effectively challenged the idea that the Spanish Caribbean was a stagnant "backwater." Alejandro de la Fuente, César García del Pino, and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado have done away with the notion that the history of sixteenth-century Havana may be casually dismissed as "that of a heavily fortified service station."⁷ Amy Turner Bushnell argues that nearby Spanish Florida may be viewed more accurately as a "maritime periphery," rather than simply an awkward North American "Borderland" which fails to conform to the Boltonian paradigm modeled on regions west of the Mississippi River.⁸ Addressing both the Spanish and English Caribbean worlds during the seventeenth century, Kristen Block evokes a number of conceptual frameworks generally associated with other geographical areas, describing the Caribbean not only as "a frontier zone," but also as "a borderland, a border-sea, or even a middle ground."⁹ Clearly, the new history of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean will emphasize social and economic activity, mobility in maritime contexts, and the traversing of multiple boundaries.

⁷ Alejandro de la Fuente, with César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), quote from 7. See also Alejandro de la Fuente, César García del Pino, and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, "Havana and the Fleet System: Trade and Growth in the Periphery of the Spanish Empire, 1550-1610," *Colonial Latin American Review* 5:1 (1996): 95-115.

⁸ See Amy Turner Bushnell, *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, number 74 (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1994), 15-16, 23-27, 36.

⁹ Kristen Block, "Faith and Fortune: Religious Identity and the Politics of Profit in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean" (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers, 2007), 37-41, 68, 112, 174, 311, 315. My thanks to the author for sharing a copy of her dissertation.

Following these recent historical interpretations in their push to show the early colonial Caribbean's dynamism and multi-directional maritime connections, this study demonstrates that in many ways, the Spanish Caribbean was one extension of an early modern Lusophone and African world, notably during the sixty-year "joint crown" period from 1580 to 1640. During these years, the same Hapsburg rulers governed both Iberian empires, and the imaginary line in the Atlantic Ocean which theoretically separated Spanish and Portuguese imperial spheres became blurred. A recent article by Sunjay Subrahmanyam argues for breaking down traditionally-perceived differences in Spanish and Portuguese imperial spheres. At one point, he appears poised to compare "the Caribbean space of the Spaniards" with a proposed "maritime enterprise centered on Melaka" in Portuguese Asia.¹⁰ Yet rather than offering what might have been a sweeping redefinition of Spanish colonization of the Caribbean, Subrahmanyam focuses on ways in which Portuguese global expansion drew on Spanish models of conquest in Mexico and Peru. In similar fashion, comparing Puritans in the early Anglo-Atlantic world with Spanish "conquistadors," Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra highlights numerous parallels in Spanish and Puritan mentalities towards conquest and expansion as a religious crusade.¹¹ Looking beyond the artificial boundaries imposed by modern-day national or linguistic identities, these comparative studies offer fresh perspectives on the early modern era. These works are limited, however, in that they rely on fairly stereotypical portrayals of Spanish colonization in order to advance our knowledge of Puritan mentalities, and of the Portuguese empire.

¹⁰ Sunjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640," *AHR* 112:5 (Dec 2007): 1359-85, quote from 1375-76.

¹¹ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

Renditions of colonial Caribbean society as static and lifeless offer a striking contrast with depictions of seaports in the early modern Portuguese world. In general terms, Portuguese outposts and trading stations resembled Spanish Caribbean population centers – after all, both were networks of fortified port cities in hot, humid regions, largely sustained by African and African-descended demographic bases. Yet unlike their Caribbean counterparts, Portuguese forts and *feitorias* in Africa and elsewhere are commonly recognized by historians as “strategic maritime cities,” “trading factories and slaving stations,” and “pressure points of trade” which “dominated the sea-lanes.”¹² While the Spanish Caribbean was not quite the mirror image of its sibling Atlantic Islands and fortified ports in coastal Western Africa, the histories of the Cape Verde Islands, Elmina, São Tomé, and Luanda have much to offer historians of other port cities in the early modern Iberian Atlantic world. These Portuguese and Luso-African population centers provide models for viewing African social and economic roles which have long been invisible in the history of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Caribbean. As the late Elinor Melville recently noted, “the Caribbean as African is an idea that has come slowly to historical consciousness.”¹³ More than simply demonstrating that early colonial Spanish Caribbean society was neither static nor isolated, this dissertation argues that Africans and their descendants were pivotal agents in the region’s demographic and economic growth, and that during the period addressed here, the social dynamics of the early modern Spanish Caribbean often resembled those of Portuguese settlements and Luso-African communities in Western Africa.

¹² See, for example, Lockhart and Schwartz, *Early Latin America*, 29.

¹³ Elinor G. K. Melville, “Land Use and the Transformation of the Environment,” in *CEHLA*, I: 125.

While most of the source materials used for this study date to the Iberian “joint crown” period between 1580 and 1640, I begin with the 1570s. Iberian vessels and crews brought captives directly from Africa to the Caribbean long before the era of the “Portuguese *asientos*” (1595-1640), and well before the union of the Iberian crowns in 1580.¹⁴ Indeed, source materials for the 1570s reveal patterns of maritime commerce, and socioeconomic roles performed by Africans, which correspond to those found in later sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century sources. Following the official reorganization of the *Carrera de Indias* routes in the early 1560s, the 1570s stand out as the beginnings of a period of consolidation and growth in Spanish population centers which would soon become the Caribbean’s major seaports. By 1574, Havana was said to contain no less than fifty taverns; in 1575—the year in which Luanda, capital of the Portuguese colony of Angola, was founded—Cartagena was granted “city” status.¹⁵ Over the following decades, the involuntary migration of tens of thousands of Africans exerted profound changes on Spanish Caribbean society. Portugal’s ties to the Spanish Caribbean—largely through the slave trade—tapered off with the end of the Spanish-Portuguese “joint crown” period in 1640, and Portugal’s renewed independence. By this point, however, the first major waves of forced migrants from Africa had become critical agents in the consolidation and expansion of “Golden-Age” Spain’s Caribbean colonies.

Chapter I, “The Portuguese Maritime World and the Spanish Caribbean,” uses shipping records, administrative correspondence, and legal suits to highlight Portuguese

¹⁴ The earliest transatlantic slave trade voyage presently known to have disembarked captives in the Spanish Caribbean took place in 1525. See *Voyages: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org> (accessed May 1, 2009), voyage ID # 46473.

¹⁵ *Actas Capitulares del Ayuntamiento de La Habana*, preface and introduction by Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring (Havana: Municipio de la Habana, 1937-46), tomo II: 304; Donaldo Bossa Herazo, *Nomenclátor Cartageno* (Bogotá: Planeta Colombiana, 2007), 22-23, 28-29.

roles in bridging the Spanish Caribbean and a broader Afro-Portuguese maritime world during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The transatlantic slave trade was the primary force behind this process, bringing not only African captives, but also heterogenous slave ship crews to Caribbean seaports and their hinterlands. While some Portuguese mariners and passengers moved through the region only temporarily, many remained for months and even years; others settled in the Caribbean permanently, with varying levels of socioeconomic status. In addition to actually transporting tens of thousands of enslaved Africans to the Spanish Caribbean, Portuguese brought experience of living and working in close contact with Africans, not only as slaveowners and slave merchants, but also as guests, employers, partners, spouses, parents, and godparents. Among the “Portuguese” residing in Cartagena, Havana, and elsewhere, we find a small but significant number of “Portuguese blacks,” Luso-Africans, and Portuguese merchants who had lived for decades in Africa.

The demographic and economic growth behind the rise of the Spanish Caribbean’s major port cities during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was the direct result of an unprecedented intensification of the transatlantic slave trade. Earlier studies have relied on indirect sources, generated largely in Mexico City and Lima, to link the Americas to major African provenance zones during the poorly-understood era of “the Portuguese *asientos*.” Drawing on under-utilized sources, including previously-unknown port entry records, Chapter II, “‘The First Great Waves’: Cartagena de Indias and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1570-1640,” uses voyage data to trace changes in the slave trade’s volume and direction between 1570 and 1640. The slave trade to Cartagena is divided into five distinct chronological periods, including two

major “waves” of enslaved Africans arriving in the Spanish Caribbean during the years 1593-1601 and 1617-1625. Each nine-year surge was followed by a fifteen-year period of relative decline. The combination of Cartagena’s voyage data with similar information for other ports during the same years creates a larger data set for the period under study than was previously available; the improved *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* is likely to facilitate its further expansion. This chapter combines slave ship voyage data from Cartagena and Veracruz, offering new conclusions about the respective volumes of disparate flows of captives from Upper Guinea, West Central Africa, and Lower Guinea to the Spanish Caribbean. Within Cartagena’s pattern of surge and decline, we see a shift over time from Upper Guinea to Angola, though this shift was more gradual than has previously been realized.

Chapter III, “Slaves and Settlers: A Spanish Caribbean Peasantry,” argues that during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the rural Spanish Caribbean world was far more complex than a conglomeration of cane fields, sugar mills, “big houses,” and bands of maroons who simply “resisted.” The Spanish empire’s heavy reliance on black agricultural workers to sustain key port cities calls into question the notion that “white settlers” were necessarily the principal agents of European colonization of the Americas. Agricultural labor in Cartagena, Havana, Santo Domingo, Panama City, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico was associated with rural black populations; diverse rural occupations in these areas were generally associated with the production of food crops and livestock, as opposed to export crops such as sugar. With sugar plantation models in mind, historians of slavery in the colonial Americas have largely equated agricultural slave labor in rural areas with isolation, ignorance, and immobility. Yet such

characterizations are as inaccurate for the Caribbean's rural African and Afrocreole populations as they were for early modern European peasantries. Linked to urban centers and the outside world by coastlines, rivers, inlets, and overland routes, the rural Caribbean was a world of constant movement, featuring diverse forms of social interaction which urban elites sought to control, usually unsuccessfully. The prominence of free people of color, including African-born ex-slaves, among rural landowners is perhaps the most significant marker of the rural Caribbean's previously under-estimated complexity.

Chapter IV, entitled "Becoming "Latin": African Acculturation and Ladino Intermediaries," draws on a range of Spanish Caribbean sources to provide information on non-elite Africans, including both slaves and former slaves, at various stages of familiarity with early modern Iberian culture. Mastery of Iberian language and religious practices provided enslaved Africans with access to resources and social networks, and opportunities to improve their immediate material conditions. Rather than simply "resisting" acculturation to Iberian society, Africans were active participants in this process on multiple levels; for every African woman or man brought before the Inquisition, thousands of acculturated Africans served as interpreters and godparents for newly-arrived "*bozales*." Extant sources reveal that Africans adapted quickly to their new cultural environment, often serving as intermediaries for subsequent generations of forced migrants, especially those with backgrounds similar to their own. As thousands of African captives flooded into Cartagena, Veracruz, Havana, and other ports during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, this cyclical process of African

acculturation fueled the expansion of Spanish Caribbean society, facilitating the growth of stable populations and reinforcing Spanish colonization of the region.

Throughout the dissertation, I argue that attention to a broader Iberian and African “Atlantic” world provides ample grounds for rejecting any notion that the colonial Spanish Caribbean was a “backwater.” The assumption that Caribbean societies were “isolated” or “stagnant” prior to the rise of sugar plantations—or prior to the arrival of Northern Europeans—is essentially a New World version of the old, derisive saying that “Africa begins south of the Pyrenees.” Both are misconceptions based on models of colonization and so-called “civilization” which completely overlook the long and complex history of interaction between early modern Iberians and Africans on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, and beyond it. Viewed through the lens of this African-Iberian world, Africans and their descendants in the Spanish Caribbean become visible as “townspeople” and “settlers,” active participants in seaport society and economy at various levels. Our improved knowledge of specific changes over time in the volume and direction of the transatlantic slave trade adds depth to this framework. African migrants to the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Caribbean may be viewed in connection to relevant African histories, rather than simply treated as homogenous “black slaves,” or anonymous bystanders, who cease to exist the moment departing Spanish galleons fade from sight.

CHAPTER I

THE PORTUGUESE MARITIME WORLD AND THE SPANISH CARIBBEAN

A. J. R. Russell-Wood once described the Portuguese empire as “a world on the move,” a world of administrators and missionaries moving tirelessly back and forth between Portugal’s far-flung imperial and economic projects.¹ To great extent, the proliferation of Portuguese men and women criss-crossing the globe was one result of large-scale outmigration fueled by rural poverty in early modern Iberia.² The efforts of Portugal’s numerous “New Christians”—the descendents of Iberian Jews forced to choose between expulsion or conversion in Spain and Portugal during the 1490s—to escape persecution and discrimination represented a second major impetus for the migration of Portuguese to the Americas and elsewhere during the same period.³ These major factors behind Portuguese emigration from Iberia help explain their presence

¹ A. J. R. Russell-Wood, *The Portuguese Empire, 1415-1808: A World On the Move* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

² Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation Upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal’s Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 41-60, 91-92; Timothy J. Coates, *Convicts and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550-1755* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 5-12; Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, “L’Emigration portugaise (XVe-XXe siècles): Une constante structurelle et les réponses aux changements du monde,” *Revista de História Económica e Social* 1 (1978): 5-32; Robert Rowland, “Emigración, estructura y región en Portugal, siglos XVI-XIX,” in *Emigración española y portuguesa a América*, ed. Antonio Éiras Roel (Alicante: Instituto de Cultura Juan Gil-Albert, 1991), I: 137-46.

³ For recent research on Sephardic Jews and New Christian communities in Iberia, Europe, and the colonial Americas, see, for example, Ruth Pike, *Linajudos and Conversos in Seville: Greed and Prejudice in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Spain* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000); Jonathan Israel, *Diasporas Within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the World Maritime Empires, 1540-1740* (Boston: Brill, 2002); Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe*, trans. Martin Beagles (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); David L. Graizbord, *Souls in Dispute: Converso Identities in Iberia and the Jewish Diaspora, 1580-1700* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Fernando Serrano Mangas, *El Secreto de los Peñaranda: el universo judeoconverso de la biblioteca de Barcarrota, siglo XVI y XVII* (Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 2004); Miriam Bodian, *Dying in the Law of Moses: Crypto-Jewish Martyrdom in the Iberian World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

throughout the Spanish Caribbean during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. With the overall aim of understanding their contribution to the formation of colonial Spanish Caribbean society and culture during a period in which the region absorbed tens of thousands of sub-Saharan African forced migrants, this chapter examines the largely overlooked Portuguese individuals who appear in Caribbean records, with particular attention to their multi-faceted connections to West and West Central Africa.

While the Portuguese who lived, worked, and traveled in the colonial Spanish Caribbean came from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, our knowledge of Portuguese individuals with connections to Africa, or with prior experience of dealing with Africans, has been primarily limited to a handful of prominent merchants. Thus far, historians interested in Portuguese “foreigners” in the colonial Spanish Americas have most successfully analyzed Inquisition records to explore the clandestine religious identities, mercantile activities, and social networks of individuals persecuted as “judaizers” and “crypto-Jews” in Lima, Mexico City, Cartagena, and Lisbon. Due to Inquisitors’ marked preference for targeting merchants and wealthy suspects, these sources have often led historians to focus on elites.⁴ Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert’s recent work provides an invaluable synthesis of Portuguese presence and activities in the early colonial Spanish Americas. Despite their heterogeneity, and despite various levels of class difference and social hierarchies, he argues that fishermen, market women, sailors, and merchants alike may be viewed collectively as members of an expansive Portuguese “Nation.” Yet even

⁴ For relevant studies which emphasize different categories of assimilation to Spanish American society, often overlapping with social class and occupation, see J. I. Israel, “The Portuguese in Seventeenth-Century Mexico,” in *JGSWGL* 11 (1974): 12-32; and Rick Hendricks and Gerald Mandell, “The Portuguese Community of Seventeenth-Century Parral, Nueva Vizcaya,” *CLAHR* 12:1 (Winter 2003): 25-58. See also Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation*, 60-62, 77-80, 169-70, 176-77.

Studnicki-Gizbert's study is devoted largely to the "perceptive traders" and powerful merchant houses who not only played "central roles" in the formation and maintenance of this "collectivity," but also, in his view, constituted the "animating core of the Nation."⁵ Between the headquarters of bankers and *asentistas* in Iberian capitals, and the fabulous mansions of elite merchants in Lima and Mexico City, Portuguese mercantile networks—most notably the transatlantic slave trade—operated within an intermediate zone made up of port cities in Western Africa, the Atlantic Islands, and the Spanish Caribbean.

A small but growing body of scholarship has begun to track early modern Portuguese mercantile networks away from Iberian metropolises and American viceroalties, and towards the major Atlantic port cities of the early modern Iberian world. Until recently, our knowledge of these networks was essentially limited to short studies of multi-stage voyages transporting African captives to Lima and Potosí, and Vila Vilar's list of known slave trade factors in Spanish American ports – all located in the Caribbean region, with the sole exception of Buenos Aires.⁶ The past decade, however, has seen renewed scholarly interest in this topic. Significant recent publications analyze transatlantic slave trading voyages such as those organized by the wealthy merchant Manuel Bautista Pérez, connecting Lisbon, Cacheu, Cartagena, and Lima; and Portuguese mercantile networks, stretching from Luanda to the Philippines, which passed through the port city of Veracruz.⁷ Recent works by historians José da Silva Horta and Peter Mark

⁵ Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation*, 18-21, 43, 56-57, 66-67.

⁶ Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos en Córdoba de Angola a Potosí, siglos XVI-XVII* (Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Instituto de Estudios Americanistas, 1966); Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 54-63; Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos: los asientos portugueses* (Seville: EEHA, 1977), 280-83.

⁷ Renée Soulodre-La France and Paul E. Lovejoy, "Intercambios transatlánticos, sociedad esclavista e inquisición en la Cartagena del siglo XVII," trans. Oscar Grandío, in *Afrodescendientes en las Américas: Trayectorias sociales e identitarias*, eds. Claudia Mosquera et al. (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de

provide information on a clandestine trade in small arms in Upper Guinea, in which short swords (*terçados*) were produced in Amsterdam and Italy, assembled in Lisbon, and transported to Upper Guinea to be used to purchase slaves.⁸ Such studies are particularly valuable, since we still know extremely little about how these early modern, transatlantic Portuguese networks actually operated in precolonial African ports, where they may well have originated. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, in Africa and the Americas alike, New Christians were accused of “judaizing” and engaging in contraband slave trafficking. It should be noted, however, that Portuguese *degradados* and children of Afro-Portuguese parentage had long been accused of such illicit activities in West and West Central Africa; this precedent has been largely overlooked by historians of the Americas.⁹

Like the transatlantic slave trade itself, Portuguese presence in the early colonial Spanish Caribbean indicates a number of direct links to precolonial Africa, including the transfer of social and cultural practices. By the 1550s, unique among European groups of the time, Portugal had been continuously engaged in diplomacy, commerce, warfare, and

Colombia, 2002), 195-211; Maria da Graça A. Mateus Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru ao Tempo da União Ibérica: Mobilidade, Cumplicidades e Vivências* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Cada de Moeda, 2005); Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007); Antonio García de León, “La malla inconclusa: Veracruz y los circuitos comerciales lusitanos en la primera mitad del siglo XVII,” in *Redes sociales e instituciones comerciales en el imperio español, siglos XVII a XIX*, eds. Antonio Ibarra y Guillermina del Valle Pavón (México, D.F.: Instituto Mora, 2007), 41-83. The author thanks Professor García de León for providing a copy of this chapter.

⁸ Peter Mark and José da Silva Horta, “Two Early Seventeenth Century Sephardic Communities on Senegal’s Petite Côte,” *HA* 31 (2004): 231-56; Tobias Green, “Further Considerations on the Sephardim of the Petite Côte,” *HA* 32 (2005): 165-83; and Peter Mark and José da Silva Horta, “Sword Trade in 17th century Senegambia: Evidence of a Trans-regional Sephardic Network,” unpublished paper presented at the Seventh International Conference on Mande Studies, Lisbon, Portugal, June 25, 2008.

⁹ See Jean Boulègue, *Les Luso-Africains de Sénégal, XVIe-XIXe siècles* (Lisbon: Ministério da Educação, IICT, 1989), 54-57; George E. Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000-1630* (Boulder, San Francisco, and Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), 159-60, 178-79, 185-87, 210, 221-22; Antonio de Almeida Mendes, “Le rôle de l’Inquisition en Guinée: vicissitudes des présences juives sur la Petite Côte (XVe-XVIIe siècles),” *Revista Lusófona de Ciência das Religiões* 5/6 (2004): 137-55. See also Alida C. Metcalf, *Go-betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500-1600* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005).

evangelization with diverse sub-Saharan African societies for more than a century. In addition to their roles in expanding the slave trade, attempts to monopolize commercial routes, and efforts to convert African elites and their subjects to Catholicism, some Portuguese men married or formed long-term sexual unions with African women, raising mixed-race children considered to be Portuguese. Other Portuguese temporarily or permanently adopted the cultures of their hosts; and Portuguese interactions with African populations contributed to the birth of syncretic religious practices, and the Afro-Portuguese language known as *Crioulo*.¹⁰ A significant number of Portuguese with some level of African experience appear among the numerous migrants to the Spanish Caribbean in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Some traveled from African ports to the Caribbean as slave traders; others were captains, officers, barbers, surgeons, sailors, cabin boys, or other crew members aboard slave ships.

Beyond their own physical movements back and forth between the Caribbean, Africa, Brazil and elsewhere, Portuguese merchants and mariners alike linked the Spanish Caribbean to a broader Luso-African Atlantic world through their knowledge of African societies, languages, and customs. Rather than simply elaborating on Portugal's role in early modern slave trafficking, this chapter argues that Portuguese who had resided in Africa, much like their African associates and mixed-race family members, occupied a privileged cultural position that to varying extents enabled them to understand and interpret both Iberian and African worlds. Most Africans who arrived in the

¹⁰ The scholarly literature on Portuguese activities in precolonial western Africa is too extensive to be fully considered here, but see, for example, Boulègue, *Luso-Africains*; Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*; Jan M. Vansina, *Kingdoms of the Savanna: A History of Central African States until European Occupation* (Madison, Milwaukee, and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966); John Vogt, *Portuguese Rule on the Gold Coast, 1469-1682* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979); *HGCV*, I-II; Robert Garfield, *A History of São Tomé Island, 1470-1655: The Key to Guinea* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992); Ilídio do Amaral, *O Consulado de Paulo Dias de Novais: Angola no último quartel do século XVI e primeiro do século XVII* (Lisboa: IICT, 2000).

Caribbean during the early colonial period were probably so-called “*bozales*,” new arrivals with very limited knowledge of Castilian society and culture.¹¹ Simultaneously, while minority groups of sub-Saharan Africans and people of African descent had been present in Iberian cities for centuries, relatively few Castilians had ever lived in a city with a majority black population, prior to their arrival in the Caribbean. In addition to actually transporting tens of thousands of enslaved Africans to the Spanish Caribbean, Portuguese brought experience of living and working in close contact with Africans, not only as slaveowners and slave merchants, but also as guests, employers, partners, spouses, parents, and godparents. An examination of extant sources reveals that “Portuguese” residing in Cartagena, Havana, and elsewhere in the Caribbean often included merchants who had lived for decades in Africa, “Portuguese blacks,” and people of mixed Afro-Portuguese descent and upbringing. Their presence holds major ramifications for understanding the social and cultural integration of a sudden influx of sub-Saharan Africans into Spanish Caribbean society.

As potential intermediaries between African captives and other residents of the Spanish Caribbean, and as potential models for social and cultural interaction between Africans and Europeans, Portuguese were not unbiased or even-handed. Regardless of any prior experience in Africa, as predominantly free Iberians, Portuguese in the Caribbean enjoyed at least a minimum socioeconomic status which many enslaved, forcibly displaced African captives would never obtain. The activities of Portuguese slave merchants and slave ship captains, in particular, were designed to accommodate Iberians and others who sought to acquire and ultimately control a relatively large

¹¹ However, for a recent study arguing that Kongo and Angola were “centers” of an “Atlantic Creole community,” see Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49-108.

population of African-born forced migrants. While to some degree, Portuguese who had lived, traveled, or worked in Africa could understand both African and Castilian world views, it should be remembered that in a social order largely dominated by Castilian elites, Portuguese residents in the colonial Spanish Caribbean had agendas of their own. Collectively and in some cases individually, as discussed below, their ethnographic knowledge of Africa and Africans was extensive, rivalling and at times exceeding that of Alonso de Sandoval.¹² However, in the Spanish Caribbean context, Portuguese interactions with enslaved Africans were typically geared more towards generating profits than towards proselytizing. Keeping in mind that Portuguese goals did not necessarily overlap with the best interests of enslaved Africans, let us now turn to ways in which Portuguese familiarity with Africa, including their background of social interaction with Africans, was extended to the Caribbean.

Slave Ship Crews and Passengers

Like other non-Castilian, voluntary migrants, Portuguese found passage to Spain's New World colonies through both legal, and most frequently extra-legal, channels. At the same time that Portuguese sailors outnumbered all other "foreigners" employed on the Indies fleets which departed yearly from Seville, literally thousands of Portuguese mariners, merchants, and immigrants traveled to the Spanish Caribbean via the transatlantic slave trade.¹³ This second maritime route, consisting of regular ocean traffic

¹² Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud* [originally published as *De instauranda Aethiopum Salute* (Seville, 1627)], ed. Enriqueta Vila Vilar (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1987); Alonso de Sandoval, *Treatise on Slavery: Selections from De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, ed. and trans. Nicole von Germeten (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 2008).

¹³ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 99-103; Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation*, 49-51, 60-61; Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "Extranjeros en Cartagena (1593-1630)," *JGSWGL* 16 (1979): 147-84; Fernando Serrano Mangas, *La encrucijada portuguesa: esplendor y quiebra de la unión ibérica en las Indias de Castilla, 1600-1668*

between African and Caribbean seaports, demonstrates the strong demographic presence of Portuguese mariners with African experience in port cities such as Cartagena and Veracruz throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Much like Spain's Indies fleets, slave ship crews were heterogenous, and included sailors of African descent. Furthermore, the actual composition of slave ship "crews" is unclear, since slave trade voyages to the Caribbean frequently brought "passengers," as well as captives, from West and West Central Africa. These individuals disembarked in various Spanish Caribbean port cities as temporary residents and unauthorized immigrants, alongside many sailors who paid for their passage with their own labor.

In their monumental study *Séville et l'Atlantique*, Huguette and Pierre Chaunu identified 1,223 vessels departing Iberian ports between 1570 and 1640 as either slave ships, or voyages registered to stop in one of several African ports en route to the Americas. The newly revised *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* currently contains information on 1,325 voyages for the same years, including 308 slave ships with known numbers of crew members on board at the voyage's outset.¹⁴ In this sample, the number of crew members per ship varied widely, from as few as ten to as many as forty-one seamen. Within these upper and lower limits, slightly over two thirds of the voyages

(Badajoz: Diputación Provincial de Badajoz, 1994), 49-60; Pablo E. Pérez-Mallaína, *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*, trans. Carla Rahn Phillips (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 54-62.

¹⁴ Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, tomes III-V; *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org> (accessed May 1, 2009). The TSTD also includes slave trade voyages bound for regions other than the Spanish Americas, most notably, in this case approximately 60 ships bound for Brazil, which would not be listed by the Chaunu. For recently revised estimates of the total number of transatlantic slave trade voyages to early colonial Latin America, see António de Almeida Mendes, "The Foundations of the System: A Reassessment of the Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, eds. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 63-94. See also Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 240-43; Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 15; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 104.

carried between fifteen and twenty-one crew members.¹⁵ With an average crew size of 19.7, these 308 voyages alone employed a total of 6,072 mariners when they first left Iberian ports. The total number of sailors on Portuguese ships traveling back and forth from Africa to Spanish Caribbean ports was clearly much larger, though some would sail only as far as Africa. Others would sail to Brazil; and many of the crew members bound for the Caribbean would not survive the voyage.¹⁶ Studnicki-Gizbert estimates that the “total number of mariners working the Angola and Cabo Verde trades” between 1595 and 1640 must have been “close to twenty thousand men.”¹⁷ Following Studnicki-Gizbert, we can multiply the average number of crew members in our sample (19.7) by the total number of slave trade voyages presently estimated to have taken place during the period under study (1,325). This simple calculation suggests that more than twenty-six thousand mariners were employed on transatlantic slave ships departing Iberia between 1570 and 1640.

Such large numbers, however, can oversimplify the complex question of who, in addition to African captives themselves, traveled onboard these slave ships.

“Portuguese” slave ship crews were not homogenous. Beyond distinctions of rank or professional status—i.e. between pages (*pajes*), apprentices (*grumetes*), and sailors (*marineros*)¹⁸—the seamen who participated in these trans-oceanic voyages can be distinguished from one another most readily, perhaps, by geographical origin. Though many mariners were originally from Portugal, slave ship crews also included Spanish-born and Luso-African sailors. Black sailors, both free and enslaved, were commonly

¹⁵ See also Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 134-37.

¹⁶ See, for example, Stephen D. Behrendt, “Crew Mortality in the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century,” *SA* 18:1 (1997): 49-71.

¹⁷ Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation*, 60-61.

¹⁸ Pérez-Mallaína, *Spain’s Men of the Sea*, 75-98.

employed sailing between the Cape Verde islands and the adjacent Senegambian mainland, a region commonly referred to as “the Rivers of Guinea.”¹⁹ Some of these men found employment in broader maritime circuits as well, including on transatlantic slave trade voyages.²⁰ For example, one of the five *grumetes* on a slave ship setting out from the Canary Islands for the Rivers of Guinea in 1592 was a free black man named “Matheos Perez,” described as a creole from the Cape Verde Islands. He was nineteen years old, with “a round face,” and one tooth missing.²¹ It is unknown whether Perez was still onboard when the ship arrived in Cartagena in late August 1593, disembarking fifty African captives.²²

Slave ships also employed enslaved sailors, including sub-Saharan Africans, and Afrocreoles from Spanish American port cities such as Havana, Cartagena, Jamaica, and Santo Domingo.²³ One common form of minor contraband slave trading was to enroll slaves as sailors, then sell them upon arrival, later claiming they had died during the voyage to the Indies (the number of black *grumetes* who “died” en route to Veracruz may provide some evidence of this practice during the early seventeenth century).²⁴ For this

¹⁹ See, for example, the *marinheiros pretos* and *grumete preto* listed in AHU-Cabo Verde, cx.1, doc. 22, “Lembranças dos mantenimentos que vierão de Guinea,” Santiago de Cabo Verde, 8 junho 1613, folhas 3r, 4r.

²⁰ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 137; Walter Hawthorne, “Choosing slavery?: A Slave Named Gorge and His ‘Flights’ from ‘Freedom’ back to his master in Bahia in the Nineteenth Century,” unpublished paper presented at American Historical Association, “Atlantic Biographies” panel, January 5, 2008.

²¹ AGI-Contratación 2875, n.6, “Registros Despachados para las Yndias con sclavos desde la yslla de Tenerife,” r.3, folio 28v.

²² AGI-Contaduría 1385, n.1, pieza 2, folios 24v-26r; María del Carmen Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVI* (Seville: EEHA, 1983), 59; TSTD 29791.

²³ See, for example, slave ship crews listed in AGI-Contratación 2875, “Registros de Esclavos,” 1584-1599.

²⁴ Georges Scelle, *La traite négrière aux Indes de Castille, contrats et traités d’assiento: étude de droit public et d’histoire diplomatique puisée aux sources originales et accompagnée de plusieurs documents inédits* (Paris: Larose et Tenin, 1906), I: 373-74, 809-10; Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, “Contribuição ao estudo do Aproveitamento de escravos negros na América Espanhola,” *Anais do Museu Paulista* 16 (1962): 92-93; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 168-69. For examples, see AGI-Contratación 533B, n.2, r.77, 122; AGI-Contratación 941B, n.32; AGI-Contratación 5709, n.211, r.24; AGI-Contratación 5709, n.218, r.21, 23, 27.

reason, slave ship *maestres* who employed black slaves among their crews were obliged to provide financial collateral, promising not to leave their slave sailors in the Indies. One slave ship captain setting out for Tierra Firme, for example, was required to provide 100,000 *maravedis* as collateral for two black slaves he owned, who served on the ship as “*pajes*.” Pedro and Anton were both described as “tall,” “about twenty years old,” and in good physical condition.²⁵ Twice in Cartagena in 1595, royal officials noted that two black sailors were not to be included among the captives delivered. In one case, royal officials noted that the two men “appeared to be free, and presented sufficient proof thereof.” On a separate occasion, they confirmed that two black men “arrived as *Grumetes*” on a caravel arriving from Angola.²⁶

Like the presence of free Cape Verdean sailors and enslaved mariners, the presence of *degradados* and other “passengers” aboard the same vessels complicates our understanding of the social background of individuals who traveled aboard early modern Portuguese slave ships. *Degradados* were involuntary passengers, or in Timothy Coates’ words, “criminal exiles.” Banished from Portugal as punishment for alleged crimes and misdemeanors, they were sent to live in exile in one of Portugal’s various overseas colonies.²⁷ Historians have generally assumed that banished convicts were transported overseas on Portugal’s *carreira da India* ships. However, *degradados* bound for the Gulf of Guinea or West Central Africa also traveled to Africa on slave ships, a means of overseas transportation which has been largely overlooked. Enslaved black cabin boys

²⁵ AGI-Contratación 2875, r.6, folios 110r-112r.

²⁶ AGI-Contaduría 1385, n.3, pliegos 9-10, 13; TSTD 29006, 29008.

²⁷ On early modern Portugal’s *degrado* system, see Coates, *Convicts and Orphans*, 24-41, 190. Coates estimates an average of 100 *degradados* sent into exile each year between 1550 and 1755. This would mean approximately 7,000 *degradados* were exiled within Portugal or sent overseas between 1570 and 1640. For *degradados* in Brazilian context, see Metcalf, *Go-betweens*, 7-15, 20, 34-38, 104-5.

Pedro and Anton, mentioned above, served on a slave ship which initially carried four *degredados* aboard, described as “passengers who [were] to remain in the land of Angola.” One of these men was the free *mulato* Antonio Gonzalez, a native of Lisbon.²⁸ In cases such as these, the same ship facilitated two distinct forced migrations, first transporting Iberian convicts to Africa, then carrying enslaved sub-Saharan Africans to the Americas.

These two groups of involuntary passengers were not supposed to overlap; *degredados* were supposed to disembark in Africa upon the ship’s completion of the first leg of its voyage, prior to embarking African captives. Many of the convicts exiled to Portuguese outposts in Lower Guinea and West Central Africa were to fill the ranks of galley oarsmen and soldiers. Those sent to Africa by the Portuguese state also included reformed prostitutes who ostensibly sought to remake their lives in a new environment, though difficult circumstances forced some women to return to their former profession.²⁹ Given their relative freedom of movement—and for many, incentive to flee—some of these individuals may have found passage to the Americas as passengers aboard slave ships, or sailors replacing crew members who had died at sea.³⁰ When the slave ship “Nuestra Señora del Rosario” set sail from Iberia for Angola in 1592, one of the vessel’s passengers was a thirty-five-year-old *degredado* named Manuel Silvera. The ship’s

²⁸ AGI-Contratación 2875, Registros de Esclavos (1584-1599), r.6, ff. 110r-112r.

²⁹ C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1969), 31, 218-19, 314-15; Vogt, *Portuguese Rule*, 41, 47, 114-15, 121, 209-10; A. Teixeira da Mota and P.E.H. Hair, *East of Mina: Afro-European Relations on the Gold Coast in the 1550s and 1560s* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1988), 15, 46-47, 73-75; Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 250-51; Ilídio Cabral Baleno, “Povoamento e Formação da Sociedade,” in *HGCV*, I: 148-53; Garfield, *São Tomé Island*, 13-14, 19, 21, 25-26, 37, 43, 112-13, 122, 241; Russell-Wood, *Portuguese Empire*, 106-11; Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*; Coates, *Convicts and Orphans*, 42-49, 65-67, 76-78, 137-40.

³⁰ On *degredados*’ service as sailors, their freedom of movement upon arrival overseas, and their frequent escapes, see Coates, *Convicts and Orphans*, 32-35, 39-40.

captain had been reminded that under no circumstance was he allowed to take Silvera to the Indies. We have no knowledge, however, of whether he (or any other *degredado*) was onboard or not when the ship disembarked 128 captives in Cartagena the following year.³¹

Slave ships were more than just “slave ships”; they performed multiple functions.³² In addition to *degredados*, early modern Portuguese slave ships commonly carried “passengers” from the Atlantic Islands and African ports to the Caribbean. Unlike *degredados*, and unlike the enslaved Africans embarked on the same ships, these were not forced migrants, but voluntary passengers often engaged in the slave trade in some capacity. Indeed, sometimes they owned a number of the captives carried on the vessel. For example, two “passengers” traveled from Angola to Jamaica on the slave ship “Nuestra Señora de Amparo” in 1622. When the ship sailed onwards to its subsequent destinations, they remained in Jamaica along with captives they had brought from Angola “on their own account.” A Sevillian named Juan Antonio, whose wife lived on the island, disembarked thirty-four or thirty-five slaves. Another passenger, Juan Rodriguez, originally from Lisbon, disembarked between forty and fifty captives.³³

Voyages in which slave ship “passengers” marketed dozens of captives upon arrival in the Caribbean reveal the transatlantic slave trade’s reliance on the efforts of private individuals, in addition to state-sponsored contracts, from very early on. Just as private individuals participated in the collection of captives in African ports, some

³¹ AGI-Contratación 2875, r.4, ff. 216v-218r; AGI-Contaduría 1385, n.1, pieza 2, ff.14v-16r; Chaunus, *Séville et l’Atlantique*, III: 494-95, 499; Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 59; TSTD 29792.

³² Mariza de Carvalho Soares, personal communication, August 25, 2008.

³³ AGI-México 351, s/n, “Informacion que hizieron los oficiales Reales de la Veracruz sobre la arivada que hizo a los puertos de Puerto Rico Truxillo y Campeche Duarte de Acosta Noguera,” Veracruz, 22 nov 1622; TSTD 28201.

“passengers” evidently joined slave ship owners and captains in Iberian ports, or in African ports, personally taking part in the slave trade voyage.³⁴ In 1628, for example, the slave ship “San Pedro” made an unauthorized stop in Havana, disembarking and selling two hundred and thirty West Central African men, women, and children in the city. During a subsequent investigation conducted two years later, nearly one hundred and fifty Havana residents came forth to admit having purchased slaves from the ship. More than fifty-five people had purchased captives from the ship’s owner, captain Simon Rivero, and another twenty-six bought slaves from the ship’s pilot, Juan Lopez Feiscas. A barber, a sailor, and an unnamed ship officer sold one captive each in Havana, and no one mentioned having purchased a captive from the shipmaster, captain Jacinto da Silva. More than a third of the captives purchased by Havana residents were sold by “passengers,” identified as Alfonso Maris, Francisco Camelo, Roque Camelo, and Simon Antonio. Alfonso Maris alone sold more than thirty African captives to various buyers in Havana, and Francisco and Roque Camelo together sold more than twenty-five captives. Three additional men described as neither sailors nor passengers arrived on the same voyage, and sold a combined total of ten captives. Several Havana residents were “unable to remember” the details of their transactions two years earlier, stating only that they had purchased a slave or slaves from “a Portuguese” who arrived on Simon Ribero’s ship.³⁵

³⁴ Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 49-52. For similar examples of intermediaries providing small groups of captives in Angola, see ANC-PN, mfn 68066806-68116811 (Regueyra / Juan Bautista Guilisasti / 27 enero 1601); and AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.4-A, Carta de Francisco de Mar a Joan de Argomedo, Loanda, 23 jullio 1609.

³⁵ AGI-SD 119, s/n, “Autos sobre la arribada del navio nombrado San Pedro, maestre Jacinto de Silba,” Havana, 1628-1631, pieza 2, folios 26r-60r.

The accounts of several Portuguese “foreigners” in Cartagena’s 1630 census provide further information on the presence of “passengers” aboard transatlantic slave ships arriving in the Caribbean. A Portuguese man named Domingo de Silva testified that eight years earlier, he had traveled from Lisbon to “Guinea,” and from there embarked for Cartagena as “passenger” on a slave ship owned by captain Mateo Sanchez. Diverse shipping records confirm that a slave ship under a different name, but under the same captain, arrived in Cartagena from “the Rivers of Guinea” in late March 1622, disembarking 402 captives in the city.³⁶ In similar fashion, a native of Oporto named Francisco Barbosa had arrived in Cartagena on March 10, 1630 as a passenger “on Juan Ortiz’s ship, which brought a cargo of blacks from Angola.” Barbosa stated that he himself had brought fifteen enslaved “*muleques*” with him on the voyage, though half of them had died en route.³⁷ It remains unclear to what extent these “passengers” simply paid for their own passage and that of their properties (including enslaved Africans), or whether they actively participated in the purchase of captives to be carried aboard ship, in coordination with the voyage’s official *armador*.³⁸

Details such as these illustrate that slave ships facilitated at least four types of human migrations, both voluntary and involuntary, across the Atlantic ocean. Setting out from Iberian ports, slave trade voyages were commissioned to carry small numbers of *degredados* or convicts to their exile in Africa. Slave ships’ next official function, and their most significant, was the forced embarkation and transportation of African captives to be sold as slaves in the Americas, the “Middle Passage.” A third function, which may

³⁶ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, “Relaçion y abecedario de los estrangeros que se hallaron en la çiudad de Cartagena, 1630,” Cartagena, 13 mayo 1631, folio 8r; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 268-69; TSTD 29317.

³⁷ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 9v-10r; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 272-73; TSTD 29388.

³⁸ For similar examples in 1596 and 1626, see Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 141-43.

be characterized as semi-legal, involved transporting “passengers” and their possessions from African ports to the Americas. As noted above, some of these individuals brought significant numbers of enslaved Africans whom they appear to have personally owned; they may have aided ship captains in stocking their vessels with captives. Crew members’ passage to the Spanish Caribbean represents a fourth type of trans-oceanic migration made possible by slave trade voyages. Though clearly prohibited by the Spanish Crown, mariners of all ranks—*marineros*, *grumetes*, and *pajes*—commonly disembarked in Caribbean ports, and often ended up becoming long-term or permanent residents.

Portuguese Ashore in the Caribbean

Portuguese men—and less frequently, women—participated in Castile’s colonization of the Americas from very early on, and by the close of the sixteenth century, Portuguese frequently appeared in port towns and cities throughout the Caribbean in surprising numbers. By the mid-1580s, for example, Portuguese residents were said to have considerably outnumbered Spanish residents on the island La Margarita.³⁹ In 1588, members of Santo Domingo’s city council wrote that Portuguese residents outnumbered the city’s Spanish residents, and dominated local commerce to the detriment of Spanish merchants.⁴⁰ In addition to their roles in facilitating the slave trade

³⁹ Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 37-39, 72-79, 131-32, 212. See also María del Carmen Mena García, *La sociedad de Panamá en el siglo XVI* (Seville: Diputación Provincial de Sevilla, 1984), 73; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 93-103, 280-83; Serrano Mangas, *La encrucijada portuguesa*, 17-27; Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation*, 25-28, 44. On Portuguese presence in Seville, see Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972), 17.

⁴⁰ Henry Kamen, *Empire: How Spain Became a World Power, 1492-1763* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 134-35. This claim stands in sharp contrast to a census of 648 households in Santo Domingo conducted in 1606 which lists only six *vecinos* as “Portuguese.” Thus either the city’s *cabildo* members

during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, these individuals often formed part of the stable populations of long-term *vecinos* (permanent residents or heads of household) in these seaports. As both permanent and temporary residents, Portuguese found work in the Caribbean as soldiers, artesans, sailors, farmers, fishermen, and as laborers in other occupations. Despite their diverse economic roles, most correspondence exchanged between colonial and metropolitan authorities regarding Portuguese activities in the circum-Caribbean focused on merchants involved in the transatlantic slave trade. Such accounts, though biased, are useful for interested parties' portrayals of the economic importance of the transatlantic slave trade, the degrees of control they ascribe to Portuguese individuals, and the ways in which these portrayals change over time.

The influx of Portuguese merchants, seamen, and passengers arriving on slave ships caused noticeable concern in Cartagena, Spanish America's major slave trade port prior to the late colonial period.⁴¹ As early as 1586, the city's newly-arrived governor, Pedro de Lodeña, informed the Crown of "the tremendous number of foreigners and Portuguese who for days and even years have resided in this city." Four years later, Cartagena's royal officials complained more pointedly that "the great quantity of Portuguese who have arrived via Guinea and the Barlovento islands are gathering up all the money of this city and province through slave trading."⁴² As agents appointed to

were exaggerating wildly, or Santo Domingo's Portuguese population vanished—or became "Spanish"—at some point in the following two decades. For the 1606 census, see Don Antonio Osorio, Gobernador de Española, "Testimonio de quantos lugares ai en esta yslla [...]," Santo Domingo, 2 octubre 1606, transcribed in E. Rodríguez Demorizi, *Relaciones históricas de Santo Domingo*, II: 374-403 (numbers 51, 483, 541, 543, 595, and 610).

⁴¹ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 99-103, 118-22; Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 435-38; Antonino Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias y la región histórica del Caribe, 1580-1640* (Sevilla: EEHA, Univ. de Sevilla, Diputación de Sevilla, 2002), 76-79, 109, 122-49.

⁴² AGI-SF 37, R.6, n.69, D. Pedro de Lodeña a S. M., Cartagena, 13 agosto 1586; AGI-SF 72, n.81, Don Luis de Guzman y Alonso de Tapia a S. M., Cartagena, 4 julio 1590; Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 109.

administer and control incoming slave traffic on behalf of the Spanish Crown, royal officials were often engaged in profitable, illicit activities on their own behalf; they likely felt threatened by what they perceived as an intrusion into their own economic sphere of interest as middlemen.⁴³ Governor Lodeña's letters to the Crown suggest a concerned, but less hostile, attitude towards the city's Portuguese population. In 1592, evidently uncertain how to proceed, Lodeña specifically requested clarification on the status of the region's Portuguese residents. These included both prominent *vecinos* who had long lived in the city and married into local families, and licensed slave ship captains, "some of whom remain here for two or three years."⁴⁴

Portuguese trade networks to Cartagena were firmly established during the two decades leading up to the turn of the century, and by 1600, the city's highest-ranking authorities had come to view the transatlantic slave trade as Cartagena's primary source of income. In response to royal directives to purge the city of all "foreign" elements, especially "Portuguese Judaizers," both Cartagena's city council and governor Jerónimo de Zuazo sought to protect Portuguese merchants, portraying them as key allies in maintaining the city's fragile prosperity. In 1602, Cartagena's city council requested that the crown reconsider its demand to expel the Portuguese, noting that "the city's conservation and growth depends on trade and commerce, most of which is administered by foreigners serving as factors for their countrymen."⁴⁵ Four years later, in 1606,

⁴³ AGI-SF 72, n.33, "Ynformacion secreta de como an usado sus officios los ofiçiales reales de Cartagena de las Yndias," Cartagena, 15 dic 1578 – 8 julio 1579.

⁴⁴ AGI-SF 37, R.6, n.107, Carta de D. Pedro de Lodeña, Cartagena, 15 sept 1592.

⁴⁵ AGI-SF 62, n.83, "Carta del cabildo secular de Cartagena sobre [...] la Real Cédula relativa a expulsión de los extranjeros," Cartagena, 14 agosto 1602.

lamenting a perceived decline in Cartagena's prosperity, the city council cited a temporary lull in the slave trade as the cause of this alleged economic downturn.⁴⁶

Governor Zuazo went further, specifically addressing metropolitan concerns that disloyal, Portuguese crypto-Jews would contaminate local Indian populations with their religious beliefs, and brazenly trade with Northern European interlopers in the region. In a letter dated 1603, he informed the Spanish Crown that there was "not a single house of Indians" in the city of Cartagena; in fact "they are all in the interior and the closest Indian *pueblo* is six leagues away." Furthermore, the city's residents rarely dealt with Indians on account of "the land's roughness, the trail's discomforts, and other reasons." In self-congratulatory fashion, Zuazo noted also that thanks to the diligence of Cartagena's galleys (under his command), northern European corsairs had not been seen in the area for quite some time. Echoing the city council, he wrote that "the largest and most important commerce of this city is that of the slaves who come from Guinea and Angola, and since these are provinces of the Portuguese Crown, everyone or nearly everyone involved is Portuguese." If Cartagena's Portuguese residents were expelled, he cautioned, this "fattest, best" commerce would be lost, along with the province's major source of labor "for the mines and agriculture." Cartagena's royal treasury would forfeit income from slave trade licenses, valued at 170,000 *ducados* (presumably, per year). Moreover, he reminded the Crown that taxes on slave imports—twenty-six *reales* per slave entered—represented the primary source of income for building and repairing Cartagena's fortifications.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ AGI-SF 62, n.90, "Carta del cabildo secular de Cartagena sobre el encabezamiento de las alcabalas," 18 agosto 1606.

⁴⁷ AGI-SF 38, R.2, n.55, Gobernador de Cartagena don Jerónimo de Zuazo a S. M., Cartagena, 1 agosto 1603; Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 78-79.

Events in Havana during the same period unfolded in a similar manner, if perhaps on a smaller scale. In 1582, a roster of roughly three hundred free men capable of bearing arms enumerated nineteen men specifically designated as “Portuguese.” These individuals, including three high-ranking *vecinos*, thirteen men who “worked for a living,” and three additional temporary residents, stood to be called upon to defend Havana should the need arise.⁴⁸ Despite the long-standing presence of Portuguese residents in Havana and surrounding areas, during the first decade of the seventeenth century Cuban authorities received royal orders commanding the removal of Portuguese “foreigners” from the entire island.⁴⁹ On June 25, 1608, following his receipt of these instructions, governor Gaspar de Pereda decreed that “all of Havana’s Portuguese residents and inhabitants, regardless of profession and status,” had exactly one day to provide collateral, or sign a deposition in the presence of a notary, assuring their intention “to embark with their households and families for Castile on the next galleons.” As in Cartagena, however, at least some of Havana’s influential Portuguese inhabitants managed to evade the metropole’s xenophobic mandate. The merchant and long-time resident Simon Fernandez Leyton presented a lengthy petition to Spanish authorities, noting that he had lived in Seville for six years, and in Havana for another ten years; two and a half years previously, he had married a locally-born woman.⁵⁰ Evidently he won

⁴⁸ Levi Marrero, *Cuba: Economía y sociedad* (Madrid: Editorial Playor, 1974-1992), II: 332-34; Peter E. Carr, *Censos, padrones y matrículas de la población de Cuba, siglos 16, 17 y 18* (San Luis Obispo: The Cuban Index, 1993), 16-19.

⁴⁹ I. A. Wright, “Rescates: With Special Reference to Cuba, 1599-1610,” *HAHR* 3:3 (Aug 1920): 333-61; Isabelo Macías Domínguez, *Cuba en la primera mitad del siglo XVII* (Seville: EEHA, 1978), 30-32, 48, 57-58, 327; Alejandro de la Fuente García and Leandro S. Romero Estebanez, “La inmigración en La Habana, 1585-1645: un estudio de sus áreas de procedencia,” *Rábida* 8 (Oct 1990): 68-82; Alejandro de la Fuente, with César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 94-101.

⁵⁰ AGI-SD 119, s/n, “Ynformacion de Simon Fernandez Leyton para ynbiar al consejo,” Havana, 25 junio 1608 – 24 agosto 1608; de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic*, 93-100.

the case, for he reappears in Havana documentation in the early 1630s, acting as legal representative for an absent slave ship captain.⁵¹

In some cases, Portuguese men such as Leyton (in Portuguese, Leitão), who set up residences in Spanish Caribbean port cities and married locally, can be traced through their surnames to broader networks which mixed commercial activity with family connections. Clearly, such relationships were critical to the operation of various long-distance mercantile activities during the early modern era, including the transatlantic slave trade.⁵² According to Governor Zuazo, without “relatives or friends of the same nation in Cartagena, people of credit who can take charge of newly-arrived slaves,” Lisbon elites would hesitate to invest in the slave trade.⁵³ When a Portuguese man named Jorge Rodriguez de Lisboa asked for a renewal of his license to sail to the Spanish Caribbean, he noted that he was already a resident of Cartagena, having “navigated many times” to that city, as well as to “New Spain and the Island of Cuba, from Cabo Verde and Angola with very large ship loads of slaves.” After one of his return trips to Iberia, he formed a partnership with his uncle, Simon Rodriguez de Lisboa, and in 1608 they purchased licenses to transport 132 slaves from Guinea to Cartagena. Though it is presently unknown whether the voyage ever took place, or whether his uncle traveled with him, Jorge Rodriguez de Lisboa did receive authorization from the Crown in 1611 to

⁵¹ AGI-SD 119, s/n, “Arribada del navio San Pedro,” pieza 2, folios 62r-69r, 82r-83v, 93r-94v, 113r-138v.

⁵² Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation*, 41-89. On the Gramajos and other examples, see Enrique Otte and Conchita Ruiz-Burruecos, “Los portugueses en la trata de esclavos negros de las postrimerías del siglo XVI,” *Moneda y Crédito* 85 (Jun 1963): 3-40; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 70, 97, 118-22, 280; Torrão, “Rotas comerciais,” 79, 83, 90-91, 107-12; Iva Cabral, “Ribeira Grande: vida urbana, gente, mercancia, estagnação,” in *HGCV*, II: 250-51; Maria da Graça Mateus Ventura, “Os Gramacho: Um caso paradigmático de redes de influência em Cartagena das Índias,” *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas* 1 (2001): 65-81; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, I (1): 227-346; Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 135-49; María Cristina Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo de al esclavitud en Colombia, siglos XVI y XVII* (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2005), 111-20; Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 49-51, 154-55, 290, 325-31; García de León, “La malla inconclusa.”

⁵³ AGI-SF 38, R.2, n.55, folio 1v.

remain in the Spanish Indies for another year, thanks to favorable recommendations from the president of the *Audiencia* of Panama.⁵⁴

Actual kinship relations are rarely spelled out so explicitly in official correspondence; we do not know whether Simon Fernandez Leyton, who became a permanent resident in Havana in the late 1590s, participated in a similar commercial network in collusion with parents, uncles, siblings, sons, or other family members.⁵⁵ He may have been associated with the Leyton family who brought enslaved Africans to the region during the previous decade. According to Santo Domingo's royal officials, "the Leytons" were responsible for contraband slave traffic between the Rivers of Guinea and Hispaniola. When one of their ships was seized in 1584, one crew member was identified as "Baltasar Leyton."⁵⁶ A man with the same surname—Vicente Leitão—served as captain of a ship which departed from the Cape Verde Islands in 1609, ostensibly bound for Cartagena de Indias, with more than four hundred captives aboard.⁵⁷ Sailing from an unknown African port, yet another slave ship captain identified as "Francisco Leyton" disembarked slightly over two hundred African women and men in Cartagena three years later.⁵⁸ While these instances of a shared last name may represent simple coincidences, it is nonetheless significant that during the same period, several men with the same surname appear in three different Spanish Caribbean ports, associated to

⁵⁴ AGI-SF 2, R.2, n.84, Consulta sobre "prorrogación a Jorge Rodriguez de Lisboa Portugues por dos Años la liçençia que tiene para estar en las Yndias," Madrid, 26 marzo 1611.

⁵⁵ For examples of letters exchanged between family members in Spain and the Spanish Americas during the sixteenth century, see James Lockhart and Enrique Otte, trans. and ed., *Letters and People of the Spanish Indies, Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

⁵⁶ AGI-SD 74, R.3, s/n (between 131 & 132), "Autos y denunciaçion del navio nonbrado La Conçeçion maestre Miguel Geronimo que vino con esclavos de los Rios de Guinea," Santo Domingo, 29 nov 1584.

⁵⁷ AHU-Cabo Verde, cx.1, n.29, "Auto que mandarão fazer [...] em comprimento do que Sua Magestade manda na provizão y renta," Ribeira Grande, 1 julho 1613, folha 1v; T. Bentley Duncan, *Atlantic Islands: Madeira, the Azores, and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 199-201; Maria Manuel Ferraz Torrão, "Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento," in *HGCV*, II: 42.

⁵⁸ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 148-49n70; TSTD 28137.

varying degrees with the transatlantic slave trade (often from the same region of western Africa).

Though ultimately directed, perhaps, by a handful of powerful men in Lisbon, or by affluent merchants who owned multiple ships, extravagant homes, and hundreds of slaves, Portuguese commercial networks depended on much larger numbers of mid-level and lower-level agents. In his 1603 defense of Portuguese presence in Cartagena, Governor Zuazo himself portrayed the Portuguese who brought Africans to the city as “poor men, usually, who do not work on their own behalf, but in the name of other great, wealthy men in Lisbon.”⁵⁹ As noted at the beginning of this chapter, many of the pilots, mariners, and passengers arriving in Spanish Caribbean port cities on slave ships chose to remain in the region, adopting a wide variety of socioeconomic roles. Historian J. Israel suggests that successful Portuguese merchants who had first entered Spanish American markets as slave traffickers often switched later to trading textiles.⁶⁰ In a similar manner, non-elite Portuguese men who first arrived in the Spanish Caribbean on slave ships, or were associated with the transatlantic slave trade in some fashion, often learned to exercise professions which were not directly related to slave trafficking.

The best known source illuminating this process is a detailed roster of nearly two hundred “foreigners” in urban Cartagena de Indias, taken by special commission in 1630. The report contains brief autobiographies of more than one hundred and fifty Portuguese men of diverse background and social status.⁶¹ As might be expected in Cartagena de Indias in 1630, a considerable number of the individuals interviewed were traders or

⁵⁹ AGI-SF 38, R.2, n.55, folio 1v.

⁶⁰ Israel, “The Portuguese,” 23-24.

⁶¹ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a. For detailed analysis and transcriptions of this report, see Vila Vilar, “Extranjeros”; and Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, I (1): 100-05; II: 31-77.

slave merchants. Bernardo Drago, for example, first arrived in the Spanish Americas in 1619 on a slave ship sailing from Angola. Upon arrival in Cartagena, he relates, his entire ship load of slaves was confiscated by Cartagena's royal officials. Port entry records left by Cartagena's royal officials offer several details that Drago fails to mention. First, his voyage was completely unauthorized by metropolitan officials; he carried neither registration nor dispatch papers from the *Casa de la Contratación* in Seville. Thus, all ninety-nine captives found onboard were confiscated when he arrived. Secondly, prior to entering Cartagena's port, he concealed an additional seventy captives on the nearby island of Baru. These were also confiscated as contraband, though only fifty-nine remained alive by the time port authorities discovered them. Drago quickly recovered, however, from what turned out to be only a temporary setback. Moving to Lima, Peru, he soon became quite successful as a commercial agent transporting "blacks and other kinds of merchandise" between Cartagena and Lima.⁶² As noted by Vila Vilar, several of Cartagena's prominent Portuguese elites—Julio Evangelista, Juan Rodriguez Mesa, and Luis Gomez Barreto—likewise owed their fortune to slave trafficking. Due to their long-standing residence and social status in the city, all were able to produce naturalization letters drawn up in Madrid, and "signed by his Majesty's royal hand." Antonio Fernandez Gramajo does not even appear on the list.⁶³

While personal narratives such as that of Bernardo Drago dramatically illustrate the substantial material wealth that stood to be gained by trafficking enslaved human

⁶² AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 4v-5r; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 39-40; AGI-SF 74, n.6, folio 19v; TSTD 28177. Drago may have been related to a man named "Manuel Drago," who was heavily engaged in slave trafficking between Luanda and New Spain in 1609; see AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.13, Carta do Governador de Angola D. Manuel Pereira a João de Argomedo, São Paulo de Loanda, 13 março 1611.

⁶³ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 16r, 17r, 19r; Vila Vilar, "Extranjeros," 160-65; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 58, 60, 62.

beings in the early modern Iberian world, it should be remembered that literally thousands of Portuguese men participated to some extent in the transatlantic slave trade, and that most of them never became wealthy or powerful. Some of the slave ship pilots, sailors, deck hands, cabin boys, doctors, barbers, and passengers who appear in the 1630 report had arrived in Cartagena only recently, and would soon depart for Iberia again, rather than pay the fees required to establish themselves as resident foreigners in the city. Others, however, had already resided in Cartagena and elsewhere in the circum-Caribbean for years. Some found employment in maritime labors which may have resembled their activities as mariners on slave trade voyages. Others learned to practice new occupations, or returned to professions they had known prior to crossing the Atlantic on slave ships. One man named Antonio de Rivero arrived in Cartagena as a cabin boy (*paje*) on a slave ship from Angola when he was nine years old. Thirty years later, he was married to a locally-born woman, and worked on a farm or *estancia* owned by Gonçalo Lopez Merano. Similarly, Domingo Diaz arrived in Cartagena on a slave ship sailing from the Cape Verde Islands in approximately 1600. Following his arrival, he served as a soldier in Cartagena for twelve or thirteen years, and eventually started a small business transporting clothing and food supplies between Cartagena and Maracaibo. Antonio Nuñez, a native of the island Terceira in the Azores, was forty years old in 1630. Like the other mariners mentioned here, twenty years earlier, he had departed from Angola as *grumete* on a slave ship which was bound for New Spain, but landed in La Margarita instead. After laboring as a sailor on many subsequent voyages throughout the region, in 1623 he finally settled in Cartagena, where he married a woman who was also from the Azores. They soon had two children, and he started a business

buying and selling boats. At nineteen years old, Ignacio de Acosta arrived in Cartagena on a slave ship from São Tomé in 1627, and found work in the city as a goldsmith within three years.⁶⁴ Taken together, these narratives provide one glimpse of a historical process in which non-elite, Portuguese mariners entered Spanish Caribbean society, carrying with them diverse experiences of Africa and Africans gained through their own participation in the transatlantic slave trade.

Portuguese Mariners and the South Atlantic World

While some ship captains, mariners, and merchants may have specialized in commercial routes between specific ports on each side of the Atlantic (i.e. Cabo Verde to Cartagena, Luanda to Veracruz), others were familiar with a variety of ports in both Africa and the Americas.⁶⁵ As noted above, the Portuguese merchant Jorge Rodriguez de Lisboa claimed to have personally transported enslaved Africans from both the Cape Verde Islands and Angola to various New World destinations prior to 1610, including Cartagena, New Spain, and Cuba.⁶⁶ Another example is that of captain Mateo Suarez (Soares), who was forty-eight years old in 1630, and had grown up in Portugal and Brazil. Having lived for four years in San Juan de Ulúa (Veracruz), and for the previous year and a half in Cartagena, he stated that he had made multiple slave trade voyages to both ports. As for the African ports of call Suarez was familiar with, we only know that

⁶⁴ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 2v, 4r, 7r, 27r; Vila Vilar, "Extranjeros," 178-79, 182; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 35, 38, 43, 76-77.

⁶⁵ On pilots' or ship captains' specializations in particular stages of the transatlantic slave trade (i.e. Iberia to Africa, Africa to the Americas), see Mendes, "Foundations of the System," 68-69.

⁶⁶ AGI-SF 2, R.2, n.84.

two of his slave trade voyages to Cartagena brought captives from “Guinea,” i.e. Upper Guinea.⁶⁷

Perhaps best known to historians as a Portuguese nobleman who participated in the conquest of Angola during the late sixteenth century, Garcia Mendes Castelo Branco also traveled repeatedly between Africa and various American ports as a slave merchant. Following his arrival in Luanda with Paulo Dias de Novais in 1575, Castelo Branco resided primarily in Angola for forty-six years, serving at various times as judge, “*cabo de companhias*,” and “*capitão-mor da guerra*.” In addition to offering to help locate silver mines which supposedly existed in Angola’s interior, Castelo Branco appeared in person before the Spanish Crown in Madrid in 1620. His “relations” to the Crown contain important descriptions of flora, fauna, geography, trade, and political structures in West Central Africa and Lower Guinea, along with an ambitious proposal to decentralize royal control over Mbundu communities subjected to Portuguese rule.⁶⁸ Castelo Branco also offered to finance and supervise the construction of a new fortress at Anzele, but he

⁶⁷ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 8r, 21r; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 66-67. Two of his voyages appear in Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 174, 268-69, 276-77; see also TSTD 29317 and 29446.

⁶⁸ MMA (1), VI: 437-78; do Amaral, *O Consulado*, 21-22, 74-75, 92, 108-10, 117, 126-28, 243-47; Beatrix Heintze, with Maria Adélia de Carvalho Mendes, *Fontes para a História de Angola de século XVII, tomo I: Memórias, relações e outros manuscritos da colectânea documental de Fernão de Sousa, 1622-1635* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1985), 82, 146, 265; Beatrix Heintze, “The Angola Vassal Tributes of the 17th Century,” *Revista de História Económica e Social* 6 (1980), 62; John K. Thornton, *The Kingdom of Kongo: Civil War and Transition, 1641-1718* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 10; Robin Law, “Early European Sources Relating to the Kingdom of Ijebu (1500-1700): A Critical Survey,” *HA* 13 (1986): 248-49. Castelo Branco’s plan for the “*aforamento*” of roughly 200 *sobas* basically consisted of “freeing” them from Crown authority by allotting them to Portuguese *conquistadores*, who would pay the Crown an annual sum of money (or its equivalent in cloths or local currency) for this privilege. These funds would then be used to pay the region’s soldiers. This plan has been characterized by Heintze as a thinly disguised return to Angola’s late sixteenth-century “tenancy” system, in which *sobas* were subject to the control of Portuguese “masters” (*amos*).

was never able to pursue these ambitions further; he died in Angola in 1621, shortly after returning from Europe.⁶⁹

Though his own writings are virtually mute regarding his maritime enterprises, Spanish archival sources indicate that before his death in 1621, Garcia Mendes Castelo Branco completed at least three voyages from Angola to the Spanish Americas as a slave ship captain. In 1599, more than twenty years after his arrival in Luanda, Castelo Branco served as captain of the slave ship “Nuestra Señora del Rosario,” sailing to Cartagena. Though the vessel “wrecked” in Rio de la Hacha, the surviving two hundred twenty-six captives were transferred to two smaller frigates, disembarking in Cartagena on November 5, 1599.⁷⁰ Just over a decade later, in late 1612, captain “Garci Méndez de Castellobranco” reappears in Spanish Caribbean sources as captain of the ship “San Agustin,” carrying one hundred sixty captives bound for Veracruz. As in his previous voyage, Castelo Branco made a “forced landing” along the way, this time in Havana, where six enslaved Africans were sold; an additional ninety-four were landed in Veracruz.⁷¹ Two months later, Castelo Branco paid customs duties in Jamaica for an unspecified number of captives—presumably the sixty remaining—disembarked on the island. Fifty of these individuals, including thirty-two males and eighteen females, were subsequently transported from Jamaica to Havana for resale.⁷² Their labyrinthine voyage

⁶⁹ MMA (1), VI: 458-60; do Amaral, *O Consulado*, 74; Heintze, *Fontes*, I: 82. In exchange for building the fortress, he requested that the Crown “give the *soba* Caculo Quehacango, with all his clan [*canda*],” to himself and to his heirs in perpetuity. This *soba*, he noted, held authority in the region where the proposed fort was to be built. On *kanda*, roughly defined as hierarchical, matrilineal descent groups, see Anne Hilton, *The Kingdom of Kongo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 8, 11-12, 19-23, 32-34, 87-90, 152. On Mbundu descent groups known as *jingundu*, see Joseph C. Miller, *Kings and Kingsmen: Early Mbundu States in Angola* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 42-53.

⁷⁰ Henri Lapeyre, “Le trafic négrier avec l’Amérique espagnole,” in *Homenaje a Jaime Vicens Vives*, vol. 2 (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 1967), 294-95.

⁷¹ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 258-59; TSTD 29217.

⁷² AGI-Esc 38B, Pleito contra Pedro Navarro, Havana, 1613, pieza 2, folios 427r-427v.

may have been pre-arranged during their earlier “forced” landing. Less is known of Castelo Branco’s subsequent transoceanic voyage, conducted five years later. Departing Angola with one hundred eighty-nine captives on the ship “Santa Catalina,” captain “Garci Méndez Castelo Branco” arrived in Veracruz on July 27, 1618, and disembarked only one hundred forty enslaved Africans.⁷³ New Spain’s royal officials may have believed that forty-nine captives perished during the ocean crossing, but we are left to wonder whether this voyage’s itinerary, too, included unauthorized ports of call. While the exact details remain unknown, this was probably the second stage of a roughly triangular route which took Castelo Branco from Angola to Veracruz with slaves; from Veracruz to Madrid, where he gave his “relations” to the Spanish Crown in 1620; and from Madrid back to Angola, where he died soon afterwards.

Of the thousands of seamen engaged in the transatlantic slave trade during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, many followed trajectories similar to those of captains Jorge Rodriguez de Lisboa, Mateo Suarez, and Garcia Mendes Castelo Branco. Many of the Portuguese slave ship mariners who spent significant lengths of time in various Caribbean ports were thoroughly familiar with African ports as well, such as Ribeira Grande in the Cape Verde Islands; Cacheo on the Senegambian mainland; São Tomé in the Gulf of Guinea; Arda (or Allada) on the Lower Guinea mainland; and São Paulo de Luanda in West Central Africa. Through their steady immigration into and through the Caribbean, and through their continual movement in multiple directions across the major Atlantic slaving circuits, Portuguese seamen and merchants maintained a continual presence in the Spanish Caribbean, linking the region’s port towns and cities

⁷³ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamerica*, 260-61; TSTD 29242.

not only to one another, but also to various seaports in the Lusophone, South Atlantic world.

Viewed from African points of departure, the Americas' major slaving ports during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—most notably Cartagena, Veracruz, Pernambuco, and Bahia—represented alternative slave trade destinations within the same system.⁷⁴ Extant records from Ribeira Grande, Santiago in 1609-1610 show slave ships departing the Cape Verde Islands bound for both New Spain and Cartagena, with smaller numbers of captives sent to the Canary Islands and Seville.⁷⁵ Meanwhile in Luanda, a slave trade factor named Francisco de Mar sent financial records involving slave trafficking to a patron in Lisbon. One of Luanda's governor's letters also contains a spreadsheet which appears to have been carefully drawn up by Francisco de Mar. In one column, the spreadsheet lists the value and quantities of wine entering the city; in another column, it lists approximately fifty "*escrituras*"—letters of credit representing various sums of money—entrusted to slave ship captains departing Luanda. These reports mention dozens of slave ships departing Luanda in the year 1609 alone, bound for Cartagena, New Spain, Pernambuco, Bahia, and the Canary Islands.⁷⁶ Fifteen years later, another official report provides statistics for nearly eighty slave ships departing Luanda during the years 1623 to 1626, and indicates the intended regions of disembarkation for nearly 18,000 captives. While the largest number of ships were bound for Brazil—thirty-seven ships carrying nearly 8,000 captives—an even larger

⁷⁴ Thus far there has been little systematic research on the transatlantic slave trade to Brazil during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, no synthesis comparable to Vila Vilar's *Hispanoamérica*. For recent estimates, with overviews of the extant literature, see Daniel Barros Domingues da Silva and David Eltis, "The Slave Trade to Pernambuco, 1561-1851," and Alexandre Vieira Ribeiro, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade to Bahia, 1582-1851," in *Extending the Frontiers*, 95-129, 130-54.

⁷⁵ AHU-Cabo Verde, cx.1, n.29; Duncan, *Atlantic Islands*, 199-201; Torrão, "Rotas comerciais," 42-43.

⁷⁶ AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.13; AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.4-A.

number of captives were forcibly transported to the Spanish Americas, totalling 9,400 captives embarked in just thirty-one ships. The remaining eleven slave ships were registered to transport a total of slightly over 1,000 captives to São Tomé and Lisbon.⁷⁷

In African ports, slave ship captains and slave trade factors could respond to local conditions and relatively recent news, leading them to make decisions which often contradicted shipping registers and contracts drawn up in Iberia months or years earlier. From their points of view, American ports of slave disembarkation could be treated as interchangeable, competing markets. Though registration and “dispatches” issued in Seville or Cádiz authorized slave ships to travel to specific African ports, and to disembark slaves in particular American ports, these documents offered no guarantee that a voyage’s actual itinerary would proceed as authorized.⁷⁸ When slave ships departed from an African port, for example, factors might direct captains to sail to a specific American port. But even then, slave ship captains and perhaps the vessels’ owners might choose destinations they deemed more favorable. Perhaps for these reasons, customs officials in Iberian ports of departure and factors in African ports of slave embarkation at times refrained from specifying an exact port of disembarkation, authorizing slave ship captains to transport enslaved Africans to either “Tierra Firme or New Spain,” i.e. to either Cartagena or Veracruz. Vila Vilar notes that “in 1619, all the ships which arrived in Veracruz and Cartagena were unregistered, carrying only a dispatch issued in Angola

⁷⁷ AHU-Angola, cx.2, n.103, Governador de Angola Fernão de Sousa sobre “a forma con que o feitor do contrato lhe ha de pagar seu ordenado a elle e aos officiaes da fazenda,” 16 julho 1626; AHU-Angola, cx.2, n.108, Carta de Estevão do Carvalhal, escrivão da feitoria por Sua Magestade, Loanda, 18 outubro 1626. See also Frédéric Mauro, *Le Portugal et l’Atlantique au XVIIe siècle (1570-1670): Etude économique* (Paris, 1960), 175; Bowser, *African Slave*, 39, 364n32; Beatrix Heintze, “Angola nas garras do tráfico de escravos: a guerras do Ndongo (1611-1630),” *Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos* 1 (Jan-June 1984), 33.

⁷⁸ Our knowledge of many early transatlantic slave trade voyages is limited primarily to port departure records. At present, TSTD lists 1,325 voyages which took place between 1570 and 1640, yet the specific “date vessel arrived with slaves” remains unknown for more than 600 of these voyages.

by the *asentista*'s factor."⁷⁹ One of these dispatches, copied verbatim by a royal scribe in Cartagena, suggests a degree of flexibility in choosing slave trade routes; Angola's factor had authorized the vessel in question to deliver captives to "one of the two ports of Cartagena or New Veracruz, and none other."⁸⁰ Furthermore, port entry records for Cartagena likewise indicate that the city served as an alternate destination for slave trade voyages explicitly registered to sail to Veracruz. Of one hundred slave ships which arrived in Cartagena between 1615 and 1623, approximately thirty slave ships which had been registered to sail to "the province of New Spain" disembarked captives in Cartagena instead.⁸¹

Though fewer in number, Cartagena port entry records and other sources also indicate several instances in which ships ostensibly bound for Brazilian ports arrived in the Spanish Caribbean. For example, at least two ships sailing from "the kingdom of Angola" towards "Brazil" are known to have landed in Cartagena, in 1600 and 1616.⁸² Though in some cases, such emergency landings and changes may well have been legitimate, some Spanish authorities suspected the existence of contraband networks connecting Cartagena de Indias to Brazil and the Cape Verde Islands. The prominent Portuguese merchant Jorge Fernández Gramajo was accused of shipping "vast quantities of contraband merchandise from Brazil," and from Cabo Verde, to Cartagena.⁸³ These "accidental" arrivals may have followed a pattern established earlier. In two letters to the

⁷⁹ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 161-62.

⁸⁰ AGI-SF 73, n.39b, "Testimonio de carta del fator de Angola," São Paulo de Loanda, 7 setembro 1618.

⁸¹ AGI-SF 74, n.6, "Certificación de los negros que han entrado en Cartaxena desde Primero de mayo de 1615 hasta 20 de marzo deste presente año de 1623," Cartagena, 28 marzo 1623. Several of these voyages appear in Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 276-77.

⁸² AGI-SF 72, n.105, "Copia de la Relacion de Cartagena de los negros q Alli han entrado desde primero de Mayo de 1600," Cartagena, 27 julio 1601, folio 21v; AGI-SF 74, n.6, folios 17v-18r; Lapeyre, "Trafic négrier," 296-97; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 248-49; TSTD 29095 and 28154.

⁸³ Boxer, *Portuguese Seaborne Empire*, 336-37.

Crown in 1584, Santo Domingo's royal officials noted that due to "storms and difficult weather," ships sailing from Portugal, Upper Guinea, and São Tomé, allegedly en route to "the provinces of Brazil" were regularly "forced" to land in Santo Domingo. Their second letter on this subject specifically mentions the arrival of "ships departing the Rivers [of Guinea], and São Tomé, bound for the provinces of Brazil with slaves."⁸⁴

In addition to accusations levelled by Spanish authorities, which may be justly viewed with some skepticism given their own biases and interests at stake, slave ship captains' names provide further concrete evidence of Portuguese maritime activities in both the Caribbean and Brazil. Luanda port departure records indicate that Captain Sebastian Zintron set out from Luanda in 1609 to deliver promissory notes, and possibly slaves, to a factor in Bahia. Sebastian Zintron (Cintron) reappears a decade later in Cartagena's port entry records as captain of the slave ship "San Francisco," disembarking captives from Angola on two separate occasions in 1618 and in 1619.⁸⁵ As discussed above, recent scholarship on early modern Portuguese and Sephardic commercial networks in Europe, West Africa, and the Spanish Americas suggests that in some cases, Spanish officials' suspicions may have been well-founded, though the extent to which mercantile networks of this genre extended to Brazil is thus far uncertain. Shipping records strongly indicate that slave traffic from Africa could be directed, or re-directed, from Brazilian ports to Caribbean ports, and vice versa. Further research in the transatlantic slave trade to Bahia and Pernambuco during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries should eventually yield a number of cases similar to that of

⁸⁴ AGI-SD 74, r.3, n.127, Oficiales reales de la isla Española a S.M., Santo Domingo, 8 feb 1584, folio 1r; AGI-SD 74, r.3, n.131, Oficiales reales de la isla Española a S.M., Santo Domingo, 15 junio 1584, folio 3r.

⁸⁵ AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.13; AGI-SF 73, n.39a, folios 1r-1v; AGI-SF 73, n.39b; AGI-SF 73, n.42, folio 1v; AGI-SF 74, n.6, folio 18v; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 174; TSTD 28169 and 29490.

Sebastian Zintron, in which captains departing African ports were familiar with maritime routes to both Brazil and the Caribbean.⁸⁶

If Brazil and the Caribbean are viewed as alternate slave trade destinations within one broad Iberian system, the question then arises as to whether the two regions were connected only indirectly, much like spokes on wheel, with Africa as the hub? Direct maritime traffic from Brazil to the Spanish Caribbean, including slave trading, suggests otherwise. The invaluable 1630 census of Cartagena's foreign residents, in particular, offers ample evidence of Portuguese immigration from Brazil to the Caribbean.

According to his own testimony, Luis Carvalho, a dance instructor and saddlemaker from Lisbon, arrived in the city of Cartagena six years earlier (circa 1624), "sailing from Brazil on Diego de Fonseca's ship." A Portuguese tailor named Pedro Dias had likewise resided in Cartagena for six years, having arrived "via the Pernambuco route." Cristobal Dias, a native of Oporto, sailed from Pernambuco two years earlier (circa 1628) on a ship bound for Lisbon, with a cargo of sugar. His vessel was allegedly captured by a Dutch ship, but he managed to board a passing slave ship destined for Cartagena.⁸⁷ Our limited information on these voyages from Brazil to Cartagena leaves us with a number of unanswered questions, most notably regarding their complete trajectories, and the voyages' ultimate purposes for interested parties on either end.

One possible answer to the latter question, at least, is provided in the testimony of a Portuguese slave merchant who appears in the same 1630 census. Pedro de Farias claimed that in 1627, he had sailed to Puerto Rico in a slave ship—*una nao de armaçon*

⁸⁶ Note, for example, ship cargos, captains, and other data listed in Leonor Freire Costa, *O transporte no Atlântico e a Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil, 1580-1663* (Lisbon: Comissão nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimientos Portugueses, 2002).

⁸⁷ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 8r-9v, 12v-13r, 18v, 21r, 24r, 27r; Vila Vilar, "Extranjeros," 178-83; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 62, 71, 76.

de negros—“via the route from Brazil.” Virtually nothing is known of this particular voyage and its outcome, or even of this type of Atlantic maritime activity in general, involving the transportation of enslaved “blacks” from Brazil to the Caribbean early in the seventeenth century. Farias notes that from Puerto Rico, he next traveled to Hispaniola, but was soon robbed by Northern European “enemies,” who left him ashore in Venezuela. He then made his way to Cartagena, and from there to Peru. Shortly thereafter, he began to act as a middleman between the two cities, “buying blacks” in Cartagena on behalf of a wealthy slave merchant based in Lima.⁸⁸

Just as Farias’s 1627 voyage raises the possibility of a previously unknown traffic in African and/or Afrocreole captives between Brazil and the Caribbean, additional sources indicate that Brazilian Indians were occasionally marketed and sold as slaves in various Spanish Caribbean ports during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Indian slavery had been widely prohibited in the Spanish Americas since the 1540s, and the Caribbean’s post-conquest demographic collapse further contributed to the decline of Amerindian slavery in the region long before the early seventeenth century. Brazil’s resilient native populations, on the other hand, continued to experience assault, enslavement, and “detrribalization” throughout the colonial period. Though outright slaving expeditions were disallowed in the mid-sixteenth century, at least in theory, they were promptly replaced by ransoming (*rescate*) and by “just wars” against unconquered Indian groups.⁸⁹ Hispaniola’s governor and officials of the *Audiencia* of Santo Domingo wrote to the Spanish Crown in 1569, noting that “there are no Indians on the island,” and

⁸⁸ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, 24r-24v; Vila Vilar, “Extranjeros,” 178; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 72.

⁸⁹ Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society, 1550-1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 52-55; Metcalf, *Go-betweens*, 173-93, 269-70; Hal Langfur, *The Forbidden Lands: Colonial Identity, Frontier Violence, and the Persistence of Brazil’s Eastern Indians, 1750-1830* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 21, 60-67, 168-74, 254-61, 277-87.

that for labor, they had to depend on black slaves, who were difficult to acquire and replace. They specifically requested authorization “to purchase Indians from Brazil to work on the island.” The following year, Santo Domingo’s officials received a royal cedula clearly stating that Brazilian Indians were not to be purchased, or brought to the island, on account of “inconveniences” this would cause for the Crown.⁹⁰

Evidently, however, local interest in Brazilian Indians as a source of slave labor did not vanish permanently in Santo Domingo, or elsewhere in the Caribbean. A short series of royal cedulae repeatedly mentions the Maranhão River area, including the Amazon and the neighboring Guyanas, as a potential source of Brazilian Indian slaves for Spanish Caribbean colonies. In 1609, the Spanish Crown wrote to various Caribbean officials concerning the alleged transportation of “many Indians from the province of Guayana and elsewhere” to the island La Margarita. According to the Crown’s informants, these Indians were “sold in public as if they were slaves, to serve those who purchase them.” The following year, a royal cedula issued to La Margarita’s governor again requested information regarding the enslavement of Amerindians. The Crown understood that although the island was formerly home to “a great number of Guayquiri Indians,” less than one hundred forty remained, having died or fled from mistreatment; and that at that time—in 1610—the island contained “approximately six hundred Indians of other nations who all serve as slaves [...] brought from the islands of Guyana, Trinidad, and New Andalusia.” Shortly afterwards, in 1616, Portuguese boats “from the Marañon and the Amazon River” were allegedly “forced” to land on the island of Hispaniola. Onboard, they carried as many as one hundred Indians who they claimed to have traded

⁹⁰ José Luis Saez, comp., *La iglesia y el negro esclavo en Santo Domingo: una historia de tres siglos* (Santo Domingo: Patronato de la Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo, Colección Quinto Centenario, 1994), 291.

or rescued (*rescatado*) from other Indians who had been planning to eat them. These men and women were sold as slaves to Santo Domingo's residents for a period of ten years. Despite the Crown's desire for the Indian men to be placed under the care of local friars, and the women under the care of nuns, the island's governor evidently ordered that the Indians be "returned to their lands." The 1617 royal cedula approved of their repatriation, but noted that "if any should choose to remain, they must learn a trade, so that they will be occupied and not idle."⁹¹

As indicated by the appearance of Portuguese ships laden with Indian slaves in Española in 1616, this practice extended beyond La Margarita island in the southeastern Caribbean. Less than one year earlier, in December 1615, a Portuguese ship had arrived in Cartagena with sixty-four French prisoners captured near the mouth of the Marañón River. The vessel also carried nine Indians whom the Portuguese "had conquered, and wanted to take as slaves," according to our Spanish sources.⁹² Soon afterwards, Cartagena authorities formally requested that Indian slavery be reinstated; much like their precursors in Santo Domingo fifty years earlier, they claimed in 1623 that the province had become too heavily dependent on African laborers.⁹³ Surely in collaboration with local elites, in 1627 a Portuguese captain brought "two hundred male and female Indians *rescatados* from the Marañón, where he says they were being held captive by their enemies to be eaten." As noted by Cartagena's bishop Diego Ramírez de Cepeda in his own correspondence to the Crown, the Portuguese captain also produced "a royal letter

⁹¹ Richard Knetzke, *Colección de Documentos para la Historia de la Formación Social de Hispanoamérica, 1493-1810* (Madrid: CSIC, 1958), vol. II, tomo 1: 173-76, 194.

⁹² AGI-SF 38, r.5, n.136, Don Diego de Acuña, gobernador de Cartagena, a S.M. [c. January 1616].

⁹³ AGI-SF 63, n.50, Carta del cabildo secular de Cartagena sobre los indios caribes que habitan en los rios Marañón y Amazonas y la posibilidad de llevarlos a aquella provincia como esclavos, Cartagena, 14 dic 1623.

authorizing the sale and possession of these Indians for a period of ten years.” Anxious to discourage the resurrection of an Indian slave trade in the Spanish Americas, Ramírez noted that he found such papers “suspicious,” writing that even if they proved to be authentic, the Indians would be confiscated on the Crown’s behalf as unregistered slaves (*esclavos descaminados*).⁹⁴ The fate of this group of two hundred women and men remains unknown. They were probably part of a larger group of captives forcibly shipped away from the Maranhão region at the same time. Following the “conquest of the Marañón” in 1628, a Portuguese vessel arriving in La Margarita carried more than one hundred captives for sale: seventeen black men, women, and children; one *mulato* man; and ninety-seven Brazilian Indians of both sexes.⁹⁵ Similarly, an unregistered Portuguese ship arrived in Trinidad in roughly 1630, selling one hundred and fifty Indians (described as “*piezas de Indios*”) and five black slaves (“*piezas de esclavos negros*”), also brought from the Maranhão.⁹⁶

The Indian Ocean and Pacific Worlds

The Spanish Caribbean’s various connections to Iberia, Western Africa, and Brazil prior to the mid-seventeenth century evoke a complex system of ocean traffic and human migration, spanning the early modern Atlantic world both north and south of the equator. While broadly-construed “Atlantic” frameworks have much to offer historians of the early modern circum-Caribbean, it is helpful to remain conscious of the limits of

⁹⁴ AGI-SF 228, n.87, Obispo Diego Ramírez de Cepeda al Consejo Real de Yndias, Cartagena, 4 agosto 1627.

⁹⁵ Konetzke, *Colección*, vol. II, tomo 1: 325-26, “R.C. al gobernador de La Margarita que ponga en libertad los indios que se trujeron de la conquista del Marañón,” Madrid, 18 mayo 1629.

⁹⁶ AGI-SD 74, r.4, n.175, Información del capitán Ambrosio Gonzalez Espeso, thesorero de la Real hacienda de la provincia de la Guayana e Isla de la Trinidad, visto en Madrid, 1630-1631.

such perspectives, as well. The Caribbean is too often portrayed as the third corner of a triangle, or crammed into the westernmost edge of a two-dimensional map. From the point of view of either Iberian empire, the Caribbean was a crossroads of truly global nature, linked to maritime networks stretching from Spain and Portugal to the Pacific world and to the Indian Ocean. During the “joint crown” period, Portuguese mariners commonly traveled the sea routes of the Spanish empire, as well as those of the Portuguese maritime world. While the Caribbean’s connections to African ports predominated, some Portuguese mariners who passed through the Caribbean also had experience of worlds beyond the Atlantic basin. The presence of small numbers of captives from more distant Iberian colonial spheres further attests to the blurring of imperial boundaries, and to the Spanish Caribbean’s relationship with Portugal’s global maritime world.

Within the context of the Spanish empire, the Caribbean was a midway point between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Ports such as Panama and Acapulco bore all the characteristics of other circum-Caribbean seaports, with the exception of their location on the Pacific coast. Pacific silver fleets arrived in Panama, after sailing from Peru up South America’s western coast; likewise, a yearly Manila galleon sailed from the Philippines to Acapulco with trade goods from China. From both of these locations, merchandise was then shipped overland, and placed on transatlantic galleons in either Veracruz or Nombre de Dios / Portobelo to be funnelled back towards Seville in the *Carrera de Indias*. While these maritime routes fell within the sphere of Spain’s global empire, Portuguese frequently played significant roles as commercial intermediaries in connecting Spain’s Pacific and Caribbean colonies. As seen above, a number of

Portuguese merchants facilitated the slave trade between Lima and Cartagena.

Portuguese also participated to some extent in the lesser-known slave traffic between Manila and Acapulco. Gonzalo Aguirre-Beltran writes that Portuguese merchants in Macao acquired Chinese slaves, some of whom were subsequently sold in the Philippines, then transported to Acapulco.⁹⁷

The vast majority of Havana's enslaved population at the close of the sixteenth century was from Upper Guinea or West Central Africa, but diverse sources refer to several slaves and free minorities from the Indian Ocean and Pacific world in the port city during this period. An enslaved black man named "Domingo Malaber" served as godfather at the baptism of an Upper Guinean man in 1590.⁹⁸ A roster of Havana's galley crews drawn up three years later mentions an enslaved oarsman named Sebastian de Melo, described as "Indian, native of Goa."⁹⁹ Both Domingo Malabar and Sebastian de Melo were enslaved, and their freedom of movement may have been circumscribed (particularly in the case of de Melo, the galley slave). However, the presence of these two men in Havana from the same region of India—one from Goa, and the other associated with the Malabar Coast, southern India's western shoreline stretching south of Goa—raises interesting questions. Did they know each other, or of one another's

⁹⁷ Tatiana Seijas, "The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish Manila, 1580-1640," *Itinerario* 32:1 (2008): 19-38. See also Konetzke, *Colección*, vol. II, tomo 1: 291-92, "R.C. sobre el registro de los chinos esclavos que vienen de las islas Filipinas," Madrid, 16 oct 1626; Homer H. Dubs and Robert S. Smith, "Chinese in Mexico City in 1635," *Far Eastern Quarterly* 1:4 (August 1942): 387-89; Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810: estudio etno-histórico* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1946), 41-44, 146-48; and Tatiana Seijas, "Transpacific Servitude: The Asian Slaves of Mexico, 1580-1700," Ph.D. dissertation (Yale University, 2008).

⁹⁸ CH-LB/B, 8r (4). On "the blacks of Maluco" and "Filipino blacks," see Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 89-99.

⁹⁹ AGI-Patronato 270, n.3, r.10, "Relacion de la gente de mar y guerra forçados y esclavos que ay en la galera Capitana de la guardia de la yslla de cuba," 27 octubre 1593, folio 6v. See also Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 15-16.

existence?¹⁰⁰ A third example likewise provides evidence of Havana's indirect connections to maritime worlds beyond the Atlantic. When Lisbon native Antonio de Sosa died in Havana in 1592, his last will specified that his possessions were to be inherited by "a boy named Feliciano, the son of a *china* [Chinese or Asian woman] named María." Feliciano, presumably de Sosa and María's son, was to be placed in the care of another individual, perhaps a relative, who came from the same town in Portugal as de Sosa's own father.¹⁰¹ It is possible that de Sosa had been involved with the transportation of captives or other merchandise from the Philippines to Mexico, and happened to have passed through Havana on his way back to Iberia. However, Feliciano may have been born in Lisbon, Macao, or any number of places rather than in Havana, where his mother may have still lived. Either way, this case offers unusual evidence of a Luso-Asian presence in the Spanish Caribbean.

The story of eight enslaved musicians from Mozambique, in southeastern Africa, provides further evidence of the presence of African forced migrants to the Caribbean who brought their experience of the global Portuguese empire with them. At some point in the mid-1580s, a Portuguese military officer named Diogo d'Azambuja embarked on a long voyage from the the Moluccas (Spice Islands), in the Indonesian archipelago, towards Lisbon. He was returning home after having served the Portuguese Crown, and then the Spanish Crown, as Captain Major in the Moluccas and, in his own words, "throughout all of India."¹⁰² Among his retinue were eight black musicians from

¹⁰⁰ Sandoval offers a description of the "Kingdom of Malavar" in *Un tratado*, 197-202.

¹⁰¹ AGI-Contratación 487, n.1, r.8, "Autos sobre los bienes de Antonio de Sosa," Havana, 1592. In the late colonial Spanish Americas, the term "*chino*," when used, often designated skin color rather than any ethnic or geographical origin. We have no evidence for this usage in the Caribbean during the period under study.

¹⁰² AGI-Esc 1011B, "Diego de Azambuja, vecino de Lisboa, con Juan de Tejada, gobernador de La Habana, sobre el valor de unos negros músicos," Lisbon and Havana, 1598-1603. See also Hair, *To Defend Your Empire*, 136-37.

Mozambique, skilled *chirimía* minstrels.¹⁰³ We do not know whether d’Azambuja stopped in Mozambique en route to Lisbon to purchase these men, or whether they had previously lived in the Moluccas or India as well.¹⁰⁴ However, the eight musicians were seen with d’Azambuja in Angola, the Cape Verde Islands, Cartagena, and Havana before several finally arrived with him in Lisbon. So artful were these musicians that they were known and recognized in ports around the Atlantic, and a string of powerful men coveted them. In Cartagena, a number of local elites attempted to purchase the eight men, including Peru’s newly-appointed viceroy, who tarried for some time in Cartagena on his way to Lima. D’Azambuja always refused, noting that he kept the eight enslaved musicians for his own pleasure; they were not for sale. In Havana, however, the four most skillful musicians were deceptively kidnapped by Cuba’s governor in 1589. Forced to sail onwards with only four *chirimía* players, d’Azambuja initiated legal proceedings after his arrival in Lisbon, gathering testimony from a number of witnesses in 1594.

Deponent Luis de Santa María was “about 45 years old” in 1594. His home was in Lisbon on the *Rua de Bonete*, but he had previously resided in Cartagena de Indias, and made several voyages to the city as a slave ship captain. Cartagena’s port entry records show that Luis de Santa María brought captives from the Cape Verde Islands to Cartagena in 1577. He also owned at least two slave ships arriving in the city in 1587, at

¹⁰³ The *chirimía* was a shawm, an instrument resembling an oboe, used in religious or ceremonial music and often accompanied by horns or percussion. See *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, eds. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrel (New York: Grove; London: MacMillan, 2001), vol. 4: 285, 575-76; vol. 7: 780; vol. 12: 238-39; 17: 237-43, 795. The author is grateful to Paula Covington for help with this reference. See also A. C. de C. M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), between pages 126-27.

¹⁰⁴ On “slave artisans and craftsman recruited in Mozambique” for service in Goa during the early seventeenth century, see David Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 45. See also Ann M. Pescatello, “The African Presence in Portuguese India,” *Journal of Asian History* 11:1 (1977): 26-48; Jeanette Pinto, *Slavery in Portuguese India, 1510-1842* (Bombay: Himalaya Publishing House, 1992), 16-18, 24-33, 37, 41-42, 49-52, 135-36.

least one from “Guinea,” and purchased a shipload of slaves arriving from the Cape Verde Islands in 1589.¹⁰⁵ According to his own testimony in Lisbon, in 1591 Santa María sailed from Cartagena to Havana, where he stayed for five and a half months. In Havana, he recognized the four musicians who had been forced to remain with Governor Tejada; Santa María had previously attempted to purchase all eight musicians in Cartagena himself, without success. Another witness, a Portuguese man in his mid-thirties named Gonzalo de Ribera, claimed to have seen all eight of Azambuja’s musicians “in Angola and in the city of Cartagena de Indias.” In 1590, Ribera traveled to Havana on one of the *Carrera de Indias* galleons, and saw four of d’Azambuja’s Mozambique musicians there. Ribera recognized them easily, because he had previously “seen them play many times, and knew them very well.” A third Portuguese deponent named Jorge Vaez (Vaz), also in his mid-thirties, actually saw all eight musicians “in Mozambique, and in Angola, and Cabo Verde, and in Havana.” Vaez states that he arrived in Havana in 1590 on a fleet commanded by Juan de Uribe Apalua. Thus Vaez and Ribera evidently traveled on the same galleons which departed Cartagena in July 1590, bound for Havana.¹⁰⁶ Also, like Ribera, Vaez immediately recognized d’Azambuja’s four minstrels when he saw them in Havana.¹⁰⁷

Given the relative novelty of highly skilled Mozambican musicians in the late sixteenth-century Spanish Caribbean, the ease with which these Portuguese travelers claimed to have identified the *chirimía* players is quite plausible. First, unlike the vast

¹⁰⁵ AGI-SF 72, n.33, folios 12r-12v, 19r, 21v; AGI-SF 72, n.74, Oficiales reales don Luis de Guzman y Alonso de Tapia a S. M., Cartagena, 9 octubre 1587. In 1591, Luis de Santa María was also encharged with leading an expeditionary force of forty soldiers and sixteen sailors to recover the galley “Santa Ana” after its crew revolted; see AGI-SF 37, r.6, n.104, Carta de D. Pedro de Lodeña, Cartagena, 1 noviembre 1591.

¹⁰⁶ On the Tierra Firme fleet in 1590-1591, see Chaunus, *Séville et l’Atlantique*, III: 450-51, 476-77.

¹⁰⁷ AGI-Esc 1011B, folios 74r-76v, 83r-86v.

majority of enslaved Africans in the Americas during this period, these African men were “of the Mozambique caste.”¹⁰⁸ Second, they were distinguishable by their musical training and talent, in addition to their possession of elaborate instruments and probably, distinctive clothing. It is more difficult to explain how Portuguese men such as Gonzalo de Ribera and Jorge Vaez were able to credibly claim that they had seen the same individuals in multiple seaports all around the Iberian Atlantic world, and even, in Vaez’s case, in Mozambique. Perhaps these two deponents, like Luis de Santa María, had been involved with the transatlantic slave trade in some capacity. Or perhaps they were simple passengers returning, like d’Azambuja himself, from the exercise of some other profession beyond the Cape of Good Hope. The latter possibility would better explain Vaez’s presence in Mozambique. Regardless of why they were crossing the Atlantic, their testimonies suggest *how* they crossed the Atlantic, even if these were only the middle and final legs of a longer voyage. The Portuguese *Carreira da Índia*, the transatlantic slave trade, and Spain’s *Carrera de Indias* have each largely been studied in isolation, yet these testimonies indicate that the three systems overlapped. Individual passengers’ trajectories might involve the use of each in the same multi-stage voyage. If so, there may have been a significant number of Portuguese travelers journeying from the Pacific or Indian Ocean back to Lisbon, passing through the Caribbean along the way.

Diogo d’Azambuja eventually won his law suit, and Havana’s governor Juan de Tejada was forced to reimburse him for the four Mozambican *chirimía* players. There is some evidence that, since d’Azambuja was compensated with money, the enslaved musicians themselves remained in Havana. The ethnonym “Mozambique” is very rare in

¹⁰⁸ Africans described as “Mozambiques” are relatively scarce in samples of Peruvian notarial records analyzed by Bowser as well; see *African Slave*, 40-43. For Sandoval’s description of Mozambique and neighboring islands, see *Un tratado*, 170-74.

Havana's records for the late sixteenth century, thus there is only a small chance that these men could be mistaken for other "Mozambiques" in Havana during the same period.¹⁰⁹ The four musicians in question are surely the same men who appear in notarial records in 1595. As noted by historian Alejandro de la Fuente, "Manuel, Francisco, Gaspar, and Sebastian, all described as Mozambique, were musicians who played the *chirimía*." All four were owned by local elites, including governor Juan de Tejeda.¹¹⁰ Four enslaved "Mozambique" men also appear as godfathers in Havana's baptisms in 1596 and 1597, but only two, Manuel and Gaspar, bear names and owners which match the 1595 notarial records. "Martin Mosambique," "Manuel Maçambique," and "Gaspar Maçambique" served as *padrinos* for newly-baptized Upper Guineans; "Anton Moçambique" was godfather for two newly-baptized people described as "Angolas."¹¹¹ A list of slaves owned by Havana's sergeant major, composed in 1614, also mentioned "four *negros de cheremía*, all of whom know how to make buttons." Though unnamed here, some or all of them may have been among the eight minstrels who arrived in Havana with Diogo d'Azambuja in 1589. If so, then the four musicians' dexterity was apparently put to use making buttons for soldiers' uniforms, or other purposes.¹¹²

In the dispute regarding ownership of the four enslaved *chirimía* musicians, neither d'Azambuja nor Tejeda mentions the musicians' African provenance right away. They are initially referred to by both sides as "black slave musicians," and "minstrels." Suddenly, sewed in with the Spanish-language documents, one finds a page written on d'Azambuja's behalf in Portuguese, and it is here for the first time we read of "four black

¹⁰⁹ See Rojas, *Índice*, I: 180 (doc. 311), 234 (doc. 422).

¹¹⁰ de la Fuente, *Havana & the Atlantic*, 156, 253n30.

¹¹¹ CH-LB/B, 77r(4), 82v(3), 97r(1), 105v(1), 105v(2).

¹¹² AGI-Esc 38B, folios 337r-338v, "Memoria y Claridad de los esclavos que el capitan y sargento mayor tiene en cassa," Havana, 14 noviembre 1613.

men [...] of the Mozambique caste.”¹¹³ Is it simple coincidence that Portuguese-language documents, penned in Lisbon during late sixteenth century, specifically make reference to four enslaved Africans’ perceived “caste,” while corresponding documents generated in Havana initially do not?

Portuguese Knowledge of Africa and Africans

Of the thousands of Portuguese mariners and merchants who visited and resided in the Spanish Caribbean during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, many had undertaken multiple voyages to seaports in Western Africa beforehand. Others had previously lived in Upper Guinea, Lower Guinea, or West Central Africa for years, or even decades. For a variety of reasons not necessarily limited to participation in the transatlantic slave trade, numerous Portuguese individuals who arrived in the Caribbean brought with them considerable experience of living and working in Africa, often in close contact with African communities and locally-born Luso-Africans. Ironically, perhaps, those who were most familiar with African languages and social practices were, indeed, heavily involved in slave trafficking. In 1612, several Africans and Afrocreoles were allegedly on the verge of fomenting a massive rebellion among Mexico City’s black and *mulato* population, but their plot was defused after two Portuguese slave merchants who “knew the language of Angola” overheard them discussing plans.¹¹⁴ When one of Cartagena’s most prominent Portuguese residents, Luis Gómez Barreto, was tried by the Inquisition in 1636, his wife sent one of their African slaves to deliver “a pot of stewed

¹¹³ AGI-Esc 1011B, folio 10r.

¹¹⁴ Luis Querol y Roso, “Negros y mulatos de Nueva España, historia de su alzamiento en Méjico en 1612,” in *Separata de los Anales de la Universidad de Valencia, Año XII, cuad. 90* (Valencia: Vives Mora, 1935), 15.

chicken and a dozen kola nuts” to make Barreto’s incarceration less unpleasant.¹¹⁵ Not all Portuguese in the Caribbean were slave merchants, and not all Portuguese were intimately familiar with African customs. Yet those Portuguese individuals in the Spanish Caribbean who did possess first-hand knowledge of Africa and Africans present a notable contrast with most Castilian immigrants’s experiences of Africans during the same era.

During the 1630 investigation of the slave ship San Pedro’s unauthorized landing in Havana and the subsequent sale of two hundred and thirty African forced migrants, dozens of women and men testified to having purchased one or more captives when the “San Pedro” arrived in 1628. Nearly everyone who admitted to having bought captives described them by gender, skin color, approximate age, and by their Spanish names (i.e. “a black woman named Catalina”; “a little black boy named Pedro”). Only a handful of slaveowners used the term “Angola” to describe the West Central Africans they had purchased (i.e. “a black woman named Lucia Angola”). The only major exception was long-time Portuguese resident Simon Fernandez Leyton. Leyton noted that in addition to two “*negritas*” named Ana and Esperanza, he had purchased six men, whom he identified as “Juan Angola, Bartolomé Congo, Manuel Malenba, another Juan Angola, Sebastian Congo, and Gaspar Malenba.”¹¹⁶ Like Leyton, several other Havana residents had obtained relatively large groups of slaves. Yet among nearly one hundred and fifty people who appeared before Spanish authorities to testify, a mere five or six individuals described the captives they had acquired as “Angolas,” and only Leyton mentioned any other ethnonym.

¹¹⁵ María Cristina Navarrete, *Historia social del negro en la colonia: Cartagena, siglo XVII* (Santiago de Cali: Universidad del Valle, 1995), 65; Soulodre-La France and Lovejoy, “Intercambios,” 195-201, 208-10.

¹¹⁶ AGI-SD 119, s/n, “Arribada del navío San Pedro,” pieza 2, folio 37v.

Legal proceedings contesting the ownership of another enslaved African in Cartagena de Indias offer an even clearer example of the extent to which Spanish Caribbean residents, including Portuguese slave merchants, possessed different levels of knowledge of Africa and of Africans. In 1607, standing before Spanish authorities in Cartagena, a scribe (*escribano*) named Juan de Meneses claimed that five or six years earlier, he had purchased a black “*bozal*” slave named Luis, “of the Congo land.” Luis was immediately put to work on Meneses’ farm, but he soon ran away and disappeared completely. By chance, in 1607 Meneses sent a frigate to Mompox, a town in the interior of Cartagena’s province up the Magdalena river. On this trip, a sailor named Juan Angola (also owned by Meneses) encountered his old acquaintance Luis, and spoke with him. By this time, Luis was owned by Francisco Camargo, the most powerful man in Mompox. Rather than performing agricultural labor, Luis mainly served alongside other Africans who paddled Camargo’s canoes, transporting merchandise and perhaps passengers up and down the river.¹¹⁷ When Meneses learned of Luis Congo’s whereabouts, he immediately initiated legal proceedings, demanding that Camargo return his long-absent slave. In response, Camargo sent notice from Mompox that this was a case of mistaken identity; the individual African in question was not Luis Congo, but rather a man named “Francisco Anzico” whom Camargo had legally purchased several

¹¹⁷ On the *boga* system in the New Kingdom of Granada’s interior, and on the increasing use of African rather than Indian laborers to paddle canoes during the last decades of the sixteenth century, see Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 42-43, 63, 117, 225-27, 234-39, 246-47, 378; Antonio Ybot León, *La arteria histórica del Nuevo Reino de Granada, Cartagena-Santa Fe, 1538-1798: Los trabajadores del Río Magdalena y el Canal del Dique, según documentos del Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla* (Bogotá: ABC, 1952).

years earlier. Moreover, Camargo provided a bill of sale as proof that he had purchased Francisco Anzico.¹¹⁸

Such litigation over the ownership of enslaved women and men was quite common in the early seventeenth-century Spanish Americas, yet this case is remarkable for its attention to the “true” ethnic background of a West Central African man identified alternately by a variety of witnesses as *Luis negro*, *Luis Congo*, *Francisco Anchico*, *Luis Angola*, and *Francisco Angola*. Instead of focusing on whether his proper Spanish name was Luis or Francisco, the outcome of this case hinged on determining whether he was “Anchico,” “Congo,” or “Angola.” If judged to be “Congo” or “Angola,” Luis would be returned to Meneses in Cartagena; if he should prove to be “Anchico,” he would remain in Mompox, employed by Camargo. In order to prove his ownership of the man he referred to as Luis Congo, Meneses argued that the individual in question was clearly not the Anxico slave described in Camargo’s bill of sale. “The black man Francisco Enxico listed in the bill of sale was a tall black with a poor body, and in conformity with his Anxico nation he had his entire forehead painted and scarred above the eyebrows.” Furthermore, Meneses noted, “my Francisco, who previously was called Luis, is a black man who I bought here in this city, recently arrived from Angola” [...] “He is of medium stature with no markings whatsoever on his forehead, and is not Anxico, but rather Congo.” Meneses reiterated that Luis was not “painted above his eyebrows in the

¹¹⁸ AGN-FNE, Bolívar, SC43, legajo 6, Pleito entre Juan de Meneses y Francisco Camargo sobre un negro esclavo y sus jornales, Cartagena y Mompóx, 1608. On the Anchico (Ansiku, Anxico, Anzico, Enchico, Tyo, Teke), see Vansina, *Kingdoms of the Savanna*, 28, 37-43, 52-54, 59, 64, 98-109, 123, 131; and Jan Vansina, *The Tio Kingdom of the Middle Congo, 1880-1892* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

manner of the Anchico blacks, who are known by these signs, as all the knowledgeable people in this region are aware.”¹¹⁹

Subsequently, Meneses produced several witnesses who offered the same criteria for distinguishing “Anchicos” from “Congos.” These men may have been Portuguese, but since their birthplaces and nationalities are unspecified, they may be assumed to be Spanish. Claiming to have conducted numerous slave sales in Cartagena, Panama, and Nombre de Dios, one local official stated that he knew

“for certain and without doubt that Luis negro [...] is of the Congo nation, and not the Anxico nation [...] because all the Anxico *negros* brought to this city, and everywhere else, arrive with markings on their forehead [...] and the *negras* arrive with the same *señales*. The other nations have their own markings; only Congos arrive with none whatsoever, and in this manner they are known and sold and bought, and this fact is well known among those who deal with the merchants who bring the blacks.”¹²⁰

Like Meneses, he argued that Luis Congo could not possibly be Anxico, since he did not bear the scarifications characteristic of the Anxico “nation.” A second man who gave testimony on behalf of Meneses likewise testified that Luis was “not Anxico because all the Anxico blacks that this witness has seen up until now have their faces marked, and they are known by this sign; and Angolas and Congos have no markings whatsoever.” Furthermore, he noted that “Luis declares that he is of the Congo nation, and so he appears to be.”¹²¹

The most significant aspect of Meneses’s argument, supported by several witnesses, was his claim that “all the knowledgeable people in this region” could distinguish Anchicos from other West Central Africans using the criteria of scarification

¹¹⁹ AGN-FNE, Bolívar, SC43, legajo 6, hojas 45v-47r, 67r.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, hojas 144r-145r. The official was Melchior de Marin, *vecino* of Cartagena and *corredor de lonja*.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, hojas 146v-147r. The witness in question was Benito Nuñez, resident of Cartagena. See also similar testimony provided by Luis de Santiago, hojas 147r-148v.

patterns. The testimony of an enslaved Upper Guinean woman—who may have seen few, if any, West Central Africans prior to her arrival in the Spanish Caribbean—further indicates that such knowledge may indeed have been widespread in Cartagena. Antonia Balanta personally knew the Francisco Anchico mentioned in Camargo’s bill of sale; for a while they had shared the same owner. Having seen Luis, the enslaved man at the heart of this litigation, she commented that the two men were obviously not the same people. According to Antonia Balanta, Francisco Anchico was “a black man of good stature with markings on his forehead and eyebrows, which are the signs of the blacks of that nation.” The black man “Luis Congo,” she stated, “is very different in person and body and markings and age from Francisco Anchico, being shorter in stature and of the Congo land.” Instead of bearing scarifications, his face was “clean.”¹²²

Presented as “evidence” before more than thirty witnesses, Luis was also asked to provide his own testimony. Interestingly, when asked to state his name, Luis replied that “in the city of Cartagena he was called Luis Angola”—rather than Congo or Anchico—and that “since coming to the Magdalena river, he is called Francisco Angola.” He testified that previously he had in fact been owned by Meneses, and ran away from Meneses’ farm because the overseer—an Upper Guinean man named Luis Bran—whipped him too much. After some time hiding in a swamp, he was picked up in a boat by men he did not know; they took him upriver to Mompox, where he was imprisoned until claimed by Camargo. Since that time, he had paddled Camargo’s canoes alongside other Africans, making trips to the mining settlement of Zaragoza, and the small river

¹²² *Ibid.*, hojas 82r-83r.

port of Honda. In Honda, he was baptized by a priest, who gave him his new name, Francisco.¹²³

An African man and woman who had arrived in Cartagena with Luis, on the same slave ship, were likewise interviewed. Despite their own provenance from West Central Africa, and despite their common experience crossing the Atlantic in the hold of the same vessel, they could confirm only that Luis was not “Anxico”; each had differing opinions as to whether he was “Congo” or “Angola.” In addition to his other witnesses, Meneses presented María Antona “of the Angola land” and Francisco Congo. Like Luis, both were brought to Cartagena by a Portuguese captain named Pasqual Carvalho, on a ship sailing from “the Kingdoms of Angola.” According to other sources which corroborate their testimony, they were among the two hundred and twenty-six captives who arrived on the ship “San Francisco” which sailed from Angola and docked in Cartagena on February 15, 1601.¹²⁴ Like the sailor Juan Angola mentioned earlier, witness María Antona “*de tierra Angola*” identified Luis as “Luis *negro* of the Congo land.” Though she was now owned by Meneses’ mother-in-law, she had initially been purchased by Meneses along with another woman and three men, including Luis. One of the men in this group, Francisco Congo, was more specific when interviewed, stating that “about six years ago, this witness arrived in Cartagena from the kingdom of Angola, in the company of four others: two men and two women, brought by a Portuguese man.” Like María Antona, he recognized Luis, but identified him as “Luis Angola.”¹²⁵

¹²³ *Ibid.*, hojas 9r-12v.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, hojas 35r-38r, 50r-51r. See also AGI-SF 72, n.105, folio 24v; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 250-51; TSTD 29115.

¹²⁵ AGN-FNE, Bolívar, legajo 6, hojas 34r-36r, 37-38r. See also the testimony of a sixty-year-old free black man named Francisco de Puesta (Puerto?), *mayordomo* of Meneses’s farm, on hojas 36r-37v. He notes that “Francisco *negro* of the Angola land” was previously known as “Luis Congo.”

Thus, while both María Antona Angola and the sailor Juan Angola identified Luis as “Congo,” both Luis himself and Francisco “Congo” identified him as “Angola.” On one hand, these testimonies raise questions regarding the roles Africans played in defining their own “ethnicities” or “nations”; on the other hand, it seems probable that a multitude of African identities were compressed into broader, homogenous categories such as “Congo” and “Angola,” categories which could be more easily incorporated into Iberian systems of meanings. If this was the case, then were enslaved Africans subject to the same limitations as Iberians in Cartagena regarding their abilities to “identify” other enslaved Africans – even those from ostensibly the same region? Or were they simply constrained by an inability to translate familiar concepts of West Central African identity into Spanish terms, for a Spanish audience?

The latter possibility was not necessarily the case for several Portuguese witnesses who testified on behalf of Meneses. According to Andres Lopez Morato, the slave in question was “of the Congo nation, and not Anxico, because if he were Anxico his forehead would be worked (*labrada*) like all the others of that nation that this witness has seen.” This was the same argument offered by several witnesses including Meneses himself, but Morato added further weight to this assertion. He knew about African scarifications “because he has been in Guinea and Cabo Verde and many other parts of that land, and has dealt in blacks and has knowledge of those nations.” Furthermore, Morato made it clear that he was not the only person to understand the differences between Anchicos and Congos. In his words, “any witness who might have claimed that Luis *negro* was of the Anxico nation,” has either “committed perjury, or does not have

any knowledge of those nations, being creoles of the land.”¹²⁶ With the latter phrase, Morato actually appears to dismiss local Spanish American residents as ignorant landlubbers, in contrast to well-traveled Portuguese individuals such as himself.

Another Portuguese deponent, identified as Captain Pedro Gonçales de Caceres, goes into greater detail. Though we do not know whether he traveled to Africa, his title of “captain” suggests authority in a maritime context, perhaps as ship captain or owner. Caceres claimed to have been active in Cartagena “for more than fifty years [...] buying, viewing, and dealing with blacks of all nations of the Rivers, Banus, Biafaras, Sapes, Escolies, Falupos, Branes or Cacangas; Angolas, Congos, Anxicos; and [blacks] of other castes.” He knew “the nations of these blacks,” he explained, “by the markings (*señales*) among them,” i.e. their scarifications. As examples, he noted that “those of the Rivers or Nalus have lines on their foreheads; the Capes have their teeth filed.” Among “the Banus”—the Bañones or Banyun—“the women’s faces are marked, and they are known by their language.” In addition to these Upper Guinean groups, Caceres remarked that “the Congos bear no markings whatsoever on their face. The Anchicos, who “have some marks (*berrugas*) between their eyebrows on their forehead,” could be identified by these markings as well as “by their languages.” In summary, “the blacks are very different from one other.” As his closing observation, Caceres added that “Luis’s own language is Congo, and if he speaks or has spoken Anxico, it is because of the communication that the ones have with the others.”¹²⁷ While Caceres’s own African background remains unclear, his testimony demonstrates considerable understanding of social interactions

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, hojas 142v-144r.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, hojas 145r-146r.

between inhabitants of the neighboring West Central African polities of Kongo and Tyo (Ansiku).¹²⁸

By general consensus, Luis's lack of facial scarifications established that he was not Anchico; yet his actual West Central African background remained unclear until another Portuguese witness provided additional information. According to Paulo Correa de Silva,

Luis *negro*, who was presented to this witness, and to whom this witness spoke in his own language, is neither of the Anchico nation, nor does he have anything to do with it. Rather, this witness knows that he belongs to a nation called Mosi Obandos, which lies between the provinces of Angola and Congo, and Luis *negro*'s ruler is subject to the King of Congo. The witness knows this because he knows the language of these nations, having lived among them for more than twenty years.

Silva was one of a number of Portuguese, Spanish, and African individuals residing in Cartagena in 1607 who could distinguish Anchicos from other West Central Africans. Like other deponents, he could easily assert that Luis was not Anchico, because he bore no corresponding scarifications. Unlike the other individuals who gave testimony on behalf of Meneses, however, Silva had previously lived in West Central Africa for more than two decades. Furthermore, he was able to communicate with Luis in Luis's own native language, which may have been either Kikongo or an early modern form of Kimbundu. Not even the enslaved West Central African witnesses who crossed the Atlantic with Luis on the same slave ship could declare, as Silva did, that "Luis is not Anchico, but rather of the Vando nation, between Angola and Congo."¹²⁹

The European term "Vando nation" and the West Central African term "Mosi Ovando"—the people of Ovando—were two different ways of identifying the residents

¹²⁸ For examples of both trade and warfare, see Vansina, *Kingdoms of the Savanna*, 54, 59, 64, 98-109, 131.

¹²⁹ AGN-FNE, Bolívar, legajo 6, hojas 146r-146v.

of Wandu, a southeastern province of the Kongo kingdom. A mountainous region with a series of fortified villages and a capital of the same name, Wandu was one of several relatively independent provinces which typically elected its own rulers, rather than having them imposed by elites in Kongo's capital, São Salvador. Despite its tributary status as a province of Kongo, the town of Wandu (Mbanza Wandu) began to trade directly with Luanda during the early seventeenth century, providing Angolan markets access to slave-producing areas northeast of Kongo.¹³⁰ Prior to the mid-seventeenth century, when the province was visited by Capuchins and repeatedly invaded by Queen Njinga, Wandu's main importance was its location as a border town along the only land route between the kingdom of Kongo and the Portuguese colony of Angola. This route lead northwards from Angola in loosely semi-circular fashion, through Mbvila, and then through Wandu, before finally entering Kongo's central provinces; the only other options were to travel along the Atlantic coast, or to attempt to pass over the mountains. Paulo Correa de Silva's ability to identify a man from Wandu in distant Cartagena during the first decade of the seventeenth century may be best explained by Wandu's position along this route. Most probably, having lived in West Central Africa for more than twenty years, Silva himself had passed through Wandu while traveling overland from Angola to Kongo, or vice-versa.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Thornton, *Kingdom of Kongo*, 5-7, 40, 43-44, 54, 70, 100, 105, 114; Hilton, *Kingdom of Kongo*, 2, 4, 29, 33, 40, 49, 61, 77, 94, 110, 130, 140, 177-79, 193-96; Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, 50, 133, 150-52, 171, 202-03.

¹³¹ John Thornton, personal communication, 12 June 2008. Useful maps indicating terrain and changes in elevation may be found in Thornton, *Kingdom of Kongo*, 5, 40. The author is particularly grateful to John Thornton for identifying Ovando as Wandu, and "Mosi Ovando" as "the people of Wandu."

Luso-Africans and Afro-Iberians

As indicated by the substantial African experience of certain Portuguese men who resided in the Spanish Caribbean, historical models which dogmatically portray “black Africans” in opposition to “white Europeans” are at times hard pressed to accurately describe the complex nature of global interaction during the early modern era. While the activities of slave merchants and slave ship captains may be readily viewed in such terms, what do we make of their knowledge of African languages, their familiarity with African communities, their comfort with African foods? Portuguese merchants, administrators, soldiers, sailors, *degredados*, and even clergymen married or maintained long-term sexual unions with African women. Slave traders often had African wives (who at times became involved in slave trafficking themselves).¹³² Russell-Wood cautions that “cohabitation or sexual intercourse does not translate into cultural penetration,” suggesting that the children of sexual unions between Portuguese men and non-European women “were likely to be brought up as Portuguese and as Catholics.”¹³³ This stance contrasts with historians’ portrayals of Portuguese *lançados* and *tangomãos*, men who “threw themselves among the blacks,” or as Boxer has it, “went completely native, stripping off their clothes, tattooing their bodies, speaking the local languages, and even joining in fetishistic rites and celebrations.”¹³⁴ A survey of African history indicates that

¹³² George Brooks, “The Signares of Saint-Louis and Gorée: Women Entrepreneurs in Eighteenth-Century Senegal,” in *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change*, eds. Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna G. Bay (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 19-44; Bruce L. Mouser, “Women Slavers of Guinea-Conakry,” in *Women and Slavery in Africa*, eds. Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 321-33; Daniel L. Schafer, *Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley: African Princess, Florida Slave, Plantation Slaveowner* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

¹³³ Russell-Wood, *Portuguese Empire*, 63, 188.

¹³⁴ Boxer, *Portuguese Seaborne Empire*, 31. See also J. D. Fage, “Upper and Lower Guinea,” in *The Cambridge History of Africa*, vol. III, ed. Roland Oliver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 507; António Carreira, *Os Portugêses nos Rios de Guinéa, 1500-1900* (Lisbon: Litografia Tejo, 1984), 18-23; Boulègue, *Luso-Africans*, 11-14; Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*, 135-37; Mauro, *Le Portugal et*

to some extent, both interpretations are accurate. Sexual unions between Portuguese men and African women in widely different contexts gave rise to multiple generations of racially and culturally mixed children, resulting in the formation of hybrid, Luso-African societies in locations such as the Cape Verde Islands and São Tomé. Indeed, these Luso-Africans and their own offspring frequently identified themselves as both Catholics and “Portuguese.”¹³⁵ Yet at the same time, their relationships with local African communities, and their knowledge of African languages, beliefs, and social practices enabled them to play pivotal roles as commercial and cultural intermediaries between European and African groups.¹³⁶

Following the pioneering work of Ira Berlin, historians of the North Atlantic World have begun to pay close attention to specific individuals appearing in early North American colonies whose origins were presumably found in Western Africa’s coastal, Luso-African communities (for discussion of “Atlantic creoles,” see Chapter Four).¹³⁷ By the mid-seventeenth century, individuals born of this African-Portuguese milieu had long been present in the Spanish Caribbean as well. The Luso-Africans who appear most

l’Atlantique, 164-65. For an unusual reference to “tangomangos” in the Caribbean, see Carlos Esteban Deive, *Tangomangos: contrabando y piratería en Santo Domingo, 1522-1606* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1996), 82, 234.

¹³⁵ Peter Mark, “The Evolution of ‘Portuguese’ Identity: Luso-Africans on the Upper Guinea Coast from the Sixteenth to the Early Nineteenth Century,” *JAH* 40:2 (1999): 173-91; José da Silva Horta, “Evidence for a Luso-African Identity in ‘Portuguese’ Accounts on ‘Guinea of Cape Verde’ (Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries),” *HA* 27 (2000): 99-130.

¹³⁶ See, for example, Boulègue, *Luso-Africans*, 14-20, 27-69; Miller, *Way of Death*, 246-83; Maria Manuel Ferraz Torrão, “Actividade comercial externa de Cabo Verde: Organização, Funcionamento, Evolução,” in *HGCV*, I: 237-345; Garfield, *São Tomé Island*, 16-17, 25-26; Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*, 143-44, 152-61, 167-69, 188-96; Arlindo Manuel Caldeira, *Mulheres, Sexualidade e Casamento em São Tomé e Príncipe, séculos XV-XVIII* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1999), 97-157; George E. Brooks, *Euroafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 68-101.

¹³⁷ Ira Berlin, “From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America,” *WMQ* 53:2 (Apr 1996): 251-88. See also Randy L. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2004); Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, 169-293.

commonly in Spanish Caribbean sources are people of African descent described as “creoles” from Portuguese settlements in Africa, mostly notably from the islands of Cape Verde and São Tomé. As early as 1579, Havana’s notarial records mention the sale of a twenty-four-year old enslaved woman identified as “Francisca, a creole from Cabo Verde.”¹³⁸ A black woman named “Juliana, creole from San Tomé” testified in an investigation in Cartagena in 1609. At approximately twenty-eight years old, she was a slave owned by the city’s Discalced Carmelite convent, and married to an enslaved man named Geronimo Angola.¹³⁹ Other examples of Luso-Africans include “Portuguese” individuals born in Africa. For example, Cartagena’s 1630 census of “foreigners” lists a man named Lorenzo Correa de León, originally from São Paulo de Luanda. Arriving in Cartagena as a passenger on a slave ship from Angola, he claimed to be traveling to Spain “to study at the University of Salamanca.” An individual named Domingo Montero had been in Cartagena since 1627; though born in Lamego, Portugal, he was married to a woman from the island of São Tomé (where she continued to reside). While historians use diverse and sometimes contradictory criteria to categorize individuals as “Luso-Africans,” Manuel Lopez—a “Portuguese” man of mixed African and European heritage, born in coastal Upper Guinea—is an exemplary case. A *mulato* born in Cacheo, Lopez had traveled to Cartagena in 1629 as a slave ship owner’s servant.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Rojas, *Índice*, I: 202 (doc. 349). See also CH-LB/B, 36v (4). An infant or child named Domingo, born to an enslaved woman named “Francisca de Cabo Verde” and an unknown father, was baptized in Havana in 1593. These two women may have been the same person, though the slaveowners mentioned in 1579 and 1593 were different men. If they were the same person, Francisca would have been approximately thirty-eight years old when her son Domingo was baptized.

¹³⁹ AGI-Contratación 772, n.13, “Autos del capitán Pedro de Murguia,” Cartagena, 1609, folios 25r-26r.

¹⁴⁰ AGI-SF 56B, n.73a, folios 6r-6v, 18r, 22r; Vila Vilar, “Extranjeros en Cartagena,” 178, 181-82; Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, II: 41, 61, 68. On the various definitions of “Luso-African,” see da Silva Horta, “Evidence.”

On rare occasions, Spanish Caribbean sources also mention enslaved, mixed-race individuals who bore African ethnonyms. A royal slave named as “Manuel Angola *mulato*” died in the Havana’s hospital in July 1627. Two other African men identified as “Pedro *Loro* Arará” and “Anton Angola *loro*” also appear in Havana’s royal slave rosters during the 1630s.¹⁴¹ As a racial designation, the term “*loro*” does not commonly appear in Caribbean source materials. In early modern Spain, however, “*loro*” was a racial term used to designate skin color somewhat lighter than *mulato*. Despite their apparently mixed African and presumably European racial background, the African “castes” or “nations” ascribed to these men signified African birth. In addition to their presence as slaves in Havana, the unusual attribution of both African ethnonyms and descriptors signifying mixed race to these men suggests that they were raised in African-European social contexts which were not, at least initially, dominated by Europeans. These men may have been born of Portuguese or Luso-African fathers whom they rarely or never saw, raised instead by their mothers in African communities which had only limited contact—and minimal cultural exchange—with the Portuguese world.

Women and men of African descent born in Portugal and Spain—Afro-Iberians—were in some ways the mirror image of Luso-Africans. By the early modern era, the populations of Iberian cities and towns included not only numerous captives and forced migrants from Northern Africa and the eastern Mediterranean world, but also significant numbers of Sub-Saharan Africans and their descendants. Thus far, historians have found

¹⁴¹ AGI-Contaduría 1117, section 2, “Lista de esclavos y forzados de su magestad,” pliego 1, and section 3; AGI-Contaduría 1118, n.2A, “Lista por abecedario de los esclavos y forzados, 1636-1638,” pliegos 1, 4. For similar reference to an enslaved woman from Angola described as “extremely fair-skinned and red-headed” in Bahia in 1698, see James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 214.

that in Iberian metropolises such as Lisbon and Seville (unlike Spanish Caribbean ports cities and their hinterlands), sub-Saharan Africans and Afro-Iberians never comprised as much as fifteen percent of the population. Nevertheless, A. C. de C. M. Saunders has estimated that by the middle of the sixteenth century, “slaves”—including sub-Saharan Africans, North African Muslims, *mouriscos*, and others—constituted perhaps ten percent of the populations of Lisbon, Évora, and towns in southern Portugal.¹⁴² In ways that have only begun to be explored, Iberian policies and attitudes regarding Africans were transferred to the Americas, and Afro-Iberians participated in conquest and settlement from their very beginnings.¹⁴³

Though they constituted a small minority compared to Africans and American-born Afrocreoles, Afro-Iberians visited and resided in Spanish Caribbean seaports as both free people of color and as enslaved laborers throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. People described as “Spanish blacks” occasionally appear in Spanish Caribbean records, but it is more common to find reference to “Portuguese blacks.” For example, two “black slaves” described as “Portuguese” were sold in Havana

¹⁴² Saunders, *A Social History*, 47-61. See also Charles Verlinden, *L’esclavage dans l’Europe médiévale* (Brugge: De Tempel, 1955); Ruth Pike, “Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century: Slaves and Freedmen,” *HAHR* 47:3 (Aug 1967): 344-359; Vicenta Cortés Alonso, “Procedencia de los esclavos negros en Valencia (1482-1516),” *Revista española de antropología americana* 7:1 (1972): 123-51; Alfonso Franco Silva, *Registro documental sobre la esclavitud sevillana, 1453-1513* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1979); Ivana Elbl, “The Volume of the Early Atlantic Slave Trade, 1450-1521,” *JAH* 38:1 (1997): 31-75; Aurelia Martín Casares, *La esclavitud en la Granada del siglo XVI: género, raza, y religión* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, Diputación Provincial de Granada, 2000); Alessandro Stella, *Histoire d’esclaves dans la péninsule ibérique* (Paris: EHESS, 2000); *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, eds. T. F. Earle and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Debra Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars: Slavery and Mastery in Fifteenth-Century Valencia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

¹⁴³ Landers, *Black Society*, 7-23; Matthew Restall, “Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America,” *The Americas* 57:2 (Oct 2000): 171-205; Leo J. Garofalo, “The Shape of a Diaspora: The Movement of Afro-Iberians to and from Colonial Spanish America,” in *Africans in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Sherwin Bryant, Ben Vinson, Rachel O’Toole (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, forthcoming).

in 1578 and 1579.¹⁴⁴ A free black man named “Juan Portugues,” who appears in Havana’s census of 1582, also served as godfather at two consecutive baptisms in Havana during the 1590s.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, a list of more than twenty enslaved people owned by Cartagena’s treasurer in 1622 included mostly West Central Africans, Upper Guineans, Lower Guineans, and three individuals described as “creoles”; among this diverse group, one enslaved black man was identified as “Anton Portuguese.”¹⁴⁶ The term “Portuguese black slave”—“*esclavo negro Portugués*”—may have been used to refer to Luso-Africans, people of color born into one of several Afro-Portuguese societies in Western Africa. Yet in some cases, documents specify that the person in question was born in Portugal. Havana records for the late 1620s mention a free Lisbon native identified as Luis Lopez, a *mulato* in his early twenties. For an unspecified crime, in December 1627 Lopez was sentenced to 200 lashes and four years of forced labor. He served out all four years, completing his sentence in December 1631.¹⁴⁷ Similar examples of Afro-Iberians may be found in Cartagena records for the same period. In one series of legal proceedings conducted in Cartagena in 1583, one of the witnesses was “a latinized black who calls himself Anton de Contreras, and says he is free, a native of Toro in the kingdoms of Portugal [...] approximately forty years old.” After providing his testimony, Contreras signed his own name.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Rojas, *Índice*, tomo I: 9 (doc. 14), 241-42 (doc. 438).

¹⁴⁵ CH-LB/B, 39r (3), 39r (4).

¹⁴⁶ AGI-Esc 632B, Pedro Guiral con Joan de Arce y Juan de Acosta, Cartagena, 1622, pieza 2, folios 76v-77v, 196r, 590v-591v, 593v, 657r, 738r-738v.

¹⁴⁷ AGI-Contaduría 1117, section 2, pliego 12.

¹⁴⁸ AGI-SF 62, n.28, “Memorial y testimonio,” Cartagena, 11 mayo 1583, folios 30v-31v.

Conclusion

Portuguese merchants, mariners, and passengers linked the Spanish Caribbean to a broader maritime world, and to Atlantic Africa in particular, throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. While the transatlantic slave trade was the primary economic force behind the Caribbean's incorporation into the Portuguese maritime world, it was not the only factor, and captive laborers were not the only result of this historical process. The experiences of diverse Portuguese agents and actors, including Luso-Africans and "Portuguese blacks," are perhaps less central to the history of the formation of Spanish Caribbean society than the experiences and trajectories of African migrants themselves. However, attention to the presence of Portuguese and Luso-Africans helps provide a fuller context for understanding the fundamental social transformations that took place in the Caribbean shortly after its "conquest." The complex social and cultural dynamics of the early modern Portuguese maritime world, from Africa to Brazil to the Indian Ocean and beyond, tangibly affected Spanish Caribbean society. Portuguese / Luso-African knowledge of Africa and Africans may have helped mediate the social and cultural integration of tens of thousands of enslaved Africans into the region, in addition to facilitating the physical transportation of African captives to the Caribbean.

CHAPTER II

“THE FIRST GREAT WAVES”: CARTAGENA DE INDIAS AND THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE, 1570-1640

While our knowledge of the port cities which developed in conjunction with the transatlantic slave trade during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has grown considerably in recent decades,¹ we still know surprisingly little about the ports most heavily involved with the slave trade during the first two centuries of Europe's colonization of the Americas. Our best recent estimates indicate that the total number of enslaved Africans transported to the Americas prior to 1650 was relatively small in terms of the overall transatlantic slave trade, probably comprising less than ten percent of the approximately twelve and a half million captives embarked.² However, any direct comparison between the early and late transatlantic slave trades must take into consideration the relatively smaller populations of both Europe and the Americas during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Also, we should acknowledge that rather than merely revealing the trade's characteristics, our present understanding of the slave trade continues to reflect the geographical and chronological parameters of the past century's research. Simply put, a great deal of archival work remains to be done for the slave trade

¹ See, for example, Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angola Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Manolo García Florentino, *Em costas negras: Uma história do tráfico atlântico de escravos entre a África e o Rio de Janeiro, Séculos XVIII e XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1995); Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port,' 1727-1892* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004); Mariana Pinho Candido, "Enslaving Frontiers: Slavery, Trade, and Identity in Benguela, 1780-1850," Ph.D. dissertation (York University, 2006); Kristin Mann, *Slavery and the Birth of an African City: Lagos, 1760-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

² David Eltis and David Richardson, "A New Assessment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, eds. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1-60.

ports of the early modern period, beginning with major hubs such as Cartagena, Veracruz, Pernambuco, Bahia, and Buenos Aires; we do not yet have a detailed, book-length study of any single slave trade port as such for this period. This chapter, focusing on the forced migration of African men, women, and children to Cartagena de Indias from roughly 1570 to 1640, represents one effort to address this problem.

The first works to address the Iberian slave trade during this early period were based on analysis of single sources, and largely ignored port cities outside of Europe.³ A major breakthrough took place in the 1950s, with Huguette and Pierre Chaunu's multi-volume synthesis of Spanish port departure and arrival registers. Drawing primarily on a series of *legajos* housed in the section "Contratación" of the Archive of the Indies, their monumental study lists thousands of individual ships departing from (*Aller*) and entering (*Retour*) Seville and adjacent ports monitored by *Casa de la Contratación* officials.⁴ While the Chaunus were more broadly interested in the structures of maritime traffic between Seville and the Spanish Americas, their massive data set lists more than 1,300 vessels either designated as slave ships, or registered to visit an African destination en route to the Indies, between the years 1561 and 1640. Subsequent studies mined the Chaunus' data for information on slaving voyages to the Americas; or extended the model they provided, incorporating additional slave trade licenses allotted to individuals.⁵

³ For works addressing the early modern transatlantic slave trade's legal and political underpinnings, see Georges Scelle, *La traite négrière aux Indes de Castille, contrats et traités d'assiento: étude de droit public et d'histoire diplomatique puisée aux sources originales et accompagnée de plusieurs documents inédits* (Paris: Larose et Tenin, 1906), tome I; *ibid.*, "The Slave Trade in the Spanish Colonies of America: the Asiento," *American Journal of International Law* 4:3 (1910): 612-61; *Documents Illustrative of the Slave Trade to the Americas*, ed. Elizabeth Donnan (Washington, D.C., 1930-1933); and Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810: estudio etno-histórico* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1946), 3-92.

⁴ Huguette Chaunu and Pierre Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique, 1504-1650* (Paris: Colin, 1955-1959).

⁵ See Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard

As noted in the previous chapter, the main problem with these sources—departure registers, Iberian port entry records, and slave licenses—is that they often had little to do with the voyages which took place. Such sources are useful primarily for gauging metropolitan Spanish administrators’ awareness of the early slave trade and their local efforts to control it.

Building on George Scelle’s political history of the early transatlantic slave trade, Rozendo Sampaio Garcia renewed the search for relevant source materials housed in Seville’s vast Archive of the Indies, particularly in the sections *Contratación*, *Contaduría* and *Indiferente General*.⁶ Like Scelle, Garcia’s treatment emphasizes administrative and economic aspects of the early slave trade to the Spanish Americas, but Garcia limited his study to the years between 1580 and 1640. His sources are based mostly on the numbers of captives registered in Iberia to be delivered to the Americas, rather than the actual numbers of captives disembarked in American ports. With special attention to both authorized and contraband slave trade in the Rio de la Plata region, however, he did manage to locate evidence for approximately 9,000 captives disembarked in Buenos Aires between 1588 and 1627. While Garcia fails to address the experiences of enslaved Africans themselves, and offers very little information regarding African provenance zones or American slaving ports, he does briefly address the diverse labors performed by enslaved Africans in different regions of the Spanish Americas, and offers provisional

University Press, 1976), 9-20; Lutgardo García Fuentes, “Licencias para la introducción de esclavos en Indias y envíos desde Sevilla en el siglo XVI,” *JGSWGL* 19 (1982): 1-46; Esteban Mira Caballos, “Las licencias de esclavos negros a Hispanoamérica (1544-1550),” in *Revista de Indias* 54 (1994): 273-97.

⁶ Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, “Contribuição ao estudo do Aproveitamento de escravos negros na América Espanhola, 1580-1640,” *Anais do Museu Paulista* 16 (1962): 1-195.

estimates of black populations in the Americas which directly challenge earlier estimates provided by Aguirre Beltrán.⁷

Shortly after the publications of the Chaunus' *Séville et l'Atlantique* and Garcia's "Contribuição," Henri Lapeyre published a pioneering short article on the early modern Iberian slave trade, which remains generally overlooked. Lapeyre's brief study analyzes a journal and two *grandes livres*, or master account books, kept by slave trade administrator (*asentista*) Pedro Gomez Reynel during the years 1596 to 1601. These three books contain information such as slave ships' African ports of departure, dates of arrival in American ports, the numbers of captives disembarked, and various other details which are not included—or often unreliable—in Iberian port departure records. Though the books evidently span only six years, they contain details on no less than eighty-five slave ships disembarking captives in Cartagena, and an additional twenty-two slave ships which landed slaves in Veracruz and other ports.⁸ Thus far, no subsequent scholar except perhaps Vila Vilar appears to have consulted these account books, and no comparable source has come to light. Lapeyre's source is particularly valuable in that it provides a glimpse of transatlantic slave trade voyages from various African ports to various American ports. Matching his information with departure records listed by the Chaunus, Lapeyre offers a relatively sophisticated conception of the late-sixteenth-century transatlantic slave trade, in which different American slaving ports (notably Cartagena and Veracruz) each had its own distinctive relationships to various African ports and

⁷ *Ibid.*, 87, 166-68, 171-77. For further refutation of Aguirre Beltrán's assertion that New Spain received up to two thirds of all enslaved Africans transported to the Americas during this era, see Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos: los asientos portugueses* (Seville: EEHA, 1977), 206.

⁸ Henri Lapeyre, "Le trafic négrier avec l'Amérique espagnole," in *Homenaje a Jaime Vicens Vives*, vol. II (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 1967), 285-306.

provenance zones. As discussed below, recent studies often lack this nuanced perspective.

Unquestionably, the best-known work to address the slave trade to early colonial Latin America is Enriqueta Vila Vilar's *Hispanoamérica y el Comercio de Esclavos*. Published more than thirty years ago, this slim monograph focusing on the years 1595 to 1640 has almost single-handedly formed the backbone of our knowledge of the entire transatlantic slave trade prior to the mid-seventeenth century, largely on account of its detailed appendices listing several hundred slave trade voyages to the Spanish Americas and slave trade factors in various American ports.⁹ Building on earlier works by the Chaunus and Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, Vila Vilar's study incorporated additional sources from the Archive of the Indies, particularly from *Contaduría* and *Escribanía*, and firmly established the importance of Cartagena, Veracruz, and Buenos Aires as Spanish America's three major slave trade ports, in that order. Her sources include port entry records sent by royal officials from Cartagena and Veracruz to metropolitan officials, as well as investigations into contraband slave trafficking and unauthorized slave trade voyages arriving in Cartagena, Veracruz, and Santo Domingo during the years 1618 to 1626. Vila Vilar matched her own findings for the years 1595 to 1601 with Lapeyre's, characterizing the enslaved Africans arriving in the Spanish Americas during these years as the New World's "first great wave of men of color."¹⁰

⁹ See Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 132, 148-49, 173-74, 244-79.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 14-16, 27-32, 197-99, 209-11. See also Scelle, *La traite négrière*, I: 347-91, 809-12; Frédéric Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVIIe siècle (1570-1670): Etude économique* (Paris: SEVPEN, 1960), 158-59; and Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "The Large-Scale Introduction of Africans into Veracruz and Cartagena," in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies*, eds. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1977), 267-80.

Vila Vilar laid the groundwork for all subsequent studies of the transatlantic slave trade to the early colonial Americas; her qualitative description of the actual workings of the early seventeenth-century slave trade was not surpassed or improved upon until 2007.¹¹ Most importantly for this study, she pointed out that the transatlantic slave trade to the early seventeenth-century Spanish Americas did not resemble that of the late colonial period. In her words, rather than a “more or less lucrative business permitted by the Crown, designed to supply a plantation economy,” the transatlantic slave trade was “absolutely necessary to sustain the Indies during a time of economic depression and crisis.”¹² The present work differs from Vila Vilar’s in its emphasis on the social history of African-born populations in key Caribbean port cities, and these ports’ connections and similarities to Portuguese and Luso-African settlements in Western Africa. Despite any differences, however, this study ultimately reaffirms, refines, and extends Vila Vilar’s argument that African forced migrants were necessary to simply sustain Spain’s American empire. As noted in the previous chapter, Africans played a particularly noticeable role in the settlement and (re)peopling of the Caribbean, where Amerindian populations had suffered tremendous demographic decline, and where legal Iberian immigration was relatively limited.

¹¹ Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007). See also Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos en Córdoba: de Angola a Potosí, siglos XVI-XVII* (Córdoba, Argentina: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Instituto de Estudios Americanistas, 1966); and Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 28-44.

¹² Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 215-16, 228, 230-31; quotes from 215.

New Developments

While slave trade scholarship has been revolutionized by the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* within the past decade, the tremendous scope of this collaborative project has only recently begun to address Iberian slave traffic to the Americas prior to 1650. The original CD-ROM version was of limited use for Spanish America during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, relying almost exclusively on voyages listed by Vila Vilar.¹³ The revised *Voyages: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, now publicly available online, is far more useful for scholarship on the first two centuries of European colonization of the Americas.¹⁴ Continued investigation of Spanish archives and the incorporation of new Portuguese-language archival sources have already made impressive additions to the body of known slave trade voyages to the Spanish Americas and Brazil.¹⁵ Further research in Iberian and Latin American archives should provide additional information. Vila Vilar's contribution remains fundamental; out of 1,325 slave trade voyages to the Americas presently listed as having taken place between 1570 and 1640, she is cited as a source in slightly more than five hundred voyages. As noted by António Mendes, however, the new version contains data for voyages to the Spanish Americas which took place prior to 1595, a period which Vila Vilar neglected to address. Moreover, for several hundred voyages between 1595 and 1640, the new database draws

¹³ *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: A Database on CD-ROM*, eds. David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, David Richardson, and Herbert S. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹⁴ *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org> (accessed May 1, 2009).

¹⁵ Eltis and Richardson, "A New Assessment." Perhaps the most significant aspect of the revised database is its attention to Iberian, particularly Portuguese, slave trade voyages. It should be noted, however, that most of the newly-incorporated voyages took place during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, thus primarily expanding the database's geographical, rather than chronological, scope.

from the original sources consulted by Vila Vilar, providing additional information which was not listed in her appendices.¹⁶

For the quantitative study of the transatlantic slave trade to the Spanish Americas during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Mendes' study represents the first breakthrough since Vila Vilar's *Hispanoamérica*, and highlights possibilities generated by the newly revised database. Most importantly, his essay represents the first attempt "to base a new estimate of the slave trade's volume in this era on the voyage material rather than the *asiento* contracts" – that is, on the numbers of captives embarked in Africa and disembarked in the Americas, rather than on the numbers of "slaves contracted for." Vila Vilar estimated that approximately 270,000 enslaved Africans were transported to the Spanish Americas between 1595 and 1640. Mendes analyzes a larger number of individual voyages, but his total estimate for the same years is somewhat smaller, at slightly under 204,000 captives. The difference is largely explained by their different interpretations of the scale of contraband slave trafficking – i.e. slave trade voyages not yet accounted for. In order to account for contraband, Vila Vilar multiplies the number of known voyages arriving in various ports by two or three; Mendes uses a somewhat lower multiplier (1.5).¹⁷

Attention to Iberian port departure records unmatched by port entry records represents another fundamental difference in Vila Vilar's work and Mendes' recent revision. The current online database lists several hundred voyages—approximately half

¹⁶ António de Almeida Mendes, "The Foundations of the System: A Reassessment of the Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Extending the Frontiers*, 63-94. My thanks to the author for providing an early copy of this chapter.

¹⁷ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 181, 197-211; Mendes, "Foundations," 75-76, 80-82. For additional estimates, see Bowser, *African Slave*, 72; Nicolás del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias* (Bogotá: Ediciones El Tiempo, 1981), 224-37; and Antonino Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias y la región histórica del Caribe, 1580-1640* (Sevilla: EEHA, Universidad de Sevilla, Diputación de Sevilla, 2002), 161-64.

of the voyages listed for the period under study—for which only port departure records are known (these are the same *Contratación* records consulted by the Chaunus). As I argue here and in the previous chapter, these “voyages” must be treated with great caution since many followed a trajectory utterly different from their registered itinerary, and some probably never arrived.¹⁸ Statistically imputed variables attributed to these voyages are of course quite useful for generating global estimates and broad trends. However, such assumptions also run the risk of distorting our tenuous knowledge of specific voyages which may (or may not) have taken place, during an era which remains understudied and poorly understood. As new archival research is conducted, the database will need to accommodate information for additional voyages, and revisions of previously known voyages. At present, the *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* already represents an impressive and readily accessible compilation of known sources (from which this project has already benefited). The database’s existence and maintenance will enable scholars to collaborate and share their findings in the future.

Departing from earlier studies of Cartagena’s role in the transatlantic slave trade, this chapter focuses exclusively on the decades between 1570 and 1640, with the aim of identifying chronologically-specific waves of captives from major African provenance zones.¹⁹ In addition to known sources utilized by the historians cited above, this chapter introduces previously unknown archival sources—port entry records—for the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Corrected for errors and double-counts, the combined sources reveal a

¹⁸ See Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 10-12.

¹⁹ For important, earlier studies which address the slave trade to Cartagena during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries within the broader context of the entire colonial period, see Jorge Palacios Preciado, *Cartagena de Indias, gran factoría de mano de obra esclava* (Tunja: Ediciones Pato Marino, 1975); and del Castillo, *La llave de las Indias*.

minimum of four hundred and sixty-three slave ships known to have entered Cartagena between 1573 and 1640, disembarking an absolute minimum of 73,000 captives in the city and in neighboring ports.²⁰ Nearly two thirds of known slave ship landings during this period are concentrated within the years 1593 to 1601 and 1617 to 1625, with each period of intensified slave trafficking involving ships from multiple African regions. Analyzed chronologically in terms of broadly-construed African provenance zones—Upper Guinea, Lower Guinea, and West Central Africa—the combined voyage data reveals basic patterns in the volume and direction of the transoceanic slave trade to Cartagena from each. These patterns are resoundingly confirmed by the appearance of corresponding African ethnonyms in a variety of contemporaneous Caribbean sources, including ecclesiastical records, notarial records, slave rosters, and miscellaneous correspondence. Taken together, Cartagena shipping records and additional source materials clearly document distinct waves of captives from Upper Guinea, Lower Guinea, and West Central Africa which overlapped in the Spanish Caribbean during the years 1570 to 1640.

Royal Officials and Port Entry Records

Since the publication of Vila Vilar's *Hispanoamérica*, historians have had access to detailed, if partial, information regarding the actual arrivals of slave ships in Spanish American ports.²¹ Port entry records are of tremendous historical value, enabling us to cross-check information for vessels known to have departed Iberia or African ports with

²⁰ See Appendices A and B. The actual numbers of ships arrived and captives disembarked are certainly larger, due not only to contraband, but also to remaining gaps in our knowledge, as discussed below.

²¹ For royal officials' lists of slave ships arriving in Veracruz (1604-1640) and taxes collected on captives disembarked in Cartagena (1622-1641), found in AGI-Contaduría 882-885 and 1397-1045 respectively, see Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 256-75; and Mendes, "Foundations," 90n18.

the ships that actually arrived in Cartagena, regardless of their intended destinations.²²

As Vila Vilar and others have noted, there are significant gaps in the records she uncovered; even the most assiduously researched studies of the slave trade during this period have concluded that Cartagena's port entry records were missing or lost.²³

However, this is not entirely true. Archival research on the slave trade to the Spanish Americas during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has largely clustered around the centralized accounts, compiled by slave trade administrators and royal officials, held in the Archive of the Indies' sections *Contratación* and *Contaduría*; some studies have also incorporated scattered evidence from the sections *Escribanía* and *Indiferente General*. To this corpus of source materials, the present study adds a set of sources housed in the same massive archive which have not been analyzed previously, found in Spanish American royal officials' letters to the Crown. Archived separately by *Audiencia* and in some cases, by province, royal officials' correspondence to the metropole principally addresses matters of economic interest to the Crown. In ports such as Cartagena, Havana, Veracruz, and Santo Domingo between roughly 1570 and 1640, these letters are replete with references to the transatlantic and regional slave trades.²⁴

²² For port entry and departure records composed by royal officials in early seventeenth-century Cabo Verde and Angola, see AHU-Cabo Verde, cx.1, n.29, "Auto que mandarão fazer [...] em cumprimento do que Sua Magestade manda na provizão y renta," Ribeira Grande, 1 julho 1613, folha 1v; AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.4-A, Carta de Francisco de Mar a Joan de Argomedo, Loanda, 23 jullio 1609; AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.13, Carta do Governador de Angola D. Manuel Pereira a João de Argomedo, São Paulo de Loanda, 13 março 1611. These and similar sources are reproduced or analyzed in T. Bentley Duncan, *Atlantic Islands: Madeira, the Azores, and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 199-201; Maria Manuel Ferraz Torrão, "Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento," in *HGCV*, II: 42; Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique*, 175; Bowser, *African Slave*, 39, 364n32; and Beatrix Heintze, "Angola nas garras do tráfico de escravos: a guerras do Ndongo (1611-1630)," *Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos* 1 (Jan-June 1984), 33.

²³ See Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 9-14; Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 337.

²⁴ AGI-SF 72-74 (Cartagena, 1535-1643); AGI-SD 74 (Santo Domingo, 1526-1639), AGI-SD 118-119 (Havana, 1528-1656); AGI-Mexico 351 (Veracruz, 1575-1642).

As agents of the Spanish Crown, royal officials in Cartagena—usually an accountant (*contador*) and a treasurer (*tesorero*), aided by customs officials—counted and taxed the captives disembarked in the city. While the actual sum collected per captive disembarked changed over time, and the funds thus generated were employed for a variety of purposes, one central tension remained constant during the period under study. Customs fees represented a major outlay for slave merchants on one hand, and a major source of revenue for the royal treasury and its administrators on the other. Throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, this tension was the source of perennial accusations of widespread contraband and rampant corruption.²⁵ Many such accusations were clearly well-founded. In Cartagena during the 1570s, for example, royal officials themselves regularly traded slaves on their own behalf. Royal treasurer Baltasar Carrillo took advantage of his position to act as a middleman, purchasing captives directly from ship captains, then selling them to local residents for a tidy profit. Meanwhile, after having been reprimanded for illegally directing Amerindians from Crown *encomiendas* to labor on his rural properties outside Cartagena, *contador* Antonio Bermudez began to employ enslaved Africans, presumably obtained from incoming slave ships; some were rented out to other Cartagena residents as well. Customs official Bartolomé de Castillejo was accused of accepting bribes from merchants and other people engaged in illicit commerce as they entered and left the city. During the inspection of one recently arrived slave ship, its captain, identified as a Portuguese man

²⁵ On contraband and *rescates* in the circum-Caribbean and Rio de la Plata during this period, particularly regarding the transatlantic slave trade, see I. A. Wright, “Rescates: With Special Reference to Cuba, 1599-1610,” *HAHR* 3:3 (Aug 1920): 333-61; Garcia, “Contribuição,” 65-81, 86-90, 155-66, 194; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 157-82; del Castillo, *La llave de las Indias*, 228-32; Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 70-80, 171-99, 208-16; Alejandro de la Fuente, “Introducción al estudio de la trata en Cuba, siglos XVI y XVII,” *Santiago* 61 (1986): 155-208, especially 174-98; and Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 100-15, 149-61.

named Cristóbal López de Fonseca, presented Castillejo with a “gift” of two slaves, presumably for looking the other way. After holding his position for the space of just one year, Castillejo was said to be worth more than 1,000 *pesos*. As noted by one witness, “that kind of money isn’t found on the street.”²⁶

Royal officials’ accounts do not always agree with other extant sources (i.e. Iberian port departure records); these discrepancies lead us to privilege some accounts over others as we piece together the details of several hundred slave trade voyages. Despite our knowledge of royal officials’ vested interest in the slave trade as early as the 1570s, however, the quality and detail of their reports to the Spanish Crown provide a strikingly clear glimpse of the direction and volume of the early transatlantic slave trade which is seldom paralleled in other sources. In addition to numerous references to single or small groups of slave ships and their captains, Cartagena’s royal officials compiled at least three major lists of vessels disembarking captives in Cartagena during the years 1585-1590, 1600-1601, and 1615-1623. Each list offers a variety of details on individual voyages, including the names of slave ship masters, ship owners, and scribes; the vessels’ stated ports or regions of departure from Africa; voyages’ dates of registration (if any) in Seville or Cádiz; and the dates of each ship’s arrival and inspection in Cartagena. Royal officials also reported the numbers of “pieces of slaves” found on board each vessel during their inspections, and often called attention to disparities between the number of captives landed, and the number of captives each ship was registered to

²⁶ AGI-SF 72, n.33, “Ynformaçion secreta de como an usado sus officios los ofiçiales reales de Cartagena de las Yndias,” Cartagena, 15 dic 1578 – 8 julio 1579, folios 11v-12r, 19v-20r, 28r-28v. For an argument that royal officials were ultimately responsible for facilitating contraband slave traffic on a much larger scale, see Garcia, “Contribuição,” 165-66.

transport.²⁷ Combined with previously known sources for the periods 1595-1601 and 1622-1640, and supplemented by scattered references to smaller numbers of vessels throughout the period under study, these slave ship rosters represent a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The first, relatively well-known to historians, is a document produced by royal officials but appended to a letter by Cartagena's governor, written in response to royal concerns over possible contraband slave trafficking. Governor Lodeña and the city's royal officials promptly supplied a list of thirty-six slave trade voyages which had disembarked nearly 7,000 captives in Cartagena during the years 1585 to 1590.²⁸ (I am not yet aware of the existence of a comparable source for any other American port, including Veracruz, or for any African port for the years prior to 1595.) The vast majority of these voyages departed from either the Cape Verde Islands (ten ships) or "Guinea" (twenty-one ships, including one from the Rivers of Guinea), disembarking a combined total of 5,979 enslaved Africans. One solitary vessel departed from São Tomé, and another single ship sailed from Angola. In addition to individual slave ships sailing

²⁷ In Spanish-language sources prior to the mid-seventeenth century, the terms "pieza" and "pieza de esclavo" were frequently used interchangeably with "esclavo," "negro," and "licencia," each commonly referring to one enslaved human being, regardless of sex, age, health, or provenance. Other terms commonly used in the same manner during these years include "pieza de negro," "pieza de registro," "negro de licencia," and "negro de registro." In the Spanish Caribbean, the better-known term "pieza de Indias" probably evolved from the term "pieza de pago," as seen in AGI-SD 119, s/n, "Autos sobre la arribada del navío San Pedro," Havana, 1628-31, pieza 1, folio 66r, in which 230 "piezas de esclavos" were evaluated as 142 "piezas de pago." See also Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 38; Bowser, *African Slave*, 39; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 186-93; Maria da Graça A. Mateus Ventura, *Negreiros Portugueses na Rota das Índias de Castela, 1541-1556* (Lisboa: Edições Colibri, 1999), 63; María Cristina Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo de al esclavitud en Colombia, siglos XVI y XVII* (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2005), 140n126; Mendes, "Foundations of the System," 91n30.

²⁸ AGI-SF 37, r.6, n.103a/b, "Fee de los negros," Cartagena, 15 julio 1591. This list of slave ships has been consulted, analyzed, or cited in Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 96-100; Bowser, *African Slave*, 72; María del Carmen Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVI* (Seville: EEHA, 1983), 58-61; and Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 161-65.

directly from Africa, three Indies fleets under the command of Antonio Osorio (1585), Miguel de Eraso (1586), and Diego de la Ribera (1589) landed a combined total of slightly less than four hundred captives in Cartagena. On each of these occasions, royal officials noted that an unspecified number of captives remained onboard the fleets, to be disembarked subsequently in Nombre de Dios.

A second major list drawn up by Cartagena's royal officials documents thirty-three slave ships entering Cartagena during the years 1600 and 1601. While the list largely replicates and confirms sources analyzed previously by Garcia, Lapeyre, and Vila Vilar, it also provides some additional information for these voyages.²⁹ The 1600-1601 report was composed or copied at the formal request of Manuel Lopez, a Portuguese citizen of Cartagena, speaking on behalf of the powerful slave trade *asentista* João Rodrigues Coutinho.³⁰ At the time, Coutinho was both governor of "the provinces of Angola," and holder of a new contract (*asiento*) for the delivery of slaves from Angola to the Spanish Americas; the list of slave ships would serve as evidence of proceeds due to Coutinho rather than to his predecessor (*asentista* Pedro Gomez Reynel).³¹ Registered to deliver a combined total of 4,637 captives, these ships actually disembarked more than 6,000 enslaved Africans in Cartagena, according to royal officials. In the space of just fifteen months, four ships from the Cape Verde Islands and an additional seven ships

²⁹ AGI-SF 72, n.105, "Copia de la Relacion de Cartagena de los negros q Alli han entrado desde primero de Mayo de 1600," Cartagena, 27 julio 1601. This list of slave ships (folios 21r-26v) may be a copy of a similar list which disintegrated prior to the late eighteenth century, cited in Garcia, "Contribuição," 51-52, 151. See also Lapeyre, "Trafic négrier," 294-97; and Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 248-51.

³⁰ Though he does not appear among the factors listed in Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 280, "Manuel Lopez portugues" is listed as one of several resident foreigners who paid naturalization fees in Cartagena in 1599; thus he was classified as a *vecino* of the city in 1601. See AGI-Contraduría 1385, n.7, "conpusiciones de estrangeros"; and Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "Extranjeros en Cartagena (1593-1630)," *JGSWGL* 16 (1979): 147-84.

³¹ For further information on the *asientos* awarded to Pedro Gomez Reynel and the Coutinhos, see Scelle, *La traite négrière*, I: 347-402, 809-12; Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique*, 157-62; Garcia, "Contribuição," 33-64; Lapeyre, "Trafic négrier," 285-90; and Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 23-42, 104-11.

from Guinea (i.e. “the Rivers of Guinea”) landed a combined total of 1,714 captives. Five hundred nineteen captives arrived on ships sailing from São Tomé, and one ship sailing directly from “Congo”—the only ship thus designated in the entire period under study—disembarked three hundred and two captives in Cartagena’s port. No less than seventeen ships had departed from Angola, landing a total of 3,282 captives. Just as conspicuous as the number of slave ships arriving from Angola were the complicated trajectories several of these ships reported. One ship had been registered to disembark its captives in New Spain, but strayed from its route after departing Angola, stopping first in Jamaica, then changing course completely to arrive in Cartagena. A similar instance involved a ship from Angola allegedly bound for Brazil. Foreshadowing patterns which would develop later, two ships (one from Angola and the other of unstated provenance) claimed to have been attacked and boarded by “the English” prior to arriving in Cartagena, though their slave cargoes were not confiscated.

The third and largest ship list, which does not appear to have been utilized by any historian previously, provides detailed information on one hundred and one slave trade voyages disembarking nearly 18,000 enslaved Africans in Cartagena between 1615 and 1623.³² In response to Crown directives, royal officials compiled this list as an official summary of captives delivered during the *asiento* of Antonio Fernandez d’Elvas who, unlike earlier *asentistas*, had contracted with the Spanish Crown to provide slaves from

³² AGI-SF 74, n.6, “Certificación de los negros que han entrado en Cartaxena desde Primero de mayo de 1615 hasta 20 de marzo deste presente año de 1623,” Cartagena, 28 marzo 1623. Thirty-six of these ships also appear in Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 148-49n70, 174-75, 268-69, 276-77. This list also overlaps with an account of thirteen slave ships arriving in Cartagena in 1621-1622; see AGI-SF 73, n.110, Francisco de Rebolledo y Alonso de Corral a S.M., Cartagena, 10 agosto 1622; and Palacios, *Gran factoría*, 19.

both Angola (1615-1623) and the Cabo Verde (1616-1624).³³ As noted by Cartagena's royal officials, eight ships had departed from the Cape Verde Islands, and another twenty-five had sailed from "Guinea" (including three ships from "the Rivers of Guinea," and two which separate sources confirm to have departed from Cacheo). As in the 1600-1601 ship list, West Central Africa played a major role within the total slave trade to Cartagena between 1615 and 1623; forty-seven ships were said to have departed from Angola. As discussed below, slave exports from Lower Guinea to Cartagena reached substantial numbers for the first time during the same period. In addition to seven ships sailing directly to Cartagena from Arda, another ship sailed from Carabalí, stopping in São Tomé en route to Cartagena. For an additional eight ships that arrived from São Tomé, we do not yet have any means of determining how many captives were drawn from West Central Africa, and how many from Lower Guinea. Royal officials noted that one voyage involved stops in both Arda and Angola. Beyond providing basic information regarding slave ship's provenance zones, the 1615-1623 slave ship roster contains details on a number of voyages which involved preliminary (and unauthorized) stops prior to arrival in Cartagena, in locations such as Hispaniola, Jamaica, La Margarita, Bonaire, Caracas, and Rio de la Hacha. Furthermore, more than thirty ships had been registered to sail to "the province of New Spain" rather than to Cartagena, their actual destination.

Complementing the lists of slave ships described above, the section "Contaduría," also housed in the Archive of the Indies, represents an additional source for the study of the transatlantic slave trade which has not yet been fully explored, particularly for years

³³ See Scelle, *La traite négrière*, I: 443-44; Chaunus, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, tome V: 16n60, 37n44, 55n42; Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique*, 157-63; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 24-28, 104-15; Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 18-21.

prior to 1595. The administrative reports collected here offer a variety of indirect information on slave ship arrivals, such as import duties on slaves landed, fees paid for unregistered merchandise, and taxes paid on slave ships sold or dismantled upon arrival in Cartagena.³⁴ As indicated by these annual account books compiled by Cartagena's royal officials, it was fairly common for ships—including vessels carrying slaves which, in some cases, are not listed in any other known source—to transport unregistered merchandise. For example, the frigate “Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria” entered Cartagena in 1597, having departed from “the Rivers of Guinea.” In addition to its cargo of nearly two hundred and fifty enslaved Africans, the ship carried a quantity of contraband “Guinea wax,” judged to be worth more than five hundred silver *pesos*.³⁵ Similarly, sailing from the Canary Islands to Cartagena in 1608, the ship “San Tomé” also brought unregistered merchandise associated with the slave trade. Though no captives are known to have been found on board, the ship carried significant quantities of wine, cloth, and “items of little value,” all originally intended to be used to trade for slaves in Angola.³⁶ A third example of indirect evidence for the workings of the transatlantic slave trade may be found in fiscal accounts for the following year.

³⁴ AGI-Contaduría 1380, 1382, 1384, 1385, 1388. María del Carmen Borrego Plá, who cites several of these *legajos*, was the first historian to identify more than fifty slave ships arriving in Cartagena between 1585 and 1593; see Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 58-61. There are some minor errors in her figures, however, and a closer survey of the records revealed a number of previously unknown voyages.

³⁵ AGI-Contaduría 1385, n.5, pliego 6. For more details on this voyage, see Chaunus, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, IV: 14-15, 21; Lapeyre, “Trafic négrier,” 292-93; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 244-45; TASTD 29022. On Upper Guinean beeswax, see Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 158; Duncan, *Atlantic Islands*, 200-6, 214-15, 218, 226, 242; and Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*, 139, 175, 199, 242. A similar example may be found in AGI-SF 73, n.30d, “Testimonio [...] de los bienes de Manuel Enriquez Correa,” Cartagena, 9 julio 1615.

³⁶ AGI-Contaduría 1387, 1 enero – 30 junio 1608, pliego 60. See also AHU-Angola, cx.1, n.13, Carta do Governador de Angola D. Manuel Pereira a João de Argomedo, São Paulo de Loanda, 13 março 1611. This document contains a spreadsheet drawn up by a factor in Luanda in 1609, featuring barrels of wine imported in one column, and quantities of money owed to slave trade factors overseas in the other column. For broader context, see José C. Curto, *Enslaving Spirits: The Portuguese-Brazilian Alcohol Trade at Luanda and its Hinterland, c.1550-1830* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 47, 51, 53-65, 136-38, 174.

Viewed as old and worn out, the vessel “San Juan Evangelista” was sold to one of Cartagena’s religious officials in September 1609; he planned to have the ship dismantled and stripped (*echado al través*), salvaging only its lumber and riggings. The event was recorded only because the royal treasury, as customary, collected a sales tax of 15 percent on all ship sales. In their description of the ship, royal officials casually noted that the “San Juan Evangelista” had entered Cartagena in July 1609, sailing from São Tomé “with slaves.” Thus far we have no further details on this voyage whatsoever, other than the name of its owner and captain, Juan de Nis Vizcardo.³⁷

At present, information on slave ships arriving in Cartagena is available for only forty-eight of the seventy years between 1570 and 1640, with the most significant gaps falling between the years 1578-1584 and 1602-1608 (see Appendices A and B). Rather than straightforward lulls in the flow of the slave trade, however, it must be emphasized that these periods mainly represent years for which, quite simply, we do not yet have sufficient concrete data to reconstruct the basic details of the slave trade voyages which took place.³⁸ For the largest gap (1577-1584), neither ship names nor dates of entry are known, but a number of textual references indicate active slave trading in Cartagena. As early as 1575, Cartagena’s royal officials complained of illegal slave trafficking, and of the ineffectiveness of procedures for discovering, seizing, and appropriating contraband merchandise (including African captives).³⁹ In the 1578-1579 investigation of Cartagena’s royal officials discussed above, witnesses mention several slave ship captains by name, including Blas Herrera, Anton Galvez, Jorge de Morales, Luis de Santa

³⁷ AGI-Contaduría 1388, pliegos 265-266; TSTD 29870.

³⁸ See, for example, the Chaunus’ discussion of the years 1611-15 in *Séville et l’Atlantique*, IV: 489n44.

³⁹ AGI-SF 72, n.28, Oficiales reales Antonio Bermudes y Balthasar Carrillo a S.M., Cartagena, 25 nov 1577.

María, and Cristobal Lopez de Fonseca. Blas Herrera and Cristobal Lopez de Fonseca were explicitly identified as “Portuguese,” and the latter captain was said to have been “present here in this city” at the time of the investigation.⁴⁰

For the second major gap (1602-1608), letters from Cartagena’s governor and royal officials addressed to the Crown suggest a decline in the slave trade and a general economic slump.⁴¹ The slave trade did not completely dry up during these years, however, as the paucity of specific data might suggest. Rather, the first decade of the seventeenth century should probably be viewed as a lull in the slave trade only in comparison with an unprecedented surge in slave trafficking during the immediately preceding years; sixty-five slave ships are known to have entered Cartagena’s port in the years 1599, 1600, and 1601 alone. Something of the slave trade’s influence on Cartagena’s economic health may be seen in royal officials’ comparison of the year 1603-1604, the year of “this land’s downfall and ruin,” with “the previous three years here,” during which “every day this place grew in prosperity.” Formerly abundant commerce in “merchandise and slaves” had dried up; the slave trade had “notably diminished,” and those who had borrowed money were now forced to default on their loans.⁴² Despite royal officials’ possibly exaggerated laments, several textual references indicate that the slave trade continued, if on a smaller scale. In 1604, Cartagena’s governor complained that “only three or four ships from Guinea and Angola have entered this port within the past seven months.”⁴³ The following year, royal officials complained that Cartagena’s governor regularly interfered in their jurisdiction over slave ship

⁴⁰ AGI-SF 72, n.33, “Ynformacion secreta.” On Luis de Santa María, see the previous chapter.

⁴¹ See Palacios, *Gran factoría*, 18.

⁴² AGI-SF 72, n.113/114, Joan de Yturrieta y don Francisco Sarmiento a S.M., Cartagena, 4 agosto 1603; AGI-SF 73, ns. 2, 4, 7, *ibid.* a S.M., Cartagena, 26 enero 1604, 8 agosto 1604, 18 agosto 1606.

⁴³ AGI-SF 38, R.2, n.65, folio 1r. Don Jerónimo de Zuazo a S.M., Cartagena, 7 agosto 1604.

inspections, citing as examples his actions during the recent arrival of two ships which carried inadequate registration. One unnamed ship, with captain's name unspecified, had entered the port "with 270 *piezas desclavos angolas*." A second unnamed vessel, captained by Pedro Vaez de Morales, landed another 120 captives in Cartagena, but royal officials neglected to state the ship's name, African region of departure, or date of arrival.⁴⁴

If royal officials played leading roles in the supervision and administration of the slave trade to Cartagena since at least the 1570s, their roles became even more meaningful after 1604, when Cartagena and Veracruz were officially designated as the only seaports in the Spanish Americas authorized to receive direct slave traffic from Africa. In 1603, Cartagena's royal officials had written to the Crown, offering a barrage of advice on how to streamline and organize the slave trade. Their plans, they claimed, would simultaneously decrease fraudulent activities, bring more Africans to the Americas, and increase revenues for the royal treasury. One of the ideas suggested by Cartagena's royal officials was that the receipt and payment of slave licenses should be centralized and administered from just two ports: Cartagena and Veracruz.⁴⁵ Regardless of whether Cartagena's royal officials were the original source of this new policy, by the following year, Cartagena and Veracruz were the Spanish Americas' only authorized transatlantic slave trade hubs. Subsequent legislation in 1614 reaffirmed the two ports' roles as official points of disembarkation, though some allowance was made for Buenos

⁴⁴ AGI-SF 73, n.5, Francisco de Rebolledo y don Alonso de Corral y de Toledo a S.M., Cartagena, 1605. We have only slightly better information for one slave ship in 1604-1605. Departing from Lisbon in mid-August 1604, under the command of captain Juan Gomes, the "San Antonio" eventually disembarked 82 captives in Cartagena, and 133 captives in Havana; see TSTD 29538 (source: AGI-Indiferente General, 2795).

⁴⁵ AGI-SF 72, n.113/114, Joan de Yturrieta y Francisco Sarmiento a S.M., Cartagena, 4 agosto 1603.

Aires as well.⁴⁶ Some additional ports did receive direct shipments of enslaved Africans during the years under study here, and slave trade factors carried on transactions both before and after the direct slave trade to ports other than Cartagena, Veracruz, and Buenos Aires was discontinued.⁴⁷ Moreover, contraband slave trafficking continued in numerous other port towns and cities throughout the colonial era. While the transatlantic slave trade leading up to the mid seventeenth-century essentially remains an open field, researchers might consider the extant correspondence of royal officials from both Veracruz and Buenos Aires as potentially fruitful areas to conduct further research.

Upper Guinea versus Angola in Peruvian and Mexican Sources

A relatively new consensus among historians emphasizes specific contexts and events which generated waves of captives from particular regions of Africa, resulting in chronologically overlapping diasporas.⁴⁸ Recent edited works, for example, address the experiences of forced migrants from Central Africa and Yorubaland, scattered throughout

⁴⁶ Garcia, "Contribuição," 80, 89, 127-9; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 12, 19, 49, 70, 75-76, 115, 207-09; Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 19, 23, 136.

⁴⁷ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 280-83; Alejandro de la Fuente, César García del Pino, and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, "Havana and the Fleet System: Trade and Growth in the Periphery of the Spanish Empire, 1550-1610," *CLAR* 5:1 (1996): 103. Slave trade factor Antonio Gonzalez ran a "public store" on behalf of *asentista* Pedro Gomez Reynel in Havana during the late 1590s, and arranged for African captives to be brought to the city directly from Luanda in January 1601. "Antonio Gonçalves mercader" likewise appears in Havana's baptismal records for 1590s as the owner of enslaved Africans identified as Juan Bran, María Bran, Gracia Angola, and Pablo Congo; he served as godfather to the children of María Nalu and Helena Bran, enslaved African women owned by local elites. See AGI-SD 118, r.5, n.238, Oficiales reales a S. M., Havana, 4 agosto 1597; ANC-PN, mfn 68066806-68116811 (Regueyra / Juan Bautista Guilisasti / 27 January 1601); and CH-LB/B, 42v (2), 60r (5), 93r (1), 112v (1), 120v (5), 135r (3), 141r (1). Notarial archives in Madrid indicate that in 1597, "un certain Antonio Gonçalves, de La Havane," was authorized to take charge of enslaved Africans brought from São Tomé and Angola; see Scelle, *La traite négrière*, I: 381.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Paul E. Lovejoy, "Identifying Enslaved Africans in the African Diaspora," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy (London and New York: Continuum, 2000), 1-29; Colin A. Palmer, "Defining and Studying the Modern African Diaspora," *JNH* 85:1/2 (Winter-Spring 2000): 27-32; Kristin Mann, "Shifting Paradigms in the Study of the African Diaspora and of Atlantic History and Culture," in *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin and Brazil*, eds. Kristin Mann and Edna G. Bay (London and Portland: F. Cass, 2001), 3-21; Patrick Manning, "Africa and the African Diaspora: New Directions of Study," *JAH* 44 (2003): 487-506.

the Americas.⁴⁹ However, the bulk of our knowledge of African diasporas in specific American locations prior to the eighteenth century remains limited chiefly to studies of central New Spain and highland Peru. While the Spanish American viceroalties' notarial and ecclesiastical records are immensely valuable for historians in a variety of contexts, the same sources have provided only indirect evidence of the volume and direction of the early modern transatlantic slave trade, often generating somewhat contradictory interpretations.

The years following the publication of the Chaunus' *Séville et l'Atlantique* were apparently conducive to wide-ranging syntheses regarding the flow of the slave trade to the early colonial Americas. In his brief study of slaving voyages to the Spanish Americas over a period of just six years (1595-1601), Lapeyre found that slave ships arriving in Cartagena predominantly came from Cape Verde and Guinea, while for "the other destinations"—mainly Veracruz—"the slaves nearly all came from Angola."⁵⁰ Despite its conspicuous failure to address either Cartagena or Veracruz, Curtin's *Atlantic Slave Trade* represents a model of similar scope. Basing his argument on the Chaunus' shipping registers, and on relevant studies of colonial Latin America available at the time, Curtin described "an early-seventeenth century shift" from Senegambia to Angola, particularly noticeable in "southern South America" (Charcas, Chile). Rather than focusing on any specific American or African region, Curtin's vision of the transatlantic slave trade was fluid, dynamic, and global, even for the late sixteenth and early

⁴⁹ *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. Linda M. Heywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, eds. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004). These collections are mostly limited to the late colonial and modern eras. See, however, Jane Landers, "The Central African Presence in Spanish Maroon Communities," in *Central Africans*, 227-41.

⁵⁰ Lapeyre, "Trafic négrier," 291.

seventeenth centuries. He speculated, for example, that Angola's slave traffic to Buenos Aires was redirected towards the Caribbean in the early 1620s (a hypothesis which, nearly half a century later, has been neither proven nor disproven).⁵¹ Broad, syncretical interpretations of this kind—addressing shifts in volume and direction from diverse African regions to diverse American regions—have simply not been sustained for the slave trade to early colonial Latin America. It bears mentioning, however, that Chaunu's study of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries was based entirely on his review of published materials; perhaps a paucity of known and readily available sources lies at the root of this neglect in recent decades.

In their search for sources regarding the transatlantic slave trade to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Americas, Africanists like Curtin long ago looked to Latin American history, only to discover colonial Latin Americanists' perennial attraction to Mexico City and Lima. Indeed, much of our knowledge of the Atlantic slave trade to the Americas prior to 1700 emphasizes connections between either Upper Guinea and Peru, or Angola and Mexico. Scholars of Upper Guinea, Peru, and to some extent, Colombia have been relatively cautious about making grandiose assumptions, and have been particularly attentive to available source materials generated in Cartagena, Peru's primary (legal) connection to Africa. Based on his reading of Sandoval and a survey of documents spanning the colonial period, David Pavy wrote in 1967 that "Senegambia [...] probably was the principal source of supply of slaves to Colombia until the middle of the seventeenth century." He further speculated that "a steady flow of slaves from Angola entered the Spanish Main throughout the years of slavery, but it is doubtful that they were

⁵¹ Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 103-18. While our data for Cartagena, Veracruz, and other ports indicate an increase in the flow of captives from Angola to the circum-Caribbean during the 1620s and 1630s (i.e. "the Angola wave"), we still know very little of the transatlantic slave trade to Buenos Aires during this period.

ever the most numerous group.”⁵² Three years later, Walter Rodney cited the above-mentioned list of slave ships arriving in Cartagena between 1585 and 1590, noting that nearly all of the captives landed were brought from the Cape Verde Islands or Upper Guinea. Also citing Sandoval, Rodney surmised that “Upper Guinea remained a key region for the supply of slaves to Spanish America” up until 1640.⁵³ Beyond Sandoval’s writings and the 1585-1590 ship list, historians have more effectively utilized Peruvian notarial and ecclesiastical records to gauge Upper Guineans’ presence in the early colonial Spanish Americas.⁵⁴ Drawing on his samples of Lima notarial records, Frederick Bowser argued that “Guinea supplied some 55 to 56 per cent of the slaves exported to Peru between 1560 and 1650.” However, his samples also suggest that enslaved West Central Africans outnumbered Upper Guineans in 1595, 1600, 1635, and 1640. “On the basis of this mixed evidence,” Bowser notes, “the most one can conclude is that despite the spectacular rise to prominence of Angola in the slave trade, Guinea remained a major supplier of blacks to Spanish America.”⁵⁵

Just as historians of Upper Guinea have turned to Peruvian records, scholars interested in West Central Africans’ presence and influence in the early colonial Americas have found an ally in New Spain. Analyses of a variety of colonial Mexican source materials, including notarial records, slave rosters, and marriage records, repeatedly and consistently indicate that “Angolas” predominated among seventeenth-

⁵² David Pavy, “The Provenience of Colombian Negroes,” *JNH* 52:1 (Jan 1967): 35-58, quotes from 56.

⁵³ Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 96-100.

⁵⁴ Stephan Bühnen, “Ethnic Origins of Peruvian Slaves (1548-1650): Figures for Upper Guinea,” *Paideuma* 39 (1993): 57-110; Walter Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves: Transformations along the Guinea-Bissau Coast, 1400-1900* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003), 68-72.

⁵⁵ Bowser, *African Slave*, 38-44 (note that “Zape” and “Cocolf” are listed as “Other West Africa”). See also James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532-1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 172-75; Jean-Pierre Tardieu, “Origines des esclaves de la région de Lima, au Pérou, aux XVI^e e XVII^e siècles,” in *La Chaîne et le lien: une vision de la traite négrière* (Actes du Colloque de Ouidah), dir. Doudou Diene (Paris: UNESCO, 1998), 81-94.

century New Spain's African-born populations.⁵⁶ The degree to which inhabitants of precolonial Kongo and Angola shared common identities, languages, religious beliefs, and other cultural traits has thus begun to take on special significance for the history of Mexico. Nicolás Ngou-Mve, for example, writes of a historically unified Bantu culture which must have played a major role in the formation of colonial Mexican society, given the demographic importance of West Central Africans in New Spain. For Ngou-Mve, "Bantu Africa" was the "sanctuary of a homogenous culture, whose evolution and new forms of expression in the Mexican diaspora remain to be investigated."⁵⁷ Recent works addressing African forced migrants' influence in other regions of the colonial Americas have placed similar emphasis on "core cultures" shared by West Central Africans.⁵⁸

Based largely on Vila Vilar's uninterrupted data for Veracruz between 1595 to 1640, and her partial data for Cartagena and other Caribbean ports during the same period, several historians have assumed that nearly all slave trafficking to all of the Americas originated in just one African port—Luanda—during this period. The evidence for Veracruz is compelling: African ports or regions of departure are known for one hundred and sixty-three slave trade voyages to Veracruz between 1595 and 1640. Of

⁵⁶ Aguirre Beltran, *La población negra*, 244-45; Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 20-23; Patrick J. Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz: Race, Ethnicity, and Regional Development*, 2nd ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 157-63; Nicolás Ngou-Mve, *El África bantú en la colonización de México, 1595-1640* (Madrid: CSIC, 1994), 97-147, 151, 172-73; Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 25, 91, 99-101.

⁵⁷ Ngou-Mve, *El África bantú*, 11-31, 184.

⁵⁸ See James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the Afro-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 103-17, 132; and Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49, 55-57, 238, 241, 262, 268. These studies both suggest that an essential West Central African culture, forged in part by interaction with Europeans, lay at the root of diverse colonial African-American cultures. The authors disagree completely, however, as to whether this cultural "core" was solidified in opposition to Iberian values (i.e. "resistance"), or shaped in large part by adaptation, assimilation, and cross-cultural interaction (i.e. "Atlantic Creole"-ization).

these ships, one hundred and forty (more than eighty-five percent) sailed from Angola.⁵⁹ Linda Heywood and John Thornton have recently used the term “Angola wave” to describe an influx of captives arriving in Anglo and Dutch American colonies during the first half of the seventeenth century; extrapolating from Vila Vilar’s data on shipping to Veracruz, they argue that these forced migrants were predominantly West Central African.⁶⁰ The idea of an “Angola wave” is by no means inappropriate, even within the broader Atlantic context. However, it would be misleading to assume that a data set dominated primarily by voyages to Veracruz accurately reflects the orientation of the entire transatlantic slave trade. In other words, to what extent did the seventeenth-century Angolan wave extend beyond New Spain? Veracruz’s obviously strong connection to Angola, combined with the relative abundance of data for Veracruz compared to other ports, have enabled historians to suggest that “Portuguese slavers primarily transported Angolans to the Americas,” and that “three out of four” or even “ninety percent” of the vessels carrying enslaved Africans to the Americas during the early seventeenth century departed from Angola.⁶¹ While these estimates may well be accurate for Veracruz, our data for Cartagena places the Angola-Veracruz slaving circuit within a larger context, discussed below, in which such broad assertions quickly become untenable.

⁵⁹ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 253-67. I have not included additional vessels listed on page 174 since dates of arrival in Veracruz are unknown.

⁶⁰ Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, ix, 39. See also their excellent and carefully analyzed appendix, “Names of Africans appearing in Early Colonial Records,” 333-59.

⁶¹ Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 21; Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 22; Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, 38-41, 48-49, 109, 160-61, 236; Mendes, “Foundations of the System,” 85.

Overlapping Waves: Chronology and Provenance

Previously unknown and under-utilized source materials for slaving voyages to Cartagena increase our ability to view the colonial Spanish Americas' African-born populations from diasporic and African-centered perspectives, and to contextualize their forced migrations with greater chronological precision. Following Mendes' revision of the early slave trade's volume based on voyage data rather than on licenses and contracts, I argue that the new data for Cartagena allows us to look more deeply into the years from 1570 to 1640, delineating five chronological periods based on slave ship voyage patterns. With the aim of more accurately tracing changes in the slave trade's volume and direction over time, the new periodization outlined below begins with the two decades prior to 1595, then breaks up the traditional era of "Portuguese asientos" (1595-1640) into four additional periods. Such a periodization enables us to isolate the relative importance of Upper Guinea, West Central Africa, and Lower Guinea within the overall slave trade, and to identify two major "waves" of enslaved Africans arriving in the Spanish Caribbean, drawn from multiple provenance zones.⁶²

While Veracruz depended almost exclusively on Angola for its direct supply of enslaved Africans during the first four decades of the seventeenth century, voyage data for Cartagena indicates that Angola and Upper Guinea provided roughly equal shares of captives to the city between 1573 and 1640, and that Cartagena also received a smaller, but significant, wave of captives from Lower Guinea. Slave ships arriving from

⁶² Historians have used the term "waves," in this context, in slightly different ways. Vila Vilar emphasizes chronology, arguing in *Hispanoamérica* that the years 1595 to 1601 represented "the first great wave" (*la primera gran oleada*) of African forced migrants to the Spanish Americas. In a separate article, "Large-Scale Introduction," she portrays the entire period 1595-1640 as the "first great wave of Africans to come to the Spanish Indies." Heywood and Thornton emphasize the numerical predominance of Africans from a certain region—West Central Africa—with less attention to chronological parameters, i.e. an "Angolan wave" during the first half of the seventeenth century. See Vila Vilar, "Introduction," 276; *ibid.*, *Hispanoamérica*, 197, 211; and Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, ix.

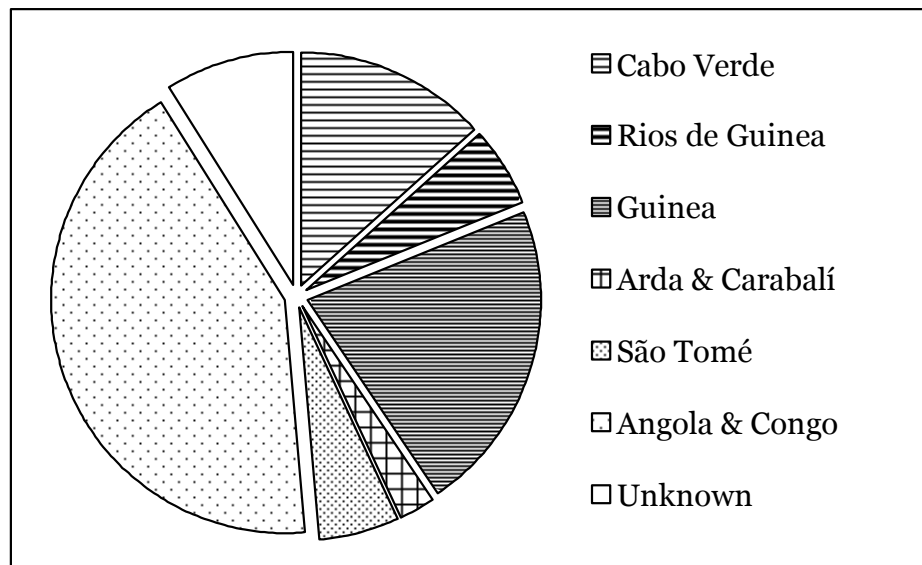


Figure 2.1. African Regions of Departure for 463 Slave Trade Voyages Arriving in Cartagena, 1570-1640

(Source: Appendix B)

“Angola,” including one ship from “Congo,” comprised forty-three percent of the ships known to have arrived in Cartagena during these seven decades. Slave ships arriving from Upper Guinea—that is, the combined total of ships arriving from “Cabo Verde,” the “Rivers of Guinea,” and “Guinea”—constituted an additional forty-one percent of the total. Eight percent of the remaining voyages were from Lower Guinea (mainly from Arda, and one ship from “Carabalí”) or from São Tomé. For nine percent of slave ships arriving in Cartagena, the African port or region of departure remains unknown. While an unknown portion of the captives arriving from São Tomé beyond any doubt originated in West Central Africa, others were drawn from Lower Guinea. However, even if all ships sailing from São Tomé (slightly over five percent) were added to “Angola,” West Central Africa would still have supplied only about forty-eight percent of all slaving

voyages to Cartagena. Voyages of “unknown” provenance could tip the balance slightly farther towards Angola, but at present our best estimate is that Angola provided slightly less than half of all transatlantic slave traffic to Cartagena between 1573 and 1640.

In *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census*, based on the evidence and estimates available to him at the time, Curtin published three small graphs regarding the backgrounds of Spanish America’s African populations during (1) the mid-sixteenth century, and (2) at the very end of the seventeenth century. The first two graphs suggest that Upper Guineans predominated in both Mexico City and Lima in approximately 1550; the third graph shows that by the 1690s, West Central Africans predominated in Mexico.⁶³ Though addressing only limited geographical areas, Curtin’s data hypothesizes a shift at some point which is consistent, in fact, with our slave trade voyage data (see Figure 2.1). During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Spanish Americas received captives from both Upper Guinea and West Central Africa. We do not have extensive notarial or census records for Cartagena allowing us to compare the relative prominence of Upper Guineans and West Central Africans in the city’s African population between 1570 and 1640. However, given that at minimum, approximately 29,000 Upper Guineans and 32,000 West Central Africans were disembarked in Cartagena during these decades (see Appendix B), we might reasonably expect to find a rough balance of Upper Guineans and West Central Africans in Cartagena during these years, particularly during the 1590s, 1600s, and 1610s.

⁶³ Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 111. For Mexico, Curtin’s estimates—and broad conclusions—largely depend on the relatively small data set analyzed by Aguirre Beltrán; see Peter Boyd-Bowman, “Negro Slaves in Early Colonial Mexico,” *The Americas* 26:2 (1969): 139; Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, 157-63. For evidence of a shift towards Congo and Lower Guinea in the late seventeenth century, see Alejandro de la Fuente, “El mercado esclavista habanero, 1580-1699: las armazones de esclavos,” *Revista de Indias* 50:189 (1990): 371-95; and *ibid.*, “Esclavos africanos en La Habana: zonas de procedencia y denominaciones étnicas, 1570-1699,” *Revista Española de Antropología Americana* 20 (1990), 135-60.

It is important to keep in mind that patterns in the slave trade to one region of the Americas did not necessarily hold true for all other regions. Our improved knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena reveals that diasporic “waves” of captives exported from any specific African region did not necessarily fan outwards to various American ports with equal intensity. Until now, the best scholarly assessment of the early transatlantic slave trade from Angola—given the disproportional representation of slave traffic to Veracruz—has been that for the years 1595 to 1640, “the vast majority of the slave trade voyages of identified coastal origin arriving in Veracruz, Mexico, came from Luanda, and a large minority of such voyages to Cartagena de Indias embarked from Luanda as well.” Indeed, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall’s recent study provides a chart which is useful for comparing known slave ship arrivals in Cartagena and Veracruz during the period studied by Vila Vilar.⁶⁴ Table 2.1, below, is a revised and slightly modified table covering the decades 1570 to 1640, and incorporating new data for slave ships known to have arrived in Cartagena. This table alone provides new perspective on the relative importance of the transatlantic slave trade to Veracruz—Spanish America’s second most important slave trade port prior to 1700—and on the slave trade from Angola to the Spanish Americas.

Even in the absence of data for slave trade voyages arriving in Veracruz prior to 1595, it becomes readily apparent that the volume of slave traffic to Cartagena was much larger during the overall period under study.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Angola’s predominance in the traffic to Veracruz exaggerates the region’s importance within the overall trade.

⁶⁴ Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 158-159. See also Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 152.

⁶⁵ See Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 228-29 map insert, “Proporción de llegada de esclavos.”

Table 2.1: Known Slave Trade Voyages to Cartagena & Veracruz
by African Regions of Departure, 1570-1640

(Source: Appendix A)

Place of Departure	Cartagena		Veracruz		Total
Rios de Guinea	26	(96.3 %)	1	(3.7 %)	27
Cape Verde Islands	62	(89.9 %)	7	(10.1 %)	69
Guinea	101	(99.0 %)	1	(1.0 %)	102
São Tomé	25	(65.8 %)	13	(34.2 %)	38
Angola	199	(58.7 %)	140	(41.3 %)	339
Arda & Calabarí	12	(92.3 %)	1	(7.7 %)	13
Unknown	41	(80.4 %)	10	(19.6 %)	51
Total ⁶⁶	463	(72.8 %)	173	(27.2 %)	636

While voyages arriving from Angola made up more than eighty percent of known voyages arriving in Veracruz, they comprised less than half of all voyages arriving in Cartagena. If overall slave ship traffic from both ports is combined, then voyages from Angola constitute fifty-three percent, or slightly over half, of known voyages to both ports. Again, there are at least three factors which may add further weight to the import of the “Angola wave” during the early seventeenth century. These include (1) voyages of unknown provenance, (2) Angola’s share in known traffic from São Tomé, and most significantly, (3) Angola’s share in slave traffic arriving in other ports such as Pernambuco, Bahia, Santo Domingo, etc. At present, however, we can state with certainty that Cartagena and Veracruz had dissimilar relationships to Luanda. During the

⁶⁶ Three ships are known to have stopped in two African ports or regions prior to arrival in Cartagena. While these voyages are double-counted within the row for each region, they are subtracted from Cartagena’s total.

years under study, both Veracruz and Cartagena received more slave ships from Angola than from any other single region (even when Cabo Verde, the Rivers of Guinea, and Guinea are combined). Unlike Veracruz, however, Cartagena did not acquire enslaved Africans almost exclusively from Angola. The tremendous disparity in the number of voyages to Veracruz and Cartagena from the Cape Verde Islands and Upper Guinea (see Figure 2.2) provides another example of the uneven flow of captives to different American ports; this disparity is likely to be diminished only slightly if historians obtain further information on slave ships arriving in Veracruz prior to 1595.

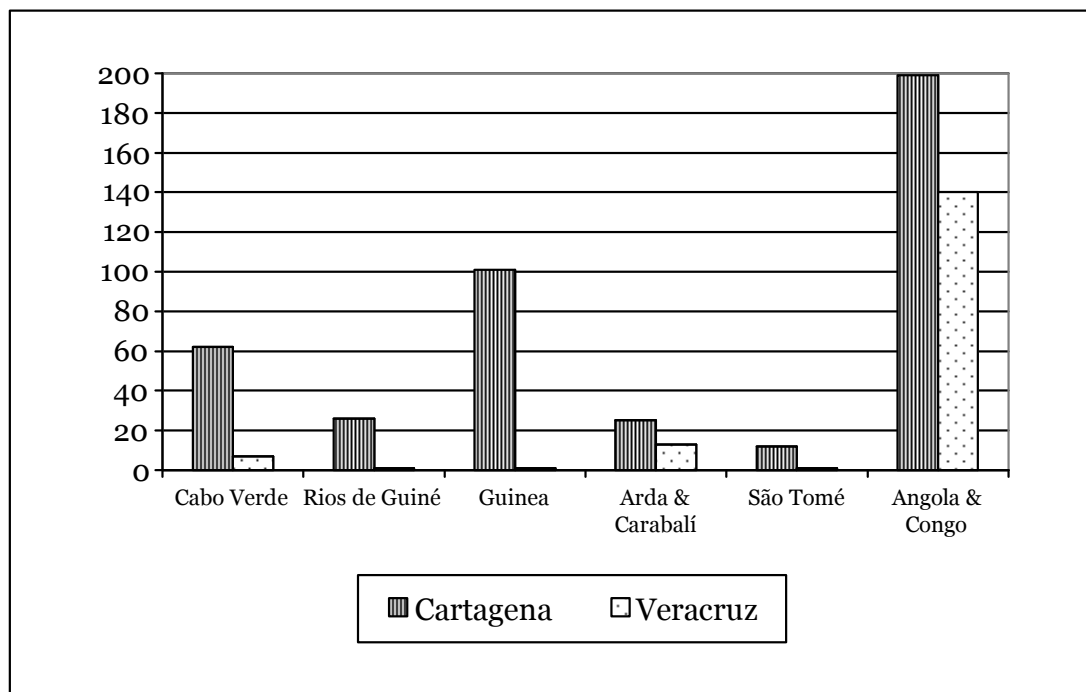


Figure 2.2. Known Slave Trade Voyages Arriving in Cartagena & Veracruz by African Regions of Departure, 1570-1640

(Source: Table 2.1)

A New Periodization for the Slave Trade to Cartagena de Indias

Attention to changes over time in the slave trade to Cartagena reveals significant fluctuations in the number of slave ships arrived, or captives disembarked, from each of the major African provenance zones. Given the volume and geographical range of the transatlantic slave trade to this city alone during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Cartagena's slave traffic represents a model against which the slave trade to Veracruz and other American ports during the same years may be measured. Table 2.2, below, divides known slave ship arrivals in Cartagena into five major chronological periods, sorting the voyages into columns depending on their African ports or regions of departure. This periodization reveals two nine-year surges in the transatlantic slave trade, each followed by a fifteen-year period of relative decline in the trade's overall volume. Within this pattern, we see a shift over time from Upper Guinea to Angola, though in Cartagena, the shift was much more gradual than previously imagined. For the purpose of comparison, the numbers of slave ships from each provenance zone known to have arrived in Cartagena are followed by those arriving in Veracruz during the same period; known voyages from Cartagena and Veracruz are separated by a forward slash (/).

During the first chronological period, 1573 to 1592, the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena was completely dominated by vessels arriving from Upper Guinea. Literally thirty-five of the thirty-eight known voyages for these two decades departed from either Cabo Verde, the Rivers of Guinea, or "Guinea," with only two ships arriving from Angola, and one additional ship from São Tomé. Further research on the slave trade to Veracruz and various other ports during the decades prior to 1595 should provide additional evidence of enslaved Upper Guineans disembarked in circum-Caribbean port

Table 2.2. Known Slave Trade Voyages to Cartagena / Veracruz
by Date of Arrival & African Regions of Departure, 1570-1640

(Source: Appendix A)

	Cabo Verde	Rios de Guinea	Guinea	São Tomé	Arda & Calabari	Angola & Congo	Unknown	Total
1573-1592 ⁶⁷	13 / 0	2 / 0	20 / 0	1 / 0	0 / 0	2 / 0	4 / 0	42 / 0
1593-1601 ⁶⁸	29 / 2	16 / 0	22 / 1	9 / 1	1 / 0	51 / 18	22 / 5	149 / 27
1602-1616	6 / 4	3 / 1	10 / 0	1 / 11	0 / 0	13 / 43	6 / 3	39 / 62
1617-1625 ⁶⁹	9 / 0	3 / 0	28 / 0	12 / 1	11 / 1	72 / 51	4 / 0	137 / 53
1626-1640	5 / 1	2 / 0	21 / 0	2 / 0	0 / 0	61 / 28	5 / 2	96 / 31
Total ⁷⁰	62 / 7	26 / 1	101 / 1	25 / 13	12 / 1	199 / 140	41 / 10	463 / 173

cities. As Vila Vilar has pointed out, several vessels sailing from Angola landed captives in Santo Domingo during the 1620s; a closer examination of the slave trade to Santo Domingo and other Caribbean ports during the preceding decades should reveal connections to Upper Guinea as well.⁷¹ Royal officials' correspondence indicates that

⁶⁷ Thus far we have no information on slave ship voyages

⁶⁸ One ship arriving in Cartagena in 1600 (TSTD 29098) sailed from both Arda (Lapeyre) and São Tomé (other sources); the ship is counted in both columns but only once in the 1595-1601 total.

⁶⁹ One ship arriving in 1618 (TSTD 28166 / 40720) stopped in both Arda and Angola before disembarking captives in Cartagena; the ship is counted in both columns but included only once in the 1617-1625 total. Another ship (TSTD 28195 / 29945) sailed to Cartagena from "Carabali" via São Tomé. This ship, likewise, is counted in both columns but only once in the 1621 total.

⁷⁰ Total numbers for Cartagena from each African region include three double-counted ships (see notes above), but these are subtracted from the combined total number of voyages (thus 463 total instead of 466).

⁷¹ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 278-79; compare with 254-55.

vessels sailing from Upper Guinea and São Tomé disembarked enslaved Africans in and around Santo Domingo during the 1570s and 1580s. In this case our information is limited, due to the fact that some of these voyages were completely unauthorized; however, some can be partially reconstructed. For example, Santo Domingo's royal officials cited the unauthorized arrival of the ship "La Conçepçion, *maestre* Miguel Geronimo, which arrived with slaves from the Rivers of Guinea" in November 1584.⁷² They also noted the arrival of the "San Pedro," which entered the city's port in late March of 1586, captained by Joan Nuñez. The latter ship landed "one hundred and sixty-six black slaves from the Rivers of Guinea"; four captives had died during the ocean crossing, and another five had died shortly after the ship arrived.⁷³

The second chronological period, corresponding to Vila Vilar's "first great wave," represents an unprecedented and relatively sudden surge of African forced migrants to the Caribbean. An average of sixteen or seventeen slave ships per year entered Cartagena alone between 1593 and 1601, disembarking a minimum of more than 25,000 enslaved Africans in the city in the space of just nine years.⁷⁴ Known slave ship arrivals for Cartagena absolutely dwarf those for Veracruz during these years. With no less than sixty-seven vessels arriving in Cartagena from the Cape Verde Islands, the Rivers of Guinea, and "Guinea" combined, Upper Guinea provided nearly half of the Caribbean's "first great wave." Though only two slave ships from Angola are known to have arrived in Cartagena prior to 1593, a boom in the transatlantic slave trade from West Central Africa—fifty ships from Angola, and a single ship from "Congo"—accounted for slightly

⁷² AGI-SD 74, R.3, s/n (between 131 & 132), "Autos y denunciaçion del navio nonbrado La Conçepçion *maestre* Miguel Geronimo que vino con esclavos de los Rios de Guinea," Santo Domingo, 29 nov 1584.

⁷³ AGI-SD 74, R.3, n.138, Oficiales reales de la isla Española a S.M., Santo Domingo, 25 mayo 1587. This voyage was apparently legally registered, pertaining to the Álvaro Mendez de Castro *asiento*.

⁷⁴ Calculated from Appendices A and B.

more than one third of the 1593-1601 surge. The years 1595 and 1601, in particular, stand out as the only years prior to the 1620s in which vessels from Angola comprised more than half of all slave trade voyages entering Cartagena. Nine ships arriving during this period departed from São Tomé; and one additional ship made stops in both Arda and São Tomé prior to disembarking captives in Cartagena. Significantly, the voyage from Arda indicates that slave ships from São Tomé were supplying some captives from Lower Guinea to the Spanish Caribbean during this period; as for the other voyages from São Tomé, we have no evidence of whether the captives disembarked in Cartagena were drawn from West Central Africa or Lower Guinea.

Thus Upper Guinea and Angola supplied the bulk of this first wave of captives to Cartagena between 1593 and 1601. Lower Guineans may have numbered significantly among the minimum 25,000 captives forcibly displaced to the Spanish Caribbean port city, but our data for voyages from São Tomé is mostly inconclusive in this regard. While Cartagena received more captives from Upper Guinea than from any other African region during these years, vessels arriving from Angola clearly predominated in Veracruz. The slave trade to Veracruz is often interpreted as a function of a high demand for slaves in Mexico City. However, given the relatively small volume of slave traffic to Veracruz during this period, it is now possible to analyze New Spain's connection to Angola as the result of slave merchants' search for secondary markets which were less saturated, and less competitive, than Cartagena. If African ports of departure for both Cartagena and Veracruz are combined for the years 1593-1601, voyages from Upper Guinea (seventy ships) and Angola (sixty-nine ships) are almost perfectly balanced, with

each region comprising roughly forty percent of all voyages known to have contributed to “the first great wave” to both ports.

Immediately following the period of intense slave trafficking between 1593 and 1601, the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena experienced a drastic downturn, lasting from 1602 to 1616. During this fifteen-year interlude, only thirty-nine vessels are known to have disembarked African captives in the city. As noted above, there are significant gaps in our source materials for the first decade of the seventeenth century, and despite the multiple complaints voiced by Cartagena’s royal officials, their letters and other sources indicate the arrivals of several slave ships for which we have only partial information. Even for those ships included here, some of our information is spotty. For example, African ports of departure are presently unknown for any of the four slave ships that arrived in Cartagena in 1614, and the numbers of captives disembarked are unknown for thirteen vessels arriving in the city between 1609 and 1614. For slave trade voyages with known African regions of departure, the portion of the trade from each major provenance zone remained roughly the same as in the previous period. Upper Guinea provided nineteen ships, or roughly half of all slave trade voyages to Cartagena; another thirteen ships sailed from Angola, representing one third of known voyages during these years. An additional ship arrived from São Tomé, and African ports of departure for the remaining six voyages are unknown.

As noted by Mendes, we still know very little of the circumstances causing “the rapid rise and then decline of Veracruz as a rival for Cartagena in the first quarter of the seventeenth century,” other than that there was clearly a shift in slave traffic, at least in

terms of volume, from Cartagena to Veracruz.⁷⁵ This shift, however, appears to have been limited mainly to slave trade voyages from Angola and São Tomé; voyages from Upper Guinea appear to have simply dropped off sharply during this period. Further research on other port cities may reveal that slave traffic from Upper Guinea shifted away from Cartagena to some other region during the same period. At present, our data for Cartagena and Veracruz combined suggests that Angola's share in the total slave trade increased during the years 1602 to 1616, a period in which the overall volume of the transatlantic slave trade from each major provenance zone declined.

The fourth major chronological period suggested by patterns in slave ship arrivals to Cartagena is a second "great wave," another surge of African forced migrants landed in Cartagena from 1617 to 1625. Much like the previous surge, one hundred and thirty-seven vessels disembarked more than 25,000 enslaved Africans in Cartagena during a period of just nine years.⁷⁶ This second surge corresponds to the years in which Alonso de Sandoval wrote and published the tract *De instauranda Aethiopum Salute*. According to Sandoval, twelve to fourteen slave ships entered Cartagena every year, each carrying from three hundred to more than six hundred captives.⁷⁷ Voyage data indicates that Sandoval in fact under-estimated the number of slave ships arriving on a yearly basis for this period; from 1617 to 1625, an average of fifteen slave ships entered Cartagena's port each year, with no less than twenty-one slave ships arriving in the year 1620 alone. If Sandoval's estimate of three hundred to six hundred captives on board each ship was not

⁷⁵ Mendes, "Foundations," 86.

⁷⁶ Source: Appendices A and B. Several voyages to Cartagena embarked captives in other ports as well; we may presume that voyages which carried unknown numbers of captives more than made up for the numbers of captives disembarked in other ports during this period.

⁷⁷ Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud* [originally published as *De instauranda Aethiopum Salute* (Seville, 1627)], ed. Enriqueta Vila Vilar (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1987), 151. See also Alonso de Sandoval, *Treatise on Slavery: Selections from De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, ed. and trans. Nicole von Germeten (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 2008), 55-59.

exaggerated, then Cartagena would have received between 41,000 and 82,000 captives during these nine years alone. Voyage data for this period—drawn largely from royal officials’ accounts—is exceptionally rich, and we have information on the number of captives disembarked for nearly all of the known voyages. Our data suggests a much lower number of captives disembarked, averaging roughly one hundred and ninety captives per ship. Two factors, both of which seem very plausible, explain this disparity between royal officials’ figures and Sandoval’s estimates. On one hand, Sandoval may have greatly exaggerated the number of enslaved Africans arriving on slave ships as a rhetorical and literary device, in order to incite “great pity and compassion” in his audience. On the other hand, as noted earlier, Cartagena’s officials took advantage of their position to enrich themselves and their associates through the slave trade. Surely, in many cases, they knowingly concealed information regarding the arrival of much larger numbers of captives.⁷⁸ Agents employed by the slave merchant Manuel Bautista Pérez composed several account books during the first half of the seventeenth century which are so detailed that “they even include bribes paid to royal officials.”⁷⁹

Analysis of the African ports of departure for slave trade voyages known to have arrived in Cartagena during this second surge, from approximately 1617 to 1625, point towards two significant changes in the overall movement of the transatlantic slave trade. Perhaps most importantly, Upper Guinea, West Central Africa, and Lower Guinea each contributed to the re-intensified flow of African forced migrants arriving in Cartagena. In addition to Sandoval’s descriptions of enslaved Africans from each of the three major

⁷⁸ For examples of slave ships known to have disembarked more than four hundred captives during this period, see TSTD 29444, 28135/29569, 28180/29542, 28183/29953, 29593, 29317, and 29318.

⁷⁹ Quote from Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 141. See also Bowser, *African Slave*, 56; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 166-67.

provenance zones, a variety of sources provide supporting evidence for the transatlantic slave trade's reliance on all three provenance zones during this period. Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, who visited the Americas between 1608 and 1622, wrote that “there is much commerce in this city and port” of Cartagena, including “ten or twelve slave ships arriving every year” from Angola, “and almost as many again from Cabo Verde, and the rivers of Guinea.”⁸⁰ Royal officials in Santa Fe, writing in 1622, were somewhat more specific:

“The black slaves that are brought to Cartagena and sold are of three types – the first and most esteemed are those of the Rivers of Guinea, who are also called *de ley*. They have different names, and their common price is 200 *pesos* of assayed silver. The second type is that of the Ardas or Ararás. These are brought with least frequency, and are sold at 160 *ducados* of 11 *reales*. The third and worst is that of the Angolas and Congos, who are infinitely numerous in their lands, and who commonly sell for 150 *ducados* each.”⁸¹

Slave trade voyage data shows that while the majority of all slave trade voyages to Cartagena continued to arrive from Upper Guinea and Angola, at least ten slave ships sailed directly from Arda to Cartagena, transporting a combined total of more than 2,000 captives; an eleventh ship arriving in Cartagena had made stops in both São Tomé and Carabalí. Lower Guineans probably figured prominently as well among the captives transported to Cartagena on an additional twelve ships arriving from São Tomé during the same years.

The increasing importance of slave traffic from Angola represents a second new pattern in the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena between 1617 and 1625. During this period, the second slave trade “boom,” a total of seventy-two ships departing from

⁸⁰ Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y descripción de las Indias occidentales*, ed. Balbino Velásco Bayón (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1969), 220.

⁸¹ AGI-SF 52, n.172a, Carta de Miguel Corcuera y Baltasar Pérez Bernal sobre el ofrecimiento que ha hecho el capitán Alonso Turrillo de llevar negros a Cartagena, Santa Fe, 27 junio 1622, folio 5r.

Angola constituted more than half (fifty-two percent) of all slave trade voyages arriving in Cartagena. During the same years, only forty slave ships—slightly less than one third of known voyages—arrived from Upper Guinea. These years represent a turning point in which Upper Guinea’s predominance in the slave trade to Cartagena was clearly fading, to be replaced by increased slave traffic from Angola. From 1573 to 1592, Upper Guinea provided the vast majority of slave ships arriving in Cartagena. In the following two chronological periods (1593-1601 and 1602-1616), approximately half of all known slave trade voyages arriving in Cartagena departed from Upper Guinea, while slave ships from Angola accounted for roughly one third of the traffic. During the years 1617 to 1625, although Upper Guinea continued to export captives and Lower Guinea contributed as well, for the first time Angola decisively surpassed Upper Guinea as the major provenance zone supplying captives to Cartagena. Angola’s importance is magnified by our knowledge of additional ships arriving in Veracruz and Santo Domingo during the same years.⁸²

The most salient features of the fifth and final chronological period, spanning the years from 1626 to 1640, are a substantial decrease in the volume of the slave trade, and the continued rise of Angola as the major provenance zone for the transatlantic slave trade, both for Cartagena alone and for the overall trade to the Spanish Caribbean region. The number of vessels disembarking captives in Cartagena declined after 1625, but remained steady at approximately nine or ten vessels per year, on average, until 1632. We have no indication that any slave ship arrived in Cartagena during the years 1633, 1634, or 1635, and the number of ships arriving in Cartagena during the rest of the decade grew fewer and fewer, from eleven ships in 1636, to just one known slave ship

⁸² Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 173-74, 260-65, 278-79.

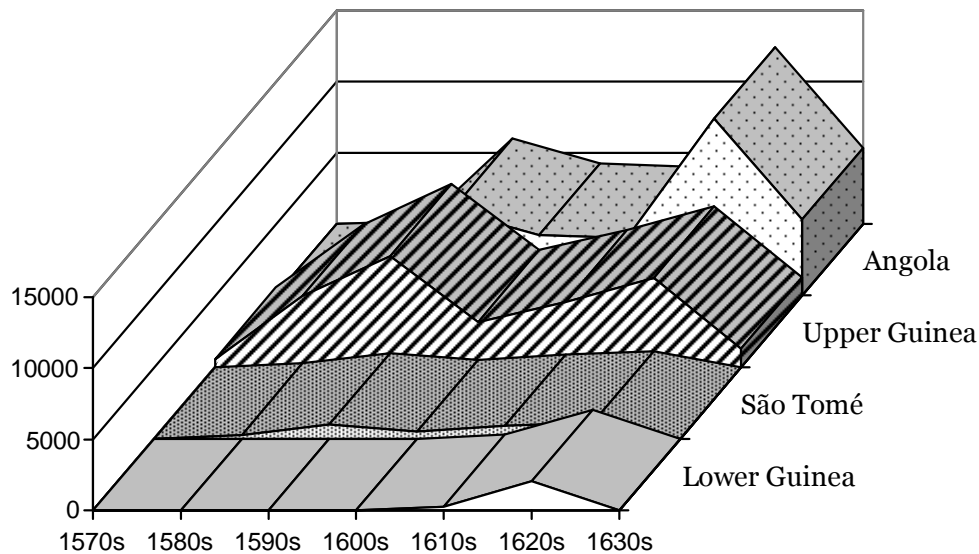


Figure 2.3. "Waves" of Captives Disembarked in Cartagena by African Regions of Departure, 1570-1640, by Decade

(Source: Appendix B)

arriving in 1640. Angola supplied two thirds (sixty-four percent) of the voyages arriving in Cartagena between 1626 and 1640; in this regard, these years represent the height of "the Angola wave" in Cartagena (though compared with earlier decades, this fifth period actually saw a decrease in the sheer number of known voyages from Angola to Cartagena – the same may be said of voyages from Angola to Veracruz). No ships departing from Lower Guinea are known to have arrived in Cartagena between 1626 and 1640, and only two ships arrived from São Tomé. Upper Guinea continued to provide roughly one third of all voyages to Cartagena until 1632, at which point the flow of African captives from the region was reduced to a trickle, averaging less than one ship per year. Only the year 1629 stands out as an anomaly; in this year, five of the nine ships arriving in Cartagena

were from Upper Guinea, and only four sailed from from Angola. As in each of the previous three periods, voyage data from Veracruz augments Angola's importance within the overall slave trade. Vessels departing from Angola constitute a full seventy percent of all slave trade voyages known to have arrived in Cartagena and Veracruz combined from 1626 to 1640.

Conclusion

When we ascribe far-reaching significance to patterns derived from Mexican sources alone, or when we presume from limited evidence that one particular African region dominated the entire transatlantic slave trade during a given period, we run the risk of oversimplifying a historical phenomenon which was at once both expansive and complex.⁸³ Like other early modern mercantile networks, the slave trade depended heavily on individual connections between family members, dependents, and employees. It involved intricate webs of kinship, credit, debt, trust, service, and obligation linking hundreds if not thousands of administrators, factors, merchants, ship captains, and go-betweens in dozens of ports around the globe.⁸⁴ This conglomeration of interests connected specific individuals in American ports to specific individuals in African ports; we still know extremely little of the men and women who operated the slave trade “on the ground,” in ports on either side of the Atlantic during the late sixteenth and early

⁸³ My thoughts here have been influenced by Morgan's argument that the exclusive pairing of one American port with one African port is a form of homogenization which historians would do well to resist. See Philip D. Morgan, “The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Destinations and New World Developments,” *SA* 18:1 (1997): 122-45, especially 131-34.

⁸⁴ See, for example, Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation Upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Antonio García de León, “La malla inconclusa: Veracruz y los circuitos comerciales lusitanos en la primera mitad del siglo XVII,” in *Redes sociales e instituciones comerciales en el imperio español, siglos XVII a XIX*, eds. Antonio Ibarra y Guillermina del Valle Pavón (México, D.F.: Instituto Mora, 2007), 41-83.

seventeenth centuries. It is these networks, rather than contracts penned in Lisbon, or slave licenses allotted in Seville, which hold the key to understanding the actual movement of enslaved Africans to the colonial Americas.

One of the most significant findings of the present study is that the enslaved Africans arriving in the Spanish Caribbean during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were not as homogenous as one might assume based on evidence from Mexican or Peruvian sources alone. Within the period addressed here, most enslaved Africans arriving in the Caribbean prior to 1593 were transported from Upper Guinea, and most who arrived after 1629 were brought from West Central Africa. During the intervening years, the flows of captives from both regions overlapped, and were accompanied by a smaller wave of captives from Lower Guinea. Systematic analysis of the transatlantic slave trade to additional ports in the circum-Caribbean, including Veracruz, should eventually provide a better idea of the geographic distribution of various Upper Guinean peoples in diaspora during the 1570s, 1580s, 1590s, and the early seventeenth century.⁸⁵ At the same time, future scholarship on the slave trade to Bahia, Pernambuco, and Buenos Aires, as well as the various circum-Caribbean ports, may provide further confirmation of Angola's primacy among African regions exporting captives to the Americas, perhaps even before 1620.

The “numbers game”—i.e. the effort to quantify the numbers of slave trade voyages arriving in Cartagena from various African ports of departure, or to estimate the number of captives landed—has already proven useful above and beyond estimating

⁸⁵ For example, Vázquez de Espinosa, who visited the Americas between 1608 and 1622, wrote that “many slave ships, brought by Portuguese from Cabo Verde and the Rivers,” arrived in La Villa de la Vega, Jamaica, where captives were rested and refreshed before being taken to other ports such as New Spain or Cartagena. See Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio*, 82. See also Juan Manuel Pacheco, *Los Jesuitas en Colombia*, tomo I (Bogotá: Editorial San Juan Eudes, 1959), 91.

basic patterns in the flow of the transatlantic slave trade.⁸⁶ Knowing at least the broadly-construed African regions of departure for large numbers of captives disembarked in Spanish Caribbean ports during specific chronological periods can help us to better understand the lives and experiences of the diverse African women, men, and children who played such important roles in the formation and evolution of Spanish Caribbean society. Furthermore, the patterns revealed by analysis of slave trade voyage data can tremendously enrich our possibilities for interpreting source materials which, all too often, portray African-born forced migrants in homogenous categories such as “blacks” or “slaves.” As the following chapters demonstrate, however, not all extant Caribbean source materials portray Africans in such anonymous terms.

⁸⁶ David Eltis and David Richardson, “The ‘Numbers Game’ and Routes to Slavery,” *SA* 18:1 (1997): 1-15. See also Eltis’s argument about Europeans’ cultural attitudes towards slavery, which he bases largely on quantitative analysis of slave trade voyage data, in David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

CHAPTER III

SLAVES AND SETTLERS: A SPANISH CARIBBEAN PEASANTRY

According to prevalent interpretations of early colonial Caribbean history, enslaved Africans were initially brought to the region to replace declining Indian populations on sugar estates and mines. After a brief “false start” in Española (Hispaniola), due to a series of problems, the Spanish Caribbean’s sugar plantations failed to prosper, leaving the region to stagnate as a “backwater” until the rise of the plantation system in the late eighteenth century. The Caribbean is characterized in the most general terms as a string of “exploitation colonies” or “non-settler societies.”¹ The main problem with this narrative is that it leaves vast expanses of time completely unaccounted for, attributing static sets of experiences and motives to “blacks,” “Indians,” and “Spaniards,” with relatively few exceptions.² Over and over again, one finds sugar plantation models anachronistically super-imposed onto early colonial Caribbean societies about which very little, in fact, is actually known. While local and transplanted

¹ See, for example, Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969): 15-49, 95-126; Sidney W. Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (Chicago: Aldine, 1974), 35,46, 51-56, 72, 83-86; Franklin W. Knight, *The African Dimension in Latin American Societies* (New York: Macmillan, 1974); and *ibid.*, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), 137-39; Henry Kamen, *Empire: How Spain Became a World Power, 1492-1763* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 139.

² Historians have expressed some interest in the rural sixteenth-century Caribbean as a world inhabited simultaneously by Amerindians and Africans, though this world, too, has largely been imagined in opposition to a social order dominated by “whites.” See Carl Orwin Sauer, *The Early Spanish Main* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 212; Lynne A. Guitar, “Cultural Genesis: Relationships among Indians, Africans, and Spaniards in Rural Hispaniola, First Half of the Sixteenth Century” (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1998); Antonino Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias y la región histórica del Caribe, 1580-1640* (Seville: C.S.I.C., E.E.H.A., Universidad de Sevilla, Diputación de Sevilla, 2002), 209-38.

Amerindian groups were visibly present in the Caribbean well into the early seventeenth century, the region's native populations were devastated to an even greater extent than those of Mexico or Peru, never to fully recover.³ Copious source materials for the late sixteenth century depict Africans and Afrocreoles engaged in numerous occupations, including some labors previously carried out by Amerindians. Instead of *encomienda* Indians providing tributary service or valuable goods, one finds constant references to rural farms, gardens, and ranches worked by “negros” and “mulatos.” Rather than cultivating sugar or mining for gold—the two occupations most frequently emphasized by historians—these “black” men and women are usually portrayed herding livestock, clearing fields, harvesting plaintains, chopping timber, producing cassava, marketing food, boiling water to extract salt, and paddling canoes. In short, source materials for the post-conquest Caribbean reveal that Africans and their descendents performed a host of agricultural activities related to the production and transportation of food crops and livestock.

Our knowledge of the Spanish Caribbean during the late fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries remains by and large limited to the extent that it serves as a precursor for the rise of late colonial sugar plantations. Descriptions of the Caribbean's rural population as homogenous black slaves tied to the production of export crops are part and parcel of the larger myth of the region as a timeless sugar plantation. As noted by Alejandro de la Fuente, exclusive emphasis on “the period that corresponds to the rise

³ For a concise overview, see Linda A. Newson, “The Demographic Impact of Colonization,” in *CEHLA I*: 143-84. See also *The Native Population of the Americas in 1492*, 2nd ed., ed. William M. Deneven (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992); *The Indigenous People of the Caribbean*, ed. Samuel M. Wilson (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997); Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Stanley L. Engerman, “A Population History of the Caribbean,” in *A Population History of North America*, eds. Michael R. Haines and Richard H. Steckel (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 483-528.

and expansion of the slave-based, export-oriented plantation complex that developed [...] at the end of the eighteenth century” greatly hinders our ability to understand Cuba’s colonial past—and, we might add, that of the larger region—in any other way.⁴ Three centuries of Africans’ presence in the Spanish Caribbean will remain “lost,” as long as the early modern era is treated simply as a prelude to the plantation era. Nearly fifty years ago, Rolando Mellafe observed that African contributions to agricultural development in the colonial Spanish Americas may be divided into two major categories: (1) “subsistence agriculture, destined to sustain local American populations and inter-American commerce,” and (2) the production of tropical crops for export, with the second category gaining importance towards the end of the colonial period.⁵ Several studies extend our knowledge of agricultural slave labor in the late colonial Caribbean beyond the boundaries of the sugar plantation complex, addressing rival export crops (i.e. coffee, indigo, cotton) and Jamaican “pens” which complemented sugar cultivation by raising livestock for local use.⁶ But we do not yet have corresponding studies of rural slavery and agricultural production in the centuries prior to the plantation era. Surely the roles played by enslaved and free people of color in sustaining Spanish Caribbean

⁴ Alejandro de la Fuente, “Sugar and Slavery in Early Colonial Cuba,” in *Tropical Babels: Sugar and the Making of the Atlantic World, 1450-1680*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 115-57.

⁵ Rolando Mellafe, *La esclavitud en Hispanoamérica* (Buenos Aires: EUDEBA, 1964), 73-75. See also María Cristina Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo de la esclavitud en Colombia, siglos XVI y XVII* (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2005), 162.

⁶ See especially Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995 [Havana: Jesús Montero, 1940]); and *Slavery Without Sugar: Diversity in Caribbean Economy and Society Since the 17th Century*, ed. Verene A. Shepherd (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002). See also B. J. Barickman, *A Bahian Counterpoint: Sugar, Tobacco, Cassava, and Slavery in the Recôncavo, 1780-1860* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). Barickman goes a step further, revealing the interdependence of export crop plantations and the production of foodstuffs (namely cassava) for local sustenance. The extent to which this Bahian example may be applied to the late colonial Caribbean is unclear, however, given the relative scarcity of available land on the islands.

populations during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries merit consideration in their own right.

The traditional, grand narrative of Europe's colonization of the Americas, conceived as a series of interactions between "white settlers," "red Indians," and "black slaves," represents a second, mythical model which obscures the presence of Africans and their descendents in the rural Spanish Caribbean prior to the late colonial era. The greatest flaw in the "white settler / red Indian / black slave" framework is the automatic pairing of racial categories with categories of legal, social, and occupational status. Overlooking, for the present, the equally problematic assumptions that all "Indians" were "red," or that all "slaves" were "black," this chapter musters evidence for rejecting the over-simplified notion that "settlers" ("colonists," etc.) were necessarily "white" or European, particularly in the context of the early colonial Spanish Caribbean. The English-language term "settler" has no direct translation into Spanish; the words closest in meaning to the English verb "to settle" are *fortificar* ("to fortify") and *poblar* ("to people").⁷ Patricia Seed shows that the very concept of establishing a colony differed widely among various European powers during the Americas' first two centuries of colonization. "Settlement," she notes, was "the dominant *English* image of entitlement and right to rule," typically associated with the establishment of houses and gardens, as well as fences and other boundary markers.⁸ Recent scholarship on conquest-era Latin America demonstrates that black men, both free and enslaved, actively participated in the

⁷ P.E.H. Hair, trans. and ed., *To Defend Your Empire and the Faith: Advice on a Global Strategy Offered c.1590 to Philip, King of Spain and Portugal, by Manoel de Andrada Castel Blanco* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1990), 262-63.

⁸ Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), especially pages 16-40, 177. Italics added for emphasis.

conquests of the Caribbean, Mexico, and Florida.⁹ We also know that by the late eighteenth century, free people of color comprised a powerful planter class in some parts of Saint-Domingue.¹⁰ Our understanding of the terms “conquistador” and “planter” have thus been complicated and expanded to include *black* conquistadors and *mulatto* planters. Yet the notion of white “settlers” persists, providing a conceptual shortcut around more nuanced understandings of the past, a means of imagining European colonization of the Americas in the stark, racial terms of the twentieth century.

Spain’s widespread reliance on Africans and their descendants rather than “white settlers” to populate, fortify, and sustain its Caribbean colonies problematizes such clear-cut racial analysis of the colonial social order. In Castile, as in much of the early modern world, death rates were typically higher than birth rates; for this reason, “towns and cities required a continuous influx of newcomers in order to maintain existing population levels, let alone grow.”¹¹ In the colonial Americas, these newcomers were frequently forced migrants from sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, a comparison of the volume of the transatlantic slave trade with that of voluntary immigration from Europe to the Americas indicates that already by 1650, “Africans were the majority of new settlers in the new Atlantic world.”¹² It is difficult to overstate Africans’ significance in “Old World”

⁹ Ricardo E. Alegría, *Juan Garrido, el conquistador negro en las Antillas, Florida, México y California c. 1503-1540* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, 1990); Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 7-16; Matthew Restall, “Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America,” *Americas* 57:2 (Oct 2000): 171-205.

¹⁰ John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963 [originally published 1938]), 36-44, 163-73.

¹¹ David E. Vassberg, *The Village and the Outside World in Golden Age Castile: Mobility and Migration in Everyday Rural Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 74. For consideration of similar dynamics in the context of eighteenth-century Jamaica, see Vincent Brown, *The Reaper’s Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2008).

¹² David Eltis, “Free and Coerced Transatlantic Migrations: Some Comparisons,” *AHR* 88:2 (1983): 251-80; quote from John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, 2nd ed

migration to the Caribbean, in particular. Castilian “*chapelones*” (ruddy-cheeked, new arrivals) clearly preferred New Spain and Peru to the Caribbean, owing perhaps to their discomfort with humid, coastal environments, or to a perception of relatively fewer opportunities for economic advancement.¹³ During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the “first great waves” of African forced migrants discussed in the previous chapter comprised the vast majority of the Caribbean’s Old World population, heavily outnumbering voluntary immigrants authorized to travel from Seville to the Caribbean during the same period.¹⁴

In addition to its connections with forced migration, slavery was linked to agricultural production in Africa during the same period in which enslaved Africans comprised the bulk of transatlantic migrants to the Spanish Caribbean. In various precolonial, Western African societies—for example, among the Bullom / Sherbro in Upper Guinea, in the Wolof kingdoms of Senegambia, in Songhay along the Middle Niger, in the kingdom of Borno farther east, and in the West Central African kingdom of Kongo—slaves were “settled” in villages, along rivers, and in fertile areas to “farm the land.” Agricultural slave labor was directed towards sustenance in European and Euro-

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 14. See also Patrick Manning, “African Connections with American Colonization,” in *CEHLA*, I: 43-71.

¹³ Peter Boyd-Bowman, “Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies, 1579-1600,” *Americas* 33:1 (July 1976): 78-95; Ida Altman, *Emigrants and Society: Extremadura and Spanish America in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 168-73; Jane Landers, “*Cimarrón* and Citizen: African Ethnicity, Corporate Identity, and the Evolution of Free Black Towns in the Spanish Circum-Caribbean,” in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Jane Landers and Barry Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 120-21; Elinor G. K. Melville, “Land Use and the Transformation of the Environment,” in *CEHLA*, I: 111-26; Newson, “Demographic Impact,” 152-61.

¹⁴ A systematic comparison of the transatlantic slave trade and *Pasajeros de Indias* remains to be done. See Boyd-Bowman, “Patterns”; Newson, “Demographic Impact,” 152-56; Auke Pieter Jacobs, “Legal and Illegal Emigration from Seville, 1550-1650,” in “*To Make America*”: *European Emigration in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Ida Altman and James Horn (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 59-84; and Pablo E. Pérez-Mallaína, *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*, trans. Carla Rahn Phillips (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 25, 27, 54-62, 90-92, 103, 118-19, 215-16.

African communities as well; Lovejoy notes that “some slaves [...] worked on farms to supply ships and the European outposts” along the continent’s western and southern coasts.¹⁵ Iberian residents of the Cape Verde Islands during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries preferred imported Mediterranean staples such as wheat flour, olive oil, and wine, but the islands’ African population subsisted on maize, sorghum, and rice imported from the adjacent mainland, the “Rivers of Guinea.”¹⁶ While São Tomé is often portrayed as the prototypical Atlantic “sugar island,” its enslaved population has been described as “self-sufficient” during the early sixteenth century, due to their cultivation of yams, maize, wheat, sorghum, and taro, and their labor on pig farms. Meanwhile in Elmina, across the Gulf of Guinea, Portuguese soldiers bought produce and poultry “at the local market,” and obtained bread made from “millet purchased locally from black farmers.”¹⁷ In West Central Africa during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, enslaved rural workers produced crops to sustain major population centers including not only Mbanza Kongo (São Salvador), but also the Portuguese village of Luanda.¹⁸ Even this cursory glance at African history suggests that Africans’ roles as agricultural laborers in the early colonial Caribbean built on long-established precedents and contemporary trends in precolonial Africa. Given the exchange of food crops in both

¹⁵ Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 32-35, 42-43, 117-21, 128, 133-35.

¹⁶ Maria Manuel Torrão, *Dietas Alimentares: Transferências e Adaptações nas Ilhas de Cabo Verde, 1460-1540* (Lisboa: Ministério do Planeamento e da Administração do Território, IICT, CEHCA, 1995).

¹⁷ Robert Garfield, *A History of São Tomé Island, 1470-1655: The Key to Guinea* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992), 30-32, 73, 84; John Vogt, *Portuguese Rule on the Gold Coast, 1469-1682* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 49-50.

¹⁸ John K. Thornton, *The Kingdom of Kongo: Civil War and Transition, 1641-1718* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 28-37, 70, 91; Anne Hilton, *The Kingdom of Kongo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 5-6, 78-79, 107-08, 139.

directions, some forms of agricultural labor may have developed simultaneously in both Africa and the Caribbean.¹⁹

With these African precedents and patterns of coerced migration in mind, this chapter analyzes the early colonial Spanish Caribbean's rural and semi-rural black populations, offering concrete evidence of Africans' roles in the region's colonization and "settlement." By the 1570s, enslaved men and women, as well as a significant number of free people of color, formed the backbone of a rural labor force employed on farms, gardens, ranches, and corrals all along the peripheries and hinterlands of the Caribbean's major seaports. Much like their counterparts in Iberia and the Spanish Americas, Africans in the Caribbean raised cattle, swine, and chickens, and cultivated foodcrops, principally maize, yuca, and plantains.²⁰ Other rural occupations included clearing fields for cultivation, tanning hides, raising and herding livestock, cutting timber for local ship-building and export, and hauling produce to urban port cities by oxcart or canoe from outlying farms known as *estancias* (the term *estancia*—and in Peru, *chácara*—has been translated into English as "farm," "small farm," "truck garden," "agricultural holding," and "plantation of food crops").²¹ One recent study posits that "although Atlantic agriculture is always identified with plantation slavery and with the

¹⁹ See especially Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport: Greenwood, 1972).

²⁰ On rural slaves and freedmen employed as gardeners, farmers, herdsmen, and shepherds in sixteenth-century Portugal, see A. C. de C. M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 48-50, 54, 58, 66, 69-71, 80, 85-87, 144, 174, 176, 193n33, 222n2. On free and enslaved black agricultural laborers in early colonial Peru, see Bowser, *African Slave*, 88-96, 109; and James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532-1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 24-25, 31, 110, 123, 125, 180, 186-87, 192, 195.

²¹ See Irene A. Wright, *The Early History of Cuba, 1492-1586* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), 307, 375; Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, 25, 31, 125, 186-87; Bowser, *African Slave*, 88, 348. On *estancias* in Cartagena's province during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 162-74, 202n65. For discussion of the functions and relative sizes of *estancias*, *hatos*, and *corrales* in sixteenth-century Havana, see Alejandro de la Fuente, with César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 119-27.

production of commercial crops, the estancias were in many ways archetypical agricultural units of the early Atlantic.”²² Where most historians have seen only underdeveloped sugar plantations, extant Spanish Caribbean source materials reveal a network of strategically-located port cities, sustained by predominantly African and African-descended rural populations. From local garrisons to slave ship crews to Indies fleet passengers, all depended on food crops and livestock produced, processed, and transported by Africans and Afrocreoles. Rather than black slaves simply filling a labor vacuum left by a shortage of Amerindians, available sources indicate that in the early colonial Spanish Caribbean, African forced migrants were frequently employed as agricultural workers in ways which directly echoed rural slave occupations in contemporary African and Euro-African societies. These rural black populations force us to rethink not only the primacy of “white settlers” in historical narratives describing European colonization of the Americas, but also, in the case of the early colonial Spanish Caribbean, the very notion of “European” colonization of the Americas.

Cartagena de Indias: Afro-Iberian Seaport, African Hinterland

While census records and population estimates for the early colonial Spanish Caribbean are scarce and partial, extant source materials provide a rough idea of change over time in the demographic environment of Cartagena de Indias, including adjacent rural areas described alternately as Cartagena’s “district,” “province,” and “*tierra adentro*.” Established as a Spanish outpost in the 1530s, Cartagena remained a relatively small town, dependent on tributary Amerindian populations for its sustenance and meager

²² de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic*, 124.

growth, until the early 1570s.²³ Over the following five decades, while the area's Amerindian societies declined by perhaps ninety percent,²⁴ African populations in Cartagena and its province grew exponentially. In fact, data for the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries provides a backdrop against which to examine population estimates found in the extant correspondence of governors, bishops, royal officials, and travelers during this period. As discussed in the previous chapter, an absolute minimum of 73,000 African immigrants arrived in Cartagena between 1573 and 1640; this figure is clearly lower—probably much lower—than the actual number of African disembarked in Cartagena during this period. Though many died shortly after arrival in the city, and others were re-exported to new destinations, thousands of enslaved Africans remained to bolster Cartagena's stable population. The presence of Africans was particularly noticeable along the port city's perimeter, and throughout the province's rural hinterland, as multiple sources attest.

Like most other Caribbean ports, with the notable exception of Santo Domingo, Cartagena was relatively small in approximately 1570. According to Juan López de Velasco, Cartagena was “a town of 250 Spanish *vecinos*,” or heads of household, primarily “vendors and merchants.” Approximately two thousand tributary Amerindians labored for the benefit of the Spanish Crown, and sixteen Spanish men, on adjacent *encomiendas*. An additional fifty Spanish *vecinos* resided in Cartagena's province outside the town, along with an additional five or six thousand Amerindians nominally

²³ María del Carmen Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVI* (Seville: EEHA, CSIC, 1983), especially 48-54, 105-247, 348-72, 417-23, 457-72.

²⁴ Adolfo Meisel Roca, “Esclavitud, mestizaje y haciendas en la provincia de Cartagena, 1533-1851,” *Desarrollo y Sociedad* 4 (1980): 227-78; Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 50-54, 160-247; Antonio Ybot León, *La arteria histórica del Nuevo Reino de Granada, Cartagena-Santa Fe, 1538-1798: Los trabajadores del Río Magdalena y el Canal del Dique, según documentos del Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla* (Bogotá: ABC, 1952), 273-74; Julián Ruiz Rivera, *Los indios de Cartagena bajo la administración española en el siglo XVII* (Bogotá: Archivo General de la Nación, 1995), 24-41.

subject to Spanish authority.²⁵ López de Velasco, whose writings describe Cartagena in approximately 1570, makes no mention of black slaves. Only two years previously, however, five hundred Upper Guinean forced migrants had been distributed among Cartagena's residents. This sudden influx of enslaved Africans—considerably large compared to Cartagena's Spanish population at the time—was authorized by metropolitan authorities on the condition that they were to remain within the province, working on outlying farms and ranches.²⁶ Both Amerindian and African labor contributed to the town's economic growth over the subsequent decade; Cartagena de Indias was granted "city" status on March 6, 1575, along with the official title "Very Noble and Very Loyal."²⁷

We have little information thus far regarding the size of Cartagena's enslaved population, urban or rural, for the 1570s and 1580s, but textual references and slave trade data for this period suggest that the presence of Africans and Afrocreoles was considerable. In 1588, Cartagena was reported to consist of "300 or 400 houses"; from this description, María del Carmen Borrego Plá estimates a "white population" of 1,500 to 2,000 inhabitants.²⁸ Historians have long accepted and employed the practice of multiplying the known number of households or heads of household (*vecinos*) by five, in order to estimate total populations during eras for which detailed census data is

²⁵ Juan López de Velasco, *Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias*, eds. Marcos Jiménez de la Espada, María del Carmen González Muñoz (Madrid: Atlas, 1971), 194-98; Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 47, 473-78; Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 137-40. See also Paul E. Hoffman, *The Spanish Crown and the Defense of the Caribbean, 1535-1585: Precedent, Patrimonialism, and Royal Parsimony* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 261-63.

²⁶ Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 55, 427.

²⁷ Donaldo Bossa Herazo, *Nomenclátor Cartageno* (Bogotá: Planeta Colombiana, 2007), 22-23, 28-29.

²⁸ Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 48.

incomplete or non-existent.²⁹ In the context of Spanish Caribbean port cities such as Cartagena, however, the equation of one household with five “white” residents is problematic. First, we have evidence of several free black and mulatto homeowners and innkeepers in Cartagena and its suburb, Gethsemaní, during the 1580s.³⁰ Secondly, whether rented or owned, African and Afrocreole slaves figured prominently among Iberian households. In 1588—the same year in which Cartagena was said to contain 300 or 400 houses—the city’s governor Pedro de Lodeña noted that “in this land, [...] Spaniards provide no service whatsoever, especially the lower occupations which no household can do without. Those who are employed here are all blacks.”³¹ Meanwhile, the region’s Amerindian population grew increasingly smaller; Cartagena’s bishop stated in 1589 that the province was “running out of Indians.”³²

By the 1590s, if not sooner, Africans’ contributions to the demographic and economic growth of Cartagena’s stable population was readily apparent. As discussed in the previous chapter, more than twenty-five thousand captives were disembarked in Cartagena alone between 1593 and 1601 (see Appendix B). In one letter addressed to the Spanish Crown, royal officials portrayed the city in 1594 as a “principal” node in Spain’s American empire, juxtaposing Cartagena with Mexico City and Lima as “one of the three [great cities] of the Indies.” At the same time, royal officials viewed Cartagena as a maritime “frontier” with “numerous foreigners, soldiers and sailors, in addition to the

²⁹ On definitions of the term *vecino*, and its utility and limitations in Spanish circum-Caribbean contexts, see María del Carmen Mena García, *La sociedad de Panamá en el siglo XVI* (Seville: Diputación Provincial de Sevilla, 1984), 30-36; Alejandro de la Fuente, “Población y crecimiento en Cuba (siglos XVI y XVII): un estudio regional,” *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 55 (Dec. 1993), 62-63; Amadeo Julián, *Bancos, ingenios y esclavos en la época colonial* (Santo Domingo: Banco de Reservas de la República Dominicana, 1997), 184-85.

³⁰ AGI-SF 62, n.28, “Memorial y testimonio de autos de la ciudad y provincia de Cartagena,” 11 mayo 1583, folios 16r-24r, 28v-35r, 36r-45v. See also Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 313-18.

³¹ AGI-SF 37, R.6, n.76, Carta de Don Pedro de Lodeña, Cartagena, 13 febrero 1588, folios 5v-6r.

³² AGI-SF 228, n.18, Obispo Fray Antonio de Herbias a Su Magestad, Cartagena, 2 agosto 1589.

four thousand blacks who are ordinarily in the city.”³³ The presence of an estimated “four thousand blacks” is confirmed by additional sources describing Francis Drake’s sack of the port city in 1586. One military official wrote that if Drake had arrived just two weeks earlier, he could have taken Cartagena completely by surprise, and that if the city’s “four thousand blacks and *mulatos*” had joined forces with him, “they could have ruined everything.”³⁴

Vague racial terms such as “blacks,” “blacks and *mulatos*,” and “black slaves” appear frequently in sources for the entire period under study; these terms are only of limited use in understanding the demographic composition of Cartagena or its rural outskirts. Furthermore, it is unclear whether such estimates refer to the area’s enslaved population alone, or to the general African and African-descended population, including free(d) people of color. In this case, the general estimates of “four thousand blacks” or “four thousand blacks and *mulatos*” may have referred only to urban and domestic slaves—elsewhere dubbed “*negros de servicio*”—and those employed on semi-rural lands just outside the urban nucleus. The 1594 estimate specifically mentions “four thousand blacks [...] in this city,” and the Drake’s potential collusion with “blacks and *mulatos*” as imagined in 1596 may or may not have included enslaved Africans employed on rural properties. While the 1594 and 1596 estimates both note the presence of four thousand “blacks and *mulatos*” in Cartagena and perhaps its immediate environs, as of late 1595 the city could muster only eight hundred men considered capable of bearing arms. These eight hundred military effectives included both paid soldiers and the city’s

³³ AGI-SF 72, n.91, Alonso de Tapia y Joan de Yturrieta Alcevia a S.M., Cartagena, 25 junio 1594, folio 2r.

³⁴ AGI-SF 37, R.7, n.153a, Carta de Alonso de Sotomayor, Ciudad de los Reyes, 23 enero 1596, folio 1v.

Iberian residents, and probably counted the black militia members who in fact had helped to defend the city against Drake's attack.³⁵

Rough estimates indicate that Cartagena's enslaved population doubled over the next fifteen years, a period corresponding in part to the final stages of a first major slave trade surge and a subsequent lull in slave trafficking. Concerned over the indoctrination of an already sizeable African-born population, and fearing the continuation of protracted maroon wars, Cartagena's city council arranged for Jesuits to establish a mission in the city in 1603. Cabildo members noted that "in particular, there are a great number of blacks who will be indoctrinated and taught with [the Jesuits'] diligence and help, to great advantage."³⁶ Shortly after his arrival in Cartagena, Alonso de Sandoval estimated in 1606 that 5,000 "blacks and Indians" were employed on the provinces's *estancias* alone.³⁷ Despite Sandoval's reference to Indians, contemporary references suggest that most of these rural laborers were Africans, rather than Amerindans. In 1607, Cartagena's entire province was said to contain "very few Indians," all of whom spoke Spanish well.³⁸ By 1611, according to one Inquisition official, Cartagena was home to approximately five hundred *vecinos*; if multiplied by five this figure would yield a hypothetical "white population"—or more accurately, a hypothetical "free population"—of 2,500 inhabitants. A royal letter dated the same year alludes to the presence of 8,000 black domestics

³⁵ AGI-SF 37, R.7, n.145, Carta de don Pedro de Acuña, Cartagena, 11 diciembre 1595. For testimony of Drake's assault given by Agustín [Martín], "captain of the free blacks and mulattoes," see Irene A. Wright, trans. and ed., *Further English Voyages to Spanish America, 1583-1594: Documents from the Archives of the Indies at Seville Illustrating English Voyages to the Caribbean, the Spanish Main, Florida, and Virginia* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1951), 127-29. This dissertation's introduction opens with Agustín Martín's testimony regarding a sword fight in Gethsemaní in 1583.

³⁶ AGI-SF 62, n.84, Expediente de Juan de la Parra en nombre de la ciudad de Cartagena, 10 sept 1603.

³⁷ Juan Manuel Pacheco, *Los Jesuitas en Colombia*, tomo I (Bogotá: Editorial San Juan Eudes, 1959), 249; Nicolás del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias* (Bogotá: Ediciones El Tiempo, 1981), 239. See also Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud* [originally published as *De instauranda Aethiopum Salute* (Seville, 1627)], ed. Enriqueta Vila Vilar (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1987), 237.

³⁸ AGI-SF 228, n.41, Obispo Fray Juan de Ladrada a S.M., Cartagena, 24 junio 1607

employed in the service of the city's residents ("*negros de servicio de los vecinos*").³⁹

Though clearly both figures are only loose estimates, combined they suggest that slaves may have comprised as much as three fourths of Cartagena's population of approximately 10,500 inhabitants in 1611. These figures also correspond well to a separate estimate, noting that Cartagena's population consisted of 3,000 "white" inhabitants, and 7,000 *negros de servicio* several years earlier, in 1604 or 1605.⁴⁰

Though the estimates above appear to focus primarily on urban Cartagena's "black and *mulato*" population, extant sources dating to the first decades of the seventeenth century also reveal a considerably large rural labor force comprised of enslaved Africans and their descendants working in Mompós (Mompox) and Tolú, the two most important villages in Cartagena's province. Each was linked to Cartagena by water routes. Deep in the province's interior, up the Magdalena River, the village of Mompox was the center for the capture of manatee, and the processing of manatee lard. Mompox was also the headquarters of organized canoe transportation (the infamous *boga*) connecting Cartagena to Santa Fé de Bogotá, capital of the Audiencia of the New Kingdom of Granada. In addition to the movement of passengers in both directions, imported goods such as wine, clothing, and other merchandise were transported upriver towards Santa Fé, while valuables intended for export to Seville, such as gold and emeralds, were sent downriver to Cartagena along with food products. The *boga*—the

³⁹ Richard Konetzke, *Colección de Documentos para la Historia de la Formación Social de Hispanoamérica, 1493-1810* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1958), vol. II, tomo I: 179-80 (doc. 117), R.C. al gobernador de Cartagena que informe sobre la falta que se ha entendido tienen los negros de aquella ciudad de quien les administre los sacramentos, San Lorenzo, 10 septiembre 1611 (AGI-SF 991, Libro 1, fol. 211v); del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias*, 238.

⁴⁰ See Vila Vilar, "Introducción," in Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 20; and Nicole von Germeten, "Introduction," in Alonso de Sandoval, *Treatise on Slavery: Selections from De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, ed. and trans. Nicole von Germeten (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 2008), x. The source cited by Vila Vilar is Archivo Romano Societatis Iesu, Nuevo Reino y Quito, t.XII, folios 12v-18v, 27r-32v.

task of paddling canoes laden with goods or passengers up and down the Magdalena River—was traditionally associated with Amerindian tribute labor, but by the late sixteenth century, Spanish authorities increasingly relied on enslaved Africans and Afrocreoles.⁴¹ Describing Mompox as “a village of more than one thousand, five hundred blacks, and a few Indians,” the town’s Iberian residents requested to be excused from militia duties in Cartagena in approximately 1606, fearing possible slave revolts during their absence.⁴²

The village of Santiago de Tolú, located on the Caribbean coast south of Cartagena, was an important source of produce and livestock for Cartagena throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Maize, yuca, and pork from Tolú helped sustain local populations, with food transported to Cartagena along the coast. Pork and maize were often exported from Cartagena to other nearby regions; Borrego Plá describes these “fruits of the land” as Cartagena’s principal commercial exports for the entire sixteenth century. Tolú’s Amerindian populations persisted throughout the sixteenth century and beyond, often providing tribute in the form of agricultural produce. In the 1590s, Tolú was estimated to be home to approximately eight hundred Amerindians, down from more than two thousand three decades earlier. As early as 1576, we find reference to “black slaves” replacing Indian labors planting and harvesting maize as well as yuca.⁴³ In 1609, Cartagena’s bishop described his bishopric as “very poor, with only

⁴¹ Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 42-43, 63, 117, 225-27, 234-47, 323, 330, 378; Ybot León, *La arteria histórica*, 65-68, 88-89, 250, 253, 263, 279, 299-306, 309, 313-19.

⁴² AGI-SF 62, n.106, Expediente de la villa de Mompox en que solicita se confirme la real provisión de la Audiencia por la que prohíbe al gobernador de Cartagena obligue a los vecinos de aquella villa a acudir a Cartagena para su defensa, [1606].

⁴³ Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 42, 53, 63, 66, 221, 231-34, 238-39, 257, 330, 362-63, 477-78; Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y descripción de las Indias occidentales*, ed. Balbino Velásco Bayón (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1969), 222. See also Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 173-208, though his focus here is on imports into Cartagena from other circum-Caribbean ports, rather than vice-versa. For

two villages of eighty or ninety *vecinos* each, named Tolú and Mompox.” In Tolú, he noted, there were two *doctrinas* of Indians, and another for the “blacks and a few Indians” who worked on nearby ranches (*hatos de ganado*).⁴⁴ Thereafter, sources for the early to mid-seventeenth century typically mention enslaved “blacks” working in the hills around Tolú, felling trees, clearing fields, and burning off plots of land to plant maize and plantains.⁴⁵

For the years 1617 to 1625, a period corresponding with a second major surge in the transatlantic slave trade (see chapter two), known source materials finally provide estimates of the size of Cartagena’s “black” population with reference to both the city and its “district” or “province.” It should be noted, though, that in some cases it is not entirely clear whether figures refer to the areas immediately adjacent to Cartagena, or to the entire province. During this period, Cartagena’s city council penned letters to the Crown portraying the city as impoverished and famine-stricken. In 1619 and again in 1620, city council members lamented that outbreaks of *viruelas* (smallpox) and *sarampión* (measles) had resulted in the deaths of no less than two thousand slaves. To make matters worse, locust plagues had ruined local crops for five years in a row. Available food was exorbitantly expensive since local maritime traffic was blocked by corsairs, which meant that food could only be brought to the city by land. The once-prosperous city of Cartagena, they wrote, was now “in danger of depopulation”; one

almoxarifazgos collected on produce and livestock exported from Cartagena and Tolú between roughly 1560 and 1640, see the “*cargos*” (deposits) listed in AGI-Contaduría 1382, 1384-85, 1387-88, 1390-95, 1397-1400.

⁴⁴ AGI-SF 228, n.47, Obispo Fray Juan de Ladrada a S.M., Cartagena, 6 abril 1609.

⁴⁵ AGI-SF 242, s/n, Inquisición de Cartagena al Rey, Cartagena, 1 julio 1611; AGI-SF 38, R.6, n.173, Don García Giron a S.M., Cartagena, 15 julio 1621; AGI-SF 73, n.74, Francisco de Rebollo y Juan de la Huerta a S.M., Cartagena, 1 agosto 1621; AGI-SF 63, n.50, Carta del cabildo secular de Cartagena sobre los indios caribes que habitan en los rios Marañón y Amazonas, 14 diciembre 1623, folio 1r; AGI-SF 63, n.105c, Expediente de la ciudad de Cartagena por su procurador Nicolás Eras Pantoja, 20 diciembre 1642.

hundred and twenty households had already been evacuated. Council members enumerated the disasters which had befallen Cartagena as an argument against another hardship visited upon them by the Spanish Crown: the supposedly tyrannical behavior of inspectors commissioned to investigate contraband slave trading activities in Cartagena.⁴⁶ The presence of swarms of locusts are confirmed by other contemporary sources, but our knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade to Cartagena de Indias during this period makes the council members' description of the city seem manipulative, if not far-fetched. Their claim that local sea routes had been "blocked by corsairs" appears quite unlikely, given that at least thirty-nine slave ships disembarked more than eight thousand African captives in the city during the same two years alone (see Appendices A and B).

A letter written in 1620 by one of Cartagena's bishops, Diego de Torres Altamirano, provides a description of the city which addresses the presence of enslaved Africans employed on rural lands outside of Cartagena. According to Torres, Cartagena's wealth and sustenance ultimately depended on the efforts of perhaps fifty or sixty *vecinos*, since everyone else was either poor, or simply passing through for business or travel. He characterized the residents of the city's populous outer neighborhood, Gethsemaní, as "scandalous." Torres accused *encomienda* owners in Tolú and Mompox of mistreating the "poor, skinny natives," and he claimed to have personally confirmed "many people, blacks, and Indians" in Mompox. One problem which Torres brought to the attention of metropolitan authorities was the presence of "many blacks" laboring as slaves on farms outside Cartagena. Disturbingly, he wrote, these black people were "not

⁴⁶ AGI-SF 63, n.22, Carta del cabildo secular de Cartagena exponiendo los daños y molestias que causan a aquellos vecinos los numerosos jueces y visitadores que se envían a aquella ciudad, Cartagena, 26 oct 1619; AGI-SF 63, n.25, Carta del cabildo secular de Cartagena en que se exponen los daños que cuasan los jueces de comisión, Cartagena, 23 julio 1620.

indoctrinated” and never attended mass; “thus one may easily imagine the dangers that could result.”⁴⁷ Over the following two decades, Cartagena’s ecclesiastical authorities regularly associated enslaved Africans’ marronage and violence with inadequate access to Catholic teachings. Their answer to this problem, as discussed in greater detail below, was to oblige the owners of rural estates to provide funding for priests who could “indoctrinate” newly-arrived Africans, particularly those who were deemed insufficiently Hispanicized or Catholic.

Cartagena resident Captain Duarte de León Márquez voiced similar concerns in a different tone the following year. In 1621, he sent a confidential letter to the Spanish Crown, recommending the temporary suspension of the transatlantic slave trade. Only his concern for the common good, he alleged, could inspire him to go against his own personal economic interest in the “commerce and navigation of blacks.” A man named Duarte de León had indeed been captain of a slave ship which sailed from “the Rivers of Guinea” nearly three decades earlier, in 1593, disembarking fifty African forced migrants in Cartagena. This is the only time Márquez is known to have captained a slave ship, but other sources indicate that he continued to be involved with the slave trade as investor in a 1595 slaving voyage, and as owner of a slave ship in 1610.⁴⁸ Citing recent slave uprisings, and the hard-won autonomy of a nearby *palenque*—“which latinized, means fort”—León Márquez worried that Africans would literally take control of the Americas. He provided his own rough estimates of black populations in Lima (65,000), Mexico City

⁴⁷ AGI-SF 228, n.78, Obispo fray Diego de Torres Altamirano a S.M., Cartagena, 23 julio 1620.

⁴⁸ For Duarte de León’s voyage in 1593 (TSTD 29791) and an additional voyage he helped finance in 1595 (TSTD 29006), see AGI-Contaduría 1385, n.1, Pieza 2, folios 24v-26r, and n.3, pliegos 9, 13; Chaunus, *Séville et l’Atlantique*, III: 494-95, 499, 544-45, 552; Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 59; and Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 244-45. Duarte de León Márquez also owned the ship “Nuestra Señora de la Luz, alias Nuestra Señora de la Asunción,” which sailed from Angola “with blacks” under the command of *maestre* Pedro Martínez, replacing Jacome Fernández. Following its arrival in Cartagena on October 26, 1610, León Márquez sold the ship to be dismantled for lumber; see AGI-Contaduría 1388, pliego 270.

(“even more”), and Tierra Firme (a “monstruosity”). In the New Kingdom of Granada, including Cartagena, he estimated a black population of 30,000, “and the number is continually growing.” The number of Africans brought to the Americas every year, he claimed, easily doubled those who died either en route to the Americas or at any point after arrival. As proof of his argument, León Márquez noted that the numerous and diverse agricultural occupations on “all the rural estates are operated with blacks.”⁴⁹

León Márquez was not the only person to comment on Africans’ notable presence in Cartagena and its province during this second major surge in the transatlantic slave trade. For example, we have a qualitative estimate provided by one witness in a 1624 legal case regarding the price of slave burials in Cartagena. According to Luis Fernández Calvo, poor people who had no one to dig a grave for their deceased relative or slave would borrow one of the church’s black slaves, paying him one *real* or half a *real* for his service. This rarely happened, though, since “this city is ordinarily so full of *negros bozales*” that one could usually be found to dig a grave “in exchange for a *bollo* (i.e. corn bread) or a few bananas.”⁵⁰ By the early 1620s, Cartagena “and its district,” presumably semi-rural areas directly adjacent to the city, depended on the labor of “12,000 to 14,000 black servants” (*negros de servicio*). These figures are given by Friar Sebastián de Chumillas, who also noted that there was “no small danger of an uprising,” and that for this reason local authorities had issued laws prohibiting black people from carrying

⁴⁹ AGI-SF 73, n.71b, Billeto que escribió capitan Duarte de Leon Marquez, veçino de la çiudad de Cartagena de las Yndias, al contador Pedro Guiral, Cartagena, 5 julio 1621; partially reproduced in Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 266-67. For a similar estimate (circa 1640), see Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, “Contribuição ao estudo do Aprovisionamento de escravos negros na América Espanhola, 1580-1640,” *Anais do Museu Paulista* 16 (1962), 175-77; Enriqueta Vila Vilar, “La sublevación de Portugal y la trata de negros,” *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv* 2:3 (1976): 171-92; and Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 29-30.

⁵⁰ AGI-SF 63, n.53b, “Ynformazion de la costumbre antigua de la yglesia de Cartagena y de lo demas que conviene Remediar,” Cartagena, 20-22 agosto 1624, folios 11v-12r.

weapons.⁵¹ In 1622, Cartagena's governor García Giron estimated there were more than twenty thousand "blacks" in the city and province of Cartagena alone.⁵² Assuming both estimates to be roughly accurate, we may speculate that perhaps six to eight thousand Africans and Afrocreoles worked in rural areas beyond Cartagena, and elsewhere in the city's province, during the early 1620s.

Governor Giron, along with twelve powerful members of Cartagena's city council, wrote to the Crown in late 1623, requesting authorization to import Amerindian slaves from the Maranhão and Amazon rivers. "Caribs" who "ate human flesh" could remain as captives for a period of ten years, they suggested, then be released as free Christians. "This city of Cartagena is in great need of Indian workers," they wrote, "since a great many have died from overwork, smallpox and other illnesses. Thus plowing, sowing, and rural labors have diminished, causing food prices to rise." Council members noted that at that time, "the greater part of these labors is done with black slaves," though many landowners could not afford to purchase slaves, or to replace those who died. Furthermore, they complained that slaveowners had to put up with the "malicious" behavior of their black slaves, who simply ran away if not permitted to "enjoy whatever comforts they want."⁵³ This letter, advocating a turn away from the transatlantic slave trade and back towards a limited form of Indian slavery, was signed by some of Cartagena's most prominent residents, including Luis Gomez Barreto, who had made his fortune through the slave trade, and would later be tried by the Inquisition. The

⁵¹ Ángel Valtierra, *El santo que libertó una raza: San Pedro Claver S.J., esclavo de los esclavos negros, su vida y su época, 1580-1654* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1954), 271; del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias*, 239; Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 267.

⁵² AGI-SF 38, R. 6, n.176, Don García Giron, gobernador de Cartagena, a S.M., Cartagena, 28 marzo 1622.

⁵³ AGI-SF 63, n.50, Cabildo secular de Cartagena sobre los indios caribes que habitan en los ríos Marañoñ y Amazonas y la posibilidad de llevarlos a aquella provincia como esclavos, Cartagena, 14 diciembre 1623.

letter resembles that of Duarte de León Márquez, in that both documents feature Iberian men who clearly benefited from the purchase, transport, and sale of enslaved Africans, yet sought to modify the system during the early 1620s. Rather than viewing these letters as contradictory to Iberian slave merchants' economic interests, or even as opportunistic (given the occasional arrival of boatloads of enslaved Amerindians from Brazil), they should also be viewed within the context of a glutted slave market. Alongside the "twenty thousand blacks" said to reside in Cartagena and its province in 1622, port entry records document a minimum of 18,000 captives disembarked in the city between 1620 and 1625 (Appendix B). While many were surely re-exported to secondary markets, Cartagena's leading Iberian residents evidently felt that African populations were approaching a critical mass, threatening their ability to maintain the existing social order.

This tension helps explain why in 1628, city council members praised Jesuits' religious indoctrination of "the great number of Indians and blacks who arrive every year for the provision of these provinces and those of Peru," a task the *cabildo* considered "so intolerable that only the great charity of these friars could bear it."⁵⁴ Evidently, however, such evangelization efforts (including those carried out by Alonso de Sandoval) were less successful in spreading out to Cartagena's rural hinterlands. Furthermore, by the subsequent decade, city council members actively opposed the creation of a network of churches and *doctrinas* on farms and ranches throughout the region. In a major conflict of interest with Cartagena's secular government, Bishop Luis de Córdoba Ronquillo wrote a report to the Spanish Crown describing African labor on *estancias* during the mid-1630s. "On the many *estancias* in Cartagena's district," he noted, "there are a great

⁵⁴ AGI-SF 63, n.71, Carta de los vecinos de la ciudad de Cartagena en que representan el mucho bien que hace en aquella ciudad la Compañía de Jesus y suplican se le favorezca, Cartagena, 15 agosto 1628.

number of black slaves employed in farming, raising livestock, and other occupations, and likewise [there are] free blacks and white people who, on account of their poverty, live in rural areas.” Arguing that these rural populations’ isolation left them unable to attend mass, confess, or receive the holy sacraments in times of need, Bishop Córdoba Ronquillo proposed a number of sites for the establishment of *doctrinas*, meeting places which priests could visit on a weekly or monthly basis, and *agregaciones*, in which existing *doctrinas* could be expanded to serve the needs of nearby populations.⁵⁵ In practice, this meant that a priest currently serving a small Amerindian community would spend more time in the area, also seeing to the spiritual needs of neighboring African and Afrocreole populations. His labors—and as Cartagena’s city council members noted, the funds necessary to support them—would be multiplied considerably.

Cabildo members, several of whom owned extensive rural properties themselves, clearly viewed Bishop Córdoba Ronquillo’s plan as a scheme to generate sizeable revenues, and a broader base of ecclesiastical power, at their expense. According to the bishop’s proposal, priests would conduct a census of “farms, houses, and ranches, and all their inhabitants” in these rural areas, in order to determine the continual cost of upkeep for churches and *doctrinas*, including priests’ salaries. Priests would receive a minimum payment of four *pesos* per year from each small farm, house, or ranch. As for larger rural properties, those which employed “more than four male and female slaves, of an age appropriate for indoctrination and for receiving the sacraments,” would each provide priests with a salary of “one *peso* per slave per year, and no more. Thus when there are more than four slaves, they will be paid by the head, and where there are less than four

⁵⁵ AGI-SF 228, n.100, Obispo fray Luis de Córdoba Ronquillo a S.M. Cartagena, 10 agosto 1634. See especially AGI-SF 228, n.100a, “Agregacion de estancias a dotrinas y eregion de otras,” 2 mayo 1634.

slaves, they will be paid four *pesos*” per year.⁵⁶ City council member’s vocal opposition, discussed in greater detail below, effectively blocked the bishop’s proposal. While Córdoba Ronquillo was not the first bishop to lament the perceived spiritual plight of Cartagena’s rural populations, his comments are particularly valuable in that he provides estimates of the numbers of black workers in various rural areas of Cartagena’s province. Though he was never able to conduct a detailed census, Córdoba Ronquillo wrote that his “conscience was heavily burdened” by the knowledge of “more than three thousand blacks” without access to Catholic teachings; he imagined that many enslaved Africans chose to escape to a notorious maroon community, the *palenque* of Limón, rather than work without respite on an *estancia* where they were unable to hear mass, confess, or receive religious instruction.⁵⁷ He was able to list more than seventy rural landowners, including prominent city council members such as Alonso de Quadrado Cid, Diego de Rebolledo, Andrés de Banquesel, and Francisco de Simancas. Other rural property owners mentioned included the convent of Santo Domingo; a priest; a surgeon; a scribe; two free black men named Agustín Arará and Bartolomé Arará; and ten women, two of whom were described as widows (see Appendix C).

In a separate letter dated only two months later, Córdoba Ronquillo wrote that Cartagena and its adjacent neighborhood, Gethsemaní, were composed of “more or less 1,500 *vecinos*, including the households of *mulatas* and free blacks.” On account of continuous commerce and the arrival and departure of royal armadas, he noted, there were actually much larger numbers of people, but these were difficult to count.⁵⁸

Multiplied by five, Bishop Córdoba Ronquillo’s estimated number of *vecinos* would yield

⁵⁶ AGI-SF 228, n.100a, folios 3r-3v.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, folios 9r-10r.

⁵⁸ AGI-SF 228, n.97, Obispo fray Luis de Córdoba Ronquillo a S.M., 10 agosto 1634.

a hypothetical free urban population of approximately 7,500 people in Cartagena in 1634, including *mulata* and free black property owners, and the men, women, and children associated with their households (but not including a seasonal, floating population). In the same year, in a lengthy report describing Cartagena authorities' efforts to "reduce" several maroon strongholds, one deponent estimated that there were no less than "twelve thousand blacks in the city and in its province."⁵⁹ It is unclear whether the deponent meant 12,000 blacks in Cartagena, and an additional 12,000 in Cartagena's entire province, or whether this figure referred to Africans and Afrocreoles in the city and adjacent areas alone. One clergyman estimated the presence of "10,000 to 12,000 slaves living in Cartagena" in a separate estimate also dating to the mid-1630s.⁶⁰ In 1638, several Discalced Augustinians wrote from the recently-founded hospice San Nicolás de la Candelaria (or Tolentina) in Santa Fé de Bogotá. They suggested that rather than bringing captives directly from Africa to work in the mines of the New Kingdom of Granada, a more convenient source of labor would be "the great number of blacks in the city and province of Cartagena." The Augustinians estimated their number to be "more than twenty-five thousand," noting that most were employed "in works of little utility for the common good" (as opposed to mining for precious metals). Furthermore, they argued, diverting some of Cartagena's black population to the mining regions would decrease the chances of a slave insurrection.⁶¹

Taken together, these various population estimates for the middle and late 1630s suggest that the city of Cartagena and its immediate surroundings were home to perhaps

⁵⁹ AGI-Patronato 234, R.7, "Testimonio de los autos que formó el gobernador de Cartagena Francisco de Murga, contra los negros cimarrones alzados en los palenques de Limón Polín y Zanaguare y sobre el castigo que por sus delitos se les impuso," Cartagena, 1634, bloque 2, folio 361v.

⁶⁰ Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 139.

⁶¹ AGI-SF 246, s/n, Descalzos de San Agustín, 4 marzo 1638.

7,500 free urban residents, including people of color, and approximately 12,000 enslaved Africans and Afrocreoles. These numbers are largely speculative, based only on very loose estimates given by competing secular and ecclesiastical authorities. Another major problem is the use of imprecise and inconsistent racial terms; we cannot necessarily equate Cartagena's "black" population with its "slave" population. Overlooking these obvious problems for the moment, however, these estimates suggest a stable urban population in Cartagena of nearly 20,000 inhabitants, not including local soldiers, or temporary residents arriving with the fleets. Approximately sixty percent of this estimated urban population was composed of enslaved men and women; the percentage of non-"white" residents was even higher, since the city's free populace included free people of color. To these figures we might add a minimum of 3,000 black slaves living in selected rural areas, as noted by Bishop Córdoba Ronquillo in 1634, though the number of rural slaves was surely much larger for the overall province. Sandoval suggested a minimum of 5,000 black slaves employed in rural areas in approximately 1606; and Cartagena's governor Don García Giron estimated 20,000 "blacks" in the city and its province in 1622, indicating a minimum of 8,000 black slaves in Cartagena's province outside the city (which was said to contain 12,000 slaves). Our highest estimates are those given in the 1634 maroon wars report, and in the Augustinian friars' letter of 1638, suggesting a total of 24,000 or 25,000 black slaves in Cartagena and its province combined. If these figures are presumed to be more or less accurate, then subtracting an estimated 12,000 urban black slaves leaves us with 12,000 black workers in the rural areas of Cartagena's province. In sum, a hypothetical 7,500 urban residents (including both Iberians and free people of color), combined with an estimated 12,000

black slaves in Cartagena itself, suggests a total urban population of approximately 20,000 inhabitants during the mid- to late 1630s, with enslaved blacks comprising sixty percent of the port city's population. If an additional 12,000 black slaves were employed in the villages of Tolu and Mompox, and on rural *estancias* in Cartagena's hinterland, then Africans and Afrocreoles made up perhaps seventy-five percent of the province's total stable population of some 32,000 inhabitants.⁶²

Rural Black Labor in Cuba, Panama, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico

Cartagena was probably the largest seaport in the Caribbean throughout most of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, in large part due to its position as the Spanish Americas' premier transatlantic slave trade hub. While no other circum-Caribbean port remotely rivaled Cartagena in terms of the scale and intensity of its direct connections to Western Africa, the city's demographic composition was not unusual. By the late sixteenth century, the Spanish Caribbean's principal port cities typically featured of an urban core composed of Iberians, Africans, and people of color, with slaves outnumbering free residents. Urban centers were supported by rural or semi-rural hinterlands inhabited primarily by enslaved Africans and Afrocreoles, along with some free people of color. Available Caribbean population estimates are limited, normally referring only to general numbers of "*vecinos*," "blacks," or "slaves"; despite this lack of concrete details, extant descriptions of various circum-Caribbean port cities reveal demographic structures resembling that of Cartagena, if usually on a smaller scale. As in Cartagena, African and African-descended agricultural workers raised livestock and

⁶² A more finely-tuned demographic analysis would also include free black, Iberian, and Amerindian inhabitants of rural areas, as well as soldiers garrisoned in urban Cartagena. On militias and garrisons throughout the sixteenth-century Spanish Caribbean, see Hoffman, *Spanish Crown*, 39-59, 261-63.

cultivated food crops to sustain Spanish Caribbean population centers in Cuba, Panama, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Española. In broadest terms, by the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, long before the era of sugar plantations, the rural farmlands and ranch lands of much of the Spanish Caribbean were predominantly inhabited by Africans and Afrocreoles.

By roughly 1570, Havana was a town of approximately sixty *vecinos*, with sixty “married Indians” living in neighboring Guanabacoa, according to López de Velasco.⁶³ Already by this time, descriptions of the countryside around Havana regularly mention the presence of a rural black labor force. Restrictive legislation issued by Havana’s *cabildo* or town council during the late 1560s associated “blacks,” rather than Indians, with the cultivation of maize and yuca, crops intended to sustain the urban population and Indies fleets.⁶⁴ In 1561, the same governing body noted that “many blacks have weapons in their houses and *estancias*,” and ordered officials to collect the weapons. Yet thirteen years later, in 1574, the *cabildo* hesitated to apply this rule to enslaved cowboys and other rural workers, who used a variety of sharp tools in their daily work.⁶⁵ Havana’s *cabildo* ruled in the same year that itinerant merchants were to be prohibited from selling wine, cloth, or any other goods on outlying farms and ranches. Urban authorities feared that “blacks and overseers” had been paying for such merchandise with hides and produce, at the expense of absentee landowners.⁶⁶ As in Cartagena during the 1630s, here we have a clear example of secular authorities in Havana, many of whom owned

⁶³ López de Velasco, *Geografía*, 57-59.

⁶⁴ Roig, *Actas*, tomo I, vol. 2: 97-98, 110, 189, 192, 286.

⁶⁵ AGI-SD 116, R.2, n.63, Petición de Gaspar de Çarate sobre confirmación de ordenanzas, Havana, 14 enero 1574, folio 10v; Roig, *Actas*, tomo I, vol. 2: 223.

⁶⁶ AGI-SD 116, R.2, n.63, folio 9v.

rural properties and slaves, passing laws designed to control economic activities in rural areas.

A 1582 census of men capable of bearing arms in Havana and Guanabacoa lists twelve individuals as “men of the countryside” (*hombres del campo*). Five of these men were described as *mestizos*.⁶⁷ The term *mestizo* retained some meaning given the Amerindian populations of Havana and Guanabacoa during the 1580s. Yet these men were clearly in the process of becoming “Spanish,” as indicated by their social status; a major factor enabling this transition was the increasingly availability of African forced migrants.⁶⁸ These “men of the countryside” appear frequently in Havana notarial records for the 1570s and 1580s, and in baptismal records for the 1590s. They were not “peasants”; some actually became quite wealthy, investing in ships, loaning money, and renting out properties. In addition to their rural estates, most owned houses in Havana, where several were neighbors. Some were closely related. Brothers Nicolas de Acosta and Francisco Nicolas were both listed as *hombres del campo* in the 1582 census (Francisco was also described as *mestizo*). Notarial records reveal that Nicolas de Acosta owned a home in Havana and a ship which made voyages to Spain and the southern Caribbean mainland. De Acosta and his wife, a Portuguese woman named María de los Reyes, also bought and sold enslaved Africans identified as Esperanza Biáfara, Domingo Bañol, Catalina Anchica, Juan Congo, Pedro Angola, and Catalina Angola. The notarial records also show that Acosta rented out enslaved women, and at one point hired an

⁶⁷ Peter E. Carr, *Censos, padrones y matrículas de la población de Cuba, siglos 16, 17 y 18* (San Luis Obispo: Cuban Index, 1993), 16-19; Levi Marrero, *Cuba: Economía y sociedad* (Madrid: Playor, 1974-92), II: 332-34.

⁶⁸ Stuart B. Schwartz, “Spaniards, Pardos, and the Missing Mestizos: Identities and Racial Categories in the Early Hispanic Caribbean,” *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 71:1-2 (1997): 5-19.

Indian servant.⁶⁹ His *mestizo* brother Francisco Nicolas (Nicolao) also owned a house in Havana, as well as an *estancia* outside town with six hundred *montones* of yuca. Though we have little information on the employees who may have labored on his rural properties, Nicolas appears in baptismal records for the 1590s as the owner of enslaved Africans named Juana Biáfara and Francisco Angola.⁷⁰ Several additional men listed as *hombres del campo* in the 1582 census likewise appear in other sources as owners of *estancias*, enslaved Africans, and urban properties.⁷¹

Havana residents who invested in agriculture, but mainly lived in the urban center, typically employed overseers known as *estancieros* (also *mayordomos* or *mayorales*) to manage their rural properties, directing the labor of hired hands and slaves. For example, in a contract of service drawn up in 1579, Alonzo de Suarez Toledo hired Tomás Martín to serve on his farm in Matanzas, and on its neighboring ranches and corrals, for a period of four years. Martín's tasks were to include "visiting and commanding the people, blacks, and servants" who worked there; as payment, he would receive "one sixth of all the produce: hides, beef, tallow, butter, maize, cassava, pork, cattle, poultry, and honey."⁷² In a separate contract recorded in Havana the same year, Juan Aceituno and Pedro Flores agreed to pool their resources for a period of two years in order to operate a farm, splitting the profits equally. Juan Aceituno—who also owned urban property, bought and sold wine and clothing, and lended money—provided the *estancia* itself, including fields of plaintains, livestock, tools, and two black slaves named Miguel and

⁶⁹ See Rojas, *Índice*, tomo I: 111, 341, 381-82 (docs. 181, 582, 656, 657); tomo II: 38, 90-94, 149, 309, 407-08 (docs. 61, 114, 199, 457, 602); tomo III: 238-39 (doc. 362); CH-LB/B, 109r(3).

⁷⁰ Rojas, *Índice*, tomo I: 13-16, 108 (docs. 26, 176); CH-LB/B, 62v(5), 91v(4).

⁷¹ For Bartolomé de Hortigosa *mestizo*, Baltasar Alonso *mestizo*, and Antonio de Salazar, see Rojas, *Índice*, tomo III: 289 (doc. 438); CH-LB/B, 14r(4), 60r(2), 69r(3), 123v(2), 129v(5), 137v(2), 150v(1).

⁷² Rojas, *Índice*, tomo I: 200-1 (doc. 346).

Antón. For his part, Pedro Flores provided two more slaves, as well as his own labor “administering and commanding the slaves,” and pledged to “make them work and cultivate the *conucos* and *hortaliza*.”⁷³

Overseers on small farms in the rural and semi-rural lands outside of Havana came into regular contact with enslaved agricultural workers; some, like Pedro Flores, owned small numbers of enslaved Africans or Afrocreoles themselves. As one result of this social contact, overseers occasionally served as godfathers for children born to African mothers – a role which may also indicate paternity in some cases. In 1595, an enslaved man identified as Antón Angola, owned by *estanciero* Pedro de Castillo, was baptized in Havana’s cathedral. Thus Pedro de Castillo, an overseer on a farm near Havana, owned at least one African-born slave. Just three months earlier, the same Pedro de Castillo served as godfather for a child born to María de Balmazeda, an enslaved black woman owned by Martín de Morales. We know very little about Castillo’s relationship to María de Balmazeda, other than that he was formally recognized as her son’s godfather. The identity of the boy’s biological father, we read, was “unknown.”⁷⁴ Some overseers may have been free people of color, or even enslaved Africans, themselves. Such was the case in Cartagena, at least; one West Central African man claimed to have run away from the *estancia* he worked on because his overseer, an Upper Guinean man named Luis Bran, whipped him too much.⁷⁵

⁷³ *Ibid.*, tomo I: 208-9 (doc. 366). *Conucos* were small mounds of soil mainly used for growing vegetables; *hortaliza* referred to vegetable produce.

⁷⁴ CH-LB/B, 56v (3), 62r (4). On the functions of Catholic godparentage within a context of Caribbean slavery, see Landers, *Black Society*, 121-23.

⁷⁵ AGN-FNE, Bolívar, SC43, legajo 6, Pleito entre Juan de Meneses y Francisco Camargo sobre un negro esclavo y sus jornales, Cartagena y Mompóx, 1608, hoja 10r. See chapter one for discussion of this case.

Following his tour of Cuba in 1608, Bishop Juan de las Cavezas Altamirano wrote that “in the distances from one *pueblo* to another, there are ranches and corrals where there are always a number of blacks at work, and a few Spaniards, depending on the owner’s resources.”⁷⁶ In a separate letter penned in 1605, Cuba’s bishop enclosed a census of Santiago de Cuba and its surrounding region. This document lists not only the residents of seventy-four households in urban Santiago, but also the occupants and owners of six *hatos*, or ranches, in nearby Guantánamo. Manuel Francisco Bastiqueri, who does not appear in the census himself, owned a ranch employing just one person, an enslaved black man identified only as “Juan.” An Iberian man named Andres de Estrada maintained a large household in Santiago, including his wife, their five children, and twelve slaves. Three of these enslaved individuals—Francisco *mulato*, Vicente *negro*, and Bartolomé *negro*—were also listed as occupants of Estrada’s ranch, “Baratagua,” in Guantánamo. On some rural ranches, enslaved men worked alongside their Iberian owners, the proprietors’ family members, and hired employees including Iberians, free people of color, and occasionally Amerindians. *Hato* owner Blas Dias lived on his ranch, accompanied by his son and two slaves, Antón Guayacan and Antón Enchico. In addition to his urban residence, Santiago’s mayor Andres de Chinchilla owned a ranch in Guantánamo. Enslaved men named Juan Borrego, Francisco *negro*, and Francisco *yndio* are each listed twice in the 1605 census, as residents of both properties. Other inhabitants

⁷⁶ AGI-SD 150, r.2, n.48, Obispo de Cuba a S.M., Havana, 22 sept 1608, folio 3r. A transcription of this entire letter may be found in Isabelo Macías Domínguez, *Cuba en la primera mitad del siglo XVII* (Seville: EEHA, 1978), 15-20; see also de la Fuente, “Población,” 76-80.

of Chinchilla's ranch included Juan Guzman *mulato* and two men identified as "Spanish."⁷⁷

Further evidence of rural circum-Caribbean populations predominantly composed of Africans and Afrocreoles may be gleaned from published descriptions of Panama City, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In his "Sumaria Descripción de Tierra Firme" dated 1575, government official Alonso Criado de Castilla wrote that in Panama, "the workers and servants are all blacks, because no white people will offer themselves for service. For this reason, the number of blacks in this kingdom is large." Criado de Castilla went on to note that Panama City and its district contained a total population of 3,900 inhabitants, of whom an estimated 3,100 were "blacks." These included three hundred freed black men and women, and 1,600 domestic slaves (*negros de servicio*) employed "in the city of Panama." The remaining 1,200 "blacks" were employed in a variety of rural and semi-rural labors. According to Criado, four hundred and one "blacks," presumably enslaved men, operated *récuas* or mule trains connecting the city to Cruces and Nombre de Dios. Three hundred sixty-three enslaved "blacks," some of whom were based on the Pearl Islands, cleared fields, planted, and harvested crops; one hundred fifty labored on cattle ranches; one hundred and ninety-three operated sawmills; and one hundred and two worked in Panama City's orchards.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ AGI-SD 150, r.2, n.33, Minuta y Padrón de la gente y casas de la ciudad de Santiago de Cuba, 6 octubre 1605, folio 4v. For the urban households of Andres de Estrada and Andres de Chinchilla, see folios 1r-1v. For a list of more than seventy *hatos* near Panama City in 1609, see Mena García, *La sociedad de Panamá*, 126-32. See also Landers, *Black Society*, 20, for reference to "blacks and mestizos" who worked on "vast cattle estates in north central Florida [...] in the midst of Indian lands" during the mid-seventeenth century.

⁷⁸ Carol F. Jopling, comp., *Indios y negros en Panamá en los siglos XVI y XVII: selecciones de los documentos del Archivo General de Indias* (Antigua: CIRM; South Woodstock: Plumsock Mesoamerican Studies, 1994), 10-15, quote from 13. See also Mena García, *La sociedad de Panamá*, 33-34, 65, 90-91.

Carmelite friar Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, who traveled throughout much of the Spanish Americas during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, offers comparable descriptions of Puerto Rico and Jamaica. In each case, rural labor forces composed of enslaved Africans and Afrocreoles, and free people of color, made up significant shares of the total population. According to Vázquez, “blacks and free *mulatos*” were “quite important for ranching and other agricultural labor” in Puerto Rico. He also notes that “since native inhabitants are lacking,” San Juan’s three hundred *vecinos* employed two thousand “blacks and free *mulatos*” on the island’s “sugar mills, cattle ranches, and farms.” Puerto Rico’s principal export crops were hides, ginger, and sugar, but the island’s population subsisted mainly on maize, and cassava bread made from yuca. Local livestock included cattle, horses, and pigs.⁷⁹ Portraying Jamaica in similar fashion, Vázquez wrote that the village of La Vega—later dubbed “Spanish Town”—was the island’s principal urban center. Though Vázquez provides no estimate of La Vega’s urban population of slaves or free people of color, he notes that the town was inhabited by five hundred Spanish *vecinos*, i.e. heads of household. These individuals employed “more than 1,000 black slaves and *mulatos* who labor in the countryside,” raising livestock including cattle, horses, pigs, and goats, and cultivating food crops such as maize, rice, and yuca. According to Vázquez, rural black workers also cultivated tobacco, and produced honey using *trapiches*, or mills. These mills were usually associated with sugar production—and in fact, the sole historian of Spanish

⁷⁹ Vázquez, *Compendio*, 37-38. See also Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Historia de Puerto Rico, 1600-1650* (Seville: EEHA, 1974), 10, 16-24, 37-38, 122. Vila Vilar characterizes sugar production in Puerto Rico during the first half of the seventeenth century as “scarce” and “far below [the island’s] potential” (10).

Jamaica refers to sugar as “the island’s sole industry”—but sugar itself is not mentioned in this early-seventeenth-century portrait of Jamaican agriculture.⁸⁰

Rural Black Labor in Española

Española was the real cradle of sugar cultivation in the early colonial Caribbean, or thus it has been portrayed, but as in Havana and Puerto Rico, Española’s sugar industry represented only one sector of a diverse economy sustained in large part by African and Afreocreole agricultural workers. During the late sixteenth century, the city of Santo Domingo was comparable to Cartagena during the 1620s and 1630s; though smaller in size, Santo Domingo’s demographic structure featured a comparable “black majority.”⁸¹ In his account dating to approximately 1570, López de Velasco wrote that the island’s entire population consisted of 1,000 Spanish residents, including five hundred *vecinos* in Santo Domingo, one hundred Indians, and 12,000 or 13,000 “blacks.”⁸² By the late sixteenth century Santo Domingo was already overshadowed by newer loci of economic and maritime activity, namely Cartagena and Havana. Yet the city continued to be one of the Spanish Caribbean’s key fortified ports during the seventeenth century, and remained the administrative center of the *Audiencia* which bore its name. According to Vázquez de Espinosa, who traveled through the region at some

⁸⁰ Vázquez, *Compendio*, 81-84; Francisco Morales Padrón, *Jamaica Española* (Seville: EEHA, 1952), 267-84, quote from 287. While Morales Padrón describes Spanish Jamaica’s enslaved African-born population as “a rather homogenous group,” mainly consisting of “*coromantis* from the Gold Coast” (273), early seventeenth-century sources typically link Spanish Jamaica to either Upper Guinea or Angola.

⁸¹ I borrow this term from Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stone Rebellion* (New York: Knopf, 1974). In colonial South Carolina, free and enslaved people of color outnumbered “white” populations; while this fact stands out in the context of the colonial Anglo-American history, such demographic breakdowns had been standard in the Spanish Caribbean societies since the late sixteenth century.

⁸² Velasco, *Geografía*, 51-52. See also Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 14-17.

point during the first two decades of the seventeenth century, the city of Santo Domingo was home to six hundred Spanish *vecinos*, a garrison of two hundred Spanish soldiers, “many free *mulatos*,” and “a great quantity of black and *mulato* domestic servants” (*negros y mulatos de servicio*). Outside the city, supporting the urban center, Vázquez noted the presence of “more than 4,000 slaves owned by the *vecinos* of Santo Domingo, and many free *mulatos*.” In addition to cultivating “sugar on the island’s many mills,” this rural African and Afrocreole population labored on farms, orchard, and ranches, producing hides, ginger, tobacco, timber, and resins. Though he focuses primarily on Española’s exportable commodities, Vázquez also briefly mentions the island’s abundance of livestock and “other fruits,” probably maize and yuca.⁸³

An invaluable source regarding slave labor in Española during this period is the “census” composed by the island’s governor, Antonio de Osorio, in 1606. According to his report, Española depended on a labor force composed of 9,648 slaves, with the vast majority—more than 8,000 individuals—engaged in some form of agriculture. Roughly one sixth of the slave population was employed in domestic service; presumably, these 1,556 enslaved women and men worked for the most part in Santo Domingo, with the exception of eighty-eight domestic slaves employed in the houses of sugar mill owners. Governor Osorio estimated that approximately eight hundred slaves cultivated sugar, and five hundred and fifty slaves raised livestock on the island’s *hatos*. Considered together, Osorio’s figures for domestic slaves in Santo Domingo (1,468), domestic slaves in sugar mill owners’ houses (88), sugar workers (800), and slave cowboys (550) total only 2,906 enslaved women and men, less than one third of the total number of slaves working on the island. The remaining two thirds of Española’s enslaved population—approximately

⁸³ Vázquez, *Compendio*, 34-35. See also Julián, *Bancos, ingenios y esclavos*, 186, 190-91.

6,742 people—labored on farms, cultivating “ginger, cassava, and maize.”⁸⁴ If these estimates were to any degree accurate, then enslaved Africans and Afrocreoles were far more likely to work on farms rather than “sugar plantations” in early seventeenth-century Española. Even were we to combine the eight hundred sugar workers and eighty-eight domestic slaves employed on sugar *haciendas*, the resulting sugar work force would comprise less than ten percent of the island’s total enslaved population (see Figure 3.1).

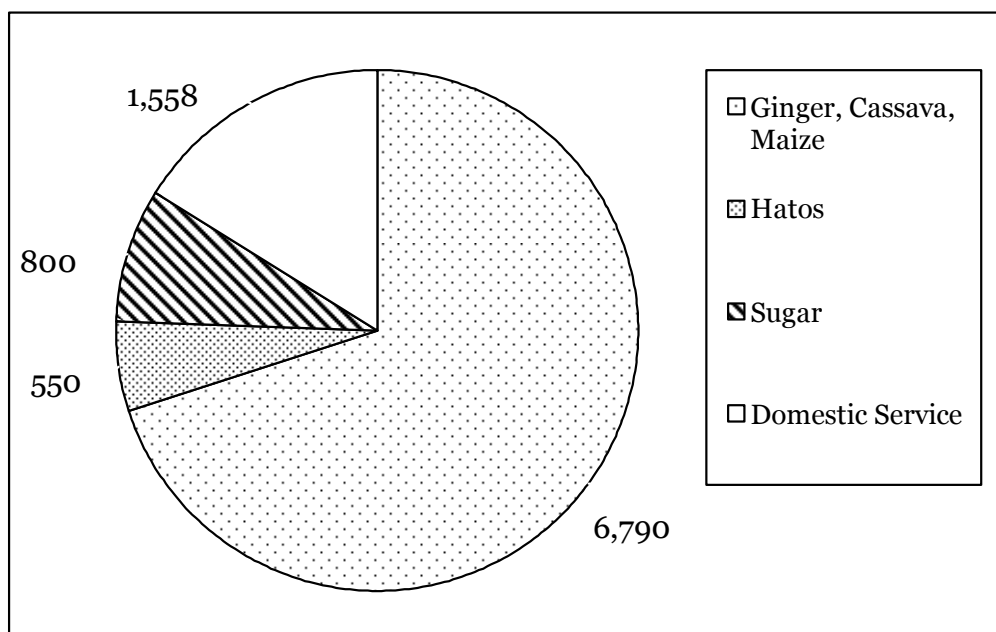


Figure 1.1. Slave Occupations in Santo Domingo & Española, c.1606

(Source: Demorizi, *Relaciones*, II: 443-44; Saez, *La iglesia*, 319-20)

⁸⁴ José Luis Saez, *La iglesia y el negro esclavo en Santo Domingo: una historia de tres siglos* (Santo Domingo: Patronato de la Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo, 1994), 319-20. Saez cites AGI-SD 83, “Autos y testimonios tocantes a las cosas del estado de la Isla Española, hechos por don Antonio Ossorio.” The original document is transcribed and reproduced in Archivo General de la Nación [Dominican Republic], *Relaciones históricas de Santo Domingo*, comp. and notas por Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, Vol. II (Ciudad Trujillo: Editorial Montalvo, 1945), 374-403. Osorio’s arithmetic is somewhat questionable; he calculates a total of 2,858 slaves employed as domestics, sugar workers, and ranch hands, though his figures add up to 2,906. When subtracted from the total of 9,648 slaves on Española, each of these figures thus yields a slightly different result.

In addition to reporting the numbers of slaves employed in various occupational categories, Osorio more precisely lists each of Española's rural estates individually, enabling us to indirectly gauge the density of slave populations, on average, in diverse forms of rural labor. Though Osorio specifically notes that the island contained one hundred and seventy *hatos*, he lists 189 separate *hatos* which raised either cows or sheep, as well as four pig farms (*criaderos de ganado cerdo*). Assuming that the 550 slaves employed on *hatos* were distributed among these rural properties, then on average, slightly less than three enslaved cowboys were employed on each *hato*. This ratio of two or three enslaved ranch hands per *hato* corresponds well with our knowledge of a handful of ranches in Guantánamo, Cuba, at the same time. Enslaved rural laborers who raised and cared for livestock on *hatos* had relatively few co-workers, and probably enjoyed a considerable degree of geographical mobility. The opposite may be said of the enslaved men and women who operated Española's sugar mills at the beginning of the seventeenth century. According to Governor Osorio, in 1606 the island contained only twelve sugar mills, yet these *ingenios* employed approximately 800 slaves. On average, then, each sugar mill was maintained by the labor of sixty-seven slaves. If the estimated eighty-eight domestic servants are included as well, then each sugar mill owner employed an additional six or seven domestic servants in their house, on average. The third major form of rural labor—farming—featured neither the extremely low slave population density of *hatos*, nor the densely concentrated slave populations of sugar mills. Osorio lists a total of 430 *estancias* on the island in 1606; if the estimated 6,790 slaves employed on *estancias* were evenly distributed among these farms, each *estancia* would have been supported by the labor of sixteen slaves.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Calculated from Demorizi, *Relaciones*, II: 421-43.

While many of Osorio's figures appear to be only general estimates, it is nonetheless significant that he reported two thirds of the island's slaves working on farms, one sixth employed in domestic service, and the remaining sixth divided between sugar cultivation and ranching. Given this distribution of slave labor on Española in 1606, it would be unrealistic to assume that Española's economy was geared towards sugar production during the early seventeenth century. This information, coupled with the fact that Española produced no less than seventy-four percent of all sugar shipped to Seville between 1560 and 1620,⁸⁶ provides a clear indication of sugar's humble position within the Spanish Caribbean's economy during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Unfortunately, Osorio makes no distinction between rural slaves who cultivated ginger—a cash crop for export—as opposed to maize and yuca, food crops for local consumption and to some extent, perhaps, for export within the Caribbean. Genaro Rodríguez Morel notes that much of Española's "plantation sector" shifted from sugar cultivation to ginger and hides in the 1550s, though these efforts to revive the island's economy were largely unsuccessful. Rodríguez Morel suggests that as food prices rose, "planters" were forced to choose between "permitting slaves time to grow their own food or intensifying slave activities in sugar production and thus hoping to create the margin of profit needed to buy provisions."⁸⁷ Though the switch to ginger failed to shore up Española's crashing sixteenth-century economy, perhaps its cultivation remained important in 1606 precisely because the root could be grown at the same time as yuca, maize, and other food crops, on the same farm.

⁸⁶ Stuart B. Schwartz, "Introduction," in *Tropical Babels*, 10-11.

⁸⁷ See Genaro Rodríguez Morel, "The Sugar Economy of Española in the Sixteenth Century," in *Tropical Babels*, 107-8.

Table 3.1. Food Crops versus Export Crops Cultivated on <i>Estancias</i> in Española, c.1606		
(Source: Demorizi, <i>Relaciones</i> , II: 421-43)		
Main Crops Cultivated	Number of <i>Estancias</i>	Percentage of Total
Food crops (<i>casave, maíz, legumbres</i>)	189	44.0
Food crops and tobacco	95	22.1
Food crops and ginger	44	10.2
Ginger	102	23.7
Total	430	100.0 %

Osorio’s figures do not allow us to determine the numbers of enslaved workers primarily engaged in growing food crops such as maize and yuca, as opposed to export crops such as ginger. Fortunately, however, he divides Española’s *estancias* into categories based on the types of crops cultivated (see Table 3.1). According to Osorio, slightly less than one fourth of the island’s 430 *estancias* were devoted to the cultivation of ginger alone in 1606, while almost forty-five percent of the *estancias* listed—nearly half of all the island’s farms—exclusively produced food crops (“*casave, maíz y otros legumbres*”). Only about ten percent of Española’s *estancias* produced both food crops and ginger; and food crops were cultivated alongside tobacco on the remaining twenty-two percent of the island’s farms. While some of the tobacco grown in Española was shipped back to Spain, it was also consumed locally, and throughout the Caribbean.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*. On page 192, Ortiz notes that “the Negroes adopted the use of tobacco from the Indians before the whites did [...] The chroniclers clearly reflect this spread of the habit of using tobacco among the Negro slaves. This occurred not only in the Indies, but among the many Negroes who lived in Seville in the sixteenth century.”

Accounts of population sizes and slave occupations in Santo Domingo, Cartagena, Havana, eastern Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and elsewhere reveal two basic facts regarding Caribbean society during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. First, Africans and Afrocreoles appear to have performed the bulk of all forms of agricultural labor throughout the Spanish Caribbean during this period. Secondly, much of this labor in rural and semi-rural areas was geared towards the production of food crops, rather than exports such as sugar. Hides, ginger, sugar, tobacco, resins, timber, and other valuable commodities were indeed exported from the Caribbean to Iberia; also, basic foodstuffs such as maize and pork were exported and imported within the Caribbean region. The main purpose of agricultural labor in and around the Caribbean's major port cities and their hinterlands, however, was to sustain local populations, including slaves, and to provide for the Indies fleets.

It should be remembered as well that even subsistence crops could be an important source of profit. In some Caribbean seaports, the chance of obtaining a lucrative contact to supply food to royal slaves or the crews of incoming fleets provided ample incentive to local farmers, ranchers, and landowning entrepreneurs. Official accounts for the 1580s and 1630s list a host of individuals who received payment for supplying plantains, fresh beef, dried beef (*tasajo*), turtle, salted pork, butter, maize, and other foodstuffs as provisions for Havana's royal slaves.⁸⁹ Likewise, extant lists of payments made to dozens of individuals who supplied unleavened bread (*bizcocho*), fresh beef, fish, manatee butter, chickens, and sugar, as well as Mediterranean staples including wine, cheese, almonds, and raisins, all ostensibly to feed the officers, crew members, and

⁸⁹ AGI-Contaduría 1088, 1117-18.

oarsmen aboard Cartagena's galleys during the same period.⁹⁰ The fortifications and maritime defenses of Cartagena and Havana each depended on specialized slave laborers (royal slaves and galley slaves); these groups of skilled slaves depended at least in part on produce and livestock bought from nearby agricultural hinterlands, farms and ranches predominantly worked by Africans and people of color. Rather than viewing the relationship between slavery and agricultural labor in the early colonial Spanish Caribbean as a scenario in which masses of "black slaves" either (1) produced staple crops such as sugar for export, or (2) raised their own food on "plots," these sources and others indicate that slave labor in the rural Caribbean world comprised a wide variety of occupations.⁹¹ Land owners and slaveowners profited not only from investing in export crops, but also by employing slaves in the cultivation of food crops which early colonial Spanish Caribbean populations depended on for much of their basic sustenance.

Slavery and Mobility in the Rural Caribbean World

Misrepresentations of rural labor in the early colonial Caribbean have largely been reinforced, rather than corrected or refined, by comparison with rural slavery in other colonial Latin American contexts. Classic studies of colonial New Spain described enslaved Africans exploited on sugar estates and in mines as "beasts of burden" and "human chattels," with few opportunities to resist "the will and caprice of the master."⁹²

⁹⁰ AGI-Contaduría 1383, 1386, 1389, 1396.

⁹¹ For recent scholarship addressing diverse forms of agricultural slave labor in the late colonial Caribbean, see the various essays collected in *Slavery Without Sugar*.

⁹² Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810: estudio etnohistórico* (Mexico, D.F.: Fuente Cultural, 1946), 173, 181-84, 187, 208; Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 36-39, 47-50, 64-83, 133-34; 187-90; Frederick Bowser, "Africans in Spanish American Colonial Society," in *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), II: 357-79.

Elaborating on perceived differences between urban and rural slavery, Frederick Bowser clearly viewed slavery in rural Peru as stifling and dehumanizing:

“Ignorant, isolated, usually with minimal linguistic skills and financial resources, [...] blacks on the plantations of Spanish America lived and died at the will of their masters and overseers, and there was little dialogue, merely an exchange of commands and acceptances, doubtless spiced by meaningless banter.”⁹³

Despite the paucity of scholarship on slavery and Africans’ presence in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Latin America—and thus our continued debt to, and reliance on, classic histories of the twentieth century—recent works have at last begun to challenge traditional portrayals of rural slave labor during the early colonial period. For example, Herman Bennett argues that for sixteenth-century Mexico, sharp distinctions between “urban” and “rural” slavery are “simply not meaningful,” primarily due to “mobility, residential patterns, and the urban-hinterland continuum.”⁹⁴ Unfortunately, this challenge has not yet been extended to the rural and semi-rural worlds of the early colonial Spanish Caribbean, an arena which too often remains the subject of speculation rather than sustained archival research. Contrary to traditional interpretations equating rural slavery with total isolation, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources reveal that agricultural labor in the Spanish Caribbean often involved geographical movement and interaction with outsiders. In some cases, rural slavery itself required a considerable degree of occupational mobility. More broadly, regional and even international networks of coastal, riverine, and overland traffic meant that enslaved Africans and people of color in the rural Caribbean usually maintained some form of contact, either directly or indirectly, with major urban centers and the wider world.

⁹³ Bowser, “Africans,” 376.

⁹⁴ Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 209n53.

While slaveowners in other times and places surely sought to increase their power over enslaved women and men by keeping them “isolated” in rural areas, this presumed motive does not always fit well in the context of the early colonial Spanish Caribbean. Several letters written by secular and ecclesiastical authorities in Cartagena attest to their shared belief that regular exposure to Iberian cultural practices—most importantly, Catholicism—was an important means of maintaining control over enslaved African populations laboring on farms and ranches outside the city. Thus rural slave uprisings, when they occurred, were seen by some as a consequence of inadequate acculturation, or spiritual neglect. In 1605, reflecting on the conclusion of a recent maroon war, Cartagena’s governor Jerónimo de Zuazo noted that the rebellious slaves were neither recently-arrived Africans nor hostile Indians. Rather, they were “seasoned and ancient” Africans who worked on farms ten to twenty-five leagues outside the city, planting and harvesting maize and yucca, producing cassava, and cutting timber. These African slaves’ irresponsible owners lived in Cartagena, and in his words, they had left no one to “administer our sacred Religion to them, nor white people to control them.” “On one *estancia* of forty blacks,” governor Zuazo wrote, “there would be at most one measly Spanish overseer, who in his ways would be similar to them.”⁹⁵ This was precisely the scenario which Cartagena’s bishops often described. In 1620, bishop Diego de Torres cautioned that “many people have *estancias* and rural properties with a great number of blacks who receive no indoctrination, and go all year without hearing mass.”⁹⁶ Seven years later, Cartagena’s subsequent bishop Diego Ramirez de Cepeda noted that “in this city and its surroundings there are numerous black slaves, as needy of indoctrination as if

⁹⁵ AGI-SF 38, R.2, n.73, Don Jerónimo de Zuazo a S.M., Cartagena, 1 noviembre 1605.

⁹⁶ AGI-SF 228, n.78, Obispo fray Diego de Torres Altamirano a S.M., Cartagena, 23 julio 1620.

they were in Guinea, divided up on *estancias* and other Spanish-owned lands.” Ramirez went on to propose the creation of three new, salaried, clerical positions for the indoctrination of more than 1,500 black agricultural workers whom he believed seldom heard mass or confessed.⁹⁷

Following a pastoral visit of Cartagena’s province conducted in late spring of 1632, bishop Luis de Córdoba Ronquillo likewise found that “on the many *estancias* within Cartagena’s district, there are a great quantity of black slaves occupied in sowing [the land], raising livestock, and performing other labors.” Perhaps inspired by his predecessor Bishop Ramirez, or by the evangelical work of his contemporaries Alonso de Sandoval and Pedro Claver, bishop Córdoba Ronquillo mounted the 1634 campaign to build new churches or *doctrinas*. Like Ramírez, he aimed to secure funding for priests who would regularly indoctrinate unacculturated Africans on Cartagena’s outlying *estancias* and ranches. Evidently, the earlier proposals to such effect had never been carried out. As discussed above, Córdoba Ronquillo estimated that in 1635 there were “more than three thousand blacks” in the rural and semi-rural lands around Cartagena who had no access to Catholic teachings.⁹⁸ His efforts to obtain a detailed census of Cartagena’s rural black population, however, were frustrated by members of the city council, some of whom happened to be *estancia* owners themselves (see Appendix C).

Representing Cartagena’s city council, Baltasar de Escobar Maldonado—captain of a local police force, the *Santa Hermandad*—argued that raising funds for new churches and priests’ salaries would mean extra, unnecessary expenses for *estancia* owners. “For the past one hundred years,” he noted, owners of farms and ranches outside

⁹⁷ AGI-SF 228, n.86, Obispo doctor Diego Ramirez de Cepeda al presidente del Consejo Real de Yndias, 4 agosto 1627, folio 1r.

⁹⁸ AGI-SF 228, n.100a, folios 1r, 9r, 10r-10v.

the city had never provided funds for the local indoctrination of African workers. Escobar claimed that overseers and black workers who lived within three leagues of Cartagena regularly traveled to the city by land and sea every Saturday, to confess and hear mass, and to go shopping (*conprar lo que an menester*)! Those who lived on *estancias* more than three leagues away from Cartagena, he argued, already went to confess and hear mass in the Indian villages of Turbaco, Mohates, Timiruaco and Turbana, where priests resided. According to Escobar, when black slaves became sick, their owners took them to Cartagena for medical treatment, and made sure they did not die without last rites. When black women were seven or eight months pregnant, they were taken to Cartagena so they could give birth with the aid of a midwife, and so that the newborn children could be baptized. In addition to the useless expense of creating new priests' salaries, Escobar cited security as a major concern. If enslaved blacks left their farms and ranches every weekend to go to hear mass, the deserted *estancias* would be easy targets for maroons. He opposed the idea of bringing so many Africans and Afrocreoles from various *estancias* together in one place; after all, even if they were supposedly learning Catholic doctrine, they might start drinking alcohol and decide to revolt. For this very reason, he noted, recent laws had been passed prohibiting large dances, and making it illegal for "more than three hundred blacks" to gather together in the hills (*el monte*). Besides, if Spain's numerous rural workers and shepherds were not obliged to attend mass, "why should these blacks—many of whom live quite close to the city, or to an Indian *pueblo*—be forced to attend mass on their one day off, weary from having worked all week long?"⁹⁹

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, folios 5r-6r.

Escobar's arguments largely represent an effort to ensure that landowners, including several of his fellow council members, would not be obliged to pay regular stipends for priests to indoctrinate the province's rural, black, work force. The city council's motives in opposing the establishment of these salaries, which combined would have represented a substantial sum of money, are fairly transparent. In the accounts given by both Córdoba Ronquillo and Escobar, enslaved Africans and Afrocreoles may be viewed pawns for larger agendas. Ecclesiastical authorities attempted to use rural black populations as a means of extending the Church's power and amplifying its resources, all the while, Cartagena's bishops might have argued, contributing to the spread of Catholic teachings and the overall maintenance of social order. On one hand, bishops argued in their own best interest that large numbers of enslaved Africans on farms and ranches outside Cartagena desperately needed Catholic indoctrination. On the other, perceiving a serious threat to their own financial well-being, secular authorities stressed the social and spiritual resources already available to Cartagena's rural black population. While Escobar's excuses on behalf of the city council are not entirely convincing, they do suggest a considerable degree of mobility between rural and semi-rural farms, Indian villages, and the urban port city of Cartagena. To what extent, for example, did rural slaves actually visit Cartagena to purchase provisions for farms and ranches? Before this period, had it been common for up to "three hundred blacks" to "gather together in the hills"? While our knowledge of the rural Caribbean world remains fragmentary, the search for answers to questions such as these undermines any assumption that enslaved agricultural workers were by definition "tied to the land."¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ On the mobility of Castilian "peasant-farmers" in European context, see Vassberg, *The Village*.

In 1634, Cartagena's secular authorities argued emphatically that the very mobility of African and Afrocreole *estancia* workers meant that extensive (and from their point of view, expensive) Catholic indoctrination was unnecessary. This argument, as articulated by Baltasar de Escobar Maldonado, is both reinforced, somewhat ironically, by a set of testimonies collected by the same city council just six years earlier. The report compiled in 1628 reveals that Cartagena's *cabildo* was in fact deeply troubled by slaves' daily movements between outlying *estancias* and the city itself. With an outbreak of leprosy in the urban center, and lepers concentrated in an unwallled hospital just east of the city, local elites feared that the disease would spread from the port to wreak havoc on their properties—including enslaved Africans—in nearby rural areas. Whereas in the mid-1630s Cartagena's city council members portrayed enslaved Africans' geographical mobility in a positive fashion, less than a decade previously they were clearly alarmed by similar connections between rural and urban worlds. Factors that remain the same in both accounts are (1) city council members' desire to protect their wealth, properties, and investments, and (2) depictions of enslaved farm workers and ranch hands as members of larger Catholic and social networks extending into the urban port city.

During the late 1620s, the hospital of Saint Lazarus housed approximately sixty lepers—black and white, male and female—and was located just outside Cartagena, on the main road into and out of the city. With no walls to contain them, black lepers were frequently seen in the company of African workers from nearby *estancias*, and with black women and men who had left the city to gather wood, to draw water, or to boil seawater in order to extract salt.¹⁰¹ According to witnesses, both rural and urban blacks

¹⁰¹ Coastal Upper Guinean groups extracted salt from evaporated seawater; in some cases the salt was purified by boiling it. See Donald R. Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa* (Armonk and

congregated with lepers in a friendly manner: they smoked tobacco together, shared food, bartered for produce and livestock, and drank together from barrels of newly-drawn fresh water destined for use back in the city. Clearly, Cartagena's upper crust had multiple reasons to construct a high wall around the leper hospital. Individuals found to have contracted leprosy were sent to the hospital regardless of race, gender, or social status; a wall, at least, would contain this threat to the established social order. Witnesses suggested that an additional building should be constructed as well, so at least men and women could be separated. Meanwhile, black lepers continued to sneak into the city at night, and pregnant black women occasionally absented themselves from the hospital to give birth; the hospital's steward had already forced some leper couples to marry. The principal danger, however, repeated by various deponents, was the possibility that black lepers would contaminate slaves passing back and forth between the city and outlying farms and ranches.¹⁰² *Estancia* owners were no doubt mainly concerned over their personal fortunes, and troubled, perhaps, by what they perceived as the collapse of order within the hospital. Walls around the hospital would resolve both problems. Evidently, no one thought to suggest curtailing the movement of enslaved Africans and people of color between rural areas and the port city, as historical portrayals of rural slavery might lead us to expect.

In his widely influential study *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, John Thornton writes that in colonial Anglo-America, enslaved Africans were often "placed near the center of visibility and power in settler society," rather than being

London: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 57; Walter Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves: Transformations along the Guinea-Bissau Coast, 1400-1900* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003), 41.

¹⁰² AGI-SF 63, n.69, Expediente de la ciudad de Cartagena en que solicita ayuda para la construcción de un hospital para los leprosos, Cartagena, 29 marzo 1628. See especially n.69a, "Imformacion de los pobres q ay enfermos de St Lazaro y estado del ospital," folios 7r-16r.

“marginalized or banished to backwoods areas.”¹⁰³ This dichotomy, and by extension differing levels of opportunity available for enslaved people, is difficult to apply to the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean. The comparison fails not only because enslaved Africans and people of color formed such prominent components of Caribbean “settler society,” but also because geographic mobility was often an inherent part of rural labor. This was particularly true for enslaved sailors, oarsmen, and paddlers who regularly traversed maritime routes connecting rural towns and estates to urban centers, transporting passengers, merchandise, and basic supplies. To take one obvious example, as early as the 1570s African and African-descended slave paddlers (*remeros*) began to replace Indian canoe-men on the Magdalena River, the water route which linked Cartagena to interior river ports such as Mompox and Tenerife, and to the inland New Kingdom of Granada. In 1597, one friar in Bogotá estimated that more than seven hundred “blacks” were employed on canoes linking the river’s various ports.¹⁰⁴ Even the most rural farms and ranches were connected to maritime networks of commerce and transportation, including unauthorized contraband. In 1599, Bishop Juan de Ladrada noted that Cartagena’s galleys served as a major deterrent for Northern European corsairs and smugglers in the region. The galleys’ presence thus prevented “a multitude of blacks” laboring on coastal *estancias* from coming into regular contact with Spain’s enemies. In bishop Ladrada’s view, the overriding danger was that enslaved rural workers would supply Northern Europeans with provisions and information, or even

¹⁰³ Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 151.

¹⁰⁴ AGI-SF 238, R.3, n.26, Fray Alberto Pedrero a S.M., Santa Fé de Bogotá, 7 mayo 1597, folios 1v-2r. See also Ybot León, *La arteria histórica*, 35-157; del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias*, 103-31; Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 42-43, 63, 225-27, 234-37, 246-47; AGI-SF 93, Expediente del capitán Martín Camacho del Hoyo a S.M., 19 noviembre 1596; AGI-SF 96, n.5, Expediente del capitán Martín Camacho del Hoyo, Tenerife, 15 mayo 1598.

worse, that interlopers would convince rural slaves to abandon their farms and become maroons.¹⁰⁵

Free Black Farmers and Agricultural Laborers

Latin Americanists have searched for the origins of the Caribbean’s “black peasantry” in the abolition of slavery during the nineteenth century, but already by the late sixteenth century, free people of color—including African-born freedmen—owned rural and semi-rural properties outside the Spanish Caribbean’s major port cities.¹⁰⁶ Wealthy Iberians who owned farms or ranches generally lived in the urban seaports, leaving an overseer in charge of their agricultural enterprises. Most of the actual labor in such circumstances was performed by enslaved Africans either belonging to the *estancia* owner or in some cases the overseer, or rented from a different slaveowner. As little as we know about rural slavery on farms and ranches in the early colonial Americas, even less is known about free black wage laborers employed in rural occupations, or the numerous free blacks who owned *estancias* themselves. Perhaps because their presence undercuts predominant narratives of plantation slavery, historians have largely ignored free people of color in rural areas during the early colonial period. Even Frederick Bowser portrayed “emancipated rural slaves” as “isolated” and unskilled, knowing “nothing but agricultural work.” Free blacks from rural areas were doomed to lead a “marginal existence”; rural black slaves “condemned their children to the unrewarding

¹⁰⁵ AGI-SF 228, n.24, Obispo Fray Juan de Ladrada a S.M., Cartagena, 28 junio 1599, folio 1v.

¹⁰⁶ See especially Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*; and *ibid.*, “From Plantations to Peasantries in the Caribbean,” in *Caribbean Contours*, eds. Sidney W. Mintz and Sally Price (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 127-53.

life of an agricultural laborer through simple ignorance of the alternatives.”¹⁰⁷

Elsewhere, Bowser writes that “the rural black” could “only infrequently [...] possess agricultural property of his own,” though in some cases “a free black might purchase a miserable plot of land.”¹⁰⁸ Such characterizations stand in sharp contrast to available source materials for the early colonial Spanish Caribbean, leading us to believe that either there were fundamental differences in the opportunities available to free people of color in rural Peru and the rural Caribbean, or that Bowser’s conceptualization of slavery and freedom in rural areas was simply of limited scope.

The examples of free black agricultural workers are numerous. Some owned their own properties. In 1585, for example, a freed black man named Hernando found work as a swineherd on around Havana for a salary of fifty-seven *ducados* per year. The contract stipulated, however, that “during the time which the fleet is in this village’s port, the aforementioned Hernando will be free from this agreement in order that he may earn what he might on his own account.”¹⁰⁹ Other free people of color owned and operated rural properties of their own. During the 1560s and 1570s, Havana’s town council granted land to a number of freedmen—*negros horros* and *morenos horros*—who petitioned for rural or semi-rural lands on which to raise livestock and cultivate food crops. Hernando de Salazar *moreno horro* received authorization to cultivate up to 10,000 mounds of yuca and half a *fanega* of maize on a piece of land near the Chorrera river. Diego de Rojas *moreno horro*’s request for a site to raise *ganado menor* (sheep,

¹⁰⁷ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 299-323, 410n86; quotes from pages 299-300. For a refutation of similar myths regarding the immobility and isolation of Castile’s rural work force, see Vassberg, *The Village*. Bowser argues that rural slaves were less likely than urban slaves to be manumitted, though his chart indicates that *gender* was the critical factor; enslaved women were more than twice as likely to be manumitted than enslaved men, and more than three times as likely among individuals 8 years of age or older (298-99).

¹⁰⁸ Bowser, “Africans in Spanish American Colonial Society,” 377-78.

¹⁰⁹ Rojas, *Índice*, tomo I: 309 (doc. 531).

pigs, or goats) also met with the council's approval, as did Hernando de Rojas *negro horro*'s request for land to raise swine. The same council records refer to "the *estancia* of Francisco, the freed black swineherd."¹¹⁰ Though none of these formerly-enslaved men appear to have participated in the town council itself, most are described as *vecinos* of Havana, that is, property-owning, tax-paying, permanent residents. Several freed people of color in both Havana and Cartagena owned vast tracts of land known as "*caballerías*," big enough for a house measuring one hundred feet wide by two hundred feet long, with at least five hundred *fanegas* (more than three hundred hectares) of land for fields, orchards, and pastures. Citing royal ordenances issued in 1573, Borrego Plá suggests that in Cartagena, the *caballería* was "a plot of land intended for the sustenance of higher-ranking *vecinos*." Yet records of land allotments in Cartagena for the 1590s show that a freed black man named Gaspar de Mendoza owned a *caballería*; another freed black named Lucas de Soto owned a small island.¹¹¹ In Havana, Juan Gallego *negro horro* requested and received a *caballería* of land in 1569 to cultivate yuca, "since he is a *vecino*, and it is for the good of this village." In the same year, freed black Julián de la Torre, "sheriff of the blacks," was granted a *caballería* of land outside Havana to cultivate yuca and maize.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Roig, *Actas*, tomo II: 240; tomo III: 160-61, 166, 218. See also María Teresa de Rojas, "Algunas datos sobre los negros esclavos y horros en la Habana del siglo XVI," in *Miscelánea de estudios dedicados a Fernando Ortiz*, vol. II: 1275-87 (La Habana: Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, 1956).

¹¹¹ Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 313-18. See also Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 164-66, 203n74; and James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 134.

¹¹² Roig, *Actas*, tomo II: 166-67, 240. Various sources for Cartagena and Havana mention free or freed people of color as leaders of free black militias which were raised mainly in times of emergencies up until the mid-seventeenth century. To the best of my knowledge, however, this is the only known reference to the position "sheriff of the blacks" (*alguacil de los negros*) in any colonial Spanish American setting. The title "sheriff" (*alguacil*) implies maintenance of internal social order, as opposed to the military title "*capitán de los negros horros*." For Iberian precedents, see Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972), 174; Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 8-9.

Significantly, some freed black farmers and ranchers bore African ethnonyms, indicating that some African-born forced migrants managed not only free themselves from slavery, but also to support themselves and their families through agricultural labor. As early as 1569, Havana cabildo records mention rural land owned by “Diego Brame, *negro horro*.” In 1577, Francisco de Rojas *moreno horro* received authorization to plant up to 6,000 mounds of yuca and half a *fanega* of maize for “the sustenance of this village”; the farmland allocated was located two leagues outside of Havana, next to land owned by a freed black man named Pedro Ibo. The following year, Havana’s town council authorized Francisco Engola, “*moreno horro* and *vecino* of this village,” to ranch cattle near a lake known as “Graçias a Dios” (Thanks be to God).¹¹³ In 1602, freed *moreno* Anton Bran sold a farm located outside Havana along the road to Guanabacoa, for the price of 270 *ducados*. The property consisted of “3,000 mounds of yuca, a grove of plantains, several *bohios* (huts), several rows of maize already sown, five *fanegas*’ worth of maize already harvested, various tools, five chickens, and a rooster.”¹¹⁴ Free African-born women also owned rural properties and agricultural holdings. In the early 1580s, María Xolofa owned a garden or located in Gethsemani, a poor neighborhood just outside Cartagena’s city walls.¹¹⁵ Shortly afterwards in Havana, Isabel Enchica *morena horra* sold half of an *estancia* to a man named Antón Pérez.¹¹⁶

As Governor Osorio’s detailed list of rural properties in Española at the dawn of the seventeenth century reveals, free people of color commonly owned and operated *estancias* in Española as well. Table 3.2 is a list of nineteen free people of color,

¹¹³ Roig, *Actas*, tomo II: 162; tomo III: 172, 194-95.

¹¹⁴ ANC-PN, mfn 75847584 (Regueyra / Juan Bautista Guilisasti / 19 diciembre 1602).

¹¹⁵ AGI-SF 62, n.28, Memorial y testimonio de autos, Cartagena, 11 mayo 1583, folios 36r-36v.

¹¹⁶ Rojas, *Índice*, tomo II: 378 (doc. 555).

Table 3.2. Free Black Farmers in Española, c.1606

(Source: Demorizi, *Relaciones*, II: 376-443)

<i>Estancia Owner</i>	<i>Vecino of</i>	<i>Estancia Location</i>	<i>Crops Cultivated</i>
Juan de Castañeda, negro horro		Buena Ventura	gengibre
Bernaldina Solana, morena libre	Santo Domingo	La otra banda	casave, maíz y otras legumbres
Juana de la Puebla, negra libre		Savana de la Venta / Esperilla y Canoa	
Simon, negro horro	Santo Domingo	Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Catalina Bran		Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Pedro Cid, negro horro		Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Gaspar Çape, negro horro		Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Sebastian Chaves, negro horro		Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Juan López, negro horro		Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Alejandro Martel, negro horro	Santo Domingo	Isabela (la Yaguasa)	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Juan Bran, negro horro		Isabela	casave, maíz y otras cosas
Elvira, negra horra		Nigua	yuca, maíz y otras legumbres
Mariana Suasso, mulata	Santo Domingo	Nigua	yuca, maíz y otras legumbres
Domingo de Rivas, de color moreno, horro	Santiago		casave, maíz y tabaco
Leonor, negra libre		La Vega	casave, maíz y otras legumbres
Tomás Franco, negro libre, çapatero	La Vega	La Vega	casave, maíz y otras legumbres
Juan Biafara, negro libre	La Vega	La Vega	casave, maíz y otras legumbres
Ana de Alarcon, negra libre		La Vega	casave, maíz y otras legumbres
Marta, negra libre		Azua	casave y otras legumbres

including eight women and eleven men, whom Osorio recognized as *estancia* owners in 1606. Several of these individuals are also listed separately as *vecinos* with households in Santo Domingo, or in one of the island's smaller towns. As in Havana and Cartagena, Española's free black property owners included a number of African-born farmers. Though we do not know precisely when Catalina Bran, Juan Bran, Juan Biáfara, and Gaspar Çape arrived in Española, they almost certainly first came to the Caribbean as captives on one or more slave ships. Though we do not know how they freed themselves from slavery, it is clear that this Upper Guinean woman, and three Upper Guinean men, were perceived by the island's governor as free *estancia* owners (Juan Biáfara is also described as a *vecino* of La Vega). With only two exceptions—a man named Juan de Castañeda, who cultivated ginger, and another identified as Domingo de Rivas, who grew tobacco in addition to food crops—nearly all of these free black farmers owned *estancias* which primarily produced maize, yuca, and other fruits and vegetables.

When Bishop Córdoba Ronquillo proposed sites for new *agregaciones* in rural areas of Cartagena's province in 1634, he, too, listed several dozen rural property owners. Agustín Arará appears on this list as the owner of a ranch or *estancia* on the coast north of Cartagena, near the Punta de la Canoa, where the construction of a new church was proposed for the religious instruction of approximately "230 blacks" (see Appendix C). The bishop also noted the presence of "more than 400 freed blacks and slaves" who lived in houses and on farms "in the Swamp of Tesca and Cascaxal," working "on pig farms and fields." Many of these individuals were already accustomed to "gathering to hear mass in the church which Bartolomé Arará has constructed on his ranch."¹¹⁷ Both men

¹¹⁷ AGI-SF 228, n.100a, folios 1r, 2v-3r.

were associated in some way with Arda (or Allada) in Lower Guinea, a region which came to be known as the “Slave Coast” during the eighteenth century.

In addition to owning farms and ranches, some free black *estancieros* owned African slaves. Unlike chattel slavery in nineteenth-century Anglo-America, slavery in the late medieval and early modern Iberian world was viewed as a temporary, legal condition at least in theory.¹¹⁸ Though Iberians virtually always acquired slaves from groups considered to be “outsiders,” and although an individual might remain in slavery for many decades or for life, there were nonetheless clearly-defined laws governing slavery, and defining who was enslaveable under what circumstances. Historians continue to refer to “the Tannenbaum debate,” i.e. compared to the colonial Anglo world, Spanish American institutions and laws governing slavery ostensibly provided greater avenues for enslaved people to achieve freedom; but did legal theory or official religious policy always translate into practice in American colonies with large slave populations?¹¹⁹ The “Tannenbaum debate” is rooted in comparative analysis of American slave regimes during the very late colonial period, a world in many ways far removed from the under-studied early modern, Iberian and African world addressed here. However, it seems beyond passing relevance for this argument that in the Spanish Caribbean during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it was not unusual for free people of color and former slaves—including women and men born in Africa—to

¹¹⁸ Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Knopf, 1946); Bowser, *The African Slave*, 272-74; Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, 49-54; Landers, *Black Society*, 1-28; de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic*, 186-88. For a depiction of enslaved Africans’ legal status in the early modern Portuguese world as sharing aspects of both Anglo-American chattel slavery and medieval serfdom, see Saunders, *A Social History*, 113-33.

¹¹⁹ For recent discussion of Tannenbaum’s limits and/or continued relevance for scholars of Latin American slavery, see articles by Alejandro de la Fuente, María Elena Díaz, and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara in *Law and History Review* 22:2 (Summer 2004): 339-88, at <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/lhr/22.2/> (accessed May 1, 2009).

own slaves, though most probably did not, and those who did usually owned only small numbers of slaves.

Sailing from Angola towards Mexico in 1628, the slave ship “San Pedro” stopped in Havana, selling its cargo of two hundred and thirty enslaved women, men, and children without authorization; subsequent criminal investigations undertaken two years later generated more than five hundred pages of testimony and legal proceedings.¹²⁰ On November 9, 1630, a royal inspector publicly announced in Havana that every individual who had purchased slaves from the ship San Pedro was legally obliged to come forth to testify within eight days. Regardless of whether their slave purchases had followed legal protocols, no one would be prosecuted (though the governor of Cuba was in fact imprisoned for having allowed the sale to take place). Over the following weeks, one hundred and forty-nine people acknowledged their purchase of one or more West Central African captives. Those who had purchased slaves from the “San Pedro” included widows, carpenters, caulkers, pilots, sheriffs, scribes, military officers, a shoemaker, a tailor, a blacksmith, a priest, a barber, a doctor, and a midwife. Fourteen free people of color also admitted that they or their spouse had purchased slaves from the San Pedro.¹²¹ Two of these men were Africans, identifying themselves as Agustín Enchico and Juan Pérez Locumi. On November 15, 1630, “*Agustín enchico moreno libre*” testified to having purchased “a *negra* named Madalena” from among the captives disembarked. “*Juan Pérez locumi moreno libre*” appeared slightly late, having been absent from

¹²⁰ AGI-SD 119, s/n, Expediente del fiscal y oficiales reales de la ciudad de Habana, “Autos sobre la arribada del navio nombrado San Pedro, maestre Jacinto de Silba,” Havana, 1628-1631.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Pieza 2, folios 37v, 39r, 41r, 42r, 47r-47v, 48v, 50r, 55r-55v, 58r-60r.

Havana for the past two months, but on November 29, he testified that he had purchased “a *negra* named Agueda” from one of the passengers traveling on the same slave ship.¹²²

Several of the free black slaveowners whose testimonies are recorded were unable to appear in person, or testified after the eight-day deadline had passed, because they were “absent” in rural areas outside of the city. A free black woman named Juana de Morta presented a bill of sale on behalf of her husband, free *moreno* Cristóbal Velazquez, who had purchased a “black woman named Graçia” from the San Pedro. De Morta stated that her husband was unable to appear himself, since he was “out in the countryside.” *Moreno libre* Francisco de Noriega, who had purchased “a little black boy named Lucas,” appeared before royal officials to testify three days after the deadline had passed, explaining that for the past month, he had been “absent from the city on his *estancia*, on the island’s southern coast, with his wife.” Testifying the following day, free *mulato* Martin Garçia blamed his tardiness on having been “absent in the countryside,” and noted that he had bought “a black woman named María.” The very last person to testify was free *moreno* Anton Mendes, who appeared before royal officials in Havana on December 10 to acknowledge his purchase of “a black woman named Ysabel.” He, too, had been “absent on his *estancia*.”¹²³

In the late 1560s, as Havana began to grow, free people of color “felt the pressure of the city’s growth,” in the words of Irene Wright. The town’s free black population of about forty people in 1568 was accused of “constituting a nuisance, and should therefore be deported to Florida.”¹²⁴ As indicated by Havana cabildo ordinances of 1577 and 1624, land and local resources such as timber were growing increasingly scarce during the late

¹²² *Ibid.*, Pieza 2, folios 48v, 59v.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, Pieza 2, folios 42r, 58r-58v, 59v-60r.

¹²⁴ Wright, *Early History of Cuba*, 313; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 36.

sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.¹²⁵ By the mid-1620s, in addition to mills and ranches, there were “more than 350 *estancias* around Havana,” which kept the city “very well supplied with vegetables, yuca and cassava.”¹²⁶ During the same period, circa 1625, members of Havana’s city council noted that “All the *haciendas* are operated with slaves, and there is no one else to make use of, particularly on this island, since native-born Indians are lacking.”¹²⁷ While slave labor remained essential to agricultural production in rural areas supporting Havana, population growth and the decreasing availability of land generated renewed conflicts over land rights during the third decade of the seventeenth century.¹²⁸ Limited resources meant that free black farmers and their families were subject to new pressure to maintain their sources of income and economic status. In 1623, a series of royal cédulas was issued to Havana’s governor, ordering the correction of several grievances reported by free blacks living outside Havana. Earlier they had written jointly to the Spanish Crown, describing themselves as hard-working farmers, whose labor on *estancias* sustained the port city and Spain’s Indies fleets:

“The free blacks of the city of Havana say that in that land, they are like the laborers in these realms of Castile, working and cultivating the land with all types of crops. They are well-established with their *estancias*, with which they sustain not only the city and its inhabitants, but also others who arrive and leave with Your Majesty’s fleets and armadas.”

¹²⁵ On Havana cabildo decisions in 1577 and 1578 to restrict the cutting of timber, and to reserve a space of one league around the city, see Roig, *Actas*, tomo III: 141-142, 144, 216. Similar concerns resurfaced five decades later, as indicated in AGI-SD 117, s/n, Carta de Diego Gonçalez Borjes including “Testimonio de la eleccion de procurador general,” Havana, 1 enero 1624, visto en Madrid, 1 febrero 1625. On Havana’s growth during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, see also Alejandro de la Fuente, César García del Pino, and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, “Havana and the Fleet System: Trade and Growth in the Periphery of the Spanish Empire, 1550-1610,” *CLAR* 5:1 (1996): 95-115.

¹²⁶ AGI-SD 117, s/n, Expediente y autos promovido por Mathias Rodriguez de Acosta, procurador de la Ciudad de San Xpobal de la Havana, visto en Madrid, 22 enero 1628 and 9 julio 1629.

¹²⁷ Alejandro de la Fuente, “Introducción al estudio de la trata en Cuba, siglos XVI y XVII,” *Santiago* 61 (Marzo 1986), 165.

¹²⁸ For an overview of urban Havana’s growth during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, see de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic*, 81-117.

They complained of being forced to perform excessive corvée labor including long-distance mail delivery, and reported pseudo-legal tricks involving land permits by which Havana residents attempted to appropriate their land. Worst of all, free blacks complained of harassment by Havana's maroon patrols, who looted their properties under the pretext of searching for runaway slaves.¹²⁹

If early seventeenth-century Havana was a site of competing agricultural agendas, with various sectors of the population advocating either farming, grazing, or sugar cultivation, then free black farmers and ranchers may well have sided against the expansion of Havana's nascent sugar industry. As noted above, the sugar sector was of relatively small importance within Havana's export economy prior to the late eighteenth century; Alejandro de la Fuente notes that "rather than specialized industrial units, seventeenth-century mills were basically self-sufficient agricultural concerns that manufactured sugar in an artisan-like manner with a limited supply of slaves."¹³⁰ Perhaps Havana's free black *estancia* owners had a hand in writing an anonymous letter received by authorities in Madrid in 1636. The letter warned that sugar mills were harmful to the health of both Havana residents and the passengers and crews of Indies fleets alike. In the 1630s, fresh water from the Chorrera river was channelled directly to Havana; there was no longer need to send slaves in boats along the coast to bring back water from the river's mouth. However, the letter warned, industrial waste from the mills ran downhill into the Chorrera river channel. The anonymous author listed a variety of toxic substances which oozed from each mill, including "purging honeys, *bagasse* from the crushed cane, bleach, ashes, soap and residue from washed cauldrons, and the urine and

¹²⁹ "Papers Bearing on the Negroes of Cuba in the Seventeenth Century," *JNH* 12:1 (Jan 1927): 55-67.

¹³⁰ de la Fuente, "Sugar and Slavery," quote from 116; de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic*, 136-46.

the excrement of fifty horses and mules, all of which inevitably ends up in the Chorrera reservoir, from which everyone drinks, having no other water to drink from.”¹³¹ While the outrage reflected in this letter from Havana clearly takes issue with sugar mills’ threat to public health, the underlying conflict during the 1620s and 1630s was one of competition over limited agricultural resources, and quite possibly an increasing threat of disenfranchisement for free people of color who owned rural properties.¹³²

Despite the fact that rural black farmers and ranchers were occasionally slaveowners themselves, urban elites in both Havana and Cartagena were continually suspicious of collaboration between *estancia* owners—particularly free black *estancia* owners—and escaped slaves. In 1574, Havana’s town council noted that “some people house fugitive blacks and maroons on their farms and ranches, giving them food and employing them [...] for many days.” At other times, *cabildo* members noted, rural property owners “buy the runaways from their masters, saying that ‘they buy them at their own risk, knowing they might never be found,’ and the owners of such fugitive slaves unsuspectingly sell them for far less than their actual value.”¹³³ Accordingly, Havana’s town council issued restrictive legislation concerning the punishment of *estancieros* who hired maroons, and ordered that every *estancia* must have stocks (*cepo*) for the imprisonment of escaped slaves who might be apprehended in the area. The unstated assumption was that rather than trying to escape slavery altogether, some enslaved Africans simply re-positioned themselves in an attempt to trade one owner for

¹³¹ AGI-SD 117, s/n, anonymous “Expediente de la Ciudad de la Habana, prohibiendo a sus vecinos las talar y rocar en el monte que esta sobre la presa de la Chorrera,” visto en Madrid, 25 octubre 1636.

¹³² For an argument that Havana’s elites consciously sought “to reduce the social distance between slaves and free blacks” during the sixteenth century, and that already by this time, “local legislation contributed to the creation of a racial knowledge that would become one of the central traits of the Atlantic system and a defining element in Cuba’s history,” see de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic*, 179-81.

¹³³ AGI-SD 116, R.2, n.63, Petición de Gaspar de Çarate sobre confirmación de ordenanzas, Havana, 14 enero 1574, folios 12r-12v, 16r.

another who would better meet their needs, or may have been less abusive. Though the context was obviously different, this practice strongly echoes the mobility of extended family groups in West Africa, and ongoing competition between rival patrons to attract clients and dependents.¹³⁴ In the Spanish Caribbean, free people of color had often been slaves themselves, and some were African-born. In addition to viewing free black farmers and ranchers with suspicion as possibly providing aid to escaped slaves, Iberian authorities may have worried also that enslaved Africans would view free people of color as more desirable owners.

In some cases, maroons are indeed known to have served as *estancia* laborers. As one of several individuals captured from the *palenque* Limón in Cartagena's province in 1634, Gaspar Angola testified that he and fellow maroons had visited the *estancia* of an Iberian man, don Juan de Sotomayor. The maroons provided hand-woven sashes and blankets, and chickens, in exchange for tobacco, salt, and shirts. Sotomayor fed them "at his table" and offered gifts to the maroons' leaders. Another *estanciero* named Francisco Martin Garruchena had given them "machetes and axes and knives and other things, because they sowed his fields and harvested the maize." As hired hands, maroons brought welcome agricultural expertise; perhaps building on previous experience farming in Africa or elsewhere in the colonial Iberian world, maroons regularly performed rural labor in their own villages. Gaspar Angola testified that since escaping to Limón approximately one year ago (i.e. in 1633), he had primarily been employed in field work and in transporting water and firewood, under the supervision of overseers. Furthermore, he had participated in raids, capturing people from nearby farms to bring back to Limón,

¹³⁴ George E. Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000-1630* (Boulder, San Francisco, and Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), 34-35, 47.

“to put them to work in the fields.”¹³⁵ Viewed in this light, colonial maroon wars appear to have been initially generated by competition between maroon communities and Spanish property-owners over who would ultimately benefit from the agricultural labor of enslaved workers.

Conclusion

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the rural Spanish Caribbean world was far more complex than a conglomeration of cane fields, sugar mills, “big houses,” and bands of maroons who simply “resisted.” The Spanish empire’s heavy reliance on black agricultural workers to sustain key port cities calls into question the notion that “white settlers” were necessarily the principal agents of European colonization of the Americas. Though agricultural labor throughout much of the early colonial Caribbean was associated with rural black populations, these diverse rural occupations were generally associated with food crops and livestock, as opposed to export crops such as sugar. With sugar plantation models in mind, historians of slavery in the colonial Americas have largely equated agricultural slave labor in rural areas with isolation, ignorance, and immobility. However, such characterizations are as inaccurate for the Caribbean’s rural African and Afrocreole populations as they were for early modern European peasantries. Linked to urban centers and the outside world principally by coastlines, rivers, and inlets, but also by overland routes, the rural Caribbean was a

¹³⁵ AGI-Patronato 234, R.7, bloque 2, “Testimonio de los Proçessos y castigos que se Hiçieron por el Maestro de Campo Francisco de Murga Governador y Cappitan General de Cartagena contra los negros Çimarrones y alçados de los Palenques de Limon Polin y Çanaguare” (1634): “Declaracion de Gaspar Angola,” 8 enero 1634, folios 134v (807v)-138v (811v). For more information on this richly detailed source and related documents, see Kathryn J. McKnight, “Gendered Declarations: Testimonies of Three Captured Maroon Women, Cartagena de Indias, 1634,” *CLAH* 12:4 (Fall 2003): 499-527; and *ibid.*, “Confronted Rituals: Spanish Colonial and Angolan ‘Maroon’ Executions in Cartagena de Indias (1634),” *Journal of Colonialism & Colonial History* 5:3 (2004); and Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 234.

world of constant movement, featuring diverse forms of social interaction which urban elites sought to control, usually unsuccessfully. The prominence of free people of color, including African-born ex-slaves, among rural landowners is perhaps the most significant marker of the rural Caribbean's previously under-estimated complexity. One avenue for future research on this topic which should yield fruitful results, given the early colonial Caribbean's demographic composition and the detailed nature of previously under-utilized source materials consulted here, will involve re-imagining a rural Caribbean world in light of precolonial African history.

CHAPTER IV

BECOMING “LATIN”: AFRICAN ACCULTURATION AND *LADINO* INTERMEDIARIES

The past four decades have seen a drastic response to Sidney Mintz and Richard Price’s challenge issued in 1976, in which they advocated “a skeptical attitude” towards the notion that research on Africans and their descendents in the Americas might reveal “direct continuities from the African homelands.”¹ From kola nuts in early seventeenth-century Cartagena, to West Central African divination ceremonies in colonial Brazil, recent scholarship has unearthed scattered evidence of African material goods, spiritual practices, social networks, and forms of military and political organization which survived the “Middle Passage.”² Our understanding of “creolization” among enslaved Africans disembarked in the colonial Americas has been further complicated by detailed studies of African groups and individuals in diaspora, the amalgamation and reconfiguration of African identities, and extensive interactions which took place in precolonial western Africa itself.³ Based on this body of new research, Africanists such

¹ Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of an African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992 [1976]), quote from 52.

² See, for example, John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Mariza de Carvalho Soares, *Devotos da cor: identidade étnica, religiosidade e escravidão no Rio de Janeiro, século XVIII* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2000); Renée Soulodre-La France and Paul E. Lovejoy, “Intercambios transatlánticos, sociedad esclavista e inquisición en la Cartagena del siglo XVII,” trans. Oscar Grandíos, in *Afrodescendientes en las Américas: Trayectorias sociales e identitárias*, eds. Claudia Mosquera et al. (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2002), 195-211; James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the Afro-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Oscar Grandíos Moráquez, “West Central African Slaves and the Transformation of Their Ethnic Identities: The Development of a Congo Culture in 19th-Century Cuba,” Ph.D. dissertation (York University, in progress).

³ Recent works include Paul E. Lovejoy, “Identifying Enslaved Africans in the African Diaspora,” in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery*, ed. *ibid.* (London and New York: Continuum, 2000), 1-29; Mariza C. Soares, “From Gbe to Yoruba: Ethnic Change and the Mina Nation in Rio de Janeiro,” in *The Yoruba*

as Paul Lovejoy and Joseph Miller forcefully argue against the notion that cultural transformations—i.e. Africans’ acculturation to Iberian social norms—necessarily implied corresponding “deculturation,” the loss of African identities, loyalties, beliefs, or memories.⁴ On the other hand, Philip Morgan warns against the dangers of oversimplifying the early modern Atlantic world’s heterogeneity and hybridity, suggesting that historians have too readily taken for granted the direct transfer of African “national” identities, intact, to the colonial Americas.⁵ Yet “creolization” models tend to avoid African history altogether, viewing African captives disembarked in late colonial Cuba, for example, as “people at a threshold” who “could no longer express their culture in the ways they had known.” With “African” and “Spanish” cultures construed as polar opposites, African migrants to the Caribbean become inhabitants of “a continuum that lay between African and Spanish cultures.” From this fuzzy, intermediate zone, it is argued, there emerged a “creole culture,” accompanied by “Cuban-ness” and “Afro-Cuban

Diaspora in the Atlantic World, eds. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 231-47; Mariana P. Candido, “Enslaving Frontiers: Slavery, Trade, and Identity in Benguela, 1780-1850” (Ph.D. diss., York University, 2006); Matt D. Childs, “‘The Defects of Being a Black Creole’: The Degrees of African Identity in the Cuban *Cabildos de Nación*, 1790-1820,” in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 209-45; Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁴ Lovejoy, “Identifying Enslaved Africans,” 17-18; Joseph Miller, “Retention, Reinvention, and Remembering: Restoring Identities through Enslavement in Angola and under Slavery in Brazil,” in *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil during the Era of Slavery*, eds. José C. Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2004), 81-121. On “transculturation,” “deculturation,” and “neoculturation,” see Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís, intro. Bronislaw Malinowski, new intro. Fernando Coronil (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995 [1940]), xxiv-xxvi, xlv-xlvi, lvii-lxi, 5, 97-103.

⁵ Philip D. Morgan, “The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Destinations and New World Developments,” *SA* 18:1 (1997): 122-45. For discussion of the “opposition” between “Africanist and creolist models,” see Kristen Mann, “Shifting Paradigms in the Study of the African Diaspora and of Atlantic History and Culture,” in *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin and Brazil*, eds. Kristin Mann and Edna G. Bay (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2001), 3-21.

identity.”⁶ However useful for postulating the formation of racial or national identities, American “creolization” models implicitly discount the possibility—and I argue, the likelihood—that Africans maintained multiple identities, simultaneously both African and Iberian.⁷ This chapter offers an interpretation of African acculturation to Spanish Caribbean society as a transformation which extended, rather than obliterated, ongoing social and cultural changes taking place in contemporary precolonial Africa.

While African diaspora studies have expanded their reach to include most of the Americas, Northern Africa, the Indian Ocean world, and beyond, the questions which initially inspired the debates cited above were rooted in attempts to understand the experiences of enslaved Africans in Anglo America, a world in which “black majorities” were rare. Understanding Africans’ roles in the early modern Iberian world presents an entirely different historical problem. By the late sixteenth century, the Caribbean’s major seaports were largely sustained by the labor of tens of thousands of forced migrants from Upper Guinea, Lower Guinea, and West Central Africa. These fortified maritime centers, lynchpins in Spain’s “Golden Age” empire, were in essence Afro-Iberian port cities under Spanish control. As discussed in the previous chapter, stable populations in port cities such as Cartagena de Indias, Santo Domingo, Panama, and Havana included both Iberians and sizeable communities of free people of color, as well as slave populations which may have outnumbered all free residents combined. How, then, did African-born migrants become integrated into Spanish Caribbean society, making Spain’s colonization of the region possible? In his survey outlining “how Spain became a world power,”

⁶ William C. Van Norman, “The Process of Cultural Change among Cuban Bozales during the Nineteenth Century,” *The Americas* 62:2 (Oct 2005): 177-207, quotes from 180, 196.

⁷ See Donald R. Wright, “‘What Do You Mean There Were No Tribes in Africa?’: Thoughts on Boundaries and Related Matters in Precolonial Africa,” *HA* 26 (1999): 409-26.

Henry Kamen convincingly suggests that the Spanish empire was “wholly dependent on the collaboration of others.”⁸ The idea of “collaboration” is less than accurate to describe Iberians’ dependence on African captives forcibly transported to the Caribbean. Yet rather than envisioning a violent cultural rupture, or a pristine new beginning, this chapter views Africans’ incorporation into Spanish Caribbean society as advanced stages of a multi-layered process which began on the mainland of Atlantic Africa and the (other) Atlantic Islands.

Within early modern Iberian societies, non-Iberian “others” were commonly classified according to their degree of familiarity with Spanish or Portuguese languages and cultures. At the bottom of a widely-employed scale of perceived acculturation, sub-Saharan Africans were often described as “*bozal*” (“*boçal*”), a noun signifying “muzzle” in present-day Spanish.⁹ To some extent, the term *bozal* may be compared with the Spanish-American word “*chapelón*,” used to describe rosy-cheeked Iberians newly arrived in the Americas. But Africans labeled as *bozales* were not merely inexperienced “greenhorns,” newcomers to the Americas. They were newcomers to the Iberian world in general, unacquainted with its long-established social and cultural practices. Historians of diverse regions of the Iberian world ranging from Portugal to Brazil, and from New Spain to the Andes, agree that as an adjective describing enslaved sub-Saharan Africans, the early modern term *bozal* may be translated into modern parlance as “unacculturated” or “un-Hispanicized” (though early modern Iberians may have preferred synonyms such as “brute,” “barbaric,” or “savage”). Beyond their African birth and a general lack of

⁸ Henry Kamen, *How Spain Became a World Power, 1492-1763* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 488. For reference to roles played by Africans and people of African descent, see 135-41.

⁹ *The Oxford Spanish Dictionary, New Second Edition* (Oxford, New York, and Madrid: Oxford University Press, 1998), 101.

exposure to the Iberian world, two specific factors determined whether an African person would be described as *bozal*. First, Africans who appear in colonial American sources as *bozales* could not speak or understand Spanish or Portuguese, at least not at the time they were thus described; African words unfamiliar to Iberians in Brazil were considered “*boçais*” words. Secondly, Africans were considered *bozal* if judged to be unfamiliar with Iberian systems of meaning espoused in Catholic practices. Thus Africans who were unbaptized or only recently baptized, and individuals with little or no experience of Catholic indoctrination, were likewise considered *bozales*.¹⁰ By all accounts, these two sets of knowledge—Iberian language skills and visible Catholicity—were the fundamental standards by which acculturation to Iberian society was measured.¹¹

On the opposite end of this scale of acculturation, sub-Saharan Africans and other non-Iberians who learned to master key elements of Iberian culture were described as “*ladinos*.” In translating this colonial-era term for modern audiences, historians of Latin America customarily refer to African *ladinos* and *ladinas* as “Latinized Africans,”

¹⁰ See Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810: estudio etno-histórico* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1946), 158-60; James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532-1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 175-76; Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 39, 73, 78-80, 347; Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 9; A.C. de C.M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 98-99; James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 217, 220; Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 250-51; Patrick J. Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz: Race, Ethnicity, and Regional Development*, 2nd ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 27, 161; María Cristina Navarrete, *Historia social del negro en la colonia: Cartagena, siglo XVII* (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 1995), 31, 126; Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 11, 13, 192; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 135 (“*boçais*” words), 235n57, 244n66, 253n45; Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 7, 15-16, 41; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 42-45, 71.

¹¹ However, familiarity with Iberian languages and Catholicism were not necessarily always related. As discussed below, we have several examples of West Central Africans who had learned to pray and confess in Kikongo or Kimbundu, and who continued to use those languages in Catholic rites in the Americas.

“acculturated Africans,” and “Hispanicized Africans.” Language acquisition was perhaps the most commonly-cited qualification for being considered “Latin,” as numerous examples from diverse geographical locations attest. In addition to high levels of proficiency in Portuguese or Spanish, historians agree that active participation in Iberian religious traditions—or at least, Iberian perceptions of Africans’ devotion to the Catholic church—was a second major characteristic shared by African *ladinos*.¹² We will examine their roles as Catholic godparents in much greater detail below. The amount of time spent in Iberian society was a third important factor in determining whether African-born forced migrants would be described as “Latin.”¹³ In 1572, royal officials wrote from Havana to inform the Crown that thirteen recently-arrived African captives had died of a contagious illness, along with fourteen Africans “who were already *ladinos* here.”¹⁴ Cartagena’s governor employed the term in similar fashion in 1617, referring to a group of Africans who, “having arrived *bozales*, made themselves *ladinos*, both in the language and in their familiarity with the land.”¹⁵ In these examples, the condition of being “Latin” was associated with the amount of time African forced migrants had resided in the Spanish Caribbean world, becoming familiar with its physical environment, in addition to increasing their knowledge of Iberian language and religious practices.

¹² Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 8, 157-58; Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, 176; Bowser, *The African Slave*, 78-79, 148, 238, 250, 348; Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 9, 32, 39; Lockhart and Schwartz, *Early Latin America*, 217; Saunders, *A Social History*, 101 (Saunders cites the Portuguese term as *ladinho*); Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, 27; Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities*, 82; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 27-28, 62; Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 16; María Cristina Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo de al esclavitud en Colombia, siglos XVI y XVII* (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2005), 78n4, 132; Alonso de Sandoval, *Treatise on Slavery: Selections from De instauranda Aethiopia salute*, ed. and trans. Nicole von Germeten (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 2008), 195.

¹³ According to the *Diccionario de la lengua española*, 22nd ed. (online), the phrase “*esclavo ladino*” signifies an enslaved individual “*que llevaba más de un año de esclavitud.*” Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, 22nd ed. (2001), <http://www.rae.es/> (accessed March 24, 2009).

¹⁴ AGI-SD 118, r.2, n.101, Diego Lopez Duran y Juan Bautista de Rojas, oficiales reales de la ysla de Cuba, a S.M., Havana, 29 noviembre 1572, folio 1r.

¹⁵ AGI-SF 38, r.5, n.144, Diego de Acuña, gobernador de Cartagena, a S.M., Cartagena, 2 agosto 1617.

The roots of the term *ladino* are probably to be found in medieval Iberian society; Ladino is most commonly known today as a distinct form of Spanish spoken by Jewish communities in medieval Spain, maintained afterwards by Sephardic Jews. Throughout the early modern era, Iberians designated a variety of “others” as *ladinos*; all were non-Iberians or non-Catholic Iberians who possessed a high degree of acculturation to the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking, Catholic world. Unlike the term *bozal*, usually applied only to enslaved sub-Saharan Africans, the term *ladino* was also used to refer to slaves and foreigners of diverse backgrounds, including Amerindians in Mexico, Guatemala, Florida, and elsewhere.¹⁶ One Iberian inspector who visited Cartagena in the late 1560s wrote that “the Indians are already so *ladino* that they will not work without being paid.”¹⁷ Briefly describing his pastoral visit throughout Cartagena’s province several decades later, one bishop also noted that “all the Indians of the Province are *ladino* in the Spanish language, both in understanding and speaking it.”¹⁸ We even have an example of a “latinized” Englishman, captured by galleys on patrol not far from Cartagena in the first decade of the seventeenth century. Spanish authorities described Captain Simon Bourman as *plático* (talkative?), *ladino*, and “intelligent” (his mother, apparently, was Spanish). Furthermore, he was “a Christian,” i.e. a Catholic, “and has given signs that he desires to remain one, in the service of your Majesty.” Upon

¹⁶ Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 157; Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, 107; Alfonso Franco Silva, *Esclavitud en Andalucía, 1450-1550* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1992), 103; Christopher H. Lutz, *Santiago de Guatemala, 1541-1773: City, Caste, and the Colonial Experience* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 54; Landers, *Black Society*, 302n83. For an unusual reference to Amerindians in Spanish Florida as “*bozales*,” see Landers, *Black Society*, 48.

¹⁷ AGI-Contaduría 1384, n.1, “Testimonio de la visita y cuenta,” 1568, folio 12r.

¹⁸ AGI-SF 228, n.98, Obispo fray Luis de Córdoba Ronquillo a S.M., 10 agosto 1634.

recommendation of Spain's Council of the Indies, King Philip III freed Simon Bourman and awarded him a post serving on Spain's galleys.¹⁹

As sub-Saharan Africans gradually attained various levels of Iberian cultural fluency, Iberians measured their transformations on a scale of acculturation ranging from *bozal* to *ladino*, with intermediate levels such as “half *bozal*,” “not very *ladino*,” and “between *bozal* and *ladino*.”²⁰ Though often closely related, these terms are not to be confused with the designation “creole,” or with the various African “nations” used to classify Africans by broadly-construed places of origin. The term “creole” (*criollo*, *crioulo*) signified birth anywhere within the Iberian world, for example in the Americas, Iberia, or Portuguese Africa. Conversely, people of color described by an African “nation,” “land,” or “caste” were ethnonyms referring (often vaguely) to regional origins or ports of embarkation for individuals born in sub-Saharan Africa, outside the realm of Iberian society.²¹ People ascribed an African “nation,” for example “Pedro Biáfara” or “María Angola,” could also be classified as either *bozal* or *ladino*, depending on their language skills and perceived level of acculturation to Iberian values. People of African

¹⁹ K. R. Andrews, “English Voyages to the Caribbean, 1596 to 1604: An Annotated List,” *WMQ* 31:2 (April 1974): 250-51; AGI-SF 1, n.309, Consulta del Consejo referente al distrito de la Audiencia “sobre lo que toca al Capitan Simon Borman, yngles,” visto en Valladolid, 9 noviembre 1604. See also AGI-SF 38, r.2, n.52a, “Testimonio de como el capitan Simon Bourman yngles se a reduzido a nuestra santa fe catolica,” Cartagena, 16 febrero 1603; AGI-SF 38, r.2, n.52b, “Relaçion que dio el capitan Simon Burman Yngles de la punta de Araya, cabo de Aguer, Inglaterra, Terranova,” Cartagena, 22 julio 1603.

²⁰ Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, 176; Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 39. For reference to a fictional character “Guiomar, la negra, que no era muy ladina,” see Miguel de Cervantes, *El celoso extremeño* [first published c.1590-1593] (Badajoz: Consejería de Cultura de la Junta de Extremadura, 2005), 69, 82.

²¹ On African “nations” as opposed to “creoles,” see Mariza de Carvalho Soares, “A ‘nação’ que se tem e a ‘terra’ de onde se vem: categorias de inserção social de africanos no Império português, século XVIII,” *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos* 26:2 (2004): 303-30. See also, for example, Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 160-61; Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, 173-75; Bowser, *The African Slave*, 40-43; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 19-30. The ways these terms were used changed over time; also, there may have been significant differences in the ways African “nations” were ascribed in Spanish and Portuguese sources. As for the term “creole,” Sandoval notes that some Portuguese-speaking, *ladino* Africans arriving in Cartagena had been born as *bozales* in Upper Guinea, then raised in Cabo Verde from the time they were small children. According to Sandoval, these individuals were known as “creoles” in Cabo Verde, whereas the term was strictly linked to place of birth in the Spanish Americas. See Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud*, introducción, transcripción y traducción de Enriqueta Vila Vilar (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1987), 139.

descent designated in Iberian sources as “creoles” were occasionally noted to have been *ladino* as well, but this was largely redundant since *criollos* were never considered to be *bozal*. Even children born free to African parents in maroon communities were described as *criollos de la montaña* (“mountain creoles”) or *criollos del monte* (“backwoods creoles”).²² There may have been a period early in the sixteenth century in which Africans viewed as *ladinos* were assumed to have been born in Spain, or to have spent considerable time in Iberia prior to traveling to the Americas.²³ By the second half of the sixteenth century, however, the term *ladino* was principally used in the Spanish Caribbean to distinguish African-born forced migrants who were acculturated, or “Latinized,” from those who were not.²⁴

These distinctions often appear in notarial records documenting slave sales, indicating that acculturation levels were a factor influencing slave prices. In 1569, having recently returned from a voyage to Mexico and the Spanish Main in the company of John Hawkins, one English merchant observed that:

If a negro be a Bossale that is to say ignorant of the spanishe or Portugale tonge then he or she is commonlye sould for 400 and 450 pesos. But if the Negro can speake anye of the foresaide languages any thinge indifferentlye (whiche is called Ladinos) then the same negro is commonlye sould for 500 and 600 pesos.²⁵

Yet there has been some confusion among historians regarding the relative values ascribed to enslaved *ladinos* and *bozales* during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; these values may have varied considerably over time, and from region to region. While

²² See María del Carmen Borrego Plá, *Palenques de negros en Cartagena de Indias a fines del siglo XVII* (Seville: EEHA, 1973), 32-35; and Jane Landers, “Cimarrón Ethnicity and Cultural Adaptation in the Spanish Domains of the Circum-Caribbean, 1503-1763,” in *Identity in the Shadow*, 39.

²³ Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 205n15; Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities*, 82-83, 105.

²⁴ See Navarrete, *Historia social*, 55, 127.

²⁵ Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930-1935), 1:72, “Deposition of William Fowler of Ratcliffe, Merchant,” 30 April 1569.

María Cristina Navarrete's assessment of slave prices in the New Kingdom of Granada agrees with the English merchant's quote above, others disagree. Based on his detailed study of notarial records in Lima, Bowser writes that in Peru, "by and large Spanish purchasers preferred slaves fresh from Africa to all but the best of the *ladinos*," and that *ladinos* were often considered less malleable, "subversive," "potential trouble-makers." For other historians, perceived acculturation made little difference in slave sale prices; the main determinants of value ascribed to enslaved Africans in colonial Mexico, Palmer suggests, were "age, sex, physical condition, and the possession of special skills."²⁶

Though we may be tempted to discount slaveowner preferences and slave sale prices as poor indicators of change over time in enslaved Africans' lives, bills of sale found in notarial records have supplied virtually our only means thus far of gauging the significance Iberians accorded to Africans' levels of acculturation within Iberian society. Otherwise, our understanding of African forced migrants' roles in the formation of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean society, as for other regions of the early modern Iberian world, is often limited to explorations of "race relations."²⁷ In 1985, Stuart Schwartz noted that the problem of incorporating acculturated non-Iberians and people of mixed ancestry into colonial Brazilian society during the sixteenth century "led to the creation of the peculiar social hierarchy based on race that we have come to associate with many New World colonies."²⁸ Much like historical emphasis on sugar cultivation in the early colonial Caribbean, the over-arching narrative of social formations

²⁶ Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 8; Bowser, *The African Slave*, 77-80, 342-45, quote from 79; Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, quote from 34; Marcos D. Arriaga Mesa, "Un acercamiento al comportamiento del precio de los esclavos en La Habana en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 56:1 (1999): 15-40; Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 132; Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities*, 82-83.

²⁷ For example, see Saunders, *Social History*, 166-75.

²⁸ Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations*, 250.

based on racial hierarchy tends to downplay aspects of the early modern world which fail to resemble models of late colonial society. For example, we have some evidence that racial categories in the early sixteenth-century Caribbean were fluid, but only to the extent that an influx of sub-Saharan Africans enabled everyone else to become “Spaniards.”²⁹ The foremost study of sixteenth-century Havana makes the case that as early as the 1550s, local elites in Havana “systematically tried to create a racially stratified order,” which they viewed as an “ideal social formation.”³⁰ The evolution of early colonial society in Cartagena has been delineated along even starker lines of racial animosity, with maroon communities described as “autonomous zones of black power,” defiantly established beyond the confines of “oppressive white society.”³¹ These Caribbean histories successfully track down events, attitudes, and practices in the early colonial period which foreshadowed or ultimately contributed to the rise of social orders based on systematic, and brutal, racial inequalities.³² However, they bring us no closer to understanding either (1) how African migrants’ experiences of Spanish Caribbean society changed during their own lifetimes, or (2) ways in which first-generation African captives, upon whom the Spanish empire depended to sustain its key Caribbean port cities, were incorporated into Caribbean society.

²⁹ Stuart B. Schwartz, “Spaniards, *Pardos*, and the Missing Mestizos: Identities and Racial Categories in the Early Hispanic Caribbean,” *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 71:1-2 (1997): 5-19.

³⁰ Alejandro de la Fuente, with César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 178-81. For a similar assertion, see Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 18.

³¹ Antonino Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias y la región histórica del Caribe, 1580-1640* (Sevilla: EEHA, Universidad de Sevilla, Diputación de Sevilla, 2002), 219-38. Other studies trace the origins of modern-day racism, through the Iberian world, even father back in time; see for example James H. Sweet, “The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought,” *WMQ* 54:1 (Jan 1997): 143-66.

³² We may contrast studies of race relations—which look backwards in time—with recent studies of the early colonial Spanish Caribbean which seek to incorporate African historical perspectives, essentially moving laterally, across the Atlantic, within the early modern period. In particular, see Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 87-140; and Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007).

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as in the late colonial period, power relations dictated the context of social and cultural interactions between Africans and Iberians in the Spanish Caribbean. It is probable, for example, that very few Iberian Catholics were ever held as slaves within colonial Spanish Caribbean society, and just as likely that no sub-Saharan African was ever a member of a colonial Spanish Caribbean city council.³³ Therefore, it is possible to write of “ladino-Spanish social interaction” within a broader context of race relations.³⁴ Yet historical interpretations using race as the primary category of analysis tend to negate any fundamental difference in the experiences of people described as *bozal* or as *ladino*, a handicap which ultimately masks significant change over time in the lives of individual Africans. For Frederick Bowser, “the ladino” was

a black who to a greater or lesser extent was Spanish except for skin color and lingering ties with his African tribal group and its culture. However poorly grasped or inwardly despised, the language, religion, and culture of the Spaniard were known to the ladino, and he moved with some ease in the Spanish world.³⁵

Bowser imagines a colonial Peruvian world in which resentfully acculturated “blacks” seemed comfortable in Iberian society, distinguishable from Iberians only by their “skin color” and by “lingering ties” to their African pasts, though they secretly “despised” the “culture of the Spaniard.” Bowser’s narrative is not the only historical account to intimate that African acculturation to Iberian norms was often a superficial gloss covering deeply rooted African—or racial—identities; other have suggested, for example, that African *ladinos* “at least outwardly adopted Christianity.”³⁶

³³ One Spanish man, “condemned to perpetual slavery in the St. Augustine galleys for murdering his wife” in the late 1560s, continued to labor as a royal slave in the late 1570s; see Landers, *Black Society*, 15.

³⁴ See, for example, Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 17-18.

³⁵ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 78-79. See also 222-23.

³⁶ Lockhart and Schwartz, *Early Latin America*, 217.

Rather than taking a longer view of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean as a proto-plantation society dominated by a burgeoning racial order, this chapter focuses on African acculturation to Iberian language and religious practices as a fundamental aspect in the formation of early colonial Spanish Caribbean society. Extant sources penned by Iberians reveal more about the ways they defined African “others” than about the ways African forced migrants defined themselves; yet Spanish Caribbean records provide extensive documentation of newly-arrived captives described as *bozales*, and acculturated Africans characterized as “Latin.” As discussed in further detail below, Havana’s baptismal records for the 1590s, in addition to other scattered accounts, actually document individual African forced migrants at different stages or levels of Iberian cultural fluency, providing a means of chronologically measuring sub-Saharan Africans’ incorporation, however partial it may have been, into Iberian society.

Historians of precolonial western Africa and African diasporas in the Americas have paid close attention to issues such as the validity of baptisms administered to enslaved Africans prior to their embarkation on slave ships, and the degree to which Africans may have been familiar with Iberian languages and Catholicism prior to being caught up in the transatlantic slave trade. With these and similar issues in mind, this chapter draws on a range of under-utilized Spanish Caribbean sources to provide information on non-elite Africans, including both slaves and former slaves, at various stages of familiarity with early modern Iberian culture. Mastery of Iberian language and religious practices provided enslaved Africans with access to resources and social networks, and opportunities to improve their immediate material conditions. In fact, rather than “resisting” acculturation to Iberian society, many Africans were active

participants in this process on multiple levels. Extant sources reveal that Africans adapted quickly to their new cultural environment, often serving as intermediaries for subsequent generations of forced migrants, especially those with backgrounds similar to their own. For every African woman or man brought before the Inquisition on charges of unorthodox religious practices, hundreds if not thousands of acculturated Africans served as interpreters and godparents for newly-arrived *bozales*. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as unprecedented waves of African captives flooded into Cartagena, Veracruz, Havana, and other ports, this cyclical process of African acculturation fueled the expansion of Spanish Caribbean society, facilitating the growth of stable populations and reinforcing Spanish colonization of the region.

African Indoctrination in Atlantic Context

Spain's heavy reliance on the labor of African forced migrants in order to "settle" and sustain its Caribbean colonies often mirrored aspects of Portuguese colonization in the Atlantic Islands and western Africa. Ecclesiastical authorities on both sides of the Iberian Atlantic during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries wrote of the necessity of incorporating sub-Saharan Africans into the Catholic church. They often debated the most effective means of indoctrination, and the "validity" of baptisms administered at different times and in different stages of the captives' involuntary journeys to the Caribbean. In the Atlantic Islands as well as in the Caribbean, African acculturation to Iberian spiritual practices was frequently viewed as a form of social control, though Iberian clergy appear to have disagreed over whether this was the primary goal of indoctrination, or simply, in their view, a fortunate side effect. Reading against

the grain of our source materials, we can only guess at possible African motives for adopting, or appropriating, Catholic practices and Iberian religious values to various extents – though for many, such practices may have represented continuities with their own religious traditions.³⁷ In fact, comparison of Africans’ acculturation to early modern Iberian Catholicism in both western Africa and the Caribbean reveals a number of parallels and continuities. The African *ladinos* who often appear in Spanish Caribbean source materials may provide evidence that some Africans were familiar with Portuguese religious culture prior to disembarking in the Americas.

While fluency in Spanish or Portuguese was probably the single most important factor in determining whether an African would be described by Iberians as *ladino*, as noted above, the term was also closely associated with Africans’ perceived familiarity with and practice of Iberian Catholicism.³⁸ In his discussion of African acculturation to Portuguese social norms in the Cape Verde Islands, António Carreira uses the term “latinize” (*ladinizar*) as synonymous with “catechize” and “Christianize”; “latinization” implied the transfer of “doctrine and Christian morals.”³⁹ Evoking a similar context, one religious history of São Tomé and Príncipe portrays the islands as a “Christian country” during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, “in spite of having been peopled [...] with Castilian Jews, and with many pagan slaves purchased in the Gulf of Guinea.” Though the author of this study does not use the word “latinize,” he clearly views the “social integration” of foreign immigrants and large numbers of enslaved Africans who “did not

³⁷ John Thornton, “The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491-1750,” *JAH* 25:2 (1984): 147-67.

³⁸ Sandoval cautions that priests should be “especially careful in examining those who are more *ladino*,” since African *ladinos* were generally assumed to have already been baptized and indoctrinated. See Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 442-43, 600, 604-7.

³⁹ António Carreira, *Formação e extinção de uma sociedade escravocrata, 1460-1878*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon: Comissão da Comunidade Económica Europeia para o Instituto Caboverdeano do Livro, 1983), 277, 294.

fit” within the desired social order as “one of the most difficult problems in the history of São Tomé and Príncipe.” Social integration, in this context, is construed largely in terms of the transfer of religious precepts and spiritual values, or the need to “evangelize, baptize, and to socially and religiously integrate very many slaves and immigrants.”⁴⁰ From this point of view, a sub-Saharan African designated as “Latin” would simply mark her as an outsider who had been successfully indoctrinated in the teachings of the Church.

Yet early modern church authorities clearly viewed the process of “Latinization” as more than simply the spread of Iberian Catholic values among an ethnically diverse populace. In late medieval Iberia as well as the early modern Iberian colonial world, professions of loyalty to the Church often carried political implications, i.e. obedience to the Spanish Crown. According to Enriqueta Vila Vilar, while ecclesiastical policies regarding the evangelization of Africans were sometimes “truly conceived with the goal of catechization,” at other times church doctrine regarding the administration of the sacraments to enslaved Africans was simply an effort to propagate “norms of social control.” The underlying concept behind “the indoctrination of slaves and of Africans in general,” she asserts, “was the need to maintain a system of control. Slaves were inculcated with the idea of sin and subsequent punishment, thus assuring their good behavior,” or so Iberian authorities hoped. Vila Vilar writes that the “conjunction of civil

⁴⁰ António Ambrósio, “Alguns problemas da evangelização em África no século XVI: D. Frei Gaspar Cão, OSA, Bispo de São Tomé (1554-1574),” in *Congresso Internacional de História Missionação portuguesa e encontro de culturas: Actas* (Braga: Universidade Católica Portuguesa / CNCDP / Fundação Evangelização e Culturas, 1993), I: 501-64; quotes from 506, 509-10, 557.

power and psychological persuasion imparted by doctrine” was essentially a “formula” designed to “pacify” Africans and people of color.⁴¹

We have several concrete examples of this philosophy at work in the minds of early modern Iberian elites. At the close of the seventeenth century in the Cabo Verde Islands, authorities feared that unacculturated Africans would rebel against their enslavement and “organize themselves in bands, attacking houses and committing robberies.”⁴² Likewise, as noted in the previous chapter, Cartagena’s bishops regularly portrayed indoctrination as a mean of incorporating—and controlling—a potentially dangerous rural population of African workers. Explaining the underlying causes of a recent maroon war not far from Cartagena, governor Jerónimo de Zuazo attempted to explain the reasons behind the slave uprising. The Africans who revolted were neither recently-arrived “blacks from Guinea” nor hostile Indians, he wrote; rather, they were “veteran” (*baquiano*) and “ancient” Africans who had lived in the province for some time. Owned by residents of Cartagena, these slaves were accustomed to working on *estancias* ten to twenty-five leagues outside the city, planting and harvesting, producing cassava bread, and cutting timber. Governor Zuazo suspected that they revolted because they “were not being treated well by their masters.” By this he meant that the Africans’ owners had neglected to provide someone “to administer our sacred Religion to them,” nor had they employed “white people to keep them subdued.”⁴³ Cartagena’s governor describes a world in which even Africans who were more or less accustomed to life in the Spanish Caribbean were liable to become a threat to the social order, unless they received

⁴¹ Enriqueta Vila Vilar, “La evangelización del esclavo negro y su integración en el mundo americano,” in *Negros, mulatos, zambaigos: derrotos africanos en los mundos ibéricos*, coords. Berta Ares Queija and Alessandro Stella (Seville: EEHA, CSIC, 2000), 189-206, quotes from 191.

⁴² Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 286-90.

⁴³ AGI-SF 38, r.2, n.73, Don Jerónimo de Zuazo a S.M., Cartagena, 1 noviembre 1605, folios 3r-3v.

thorough indoctrination and regular access to Catholic sacraments. Alternately, Zuazo suggested, it would be necessary to hire some “white people to keep them subdued.”

However, a narrow view of evangelization as exclusively a function of social control, including the maintenance of racial or ethnic hierarchies, fails to capture the often ambiguous nature of cultural interaction in coastal western Africa and in the Caribbean (as suggested, for example, by Zuazo’s mention of a Spanish overseer in Cartagena who “in his ways would have been similar” to enslaved Africans).⁴⁴ In studies of colonial Latin America, one prominent interpretation essentially holds that Africans’ exposure to Iberian Catholicism was limited prior to arrival in the Americas; religious instruction and baptisms administered on Africa’s coasts are regarded with skepticism owing to the presumed insincerity or ineffectiveness of local clergy. Bowser holds that “the odd ceremony of baptism increased the confusion and gave rise to lurid rumors” that enslaved Africans “were being carried away to be eaten,” or that “the Spaniards intended to make oil or lard from their fat.”⁴⁵ Bennett suggests that African *bozales* “had not been exposed to Christianity beyond the problematic baptism as they boarded the slave ships.”⁴⁶ Bennett is correct, of course, in that enslaved Africans who were familiar with Catholic teachings were less likely to be classified by Iberians as *bozales* in the first place. Africanists have found similar problems in Iberian attempts to implant, or impose, their own religious values onto sub-Saharan African societies. According to John Vogt, the presence of priests in sixteenth-century Elmina, sporadic at best, meant that “it was virtually impossible to break the new converts completely from their fetishism and

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* For a similar observation of “little difference” in the cultural mores of Portuguese inhabitants, their African slaves, and formerly enslaved “christãos” in Biguba, see MMA(2), IV: 260-64, “Carta do Padre Baltasar Barreira a El-Rei D. Filipe II,” 13 maio 1607.

⁴⁵ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 48.

⁴⁶ Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 41.

superstitions.”⁴⁷ In less Eurocentric fashion, Anne Hilton observes that even in seventeenth-century Kongo, Christian baptism was primarily valued as a protection against witchcraft.⁴⁸

The certainty that captives in coastal barracoons awaiting departure for Latin America received either bogus baptisms, or none at all, may be traced back, in large part, to the early seventeenth-century writings of Alonso de Sandoval. In his well-known *De instauranda Aethiopia salute*, published in Seville in approximately 1627, Sandoval copied three letters describing the frequently inadequate “instruction” of captives baptized in African ports. The first two letters, penned in 1614 and 1616 by the rector of a Jesuit college in the Cape Verde Islands, describe the superficial nature of baptisms administered to “*negros brutos*” on slave ships departing Cacheo on the Upper Guinea mainland, and the difficult nature of adequately catechizing newly-arrived Africans prior to their departure from Cape Verde. Sandoval received the third letter, dated 1622, from a Jesuit in Argentina who claimed that the day before slave ships departed Luanda, priests lined captives up for mass baptism with no explanation whatsoever, simply giving them a copy of their new Christian name in writing, perhaps on a small slip of paper, so they would not forget. Sandoval follows these letters with further examples of inadequate religious instruction given to African captives prior to their arrival in the Americas, including a series of sworn testimonies collected from slave ship captains in

⁴⁷ John Vogt, *Portuguese Rule on the Gold Coast, 1469-1682* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 56. On the evolution of the term “fetishism,” associated with Enlightenment-era theories of “the primitive mentality,” see Wyatt MacGaffey, “Dialogues of the Deaf: Europeans on the Atlantic Coast of Africa,” in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 249-67.

⁴⁸ Anne Hilton, *The Kingdom of Kongo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 98, 101-2.

Cartagena in 1610 and 1613.⁴⁹ Extant voyage data confirms that several of these men, including Felipe Rodríguez, Álvaro Serrano de Setubar, Jorge Lopez de Morales, and Pascual (Gaspar) Carvallo, participated in slave trade voyages to Cartagena during the years 1598, 1601 and 1616.⁵⁰ A separate letter written in 1607 also confirms that in the Cape Verde islands, unbaptized captives were often given Christian names, making it difficult for priests in Santiago to determine whether those on slave ships bound for “Quartajena” had been baptized.⁵¹ By 1630, the arguments presented by Sandoval and his colleagues reached Spain’s Council of the Indies. Informing the Crown that “every year more than eight or nine thousand blacks arrive at the Port of Cartagena, and in order to catechize them, it has been found that it is first necessary to re-baptize almost all of them,” the Council recommended the appointment of priests who would demonstrate greater zeal in catechizing Africans prior to embarking on slave ships.⁵²

Sandoval’s criticism of deficient baptisms administered in African ports during the early seventeenth century reflects long-running debate, and official concern, over the indoctrination of Africans and their incorporation into the Catholic, Iberian world.⁵³ One major question that remained unresolved for most of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was the length of time that Africans who had been disembarked in the America

⁴⁹ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 382-88.

⁵⁰ See, for example, TSTD 28153, 29049, 29115, 29559. Pascual Carvalho—who on January 14, 1614, claimed to have been “twenty times in San Paulo de Loanda, in Angola, during the last twenty years,” (Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 387)—was also captain of the slave ship that brought “Luis Congo,” actually from Wandu (*mosi obando*), from Angola to Cartagena in 1601. See chapter one, and further discussion below.

⁵¹ MMA(2), IV: 278-82, “Carta do Padre Manuel de Almeida ao Provincial da Companhia de Jesus,” 11 Junho 1607; Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 278.

⁵² AGI-SF 3, r.1, n.16, Consulta del Consejo sobre un memorial que a dado el Procurador General de la Compañía de Jesus refiriendo el gran daño que ay en los baptismos que hazen los curas de los Negros de Guinea, que pertenecen a la Corona de Portugal, y que convendra que V.M. mande por aquel Consejo, que en aquellas Provincias se pongan Curas Doctos que hagan bien sus officios. R: “Assi lo he mandado.” Madrid, 30 diciembre 1630. See also Vila Vilar, “La evangelización,” 192-96.

⁵³ See, for example, MMA(1), II: 383, “Alvará para os oficiais de S. Tomé,” 22 março 1556; MMA(1), II: 428-29, “Carta de Fernão Roiz a El-Rei,” 10 dezembro 1558; Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545 to 1800* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 119-20.

should be instructed in Catholic doctrine before receiving baptism. While some ecclesiastical authorities (including Sandoval) argued for immediate baptism, others favored a period of indoctrination lasting twenty to thirty days.⁵⁴ Writing from Española in 1576, fifty years before Sandoval, Santo Domingo's archbishop asked the Spanish Crown whether it would be preferable to baptize "*boçales*" immediately upon arrival (given their risk of dying), or whether their baptism should be postponed "until they know the Christian doctrine." In response, the archbishop was informed of a previously-established policy, by which "a *negro boçal* must be taught the doctrine for thirty days continuously, then baptized afterwards, however much or little he may know."⁵⁵ Later sources indicate that one month was viewed as insufficient time. In 1623, Portugal's overseas council recommended the appointment of two trustworthy priests in the Cape Verde islands to catechize and baptize captives for a period of two months, before "the monsoon," when slave ships had to depart.⁵⁶ Royal orders issued the same year indicate that efforts to "Christianize" enslaved African before and after their transatlantic passage may have been supplemented by indoctrination on the slave ships themselves. The royal order, issued on August 4, 1623, reads that "when possible, clergy must travel onboard all the ships that carry slaves, occupying themselves with the indoctrination and improvement of their souls, and those of the other passengers."⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Vila Vilar, "La evangelización," 200; Meier, "Beginnings," 45-49.

⁵⁵ AGI-SD 868, L.3, folios 61r-61v, Carta Real al arzobispo de Santo Domingo, en respuesta a carta suya de 17 julio 1576, sobre la duda que surgió en el sínodo de Santo Domingo del momento en que habían de ser bautizados los negros traídos de Guinea, Aranjuez, 8 mayo 1577. See also Johannes Meier, "The Beginnings of the Catholic Church in the Caribbean," in *Christianity in the Caribbean: Essays on Church History*, ed. Armando Lampe (Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago: University of the West Indies Press, 2001), 1-85.

⁵⁶ MMA(2), V: 3-7, "Consulta da Junta sobre o baptismo dos negros adultos da Guiné," 27 junho 1623.

⁵⁷ ANTT-MCO, Livro 26 (1618-1624), folha 130r; MMA(2), V: 10, "Carta Régia sobre a missão da Guiné," 4 Agosto 1623.

Despite a litany of ecclesiastical correspondence and royal decrees aimed at reforming the process of indoctrinating African captives, it is also apparent that many African baptisms were regarded as valid, and that in various contexts, early modern Iberians perceived African converts as legitimately “Christianized.” We have some evidence of legitimate indoctrination—and possible acculturation—among enslaved Africans in the Cape Verde Islands during the early seventeenth century: when questioned by Inquisition officials in Cartagena in 1650, a man named Sebastián Bran related that he was captured as a boy in Upper Guinea, and taken to the Cape Verde islands, to be sent afterwards to Cartagena. The length of his stay in the Cape Verde Islands is unknown, but he did remember having been baptized in the church “La Madre de Dios del Rosario.”⁵⁸ Even for Upper Guinea, where efforts to indoctrinate Africans were allegedly non-existent or ineffectual at best, a variety of sources depict the adoption of Catholic practices by diverse local populations. For Luso-African communities in the Cape Verde islands and on the Upper Guinean mainland, Catholicism—often incorporating elements of Judaism and indigenous African religious practices—was a major component of “Portuguese” identity.⁵⁹ Moreover, Iberian religious practices evidently spread among African communities as well. In approximately 1600, one Portuguese observer described the “nations of blacks” living along the São Domingos River, noting that “the Banhuns, Casangas, and Buramos, who continually communicate with us Portuguese, are very *ladino*. Many speak the Portuguese language, and are baptized of their own free will, traveling to the Island of Santiago [Cape Verde] to

⁵⁸ Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 102.

⁵⁹ Peter Mark, “The Evolution of ‘Portuguese’ Identity: Luso-Africans on the Upper Guinea Coast from the Sixteenth to the Early Nineteenth Century,” *JAH* 40:2 (1999): 173-91; José de Silva Horta, “Evidence for a Luso-African Identity in ‘Portuguese’ Accounts on ‘Guinea of Cape Verde’ (Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries),” *HA* 27 (2000): 99-130.

become Christians.” The same observer mentions a Christian, Zape village (*aldeia*) ruled by a literate king, in which newborn children were raised as Christians, and Christian teachings were read aloud in the village every night.⁶⁰ Two decades later, a report on the Cape Verde Islands and Upper Guinea referred to both Portuguese and indigenous populations as “Christians.” Though Sierra Leone was not controlled by the Portuguese Crown, two kings in the region, identified as Dom Felipe and Dom Pedro de Caricuri, were “Christians” (*christãos*). “And most of the vassals of these two Kings are Christians,” all baptized by Jesuits, who had been continually active in the region for a period of sixteen years. Many of the African inhabitants of Cacheo, Bichangor, and Porto de Santa Cruz (Porto da Cruz) are likewise straightforwardly described as *christãos*.⁶¹

We have comparatively little information regarding African appropriation of Iberian Catholicism in Lower Guinea prior to the late seventeenth century. John Vogt writes that the Portuguese garrison at Elmina typically included “two to four priests,” charged with “converting the black inhabitants of the neighboring settlement to Christianity.” Vogt disparagingly describes African residents of the village of Elmina as “superstitious blacks,” whose acceptance of Catholicism was limited to a “superficial veneer.” However, Vogt does reveal that roughly half of Elmina’s African population had converted by the 1630s, constituting no less than “four hundred Christians.”⁶²

Writing in the late 1620s, Sandoval mentioned having received “certified” information

⁶⁰ MMA(2), IV: 3-5, “Relação de Lopo Soares de Albergaria sobre a Guiné do Cabo Verde” (c. 1600).

⁶¹ MMA(2), IV: 662-65, “Relação da cristandade da Guiné e do Cabo Verde” (c. 1621).

⁶² Vogt, *Portuguese Rule*, 41, 184. See also page 55 for the mass conversion of more than 1,000 members of “the Efutu nation” in 1503. For the argument that early modern Catholicism as practiced in a variety of contexts was actually quite flexible, and that present-day historians have assumed too hastily that Kongolese Catholic practices were not “real” or “genuine” Catholicism, see John K. Thornton, *The Kingdom of Kongo: Civil War and Transition, 1641-1718* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 63-68.

that the king of Warri, as well as the inhabitants of his kingdom (southeast of the kingdom of Benin), were “Catholic, committing no error against our holy Faith.”⁶³ While little is known of Catholic evangelization efforts in Arda during the years of Portuguese influence (roughly 1570 to 1630), accounts provided by Spanish and French expeditions in 1660 and 1670 suggest “that significant missionary efforts had been made in Allada in the early seventeenth century.”⁶⁴ Robin Law also notes that “Portuguese remained the *lingua franca* of the Slave Coast long after the eclipse of the Portuguese from the trade of the area in the 1630s.”⁶⁵ In Cartagena in 1634, when Bishop Córdoba Ronquillo proposed sites for new *agregaciones* in rural areas of Cartagena’s province, he noted that “more than four hundred freed blacks and slaves” lived in houses and on farms “in the Swamp of Tesca and Cascaxal,” working “on pig farms and fields.” Many of these individuals, he wrote, were already accustomed to “gather to hear mass in the church which Bartolomé Arará has constructed on his ranch.”⁶⁶ Bartolomé Arará may well have arrived in Cartagena as a “*bozal*,” growing increasingly familiar with Iberian spiritual practices over a period of many years. However, his remarkable role in sponsoring the indoctrination and religious participation of rural black workers may also indirectly reflect the intensity of Catholic evangelization and Portuguese cultural influences in Lower Guinea during the early seventeenth century.

Regardless of elite Iberian motives for proselytizing and indoctrinating Africans, African communities and individuals probably viewed the adoption of Iberian religious

⁶³ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 65.

⁶⁴ Robin Law, “Religion, Trade and Politics on the ‘Slave Coast’: Roman Catholic Missions in Allada and Whydah in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 21:1 (February 1991): 44, 73n1.

⁶⁵ Robin Law, “Problems of plagiarism, harmonization & misunderstanding in contemporary European sources: Early (pre-1680s) sources for the ‘Slave Coast’ of West Africa,” *Paideuma* 33 (1987): 356n71.

⁶⁶ AGI-SF 228, n.100a, “Agregacion de estancias a dotrinas y eregcion de otras,” 2 mayo 1634, folio 3r.

practices as a means of gaining entry into the Iberian world – a world which in many cases offered tangible benefits such as access to trade goods and an international market, military support and protection, international networks of communication and transportation, etc. For African communities, “conversion to Christianity was an important factor in cultural assimilation and opened the possibility of further cultural transformations,” essentially “a first step in the process of becoming ‘Portuguese’.”⁶⁷ While Africans’ adoption of Iberian languages and religious culture provided Iberians with opportunities to extend their own economic reach, it simultaneously gave Africans greater access to Iberian-controlled resources. Rather than neatly complementing one another, however, in some cases African motives for acquiring and maintaining Iberian religious identities came into direct conflict with Iberian motives for incorporating Africans. In the midst of one early seventeenth-century famine, Cape Verde’s governor Nicolau de Castilho wrote that “many Christian women” (*muitas molheres cristães*) left the islands to reside on the Upper Guinean mainland. In his view, their relocation was disadvantageous not only because they would be left to live “in evil” and “at their own will” among “gentiles,” but also because their departure was detrimental to the operation of the slave trade (*rescate*). These women were skilled weavers, responsible for the production of the Cape Verdean textiles—“*panos* and *besafulos*”—so highly valued by Africans on the mainland.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Mark, “Evolution,” 178.

⁶⁸ AHU-Guiné, cx.1, n.1, Carta do governador de Cabo Verde, Nicolau de Castilho, Ribeira Grande, 19 dezembro 1614, folha 2v. See also António Carreira, *Panaria Cabo-Verdiano-Guineense: Aspectos históricos e socio-economicos* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1969); K. David Patterson, “Epidemics, Famines, and Population in the Cape Verde Islands, 1580-1900,” *IJAHS* 21:2 (1988): 303-6; George E. Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000-1630* (Boulder, San Francisco, and Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), 147, 157, 165-66, 259.

Despite major differences in their interpretative frameworks, both Latin Americanists such as Bowser, and Africanists such as Vogt, have viewed the African adoption of Iberian religious practices with skepticism, i.e. as a “superficial veneer.” Yet recent scholarship emphasizing the mobility and adaptability of “Atlantic creoles” contradicts this reluctance to examine spaces in which African and Iberian cultural boundaries overlapped or blurred. In his survey of early modern, coastal African communities transformed by sustained exposure to Iberian culture, Ira Berlin emphasizes the key roles played by generations of mixed-heritage families and individuals who facilitated intercultural commerce and communication. Multilingual, knowledgeable, and experienced, these “Atlantic creoles” were neither fully African nor fully European, yet their “genius for intercultural negotiation” left them “in a powerful bargaining position” vis-a-vis both European merchants and African leaders. Berlin’s emphasis on some Africans’ “cosmopolitan ability to transcend the confines of particular nations and cultures” represents a complete reversal of historical interpretations which categorically discredit the extent of African acculturation to Iberian systems of meaning.⁶⁹ We might note, however, that the multicultural individuals Berlin identifies as “Atlantic creoles” would probably be considered “Luso-Africans,” *christão* (“Christians”), or simply “Portuguese” in African contexts. In early colonial Latin America, Africans with extensive experience of Iberian culture would simply be described as *ladino* or

⁶⁹ Ira Berlin, “From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America,” *WMQ* 53:2 (Apr 1996): 251-88. Berlin argues that “African” and “creole” identities were “cultural strategies,” rather than merely “way stations of generational change” which moved in one direction only (253). However, the term “creole” as it appears in early modern Iberian sources is very much a sign of generational change, signifying birth within the Iberian world. Thus first-generation African forced migrants to the Americas (described by “nations,” “castes,” and “lands,” if not born in Iberia, the Atlantic Islands, or Portuguese Africa) are clearly distinguished from their American-born descendants (described as “creoles”). The Iberian terms *bozal* and *ladino* more closely approximate Berlin’s articulation of what it meant to be “African” or “creole,” as signs of cultural change (and, we may argue, cultural strategies) rather than generational change.

“Latinized” (the absence of similar terms in English-language sources may indicate that acculturated, well-traveled Africans were something of a novelty in early colonial Anglo America).

Berlin’s initial conceptualization of “Atlantic creoles” was not intended to refer only to elites, yet thus far elite Africans have provided the best examples of “individuals of cultural plasticity,” perhaps due to the nature of available sources.⁷⁰ Linda Heywood and John Thornton have adapted Berlin’s concept to suggest the rise of an “Atlantic Creole culture” in West Central Africa, particularly evident through the spread of Catholicism in the Kingdom of Kongo. Since many African captives brought to the Americas during the early seventeenth centuries were exported from Luanda, the argument that most West Central Africans were familiar with Iberian culture could have broad implications:

Central Africans were bearers of an Atlantic Creole culture and [...] many of those who were actually enslaved, transported, and eventually integrated into the estates and homes of American colonists bore this culture. Their knowledge of European material culture, religion, language, and aesthetics made it easy for them to integrate into the colonial environment, especially [...] between the 1580s and 1660.⁷¹

While Heywood and Thornton claim that “all Kongolese had some contact with this emerging African Creole culture,” they also acknowledge that “the poor and rural people were the least exposed and the high born and urban the most involved.” And indeed, most of their examples of West Central Africans appropriating aspects of Iberian culture

⁷⁰ See, for example, Randy L. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁷¹ Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, 2. As indicated in this study’s second chapter, the assumption that West Central Africa provided nearly all captives transported to the Americas during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is inaccurate, especially for the period prior to 1620. Northern European corsairs operating in the Caribbean preyed not only on slave ships arriving from Luanda, but also vessels from Upper Guinea, Cabo Verde, São Tomé, and Lower Guinea, in addition to inter-Caribbean traffic.

are provided by Kongo's monarchs, "literate elites" in Kongo's royal court, Kongolese noble families, and Angolan *sobas* who accepted baptism (though many later rejected Catholicism).⁷² On the other hand, source materials generated in the seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean lend some support to Heywood and Thornton's argument for the general spread, adoption, and adaptation of Iberian religious culture throughout West Central Africa. Of Kongo's capital, São Salvador, Sandoval himself writes that although most of its inhabitants "are blacks," they are also "great Christians." Contradicting one of the letters he cites, mentioned above, Sandoval also states that "normally," captives brought from Luanda (including "Angolas, Congos, Anchicos, and Malembas") and from São Tomé (including Ararás, Lucumís, and "pure" Caravalís) "arrive truly baptized." Those arriving from Luanda, in particular, were nearly always able to "give an account of [the baptism] they had received."⁷³ One striking example of an African forced migrant claiming long-standing Iberian religious identity is provided by a West Central African man born between approximately 1600 and 1610. Testifying before agents of Cartagena's Inquisition in 1676, Pedro Nambua explained that he was a descendent of "Torojojo Quilois," and that as residents of Nambua and vassals of the King of Congo, his parents had been "Old Christians."⁷⁴

⁷² *Ibid.*, 60-67, 79-80, 82, 98-105, 169-70, 267, quote from 67. The concepts of "Atlantic creolization" and "creolization" in Africa have not yet been conceptually distinguished from their American counterparts. Some differences are evident, however, in that scholars addressing "creolization" in Africa appear interested in describing cultural and social change over time within African societies, rather than the formation of modern racial and national identities.

⁷³ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 132, 382, 605.

⁷⁴ Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 106. "Nambua" is presumably Nambua Ngongo, west of Mbvila (the location appears on a map in Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, 50). See also Ignacio Angola's testimony in Anna María Splendiani and Túlio Aristizabal, S. J., trans. & notes, *San Pedro Claver: proceso de beatificación y canonización, edición de 1696* (Bogotá: Centro Editorial Javeriano, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Universidad Católica del Táchira, 2002), 162; and see Landers, *Black Society*, 48, for evidence of three enslaved African men described as "Congos" in Spanish Florida in the 1740s; each of whom "had been baptized in Africa and continued to pray in his native language."

Ladino African Interpreters

Unlike the above-mentioned notarial records, which may provide some means of gauging the monetary value ascribed to enslaved *ladinos*, other sources referring to African *ladinos* as interpreters offer a much clearer example of their skill sets, and their important roles as cultural intermediaries. Some of the earliest Portuguese mariners traveling to Africa purchased (and at times, captured) Upper Guineans, to be taken back to Portugal for training as interpreters; during the mid-fifteenth century, each Portuguese slave ship allegedly carried one of these interpreters on board.⁷⁵ In addition to facilitating commercial transactions, “Latinized” African interpreters aided Portuguese clergy in their endeavors to convert African communities to Catholicism, and to indoctrinate enslaved Africans newly brought into the Portuguese world. During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, priests relied on “Portuguese-speaking blacks” to indoctrinate Africans living in the vicinity of Elmina.⁷⁶ Likewise, a royal order issued in 1556 set aside 20,000 *réis* per year to pay for African interpreters to assist priests in their efforts to catechize slaves.⁷⁷ In Lisbon itself in 1568, the city’s archbishop acknowledged the need for African interpreters to aid priests who, according to Saunders, “administered the last rites to dying slaves.”⁷⁸ It seems probable, however, that African interpreters would have been more useful in facilitating captives’ indoctrination. In the first decade of the seventeenth century, Jesuits in Santiago, in the Cape Verde Islands, “asked slaveowners to send us those [slaves] who were spread about the Island so that we could catechize

⁷⁵ Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 279-80; Ivana Elbl, “Cross-Cultural Trade and Diplomacy: Portuguese Relations with West Africa, 1441-1521,” *Journal of World History* 3:2 (1992): 165-204.

⁷⁶ Vogt, *Portuguese Rule*, 54. Vogt erroneously labels the language(s) spoken in the village of Elmina as “the local dialect.” See, however, M.E. Kropp Dakabu, *Language and Community* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1996), 3-13.

⁷⁷ MMA(1), II: 384, “Alvará para o almoxarife de S. Tomé,” 22 março 1556.

⁷⁸ Saunders, *A Social History*, 99.

them, since interpreters here are readily available, and baptize them.”⁷⁹ In West Central Africa, Catholic priests were similarly dependent on interpreters provided by Kongo heads of state, until some Capuchins began to learn Kikongo in the 1640s.⁸⁰ By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, directly mirroring their counterparts in precolonial western Africa and the early modern Portuguese world, sub-Saharan African *ladinos* in the Spanish Caribbean commonly served as interpreters for Africans with little or no prior knowledge of Spanish or Portuguese.

The best-known Spanish Caribbean examples of “Latinized” African interpreters are those who worked for the Jesuit missionaries Alonso de Sandoval (1577-1652) and Pedro Claver (1580-1654). Sandoval depended on a multitude of volunteer interpreters, African women and men alike, often requisitioned from their owners on extremely short notice. Acutely conscious of the need for Spanish-speaking Africans who could translate Iberian Catholic concepts into more than seventy different languages, he kept a notebook with an alphabetized list of African “castes” and languages, accompanied by the names, addresses, owners, and language abilities of African interpreters. While Sandoval’s notebook has not been found, he refers to several occasions in which he enlisted the short-term assistance of interpreters described by ethnonyms associated with both Lower Guinea (Arda, Caravalí), and Upper Guinea (Bran, Bañon, Falupo, Zape).⁸¹ Even when boarding slave ships just arrived in Cartagena’s port, Sandoval tells his readers that he would find “Latinized” Africans among the captives, who aided him in proselytizing the others onboard. Boarding a ship newly arrived from Cacheo, Sandoval writes, “I called for the most *ladino* black among them—these are never lacking, at least serving as

⁷⁹ MMA(2), IV: 278-82, “Carta do Padre Manuel de Almeida.”

⁸⁰ Hilton, *Kingdom of Kongo*, 67, 81, 101, 134, 185, 193.

⁸¹ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 373-75, 600-6.

grumetes—and told him to talk to those people, asking them if they wanted to be like whites.”⁸² On one such occasion, according to Pacheco, after having examined approximately two hundred captives arriving together on the same ship, Sandoval estimated that very few had received adequate baptism previously. The only exceptions, he noted, were twelve or fourteen “*ladinos*, who came guarding the rest.”⁸³

Eventually Sandoval—and later, his helper and colleague Pedro Claver—came to rely on a team of professional interpreters, purchased by the Jesuit College, at least in part, for this very purpose. In 1657, more than one hundred and fifty inhabitants of Cartagena offered detailed testimony as evidence of Pedro Claver’s saintliness. One deponent recalled that Claver “relied especially on many *negros chalones*, which is how those who know many languages are called. He arranged for them to arrive from Guinea and elsewhere, and collecting alms from his followers, obtained the sum necessary to purchase them.” The deponent noted that a certain pilot named Bartolomé de Flores, who had “made many trips to Guinea,” brought Claver “two or three of these *negros chalones*.”⁸⁴ Some of these highly specialized interpreters were able to speak up to six or eight different languages; the Jesuits’ slave Capelino has been described as “a black man who knew eleven languages.”⁸⁵ Claver’s other interpreters included Francisco Yolofo, a former Muslim who spoke Wolof, Mandinga, and Berbesí; and José Monzolo, who spoke

⁸² *Ibid.*, 389. Interestingly, Sandoval writes of using the verb “*chalonar*” rather than “*hablar*” when commanding *ladino* captives and / or *grumetes* to “talk” to the others. This term—as well as the term *negro chalón*—may share roots with the Spanish verb *chalanear* (to bargain or haggle), which was the primary service African interpreters provided to Iberians in coastal western Africa.

⁸³ Juan Manuel Pacheco, S. J., *Los Jesuitas en Colombia*, tomo I (Bogotá: San Juan Eudes, 1959), 253.

⁸⁴ Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 121. See also “chalán” in the *Diccionario de la lengua española*, 22nd ed.

⁸⁵ Angel Valtierra, S.J., *El santo que libertó una raza: San Pedro Claver S.J., esclavo de los esclavos negros: su vida y su época, 1580-1654* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1954), 217; Pacheco, *Jesuitas*, I: 254; Navarrete, *Historia social*, 110.

both Kikongo and Monzolo.⁸⁶ A West African man known as Andrés Sacabuche “of the Angola nation” probably spoke multiple languages as well. By his own estimate, Andrés Sacabuche served as one of Claver’s interpreters for more than thirty years, i.e. from approximately 1624 to 1654. In 1634, for the interrogation of a captured maroon identified as Domingo Anchico, Cartagena’s secular authorities called on the services of “Andrés Angola, a black *ladino* slave owned by the fathers of the Society of Jesus [...] because he is an interpreter of the Anchico language.”⁸⁷ Claver employed at least six West Central African interpreters owned by the Jesuits, four of whom were described as “Angolas.” Since Claver himself was said to have learned to speak “the language of Angola,” he may well have relied on “Angola” interpreters who could speak multiple West Central African languages.⁸⁸ Though the African interpreters owned by the Jesuits were evidently all men, another 1657 testimony reveals that Claver also relied on the language skills of conscripted interpreters, including a free black woman “of the Biáfara nation” named María de Mendoza.⁸⁹

While the indoctrination and catechization of unacculturated Africans was often facilitated in the Spanish Caribbean, as in Africa, by “*ladino* slaves of identical linguistic group,”⁹⁰ the process was also sped along by Africans interpreters and newly-arrived

⁸⁶ Some of the other interpreters Claver relied on over the course of his career included Andres Sacabuche (Angola), Igancio Angola, Alfonso Angola, Pedro Angola; Antonio Congo; Simón Biáfara, Manuel Biáfara, Francisco Biáfara; Ignacio Soso, Lorenzo Zape (Cocolí), Ventura Cocolí; Domingo Folupo, Diego Folupo, Francisco Folupo; Joaquín Nalu, Bartolomé Nalu; Domingo Bran, Francisco Bran, Manuel Bran; Antonio Balanta; and Cosme Bioho. See Pacheco, *Jesuitas*, I: 276-78; Valtierra, *El santo*, 211-24; Nicolás del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias* (Bogotá: Ediciones El Tiempo, 1981), 220-21; Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 86-95, 101-18, 132-44, 162, 171-81, 184-85, 193-96, 207-25, 228-30, 254-64, 271-73, 305-12., 320, 329-31, 407.

⁸⁷ AGI-Patronato 234, r.7, “Testimonio de los autos que formó el gobernador de Cartagena Francisco de Murga, contra los negros cimarrones alzados en los palenques de Limón Polín y Zanaguare y sobre el castigo que por sus delitos se les impuso,” Cartagena, 1634, bloque 2, folios 161v-162v.

⁸⁸ Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 210; Valtierra, *El santo*, 211, 220.

⁸⁹ Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 293.

⁹⁰ Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 289.

“*bozales*” alike who spoke mutually intelligible languages, or multiple languages. For example, despite living in different states, Biáfaras spoke a common language, described by Sandoval as “more or less elegant.”⁹¹ Unsurprisingly then, when Isabel “of the Biáfara nation” testified before the Inquisition, a man identified as Bartolomé “of the Biáfara nation” served as her interpreter.⁹² In what may have been a similar case, Pedro Claver employed a Folupa (Diola) woman to indoctrinate a newly-arrived Folupa.⁹³ In other instances, communication was made possible when ladino *interpreters* and *bozales* were familiar with mutually intelligible languages, or different dialects of the same language. Attempting to indoctrinate a “black man of the Caravalí caste,” Sandoval relied on an African *ladina* to interpret for him, noting that though she was “of a more remote caste,” the Caravalí man “understood her well.”⁹⁴ Brans were divided into subgroups (i.e. Cacheo, Basserral, Bojola, Papel, Pessis), and while each of these groups spoke a different language, all were intelligible for other Brans. Moreover, Sandoval writes that “Brans commonly speak and understand many other languages, including Bañon, Folupo, Balanta, Mandinga, and Biáfara.” However, this was not necessarily true in every case; Sandoval also provides an example in which a newly-arrived, unacculturated Bran was not able to understand a Bañon woman interpreting on Sandoval’s behalf.⁹⁵

Even Africans commonly ascribed the same ethnonym sometimes spoke different languages which were not mutually intelligible. For example, while Balantas often communicated easily with Brans and Mandingas, they often had difficulty understanding

⁹¹ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 138.

⁹² Navarrete, *Historia social*, 110-11.

⁹³ Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 110-11.

⁹⁴ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 600.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 137, 606.

other Balantas. Similarly, Sandoval writes that Bañons (Banyuns) could be divided into three subcategories: “pure” Bañons, Boote or Bohote Bañons, and Boyochos. Bañons could generally understand Mandingas and Brans, as well as their Cazanga overlords; and Bañon Bootes could also understand Folupos. Yet each Bañon subgroup’s language was mutually unintelligible to the other subgroups. Upper Guineans described in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean documents as “Zapes” provide an even more complex example of this phenomenon. According to Sandoval, newly-arrived Africans who claimed to be of “the Zape caste” actually included “a great diversity of languages and nations.” In order to catechize them, it was necessary to distinguish “pure” Zapes from Zape Cocolís; Zape Yalongas (Jallonké), normally known as Zozos (Soso); Zape Bagas; “and an innumerable diversity of castes encompassed by the general term Zape.” Members of these various Zape groups “do not always understand one another,” since they spoke a number of distinct languages including “Cocolí, Limba, Baca, Lindagoza, Zozo, Peli Coya, Baga, Boloncho,” and others.⁹⁶ Among Lower Guineans, Sandoval portrays Caravalís in a similar fashion, listing no less than nineteen subgroups of Caravalís who frequently “do not understand each other.”⁹⁷

Sandoval’s *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* and testimonies regarding Claver’s beatification offer unparalleled insight into African *ladinos*’ roles as interpreters in ecclesiastical contexts; additional, unpublished archival materials offer equally fascinating glimpses of the lives of African *ladinos* who served as interpreters at the

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 138-39, 601.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 139-40. Sandoval mainly distinguishes between “pure” Caravalís and *Caravalies particulares*, with the latter category comprising “innumerable” subgroups. Those he mentions include Ambo, Abalomo, Bila, Cubai, Coco, Cola, Dembe, Done, Evo, Ibo, Ido, Mana, Moco, Oquema, Ormapri, Quereca, Tebo, and Teguo (this alphabetical arrangement supports Sandoval’s claim that he kept an *abecedario*, or alphabetized listing, of African “nations,” languages, and interpreters).

behest of secular authorities. In January 1590, fifteen years before Sandoval set foot in Cartagena,⁹⁸ black slave cowboys encountered eleven half-starved African men, wandering in the sparsely-inhabited interior of western-most Cuba. Soon afterwards, ten of the Africans were taken to Havana; the remaining man was too ill to make the sixty-league journey. In order to learn the circumstances behind their arrival (and thus determine who was entitled to own or sell them), royal officials in Havana called on a domestic servant identified as “Mariana of the Angola nation, *ladina* [...] who knows the language of these blacks.” With Mariana interpreting, one of the African men responded to royal officials’ questions, providing what may be the earliest known African account of the “Middle Passage.” When asked “what land is this black man from, and his companions?,” Mariana Angola responded that he was “of the Angola land.” The other nine were from “neighboring regions” (*circunvezinos*), but “they could all understand one another.” Purchased with trade goods in Angola, they had been placed aboard a tightly-packed Portuguese slave ship bound for Santo Domingo. Captured in battle by a French ship after ten days at sea, the Portuguese ship was left in São Tomé, along with half of the captives and the surviving crew. The French vessel then set sail for the Caribbean, and many enslaved Africans died along the way. With food and water in short supply, the ship’s crew left these eleven African men on the shore of western Cuba with an axe and flint.⁹⁹

This account, or at least the version interpreted by Mariana Angola and recorded by Havana’s royal officials, demonstrates an instance in which complex West Central

⁹⁸ Sandoval arrived in Cartagena in 1605; Claver began his career as a Jesuit in Cartagena in 1615. See Pacheco, *Jesuitas*, I: 247-49, 270-74.

⁹⁹ AGI-SD 118, r.5, n.215, Oficiales reales de la Habana a S.M. sobre “onze peças de escravos boçales por descaminadas y traídos fuera de Registro,” Havana, 31 enero – 24 marzo 1590.

African realities were elided or compressed into categories which a Spanish audience could more easily understand. The ten men held for questioning were from “neighboring regions” and “could all understand one another,” but we do not know what else they had in common, beside the long and grueling voyage they managed to survive. As the interpreter, Mariana was instructed to select one of them as a spokesmen, the person whom she judged able to “respond most capably to the questions asked.”¹⁰⁰ Perhaps all ten men spoke mutually intelligible languages, or different dialects of the same language, and she selected one individual on the basis of his eloquence alone. Or, perhaps, Mariana recognized that he held some type of authority among his companions. However, her choice of a spokesman might indicate some difference beyond simple eloquence or a leadership role. Was it purely coincidental that Mariana “of the Angola nation” chose a man “of the Angola land” as spokesperson? Did she herself distinguish him from the other nine men, who were from “nearby regions,” or was she simply relaying his words to Spanish officials? In her view, were the others “from the Angola land” as well? While we can only speculate as to how these West Central Africans identified or categorized one another, apparently Spanish Caribbean authorities ascribed the same ethnonym to all of them. These men are surely the ten “Angolas” who appear as newly-baptized royal slaves in Havana’s baptismal records in May and June of 1590.¹⁰¹

By all accounts, the language(s) which Iberians termed “*la lengua de Angola*” was widely spoken by West Central African captives throughout the Spanish Americas during the first half of the seventeenth century. While relatively little is known of the “language of Angola,” the possibility that West Central Africans could communicate with one

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, folio 3r.

¹⁰¹ CH-LB/B, 5r(2), 5v(1), 5v(2), 5v(3), 5v(5), 5v(7), 5v(8), 6r(1), 6r(2), 6r(6).

another in a common African language would represent a notable contrast to the experiences of many Upper Guineans. According one deponent testifying on Claver's life work in Cartagena, any slave ship arriving "from the Region of the Rivers [of Guinea]" might bring captives who spoke "many languages, sometimes more than forty."¹⁰² On the other hand, Sandoval writes that "castes" typically arriving in Cartagena from Luanda included:

Angolas, Congos or Manicongos which are the same, Anxicos, Monxiolos, and Malembas. Although all of these castes, and others which arrive in smaller numbers, are diverse from one another, each is generally coherent unto itself, especially the Angolas, who are understood by almost all of these other nations.¹⁰³

Based on his reading of Sandoval, Nicolás del Castillo Mathieu has suggested that "the 'language of Angola' (surely Kimbundu) served as the predominant language" among Africans in Cartagena throughout the first half of the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁴ While we have very limited evidence for making such claims, it is significant that Pedro Claver himself learned "the language of Angola," as noted above. Jesuits in Lima and Upper Peru also indoctrinated enslaved Africans using "the language of Angola" during the early seventeenth century. While most of them probably relied on interpreters, nearly 1,500 copies of an "Angola" grammar book were printed up in Lima in 1629 and 1630. Peru's Jesuits considered using a catechism written in "the language of Angola," perhaps like the Kikongo text produced in 1624 by Jesuits working in Kongo, but the idea was ultimately rejected as unnecessary, since enslaved Africans tended to learn Spanish

¹⁰² Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 86.

¹⁰³ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 141.

¹⁰⁴ del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias*, 184, 216-224, 290-91, 332n216, quote from 290.

quickly anyway.¹⁰⁵ This topic is significant for scholars interested in tracking specific elements of African cultures which not only survived the “Middle Passage,” but may also have contributed to the formation of new identities among Africans in diaspora. For example, Thornton speculates that “when Kimbundu-speaking people were able to communicate and visit each other, a sense of an ‘Angola Nation’ emerged.”¹⁰⁶ David Northrup takes a more cautious stance, however, noting that a shared African language might not necessarily lead to a shared identity among African forced migrants.¹⁰⁷ In either case, if “the language of Angola” was widely spoken and understood in West Central Africa, then Spanish-speaking *ladinas* like Mariana stood to play pivotal roles as intermediaries for newly-arrived “Angolas” who were less familiar with Iberian languages and systems of meaning.

The rise of several creole languages may have also aided “Latinized” African interpreters, as well as Iberians, in their attempts to communicate with recently-arrived African forced migrants who spoke little or no Spanish or Portuguese. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Portugal, Africans were often said to speak an “Africanized form of Portuguese,” typically referred to as *fala de Guiné* or *fala dos negros*.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, creole languages developed in both the Cape Verde Islands, and

¹⁰⁵ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 234-35, 245; Jean-Pierre Tardieu, “Los Jesuitas y la ‘lengua de Angola’ en Peru, siglo XVII,” *Revista de Indias* 53:198 (1993): 627-37. On the Kikongo catechism, see François Bontinck and D. Ndembe Nsasi, *Le Catéchisme Kikongo de 1624: Réédition Critique* (Brussels: Academie royale de Sciences d’Outre-Mer, 1978); Anne Hilton, “A Seventeenth Century Bantu Catechism,” *JAH* 21:2 (1980): 283-284; and Thornton, “Development.”

¹⁰⁶ John Thornton, “The African Experience of the ‘20. and Odd Negroes’ Arriving in Virginia in 1619,” *WMQ*, 55:3 (July 1998): 421-34, quote from 433-34. See also Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 321.

¹⁰⁷ David Northrup, “Igbo and Myth Igbo: Culture and Ethnicity in the Atlantic World, 1600-1850,” *SA* 21:3 (Dec 2000): 1-20.

¹⁰⁸ Saunders, *A Social History*, 99-102.

in São Tomé.¹⁰⁹ Sandoval described “the language of São Tomé” as a “very corrupt and backwards form of Portuguese.” Interestingly, he went on to compare the language and its usage to “the way that we now understand and speak with all types of blacks and [African] nations, in our corrupt Spanish language, as it is commonly spoken by all the blacks.” Drawing on this reference, some scholars have offered speculations regarding the possible existence of an African-Spanish creole in the Caribbean, mirroring contemporary creoles used in Cape Verde and São Tomé.¹¹⁰ Some scholars go even further, assuming that “all over Spanish America, [...] Africans succeeded to some degree in preserving [...] their languages,” or developed creole languages.¹¹¹ The latter possibility is largely contradicted by linguists, who since the 1970s have argued that the speech of African-descended peoples in the Spanish Caribbean usually differs from that of their counterparts in other American regions. If a creole language was spoken in the Spanish Caribbean, from the various studies conducted so far, the language appears to have derived from an Afro-Portuguese creole, rather than a direct mix of Spanish with African languages.¹¹² As discussed in greater detail below, many first-generation, African forced migrants to the Spanish Caribbean became familiar with Iberian language

¹⁰⁹ Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 274-75; Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 213-18; Navarrete, *Génesis y desarrollo*, 102, 104.

¹¹⁰ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 140. See also del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias*, 290, 339n310; Armin Schwegler, “El Palenquero,” in *América negra: panorámica actual de los estudios lingüísticos sobre variedades hispanas, portuguesas y criollas*, eds. Matthias Perl and Armin Schwegler (Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1998), 229; John H. McWhorter, *The Missing Spanish Creoles: Recovering the Birth of Plantation Contact Languages* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2000), 17-20.

¹¹¹ Kamen, *How Spain Became a World Power*, 337, 355. Kamen cites Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 213-17, but Thornton carefully notes that unlike French Jesuits in seventeenth-century St. Christopher, who learned to speak a form of French-African creole, Jesuits in Cartagena relied on African interpreters (216-17).

¹¹² See, for example, John M. Lipski, “The *Negros Congos* of Panama: Afro-Hispanic Creole Language and Culture,” *Journal of Black Studies* 16:4 (June 1986): 409-28; Armin Schwegler, “Rasgos (afro-) portugueses en el criollo del Palenque de San Basilio (Colombia),” in *Homenaje a José Pérez Vidal*, ed. Carmen Díaz D. Alayón (La Laguna, Tenerife: Litografía A. Romero, 1993), 667-96; McWhorter, *Missing Spanish Creoles*.

and religious practices fairly quickly. For some, this transformation may have been enabled by prior exposure to an Afro-Portuguese creole language as spoken in São Tomé or the Cape Verde Islands.

Ladino African Godparents

As several historians have noted, relatively few Jesuits and clergy made conscious efforts to indoctrinate enslaved Africans in the early colonial Spanish Caribbean; furthermore, slaveowners may have had very little incentive to encourage their slaves to learn or practice Catholic doctrine.¹¹³ Nevertheless, extant church records demonstrate that enslaved Africans in the Caribbean had extensive experience of Iberian religious culture during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. We have some scattered evidence of black *cofradiás*, or religious brotherhoods, in Veracruz as early as 1571, and in Santo Domingo prior to 1612.¹¹⁴ More tellingly, Havana's earliest extant baptismal register reflects large-scale African participation in Catholic practices, corresponding to our knowledge of Spanish Caribbean demography during the period under study. The *Libro de Barajas: Bautismos* housed in Havana's Cathedral consists of 1,223 baptisms recorded between January 1590 and January 1600, includes the baptisms of 472 Africans, and 284 children born locally to African or African-descended parents. Together, these

¹¹³ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 79, 235; Navarrete, *Historia social*, 114-15.

¹¹⁴ For a "*cofradía de negros*" in Veracruz circa 1571, see AGI-Mexico 19, n.82, folios 1v-2r. For reference to a "*cofradía de negros Biafras* [Biáfaras] *llamada Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria*" in the Iglesia Metropolitana of Santo Domingo prior to 1612, see AGI-SD 869, L.6, f.154v, Real Cédula sobre cofradías de negros en la iglesia de Santo Domingo, Aranjuez, 9 septiembre 1612. See also Landers, *Black Society*, 7-9; and Meier, "Beginnings," 48. For recent studies addressing this topic in late colonial Cuba and colonial New Spain, see Philip A. Howard, *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998); Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Nicole von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers: Confraternities and Social Mobility for Afro-Mexicans* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006).

African and Afrocreole baptisms comprise more than sixty percent of all baptisms recorded in this source (see Appendix D). In addition to individuals baptized, these records list hundreds of godparents, parents, spouses, slaveowners, etc. While historians of Cuba have long been aware of this source's existence, it has largely been neglected in favor of notarial records and city council legislation.¹¹⁵ Supporting our previous analysis of African interpreters employed by Sandoval and Claver, these baptisms reveal gradations in Africans' levels of familiarity with Iberian values and religious practices, with "Latin" African intermediaries commonly serving as godparents for newly-arrived captives, particularly those from African backgrounds similar to their own.¹¹⁶

Individual Africans' appearance in baptismal records as godparents indicates that they were perceived by Iberians as acculturated, or at least semi-acculturated, "*ladinos*." Regardless of their level of Iberian cultural fluency, Africans in Havana would never be considered "Old Christians," yet those like Mariana "of the Angola nation" who could speak Spanish made ideal interpreters – and godparents. Writing circa 1620, and drawing on his own extensive experience evangelizing and indoctrinating Africans in Cartagena, Sandoval suggested that priests' interpreters serve as godparents for newly baptized Africans. When he boarded slave ships, organizing captives in groups of ten for baptism,

¹¹⁵ Sagrada Catedral de La Habana (Havana, Cuba), *Libro de Barajas: Bautismos, 1590-1600*. Digital images of the entire book may be viewed online at <http://lib11.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib/esss.pl>. For brief references to this source, see María Teresa de Rojas, "Algunos datos sobre los negros esclavos y horros en la Habana del siglo XVI," in *Miscelánea de estudios dedicados a Fernando Ortiz*, II: 1275-87 (La Habana: Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, 1956); Alejandro de la Fuente, "El mercado esclavista habanero, 1580-1699: las armazones de esclavos," *Revista de Indias* 50:189 (1990): 371-95; *ibid.*, "Esclavos africanos en La Habana: Zonas de procedencia y denominaciones étnicas, 1570-1699," *Revista Española de Antropología Americana* 20 (1990): 135-60; de la Fuente, et al., *Havana and the Atlantic*, 8.

¹¹⁶ On Catholic godparentage networks in relation to slavery in late colonial Latin America, see Stephen Gudeman and Stuart B. Schwartz, "Cleansing Original Sin: Godparenthood and the Baptism of Slaves in Eighteenth-Century Bahia" in *Kinship Ideology and Practice in Latin America*, ed. Raymond T. Smith (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 35-58; Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations*, 62-65; Landers, *Black Society*, 121-23; Soares, *Devotos da Cor*; Emily Clark and Virginia Meacham Gould, "The Feminine Face of Afro-Catholicism in New Orleans, 1727-1852," *WMQ* 59:2 (April 2002): 409-48.

Sandoval often instructed his interpreters to fill the role of godfather or godmother for newly-arrived captives in their group, presumably matching captives with interpreters who spoke the same or a mutually intelligible language. If this arrangement was not possible, then “some other *moreno* or *morena ladina* of the same caste,” or “someone chosen by them.”¹¹⁷ (If the godparent were selected by soon-to-be-baptized captives themselves, the options available to them must have been extremely limited, particularly if they had yet to disembark from the slave ships.) Much like African interpreters, African godparents’ role was to bridge dissimilar languages and systems of meaning. As godparents, African *ladinos* were to transmit Iberian world views embodied in Catholic doctrine—concepts with which they were already familiar—to newly-arrived African captives perceived as *bozales*. Unlike interpreters, however, African godparents were intended to facilitate the transmission of unfamiliar ideas and practices in one direction only.

Three decades before Sandoval published his famous treatise on slavery, the matching of African *bozales* with *ladino* godparents of similar background was already common practice in Havana. More often than not, the various ethnonyms or “nations” ascribed to Africans by Iberians may have collapsed specific African identities into broader categories easier for Iberians to comprehend. In many cases these godparents and individuals baptized probably did not share identical African pasts. For example when Francisco Bañon was baptized in January 1599, his godparents were Pedro Bañon and Guiomar Bañon; all three were enslaved, and owned by three different men.¹¹⁸ As noted earlier, Bañons (like several other African “nations”) could be divided into smaller

¹¹⁷ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 434. See also Valtierra, *El santo*, 225; Splendiani, *San Pedro Claver*, 84.

¹¹⁸ CH-LB/B, folio 138r(5). See also 139v(2).

polities, with languages which were often incomprehensible to other “Baños.” Perhaps this explains why newly-baptized Baños’ godparents were frequently Biáfaras, Zapes, Brans. We have no reason to believe that these three individuals necessarily shared a common language. The same may be said, to some extent, of “Zapes” (Çapes): when Anton Çape was baptized in November 1596, his godfather was Simon Çape, a slave owned by Sebastian Fernández, and his godmother was a free African woman, María Çape *morena horra*.¹¹⁹ Did these three individuals speak a common language prior to arriving in Havana? And if so, was it Cocolí, Zozo, Baga, or one of many other languages spoken by the diverse peoples identified in early modern Iberian sources as Zapes?

Despite these qualifications, it is significant that Havana’s baptismal records consistently feature newly-baptized Africans matched with both godparents ascribed the same ethnonym. Though “Brans” were composed of a number of different groups, as Sandoval notes, they could all generally understand one another without difficulty. Not surprisingly, we have several examples of Bran godchildren paired with a Bran godmother, and a Bran godfather. In April 1598, an enslaved woman named María Bran was baptized in Havana’s cathedral; her godparents were Baltasar Bran—also enslaved, but with a different owner—and a free black woman named Victoria Bran.¹²⁰ We also have even more striking examples in which African adults of a certain “nation” served as godparents for children born to parents of the same “nation,” suggesting parents’ efforts to maintain African identities. A black girl named Juana was baptized in Havana on the first day of January 1595. Her baptismal entry tells us that her mother was an enslaved

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 88r(5). See also 24r(2), 32v(1), 32v(2).

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 121r(5). See also 2v(3), 24v(3), 28v(3), 34v(6), 62r(1), 123v(1), 136r(3), 145r(2), 146r(1), 152v(3).

woman named Bernaldina Biáfara, owned by a merchant named Diego de Lara. Juana's father is identified only as "Juan *negro* Biáfara," a black Biáfara man. The newly-baptized girl was probably named after her godmother, if not both her godparents, who were Juana Biáfara and Juan Biáfara, owned by Fernando d'Espinal and Sebastian Fernández, respectively.¹²¹ According to Sandoval, as noted above, Biáfaras—Beafadas—lived in communities spaced well apart from one another in Upper Guinea, but all spoke the same "elegant" language. In this case, rather than asking to what extent these Beafada forced migrants could communicate with one another, we may well wonder to what extent did this Catholic ceremony serve to consolidate social ties between parents and godparents? And to what extent might these four adults have expected the first-generation Afrocreole girl, Juana, to perpetuate their common language and traditions?

Continuing with an overview of godparentage relationships among Upper Guineans, we find that acculturated Africans frequently served as godparents for newly-baptized Africans of different ethnonyms associated with the same broad region. Again, Sandoval's comments on the prevalence (or absence) of multiple and mutually intelligible languages are instructive. At the periphery of the Kaabu Empire during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Casangas exerted pressure on their coastal neighbors, seeking tribute and at times, captives, from Bañon (Banyun) states; in Sandoval's words, "the Casangas are Kings over the Bañons." For this reason, "pure" Bañons and Casangas could usually understand one another in Cartagena.¹²² A history of both mutual hostilities and trade relations meant not only that enslaved Bañons and

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 52v(1). See also 43v(1), 62v(5), 64r(2), 83r(1), 87v(2), 95r(3), 111r(2).

¹²² Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 111; Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*, 91-95, 113, 231-36, 242; Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 137.

Casangas alike would be transported to the Spanish Caribbean, but also that upon arrival, they would be able to understand one another. At Juan Bañon's baptism in Havana in April 1598, the fact that his godmother was an enslaved woman named Madalena Caçanga indicates that she was not simply filling a ceremonial role, but rather, fully capable of explaining Catholic practices and Iberian values to Juan Bañon on African terms, in a language that he would understand (if he was, in Sandoval's terms, a "pure" Bañon).¹²³ Just as *ladino* interpreters commonly spoke multiple languages, *bozales* often spoke multiple languages as well, opening up multiple possibilities for cultural intermediaries of diverse African backgrounds.¹²⁴ Similarly, for example, Sandoval mentions that Biáfaras and Nalus in Cartagena commonly understood one another; this information is supplemented by our knowledge of commercial exchange between the two groups in Upper Guinea, and the fact that Biáfaras often served as "middlemen" for trade between Nalus and Portuguese during the late sixteenth century. We should not be surprised, then, to learn that an enslaved woman named Ana Biáfara was the godmother for María Nalu's daughter, baptized in April 1594. While both women shared the same owner, they may have also shared a common African past, or common languages.¹²⁵

Havana's baptismal records also reveal that acculturated Africans often served as godparents for individuals with African backgrounds widely different from their own, diverse peoples who probably had little if any contact with one another prior to arriving in the Spanish Caribbean. In many cases, this phenomena may be best viewed within the context of chronologically overlapping slave trade waves. As discussed at length in chapter two, the transatlantic slave trade from Upper Guinea was predominant among

¹²³ CH-LB/B, folio 121v(1).

¹²⁴ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 373-74.

¹²⁵ Brooks, *Landlords & Strangers*, 276; Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 138; CH-LB/B, 42v(2).

African provenance zones during the late sixteenth century; the 1590s saw the first significant waves of captives from West Central Africa. Thus in Havana during the 1590s, we might expect to find a disproportionate number of acculturated Upper Guineans serving as godparents (and appearing as free people of color), on one hand, and a disproportionate number of newly-baptized West Central Africans on the other. At Constantino Angola's baptism in 1598, his godfather was also described as "Angola," but his godmother is identified as Juana Jolofa!¹²⁶ Both godson and godmother were owned by Cuba's governor, Juan Maldonado Barrionuevo, however, suggesting that shared ownership—and thus perhaps proximity and shared living quarters, or shared occupations—may have been a factor as well in the decision to pair an acculturated, Wolof godmother with a newly-baptized West Central African man. The baptismal records offer several similar examples of godparentage relationships among diverse Africans, in which common African backgrounds are clearly not a factor facilitating the African mediation of Iberian values and religious practices. In some cases, godparents and newly-baptized Africans share neither African commonalities, nor owners; perhaps geographical proximity, close relationships between diverse slaveowners, or decisions made by local clergy played some part in determining how these roles would be allotted.¹²⁷ We do not know the extent to which either slaveowners or ecclesiastical agents arranged these baptisms or assigned godparents their roles, particularly when all of the Africans involved were enslaved. In general, however, we have good reason to associate newly-baptized Africans' religious "education" at the hands of "Latinized" African godparents with language acquisition, and / or occupational training.

¹²⁶ CH-LB/B, 123r(5).

¹²⁷ See, for example, *ibid.*, 77r(4), 97r(1), 120v(1), 129v(4), 140v(1), 149v(3), etc.

While most of the above examples deal with Upper Guineans, “Angola” was by far the ethnonym most commonly ascribed to newly-baptized Africans in Havana during the 1590s. A brief examination of “Angolas” baptized over the course of the decades offers conclusive evidence of a general tendency for newly-baptized Africans to be matched with same-“nation” godparents. For those West Central African captives transported to Havana in the 1590s, particularly during the first half of the decade, only a limited number of “Angola” godparents would be available. From 1590 to 1594, just under ten percent of all newly-baptized “Angolas” had godparents ascribed the same ethnonym. Over the course of the decade, however, it became increasingly common for “Angolas” to serve as godparents for newly-arrived West Central Africans. Presumably, several years passed while West Central Africans who were already present became sufficiently acculturated to be perceived by Iberians as capable of transmitting Iberian Catholic teachings to recently-arrived captives. By the years 1597 and 1598, a full fifty percent of all baptized “Angolas” had godparents also described as “Angolas.”¹²⁸

“Angola” women were much more likely than anyone else to serve as godmothers for newly-arrived captives bearing the same ethnonym. Viewed as a group, godmothers to newly-baptized “Angolas” were fairly diverse, including thirty-five West African women, most prominently Biáfaras, Brans, and Çapes; twenty-four Afrocreole women (“*negras criollas*”); and five Iberian women. Yet in addition to five Congas and one Anchica, no less than sixty-two women described as “Angolas” served as godmothers for newly-baptized “Angolas.” Even more importantly, and perhaps of necessity given the

¹²⁸ Of the 41 “Angolas” baptized during the years 1590 to 1594, only four had godfathers described as “Angola,” and only four had godmothers described as “Angola.” During the years 1597 and 1598 alone, in which a total of 101 “Angolas” were baptized, 47 had an “Angola” godfather, and 51 had an “Angola” godmother.

sudden influx of West Central African captives in the mid-1590s, “Angola” godmothers often had two or three “Angola” godchildren, and in some cases, more. These sixty-two “Angola” godmothers alone sponsored ninety-nine newly-baptized “Angola” godchildren, accounting for roughly half of all newly-baptized “Angolas” entering Havana during the decade. Between 1597 and 1599, for example, Ysabel Angola, owned by the priest Nicolás Geronimo, appears as godmother for four newly-arrived “Angola” captives, and for the new-born daughter of Lucía Angola as well.¹²⁹ Likewise, during the same years, Madalena Angola, “black slave of Jorge Fernandes,” served as godmother to five newly-baptized “Angolas,” two of whom were also owned by Fernández.¹³⁰

West Central African women served as godmothers primarily for “Angolas,” but for other Africans and Afrocreoles as well. Approximately ninety “Angolas” appear as godmothers in 142 baptisms, slightly more than two thirds of which were for newly-baptized “Angolas.”¹³¹ Of the remaining forty-three baptisms, “Angolas” served as godmothers for sixteen Afrocreole children born to “Angola” mothers. They also served as godmothers for seven West Central Africans described as “Congos,” and for smaller numbers of newly-baptized individuals described as “Moçongo,” “Bran,” “Bioho,” and “Mandinga,” or simply as “*negro*” or “*esclavo*.”¹³² As seen in the case of newly-baptized “Angolas,” Africans frequently served as godparents for newly-arrived captives bearing

¹²⁹ CH-LB/B, 100r(3), 109r(2), 109r(3), 126v(1), 145r(3). Other enslaved Africans owned by Nicolás Geronimo—Ana Biáfara, Juan Angola, Lucas Angola—appear in entries 5v(6), 5v(8), 70v(4), and 124r(3). Ana Biáfara also served as godmother for one, and perhaps two, newly-baptized “Angolas” in 1590; the godmother in entry 5v(8) appears to read “Ana del vicario Nicolas Geronimo.”

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 99r(1), 99r(2), 117v(3), 125v(3), 140v(2).

¹³¹ Likewise, “Angolas” served as godfathers for 112 newly-baptized individuals, including eighty-eight “Angolas.”

¹³² For “Angolas” as godmothers for the children of “Angola” mothers, see CH-LB/B, 10v(2), 20v(1), 58r(2), 68r(2), 98v(3), 103r(2), 111v(3), 113r(1), 130v(4), 131v(1), 133r(3), 134r(4), 135r(3), 139r(3), 145r(3), 151v(1). For “Angolas” as godmothers for newly-baptized “Congos,” see entries 84r(3), 96r(2), 108r(5), 120v(5), 136v(6), 155v(1), 157r(5).

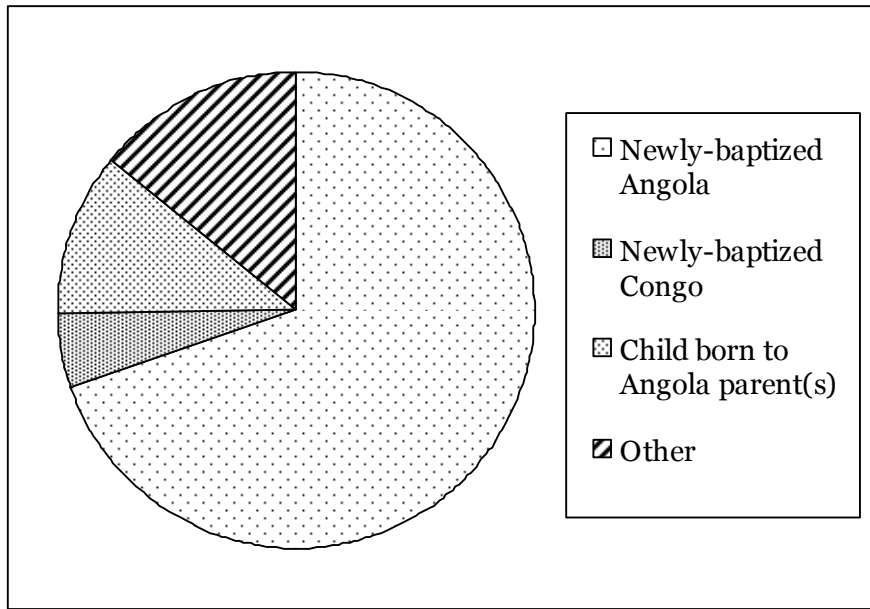


Figure 1.1. Godchildren of 142 Angola Godmothers in Havana, 1590-1600
(Source: CH-LB/B)

widely different ethnonyms—and thus presumably, of widely different backgrounds—ruling out the possibility that such ethnonyms were passed along from godparent to godchild. In such instances, shared owners, shared occupations, and geographical proximity were likely deemed more important factors in the selection of godmothers for newly-baptized Africans, particularly when few acculturated Africans of similar background were available (as in the case of “Angolas” during the early 1590s). Yet throughout the entire decade, when “Angolas” served as godparents in Havana, their godchildren were either “Angolas,” “Congos,” or the children of “Angolas” in eighty-five percent of all cases (see Figure 4.1).

Analysis of “Bran” godfathers reveals a similar pattern. As our knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade leads us to expect, Upper Guineans played important roles as

godparents, not only for Upper Guineans and their first-generation Afrocreole children, but also for West Central Africans (see Figure 4.2). Fifty-four Bran men appear in Havana’s baptismal records for the 1590s as *padrinos* (godfathers), and in all but four baptisms, an African ethnonym is ascribed to the godchild. Of the remaining fifty baptisms, nearly sixty percent of the godchildren sponsored by Bran godfathers were either described as Bran themselves, or noted to be the child of at least one Bran parent.¹³³ We are reminded, again, that while “Brans” consisted of various subgroups

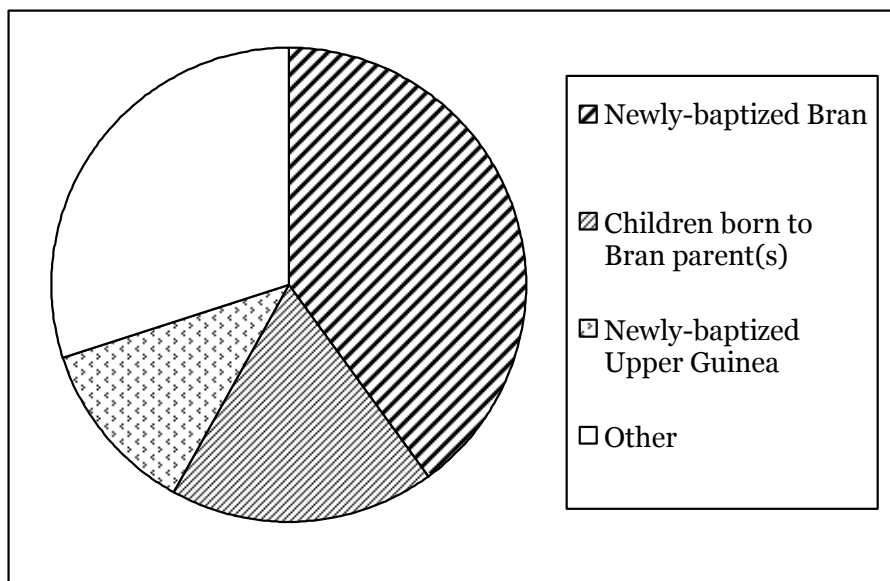


Figure 4.2. Godchildren of 50 Bran Godfathers in Havana, 1590-1600

(Source: CH-LB/B)

¹³³ For Bran godfathers to newly-baptized Bran, see 2v(3), 4v(1), 4v(4), 24v(3), 25r(4), 26v(3), 28v(3), 34v(6), 44r(2), 60r(4), 62r(1), 64r(3), 83r(2), 86r(2), 93r(1), 121r(5), 123v(1), 130r(3), 145r(2), 156v(4). For Bran serving as godfathers for children born to at least one Bran parent, see 13v(2), 34v(4), 34v(5), 44r(4), 74v(1), 79r(2), 136r(3), 146r(1), 152v(3).

including Cacheo, Basseral, Bojola, Papel, and Pessis, according to Sandoval, their diverse languages were mutually intelligible, “and they usually understand many languages, such as those spoken by Bañons, Fulupos, Balantas, Mandingas, and Biáfaras.”¹³⁴ An additional twelve percent of Bran *padrinos*’ godchildren were ascribed other Upper Guinean ethnonyms, including three Bañons, one Jolofa, one Cazanga, and one Nalu.¹³⁵ The remaining thirty percent of godchildren sponsored by Bran godfathers were nearly all West Central Africans (nine Angolas, one Conga, and one Enchica) or children born to West Central Africans.¹³⁶

Ultimately, Havana’s baptismal register provides little evidence of whether enslaved Africans’ godparents were selected by the captives themselves, by slaveowners, or by local priests, as Sandoval seems to suggest. Regardless of the power relations or cultural agendas which may have influenced the choice of godparents, however, Havana’s baptismal records for the 1590s indicate the presence of literally hundreds of African women and men whom Iberian ecclesiastical authorities and slaveowners deemed sufficiently acculturated to transmit Iberian religious precepts and world views to recently-arrived, non-Hispanicized “*bozales*.” Despite considerable consternation in early modern Iberia, Africa, and the Americas regarding the validity of baptisms performed by clergy in Africa, and despite modern historians’ skepticism over the degree to which Africans were “truly” converted, extant source materials make it abundantly clear that newly-arrived African captives were frequently indoctrinated at the hands of acculturated African godparents. Furthermore, the presence of significant numbers of

¹³⁴ Sandoval, *Un tratado*, 137.

¹³⁵ For Bran men serving as godfathers to Antonio Caçanga, Ysabel Jolofa, Domingo Nalu, Juan Bañon, Bartolomé Bañon, and Pedro Bañon, see CH-LB/B, 23v(3), 109r(4), 109v(4), 121v(1), 129r(1), 139v(3).

¹³⁶ See CH-LB/B, folios 3r(3), 5v(8), 6r(2), 22v(2), 62r(4), 63v(1), 93v(3), 96r(2), 100v(1), 115v(3), 116r(1), 127r(2), 140v(4), 144r(2), 145r(3).

African interpreters and godparents reveals that “Latinized” Africans were available to serve as cultural intermediaries for newly-arrived African forced migrants regardless of any formally-recognized social or religious ties.

Rapid Acculturation of *Bozales*

As several historians have noticed, African forced migrants quickly became accustomed to their new environments. For Lockhart, “the Negroes assimilated Spanish culture with amazing speed” in Peru; Tardieu writes that just “six months after arriving in Lima, the *bozales* knew how to confess.”¹³⁷ Bowser, too, notes that clergy in Peru expected slaveowners to “be sure that newly purchased slaves were both baptized and taught the Spanish language within six months after purchase.”¹³⁸ Similarly, in the Cape Verde Islands at the close of the seventeenth century, according to Carreira, enslaved Africans from Upper Guinea often learned *crioulo* and became eligible for baptism within four to six months, or less than one year’s time.¹³⁹ For some historians, however, even rapid African acculturation to Iberian society has been construed as evidence of homogenous, essentialized characteristics typical of “Africans,” as opposed to “Spaniards.” We read, for example, of Africans’ “facility with languages and lack of Castilian rigidity.”¹⁴⁰ This study of the early colonial Caribbean seeks to move beyond simplistic either / or models which define African forced migrants exclusively in opposition to events or traits associated (whether accurately or not) with early modern

¹³⁷ Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, 198; Tardieu, “Los Jesuitas,” 635.

¹³⁸ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 234.

¹³⁹ Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 286-91.

¹⁴⁰ Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), 137. For other portrayals of early modern Iberians as “rigid,” see Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 17-19; de la Fuente et al., *Havana and the Atlantic*, 181.

Iberians. Rather than viewing sub-Saharan Africans' acquisition of Iberian cultural fluency through anachronistic interpretative frameworks privileging racial or national identities, we may follow the lead of Ira Berlin and others, acknowledging "cultural plasticity" as a useful skill for Africans in diaspora. There is no reason to assume that forced migrants' African identities were obliterated by the acquisition of an additional language, or adoption of a new set of religious practices. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in Spanish Caribbean port cities such as Cartagena and Havana, a variety of sources provide strong evidence that African-born "*bozales*" rapidly acculturated to Iberian society, often within less than five years.

Several West Central Africans described themselves or one another in terms of this Iberian scale of acculturation, with attention to change over time, in a legal suit initiated in Cartagena in 1607. This legal suit, discussed in greater detail in chapter one, aimed to determine the identity and African "nation" of a man from Wandu, known as Luis "Congo" (though for some, he was Luis "Angola"). Luis was one of more than two hundred West Central Africans—i.e. "Congos" and "Angolas"—who departed from Luanda onboard the "San Francisco," a slave ship captained by Pascual Carvalho. The ship arrived in Cartagena on February 15, 1601, disembarking a total of two hundred and twenty-six captives.¹⁴¹ Luis and four others were purchased by the scribe Juan de Meneses, who immediately sent them to work on his *estancia* outside the city. As West Central Africans, they may have had some exposure to Catholicism prior to arrival in the Americas, but according to Meneses, all five arrived as *bozales*. He claimed to have purchased "Luis Congo, along with four other *piezas de esclavos*, all *bozales*." The *estancia*'s overseer or "captain"—an Upper Guinean man named Luis Bran, described as

¹⁴¹ TSTD 29115; AGI-SF 72, n.105, folio 24v; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 250-51.

“Christian”—likewise noted that Luis “was *bozal*” at the time he first arrived in Cartagena. Shortly after escaping from Meneses’s *estancia*, Luis found himself in Mompox, working for a Spanish man named Camargo. When Cartagena officials queried whether Camargo had made any effort to ascertain whether Luis was an escaped slave, and if so, from where he might have fled, Luis responded simply that at that time, he “was *bozal*, and did not know how to understand or respond to the questions he was asked.”¹⁴²

Yet in December of 1606, five years and ten months after his arrival in Cartagena as a “*bozal*,” Luis Congo testified in Spanish (no interpreter is mentioned at any point in this investigation). He was permitted to give sworn testimony on his own behalf, one reads, “because he said that he was Christian.”¹⁴³ Two of his shipmates, also initially purchased by Meneses, also gave testimonies regarding Luis’s background, identifying themselves as “Christians” or as “*ladino*.” Even before they testified, as proof that they had arrived on the same ship, and on the same day, Meneses noted that all three bore an identical marking or brand on the right side of their chests, given to them *afuera* (elsewhere, perhaps in Luanda). By this time, however, the brands were too faded to discern the original image.¹⁴⁴ An approximately thirty-year-old enslaved man owned by Meneses, identified as Francisco Congo (also referred to as Francisco Angola) testified twice, in February and April of 1607. Like Luis, he was ceremonially sworn in “since he said that he was *ladino* and Christian.” According to Francisco, “About six years ago, more or less, this deponent came from the kingdoms of Angola to this city, in the

¹⁴² AGN-FNE, Bolívar, SC43, legajo 6, Pleito entre Juan de Meneses y Francisco Camargo sobre un negro esclavo y sus jornales, Cartagena y Mompóx, 1608, hoja 11v, 65v, 69r.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, hoja 9r.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, hojas 50r-51r.

company of four others: two males and two females, brought by a Portuguese man. This deponent was called Francisco,” and the others were Luis, María Antona, Ysabel Angola, and Antón Angola. “And in this city, this deponent saw that his master Juan de Meneses bought all of them, and sent them to his *estancia*.”¹⁴⁵ María Antona, an enslaved woman now owned by Meneses’s mother-in-law, also testified in February and April of 1607.

The legal records notes that she was “a black woman who said that she was named María Antona, of the Angola land, and that she was Christian, and a slave of the widow Leonor de Carmona.” In María Antona’s words, she

came to this city with another black woman and three black slave men. All were owned by Pasqual Caravallo, the Portuguese man who brought them. And in this land, the scribe Juan de Meneses bought all five of them. The black man Luis, of the Congo land, was one of the three males he purchased. And only a few days after Meneses bought them, Luis fled, and never appeared again until now, when they brought him from Mompox.¹⁴⁶

Thus almost exactly six years after arriving in Cartagena as *bozales*, unfamiliar with Iberian language, three enslaved West Central Africans were able to identify not only the slave ship captain who brought them from Angola, but also several fellow captives brought to Cartagena on the same ship. Interestingly, they use Iberian referents to identify themselves, for an Iberian audience, as “Christian” or “Latinized” Africans. Whereas six years earlier they were “*bozales*,” unable to speak Spanish or Portuguese and probably with only limited exposure, at most, to Iberian religious practices, by late 1606 / early 1607 they were not only viewed by Iberians as “Christian” or “*ladino*,” but were also sufficiently familiar with Iberian categories of acculturation to describe themselves using such terms.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, hojas 37r-38r, 70r-71r.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, hojas 35r-36r, 63v, 69r-70r.

For non-Iberians and non-Catholics brought into the Iberian world (forcibly or otherwise), baptism ostensibly represented a transformation. Baptism was a form of symbolic incorporation into the Iberian world, and simultaneously, a display of shifted loyalties and values. In the case of African migrants to the Spanish Caribbean, it is perhaps unrealistic to envision baptism as straightforward conversion to Catholicism; most Africans who were not previously baptized probably were not given the choice. However, baptism may still be viewed as a sign of “culture and adaptation” in sixteenth-century Havana.¹⁴⁷ More concretely, baptism may be equated with Iberians’ public recognition of an African forced migrant’s initiation into the Iberian religious world. The fact that an African woman or man was baptized indicates that previously, they were perceived as non-Catholic, unacculturated to Iberian values and spiritual practices. The opposite may be said of Africans women and men who served as godparents for newly-baptized Africans; these women and men were judged to have been capable of understanding Iberian religious perspectives, and of communicating them to newly-arrived *bozales*. We may argue, then, that newly-baptized Africans were perceived by Iberians as unacculturated *bozales*, and that African godparents were perceived by Iberians as acculturated “*ladinos*.” If these assumptions are accurate, then Havana’s baptismal records for the 1590s indicate the speed of acculturation for nearly thirty African women and men who appear first as newly-baptized *bozales*, then reappear later as godparents for other new arrivals (see Table 4.1).

Among Havana’s extant baptismal records for the last decade of the sixteenth century, thirteen African women and fifteen African men appear in baptismal records first at their own baptism, and later as godparents. The women are described as “Angola”

¹⁴⁷ de la Fuente et al., *Havana and the Atlantic*, 161-70.

Table 4.1. Baptized Africans who Reappear as Godparents in Havana's Baptismal Records, 1590-1600 (Source: CH-LB/B)					
Name / Description / Owner	Date Baptized	First Appears as Godparent	Approximate Time Elapsed	Folio (and entry)	
Pedro Angola negro de Gomes de Rojas	17 Aug 1597	26 Apr 1598	8 months	107v(3), 123r(3)	
Francisco Angola negro de Juan Mordaz	17 Nov 1596	24 Aug 1597	9 months	88r(2), 109r(2)	
Madalena Angola negra de Hemando Soluzio	17 Aug 1597	28 June 1598	10 months	108r(3), 127r(2)	
Sebastian Angola negro de Jorge Fernandes	11 May 1597	26 Apr 1598	11 months	99r(1), 123r(4)	
María Angola negra de María Sanchez mulata, mujer de Juan Sanches, piloto	30 Jan 1594	30 Apr 1595	1 year, 3 months	39r(3), 56v(2)	
Manuel Angola negro de Sebastian Garcia	3 May 1598	12 Nov 1599	1 year, 6 months	123v(3), 153r(2)	
Domingo Biáfara negro del padre Francisco Basquez de Carrion	1 Sept 1596	5 April 1598	1 year, 7 months	83r(1), 121v(2)	
María Angola negra de Jorge Fernandes	7 Jan 1596	28 Sept 1597	1 year, 9 months	71r(3), 111r(3)	
Ysabel Angola negra de Nicolás Geronimo, vicario	15 Aug 1595	18 May 1597	1 year, 9 months	60r(3), 100r(3)	
Luisa Angola negra de Baltasar Gonçales	30 July 1595	1 June 1597	1 year, 10 months	59r(2), 101r(2)	
Madalena Angola negra de Jorge Fernandes	30 Apr 1595	11 May 1597	2 years	56v(2), 99r(1)	
Pedro Angola esclavo del convento de San Francisco	14 Jan 1596	3 May 1598	2 years, 4 months	71v(3), 123r(5)	
María Bran esclava de Julian Hernandez	17 Sept 1595	6 Apr 1598	2 years, 7 months	62r(1), 121v(4)	

(Table 4.1, continued)

Lucrecia Angola negra de Antonio de Salazar	25 Dec 1595	16 Aug 1598	2 years, 8 months	69r(3), 129v(5)
María Angola esclava de Hernando Dias	30 July 1595	26 Apr 1598	2 years, 9 months	59r(3), 123r(4)
Bartolomé Angola negro de Manuel Dias, tesorero	20 Apr 1593	8 Sept 1596	3 years, 5 months	29r(2), 84r(3)
Gaspar Bran negro de Diego de Herrera	31 Oct 1593	18 May 1597	3 years, 7 months	34v(6), 100v(1)
Gaspar Biáfara negro del Rey	21 Feb 1593	19 Jan 1597	3 yrs, 11 months	26v(5), 91v(4)
Pedro Angola negro de Diego de Herrera	10 Jan 1593	19 Jan 1597	4 years	23v(4), 92r(2)
Sebastian Bañon negro de Hernando Rodrigues Tabares	28 Dec 1593	29 Mar 1598	4 years, 3 months	38r(2), 121r(2)
Francisco Angola negro de Alfonso Lorenço	12 Apr 1594	6 Sept 1598	4 years, 5 months	42r(4), 130v(4)
Domingo Biáfara negro de Juan Rezio	6 Feb 1594	6 Sept 1598	4 years, 7 months	40r(1), 130v(1)
Ysabel Bran negra de Alfonso Lorenço	29 Sept 1593	27 Dec 1598	5 years, 3 months	32v(4), 136r(3)
Juliana Angola negra de Juan Mordaz	15 Nov 1592	27 July 1597	5 years, 8 months	20v(2), 105v(1)
María Angola negra de Melchor Rodrigues, piloto de las galeras	8 Sept 1590	8 Sept 1596	6 years	9r(4), 84r(3)
Juan Bran negro del alferes Pedro de Portierra	31 Jan 1593	23 May 1599	6 years, 4 months	24v(3), 145r(3)
Jeronimo Nalu negro de Pedro de Rubio	10 Jun 1590	29 Dec 1596	6 years, 7 months	6r(4), 90v(3)
María Angola negra de Sebastian Fernandes	20 May 1590	6 July 1597	7 years, 2 months	5r(4), 103v(1)

and “Bran”; the men as “Angola,” “Bañon,” “Biáfara,” “Bran,” and “Nalu.” For these twenty-eight individuals, the time elapsed between their initial baptisms and their first appearances as godparents varies widely, from as little as eight months to as long as seven years and two months. On average, however, approximately three years and three months elapsed from the time of their own baptism, to the time when they were initially perceived as adequately acculturated to serve as godparents for newly-arrived captives. Though neither godparents nor newly-baptized are explicitly identified as “*bozales*” or “*ladinos*” in the baptismal records, this process of familiarization with Iberian religious practice most likely paralleled the acquisition of Iberian language skills. Though we do not know the exact or approximate ages of godchildren or padrinos, age may well have been a factor in the process of “latinization.” Carreira suggests that in the Cape Verde Islands, slaves older than thirty were more likely to experience difficulty learning Creole.¹⁴⁸ In addition to different degrees of capability or desire to acculturate to Iberian religious and social practices, diverse experiences of enslavement and captivity may account for difference intervals of acculturation (or perceived acculturation). Perhaps Madalena Angola, for example, an enslaved black woman owned by Hernando Soluzio, had been previously baptized and indoctrinated in Africa; while she herself was baptized on August 17, 1597, she appears as godmother just ten months later at the baptism of an African captive named María Angola on June 28, 1598.¹⁴⁹ Slave labor in urban, as opposed to rural, environments may have contributed to more rapid acculturation and Iberian language acquisition as well. Bowser writes that “females slaves were largely

¹⁴⁸ Carreira, *Formação e extinção*, 289.

¹⁴⁹ CH-LB/B, 108r(3), 127r(2).

employed in household tasks that made a degree of acculturation desirable.”¹⁵⁰ Rather than emphasizing slaveowners’ choice of acculturated as opposed to unacculturated slaves for urban labor, however, future studies might assess the degree to which labor in an urban environment produced acculturated slaves.

Conclusion

Extant sources largely reveal Iberian perceptions of African acculturation, defined in terms of Iberian categories, rather than ways in which individual Africans may have viewed their own increasing familiarity with Spanish Caribbean society. Despite such limitations, these sources demonstrate that African-born forced migrants to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean rapidly became familiar with Iberian languages and religious practices, blurring the conceptual categories of “Africans” and “Spaniards.” As interpreters and as godparents, “Latinized” Africans often served as intermediaries in this transformation, facilitating the acculturation of newly-arrived “*bozales*,” particularly (though not exclusively) those of similar background. Ultimately, regardless of the duration of ceremonial relationships established by the Church or secular authorities (i.e. godparentage, interpreting), the hundreds of African godparents listed in Havana’s baptismal records alone indicate the demographic presence of hundreds of acculturated African women and men who could serve as cultural brokers and guides for newly-arrived forced migrants with little prior experience of Iberian language and religious practices. Sub-Saharan Africans’ social integration into early colonial Spanish Caribbean society was in this respect a cyclical process, with African *ladinos* serving as intermediaries for *bozales*, who in time became

¹⁵⁰ Bowser, *The African Slave*, 80.

“Latinized” themselves, and would in turn serve as intermediaries for newly-arrived *bozales*, and so on. Sandoval and Claver’s efforts to evangelize Africans in Cartagena during the early seventeenth century may be seen as one episode of a much broader process in which African migrants, rather than Jesuit missionaries alone, were the most significant agents of change. The stories of these overlapping waves of African captives are less dramatic, perhaps, than those of the “Atlantic creoles” so eloquently described by Ira Berlin. However, the intermediary roles performed by acculturated Africans point towards a widespread cultural transformation among generations of enslaved Africans usually described only as homogenous masses of “black slaves,” a cultural transformation in which they themselves participated extensively.

Epilogue

This dissertation opened with the story of a swordfight and murder in Gethsemaní, a poor neighborhood just outside Cartagena's city walls, in the late sixteenth century. The scene provides a fascinating glimpse of everyday social interaction in the early colonial Spanish Caribbean, a place and time long dismissed by historians of Latin America as a "backwater." As discussed previously, various individuals gave testimony regarding the events that unfolded that day in January 1583; several of these witnesses, along with others whom they mention, may serve as prime examples of people who have been relegated to the margins of Caribbean history. We could choose to read this source as simply another colorful tale of gambling and violence in an otherwise sleepy "backwater." Nearly a century ago, historian Irene Wright thus described the social environment of mid-sixteenth-century Havana:

Passing ships spewed forth in that hot harbor criminals and fortune-hunters out of Spain, broken adventurers [...] A roystering, gaming, throat-slitting congregation, gambling for gold in bars, for pearls and emeralds rough from the mines, for neckchains and table plate, so that some swelled with easy gains, while others died heartbroken with loss! They knifed each other, posted defamatory placards, poisoned half-breed wives to make place for new ones, and burned an enemy's house now and then for diversion.¹

Yet rather than reinforcing static, stereotypical portrayals of the early colonial Caribbean, our narrative—and its cast of characters—takes on greater depth when placed within the context of a Spanish Caribbean society firmly connected to the early modern Portuguese maritime world, with particularly strong links to Atlantic Africa.

¹ Irene A. Wright, *The Early History of Cuba, 1492-1586* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), 245-46. For a comparable description of Havana society during the same period, see Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* [1940], trans. Harriet de Onís (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995), 286-87.

Throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Portuguese merchants, mariners, and passengers were regular participants in Spanish Caribbean society. Frequently arriving on slave ships sailing directly from African ports, Portuguese mariners often became long-term or permanent residents in Caribbean port cities such as Cartagena. It should come as no surprise, then, to read of a sailor identified only as “Guinea” among the small group of people portrayed in this snapshot of daily life in Cartagena. Nor should we be surprised—or take for granted—the presence of a number of witnesses and bystanders described as “blacks.” Rather, a host of contemporary sources reveal that the majority of Cartagena’s inhabitants, like the populations of other Spanish Caribbean towns and cities during the same period, was composed of Africans and people of African descent, both enslaved and free. This broad demographic trend was a direct result of the “first great waves” of the transatlantic slave trade, the large-scale, forced migration of tens of thousands of enslaved Africans from Upper Guinea, Lower Guinea, and West Central Africa. While some captives stopped only briefly in the Caribbean en route to other destinations, a great many African migrants were clearly absorbed into Caribbean populations between 1570 and 1640.

Historians have long viewed the history of the early colonial Caribbean, and that of its African and African-descended populations, through the lens of a nascent “sugar plantation complex.” Our knowledge of the socioeconomic underpinnings of late colonial Caribbean society continues to foster generalizations about “slavery in the Americas” and “Atlantic slavery,” along with corresponding racial attitudes and identities, which are often presumed to have remained constant over centuries. It is significant that the events described in our Cartagena narrative, events witnessed by a

number of black bystanders, took place not in a cane field (nor in a silver mine), but in a “garden” or “corral” owned by María Xolofa, a free, African woman. Most agricultural labor in the early colonial Caribbean was performed by Africans and people of color, but this labor was predominantly oriented towards sustenance, not the production of cash crops such as sugar. Attention to the Spanish empire’s heavy reliance on black agricultural workers to cultivate food crops and raise livestock helps move us beyond the simplistic “sugar and slavery” paradigm for Caribbean history. It also calls into question the notion that “white settlers” were necessarily the principal agents of European colonization of the Americas.

Numerous sources attest to the prevalence of free black property owners such as deponent Agustín Martín, and the innkeeper Antón, in various early modern Caribbean seaports and their hinterlands. Many, like María Xolofa, were African-born migrants and former slaves. The frequency with which enslaved Africans managed to free themselves from slavery and acquire properties may well be viewed as one manifestation of a broader process of acculturation to Spanish Caribbean society. While we have no reason to assume that first-generation forced migrants suffered any immediate loss of African identity or identities, it is clear that sub-Saharan Africans rapidly became familiar with Iberian languages and religious practices. In the Caribbean, a cyclical process of social and cultural integration developed, with “latinized” Africans serving as interpreters and godparents for newly-arrived captives, who would in turn serve as intermediaries for those who arrived later. This process, ultimately based on the involuntary migration of enslaved Africans, fueled the expansion of Spanish Caribbean society by facilitating the growth of stable populations, thus reinforcing Spanish colonization of the region.

APPENDIX A:

Slave Ships Known to have Arrived in Cartagena de Indias, 1573-1640, by Stated African Ports / Regions of Departure

(Sources listed below)

Year	Cabo Verde	Rios de Guinea	Guinea	São Tomé	Arda	Angola	Unknown	Total
1573	1							1
1575	1							1
1577	1							1
1585	1		3					4
1586	2							2
1587	2		3				2	7
1588	1	2	2	1		1		7
1589	3		5				1	9
1590	1		6					7
1591			1			1	1	3
1593	2	7	1			2	1	13
1594	4	1	1			3		9
1595 ¹		2				8	1	11
1596							12	12
1597	6	1	6	2		5		20
1598	7		4	2		4	2	19
1599	3		5	2		9	5	24
1600 ²	4	3	3	2	1	10		22
1601	3	2	2	1		10	1	19
1605							1	1
1609	1		2	1		3		7
1610 ³	3		1			4		8
1611	1	1	1			1		4
1612			1			2	1	4
1614							4	4
1615			2			2		4
1616	1	2	3			1		7
1617 ⁴	1		6	1		5		13

¹ Possibly another ship (TSTD voyage ID # 29549), is not included here because it is not clear whether the voyage to Cartagena was completed.

² “Angola” column for 1600 includes 9 ships from “Angola,” and 1 ship from “Congo” (TSTD 29093). Also, one ship (TSTD 29098) sailed from both Arda (Lapeyre) and São Tomé (other sources); the ship is counted in both columns but only once in the 1600 total.

³ There may have been another ship arriving from the Cape Verde Islands (TSTD 41596). This voyage is not included here, however, because we only have departure records; it is presently unknown whether the ships actually disembarked captives in Cartagena as intended.

⁴ Possibly another ship (TSTD 29534), not included here because it is not clear whether the voyage to Cartagena was completed.

1618 ⁵	2	1	1	2	1	6	1	13
1619			5	3	2	8		18
1620	2		3	1	2	12	1	21
1621 ⁶			3	1	3	10		16
1622	2	2	2	1	1	8		16
1623			2	1	2	8		13
1624			2	2		9	2	15
1625	2		4			6		12
1626		1	3			5	1	10
1627	2		1			5		8
1628	1	1	2	2		4	1	11
1629			5			4		9
1630			2			5	1	8
1631			2			8	2	12
1632	1		2			7		10
1636			1			10		11
1637			1			4		5
1638	1		1			5		7
1639			1			3		4
1640						1		1
Total ⁷	62	26	101	25	12	199	41	463

Published Sources: *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, available online at <http://www.slavevoyages.org> (accessed May 1, 2009); Huguette Chaunu and Pierre Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique, 1504-1650* (Paris: Colin, 1955-59); *Monumenta missionaria africana: Africa ocidental, Segunda série*, ed. António Duarte Brásio (Lisboa: Agência Geral do Ultramar, Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca, 1958-1991), III: 207-10; Henri Lapeyre, "Le trafic négrier avec l'Amérique espagnole," in *Homenaje a Jaime Vicens Vives* (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 1965-67), II: 285-306; T. Bentley Duncan, *Atlantic Islands: Madeira, the Azores, and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 200, 205; Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 49-50, 58-71, 365, 368-76; Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos: los asientos portugueses* (Seville: EEHA, 1977); María del Carmen Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVI* (Seville: EEHA, CSIC, 1983), 58-59; *Gran Canaria e Indias durante los primeros Austrias: documentos para su historia*, recopilado por Manuel Lobo Cabera (Canarias: Comisión de Canarias para la Conmemoración del V Centenario del Descubrimiento de América, 1990), 358; Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, "Slave Mortality and African Origins: A View from Cartagena, Colombia, in the Early

⁵ Total for 1618 includes one ship (TSTD 28166 / 40720) which stopped in both Arda and Angola before disembarking captives in Cartagena. The ship is counted in both columns but only once in the 1618 total.

⁶ "Arda" column for 1621 includes one ship (TSTD 28195 / 29945) sailing from "Carabalí" via São Tomé. The ship is counted in both columns (Arda and São Tomé) but only once in the 1621 total.

⁷ Total numbers for each region include three double-counted ships (see notes 2, 5, and 6 above), but these are subtracted from the combined total number of voyages (thus 463 total instead of 466).

Seventeenth Century,” *Slavery & Abolition* 25:3 (Dec 2004): 18-43; Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007).

Unpublished Sources: David Wheat, “Atlantic Slave Trade Voyages to Cartagena de Indias, 1573-1623,” a data set based on the following sources, found in the Archivo General de la Nación (Colombia) and Archivo General de Indias (Spain): AGN-FNE, Bolívar, *legajos* 4, 6, 7; AGI-Patronato 259, r.52; AGI-Contaduría 1382; AGI-Contaduría 1384, números 3, [?], 5; AGI-Contaduría 1385, números 1, 2, 3, 5, 9; AGI-Contaduría 1388; AGI-SF 37, r.6, números 103a/b, 107; AGI-SF 38, r.6, n.153; AGI-SF 56A, n.21; AGI-SF 56B, n.73; AGI-SF 72, números 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 105; AGI-SF 73, números 30d, 32a, 32f, 32h, 38, 39a-b, 42, 71a, 91, 110a; AGI-SF 74, números 5, 5a, 5d, 6. Most of this data set has already been incorporated into the revised TSTD database online, where more specific citations (precise *folio*, *pliego*, and *hoja* numbers) are provided.⁸

⁸ For some voyages which appear at present in TSTD, our only information appears to be port departure records. Since we do not yet have evidence that such voyages ever embarked captives, or evidence that they actually followed their registered itineraries, I have chosen not to include them here. For further information on the 463 voyages listed above, see TSTD 29582 (1573); 28055 (1575); 29530 (1577); 28056-28057, 28059-28060 (1585); 28061-28062 (1586); 28063-28068, 29783 (1587); 28069, 28070/28071, 28072-28073, 28075, 28077, 29576 (1588); 28078, 28079/29788, 28080/28087, 28081, 28084-28086, 28088-28089 (1589); 28090-28096 (1590); 28097-28099 (1591); 28100-28106, 29789-29792, 29797-29798 (1593); 28107-28114, 29799 (1594); 28115-28117, 29001-29008 (1595); 29009-29020 (1596); 29021-29040 (1597); 29041-29059 (1598); 29060-29082, 29138 (1599); 29084-29095, 29096/29803, 29097-29105 (1600); 29106-29124 (1601); 29538 (1605); 28119-28122, 29863, 29870, 29487 (1609); 28083, 28123-28125, 29820, 29850, 29861, 41597/41598 (1610); 28126, 29844, 29852, 41599 (1611); 28137-28140 (1612); 28143-28146 (1614); 28147, 28148/29554/29830, 28149, 28150/29555 (1615); 28151/29894, 28152/29888, 28153-28154, 29551-29552, 29559 (1616); 28130/29560, 28131, 28155/29890, 28156/29892, 28157/29982, 28158/29886, 28159/29885, 28160/29893, 28161/29887, 28162/29584, 28163/29884, 28164/29889, 28165 (1617); 28132/29984, 28166/40720, 28167, 28168/29950, 28169, 28170/40662, 28171/29891, 28172, 28173/29980, 29441, 29442/29489, 29443, 29488 (1618); 28174/29897, 28175, 28176/29990, 29444-29445, 29446/29448, 29447, 29449, 29451/40722, 29452, 29454, 29490-29494, 29496, 29987 (1619); 28133-28134, 28135/29569, 28177-28178, 28179/29921, 28180, 29542, 28181, 28182/29949, 28183/29953, 28184/29533, 28185/ 29543, 28186/29537, 28187/40684, 29450/29498, 29455, 29456, 29457/29935, 29458, 29459/29497/40688, 29495 (1620); 28188/39091, 28189/29535, 28190/29920, 28191/29901, 28192/29900, 28193/29933, 28194/40721, 28195/29945, 28196/40657, 28197/29595/40712, 28198/29643/40685, 28199/40698, ?????, 29523, 29593, 29602 (1621); 28200/29522, 28202/29985, 28203/29978, 28204/29991, 28205-28207, 29316/29895, 29317-29319, 29320/29903, 29321/29570, 29322, 29512, 29599 (1622); 29323-29332, 29536, 29596-29597 (1623); 29333-29343, 29467, 29481, 29591, 29606 (1624); 29344-29353, 29598, 29608 (1625); 29354, 29356, 29357/29926, 29358-29363, ????? (1626); 29355, 29364-29370 (1627); 29371-29378, 29604, 29607, 29610 (1628); 29379-29384, 29385/29907, 29609, 29612 (1629); 29386-29393 (1630); 29394-29402, 29601, 29603, 29614 (1631); 29404-29409, 29613, 29623-29625 (1632); 29410- 29619, 29633 (1636); 29418-29421, 29474 (1637); 29422-29423, 29425-29428, 29438 (1638); 29429, 29430, 29431, 29432 (1639); and 29433 (1640). Two voyages marked here as (????) have not yet been assigned voyage ID numbers. Evidence for one of these voyages may be found in AGI-SF 74, n.6, folios 12r- 12v (sailing from Angola under captain Manuel Dominguez, the NS Rosario disembarked 127 captives in Cartagena on June 28, 1621). Another un-numbered voyage which arrived in Cartagena (presumably in 1626, though we do not have the precise date) is listed in Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 132: “El 26 de septiembre de 1625, Marcos Pérez, maestro del navío Santa Cruz, de 60 toneladas sacó licencias para 120 esclavos de los cuales sólo llegaron a Cartagena 59 por haber sido víctimas de un ataque pirático en la travesía.”

APPENDIX B:

Known African Captives Disembarked in Cartagena de Indias, 1573-1640, by Vessels' African Ports / Regions of Departure

(Sources: See sources for Appendix A)

Year	Cabo Verde	Rios de Guinea	Guinea	São Tomé	Arda	Angola	Unknown	Total
1573	139							139
1575	289							289
1577	148							148
1585	203		559					762
1586 ¹	377							377
1587	915		549				405	1,869
1588	162	421	134	279		242		1,238
1589	607		1,076				54	1,737
1590	118		724					842
1591			51			122	+	173 +
1593	180	654	78			274	256	1,442
1594	233	42	40			257		572
1595 ²		204				1,421	146	1,771
1596							2,536	2,536
1597	924	248	848	305		1,217		3,542
1598	1,193		814	374		714	460	3,555
1599 ³	529		935	333		1,964	1,020	4,781
1600 ⁴	572	537	469	401	+	2,256		4,235
1601	411	348	330	118		1,875	261	3,343
1605 ⁵							215	215
1609	144		386	+		104 +		634 +
1610	89 +		147			254 +		490 +
1611	+	80	124			+		204 +
1612			123			202	145	470

¹ One ship arriving in 1586 (TSTD 28061) disembarked 17 captives in Rio de la Hacha, then continued on to Cartagena, where an additional 122 captives were landed. All 139 captives are included here.

² There may be an additional known voyage disembarking captives in Cartagena in 1595 (TSTD 29549), but the voyage is not included here because it is not clear whether it was ever completed.

³ One 1599 voyage (TSTD 29070) disembarked 29 captives in Rio de la Hacha, then disembarked an additional 163 captives in Cartagena. All 192 captives are included here.

⁴ “Angola” column for 1600 includes one ship from “Congo” (TSTD 29093) which disembarked 302 captives in Cartagena. Another ship (TSTD 29098) sailed from both Arda (Lapeyre) and São Tomé (other sources), disembarking 207 captives in Cartagena; though we have no more specific information on the captives’ provenance, the 207 captives are listed in the São Tomé column (understood to include captives regularly drawn from both Lower Guinea and West Central Africa); the symbol (+) in the Arda column indicates that an unknown number of enslaved Africans departed from Arda during the same year.

⁵ According to TSTD 29538, this voyage first disembarked 82 captives in Cartagena, and then disembarked an additional 133 captives in Havana. All 215 captives are listed in the chart above.

1614							+	+
1615			386			248		634
1616	197	301	542			25		1,065
1617 ⁶	176		894	177		669		1,916
1618 ⁷	284	220	147	210	125	744	78	1,808
1619 ⁸			873	519	173	1,879		3,444
1620	374		839	293	797	2,634	+	4,937 +
1621 ⁹			1,234	205	560 +	2,381		4,380
1622 ¹⁰	266	608	151	139	422	1,670		3,256
1623			325	117	272	1,389		2,103
1624 ¹¹			346	212		1,375	140 +	2,073
1625	134		308 +			788		1,230
1626		44	335 +			720	59	1,158
1627	345		200			540		1,085
1628	69	112	212	167		543	+	1,103 +
1629			370 +			376 +		746 +
1630			251			607	47	905
1631			303			984	150 +	1,437 +
1632	108		196			861		1,165
1636			60			1,348		1,408
1637			130			506		636
1638	68		106			622		796
1639			84			410		494
1640						120		120
Total ¹²	9,254	3,819	15,679	3,849	2,349	32,341	5,972	73,263

⁶ One 1617 voyage (TSTD 28130 / 29560) disembarked 250 captives in Santo Domingo, then disembarked an additional 65 captives in Cartagena. All 315 captives are included here. There may be an additional known voyage disembarking captives in Cartagena in 1617 (TSTD 29534), but the voyage is not included here because it is not clear whether it was ever completed.

⁷ Total for 1618 includes a ship (TSTD 28166 / 40720) which stopped in both Arda and Angola before landing 250 captives in Cartagena. Though it is presently unknown how many captives were embarked from each region, the total has been split between the two, with 125 captives added to each column.

⁸ TSTD voyage 29449 departed from São Tomé disembarking 214 captives in Cartagena; the captives on this vessel were said to have been from “the Kingdom of Angola.”

⁹ “Arda” column for 1621 includes one ship (TSTD 28195 / 29945) sailing from “Carabalí” via São Tomé. Though we have no more specific information on their provenance, the 205 captives are listed in the São Tomé column (understood to include captives drawn from both Lower Guinea and West Central Africa); the symbol (+) in the Arda column indicates that an unknown number of enslaved Africans departed from Carabalí during the same year. An additional 1621 voyage sailing from Angola (TSTD 29523) landed 69 captives in Caracas, and an additional 152 captives in Cartagena; all 221 are included here.

¹⁰ One 1622 voyage (TSTD 28206) disembarked 22 captives in La Margarita, then an additional 183 in Cartagena; all 205 captives are included here. A separate 1622 voyage (TSTD 29321) disembarked 117 captives in Santo Domingo, then an additional 246 in Cartagena; all 363 captives are included here.

¹¹ TSTD 29467 departed Angola with 522 captives on board, and disembarked up to 225 captives in Santo Domingo in 1624; the ship then sailed to Cartagena and disembarked an additional, unspecified number of captives. The 225 captives disembarked in Santo Domingo are included here.

¹² Total column ignores unknown numbers of captives delivered (+). Also, Totals include 592 captives disembarked in Santo Domingo (1617, 1622, 1624); 133 in Havana (1605), 69 in Caracas (1621); 46 in Rio de la Hacha (1586, 1599); and 22 in La Margarita (1622). The removal of these 862 captives from the Total yields a minimum of 72,401 captives disembarked in Cartagena alone between 1573 and 1640.

APPENDIX C:

Bishop Luis de Córdoba Ronquillo's Proposed Sites
for Rural *Agregaciones* in Cartagena's Province, 1634

(Source: AGI-SF 228, n.100a)

Proposed Agregación	Location of Proposed Agregación ¹	Rural Property Owners Listed by Name ²	Number of Slaves and Others
Mohates	<i>Estancia</i> in Arjona, owned by Doña Mariana de Armas Clavijo	Doña Mariana de Armas Clavijo Cristoval de Castro Andres de Herrera Martin Sanchez Tres estancias que fueron de Juan de Simancas Captain Alonso Quadrado* Julian de Molinedo Estancia del convento de Sto Domingo Don Martin Polo Don Juan de Atiença Francisco Dias	More than 200 slaves and other people
<i>Dotrinas</i> of Bahayre and Turvana	<i>Dotrinas</i> of Bahayre and Turvana	Francisco de Simancas regidor* Diego de Mesa Joana Gutierrez Don Juan de Espinosa difunto Magdalena de la Cruz biuda	150 slaves
<i>Población</i> of Indians of Timiruaco	<i>Población</i> of Indians of Timiruaco	Capitan Diego Matute Sipacóa, estancia de Dn Sebastian Polo Don Nicolas de los Eras Juan Baptista de Segovia Casas y rranchos del Palmar Capitan Diego de Rebolledo* El padre Joan Diez, presbitero Don Pedro de Mendoça Diego Caro Simon Marquez Martin Gonçales Cassas y ranchos de los Avaneta Camino de la Barranca Anton del Rio Juan Martin Diego Moran	?

¹ Compare with maps of Cartagena's province in Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias*, 39, 177; del Castillo Mathieu, *La llave de las Indias*, 121; Navarrete, *Historia Social*, 17; Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias*, 73, 227; Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 158.

² Five known *cabildo* members are noted with an asterisk (*).

<i>Pueblo of Indians of Turbaco</i>	<i>Pueblo of Indians of Turbaco</i>	La estancia y esclavos del Capitan Andres de Banquezel*	?
Camino de la Sierra de Turbaco	<i>Estancia owned by Diego Gonzalez</i>	Diego Gonçales Capitan Diego de Rebolledo* Ambrosio Arias de Aguilera, escribano Juan de Leon del Castillo La torrezilla de don Fr ^o Sarmiento Puerta del Capitan Diego de Matute Doña Agustina de Barros Diego Dias El alferes Mateo de Baldes Don Juan Bonifaz, Capitan de la gente de la tierra adentro Gaspar Martin Casas y ranchos junto a Gaspar Martin Casas y ranchos del Bijagual Antonio de Prado Don X ^o Bermudes de Luna, Regidor Doña María de Herrera, viuda de Gregorio Ortiz de la Maça	300 blacks
<i>Dotrina entre el camino Bajo de la Barranca</i>	<i>Estancia owned by Captain Juan Ruiz de la Vega</i>	Capitan Juan Ruiz de la Vega Juan de Ayala Baltasar Ponçe Don Vicente de Villalobos, alguacil mayor Juan Baptista de Segovia Don Pedro de Mendoça Diego Bernal de Heredia Juan Dias del Alamo	220 blacks
<i>Dotrina on the coast between Punta de Canoa and Punta Blanca</i>	<i>Estancia owned by Diego Gonzalez</i>	Diego Gonçales Ygnacio de Losoya Sargenton Miguel Garçia cirujano Pedro Ballestas, alferes Capitan Antonio Saba[riego?] Juan Peres de Abedillo Doña Maria de Mesa Doña Lorençana de A[cereto?] Antonio de Barros Alferes Rodrigo de Çarate Filipe de Garmendia Mariana Enrriquez Agustin Arará	230 blacks
<i>Dotrina in the Cascaxal and Ciénega de Tesca</i>	“The church that Bartolomé Arará has built on his ranch”	Estancia de don Juan Maldonado Doña María de Viloría Doña Catalina de Castro Blas de Paz Pinto Juan Camacho	400 freed blacks and slaves

APPENDIX D:

Africans, Afrocreoles, Iberians, & Others Baptized in Havana, 1590-1600

(Source: CH-LB/B)

Date		Africans ¹ Baptized	Afrocreoles ² Baptized	Iberians ³ Baptized	Others ⁴ Baptized	Total	Folio and Entry Numbers
1590 ⁵	Jan	1	2	3		6	1r(1) – 1v(3)
	Feb	6	1	3		10	2r(1) – 3r(4)
	Mar	2	3	2		7	3v(1) – 4r(2)
	Apr	1	1	3		5	4r(3) – 4v(3)
	May	13		1		14	4v(4) – 6r(1)
	June	7		1		8	6r(2) – 6v(3)
	July		1			1	6v(4)
	Aug	4	3	7		14	6v(5) – 8v(2)
	Sept	4	4	6		14	8v(3) – 10v(1)
	Oct		1	1		2	10v(2) – 10v(3)
	Nov		3	4	1	8	11r(1) – 12r(1)
Dec	1	2	3		6	12r(2) – 12v(3)	
1591	Jan		3	6		9	12v(4) – 13v(3)
	Aug	4		4		8	14r(1) – 14v(3)
	Sept	5	4	1		10	14v(4) – 15v(2)
	Oct		2	3		5	15v(3) – 16r(3)
	Nov		3	2		5	16r(4) – 16v(4)
1592 ⁶	Aug			1		1	17r(1)
	Sept		1	3		4	17r(2) – 17v(2)
	Oct	1	5	6		12	17v(3) – 19r(4)

¹ The “Africans” category includes individuals ascribed an African “nation,” “land,” or “caste.” It also includes people described as *esclavos*, *negros*, or *morenos*, and baptized with no mention of their parents.

² The “Afrocreoles” category includes children born of a parent or parents described as *negros*, *morenos*, *mulatos*, and of parents ascribed an African “nation.” This category also includes the baptisms of people of unknown racial background, born to mothers described only as “slaves.” In these cases, I assume that most, if not all, enslaved women in Havana during the 1590s were African-born or African-descended.

³ The “Iberians Baptized” category includes Individuals born to parents of unspecified racial background (presumably “white”) and unspecified legal status (presumably free).

⁴ The “Others” category includes Amerindians and “newly converted” Protestants and Muslims. For children born to Amerindian parents, see 11v(3), 44v(1), 57r(3). For the baptisms of “Sebastian yndio de la Florida,” “Alonso yndio de la Florida,” “Felipa yndia,” and “Lucia Yndia de Santa Marta,” see 42v(3), 58r(3), 59r(4), 92r(4). For “newly converted” individuals, see 26v(1), 35r(1), 146v(1), 146v(2). “Francisco Yngles,” was evidently of Northern European origin, and Juan de la Cruz claimed to be North African (“*natural que dixo ser de las partes de Africa en Verberia*”). No information is given for the other two.

⁵ One of the baptisms for March 1590 is found in Libro de Barajas, Matrimonos, folio 26r(1).

⁶ December 1592 baptisms are slightly out of order chronologically. Also, folio 21r/v is badly torn, rendering two baptismal entries, 21r(1) and 21v(1), completely illegible.

	Nov	3	5	3		11	19v(1) – 20v(4)
	Dec		3	9		12	21r(1) – 22v(1)
1593	Jan	13	2	2		17	22v(2) – 24v(4)
	Feb	12	7	6	1	26	25r(1) – 28r(1)
	Mar	1	1	3		5	28r(2) – 28v(2)
	Apr	2	2	1		5	28v(3) – 29r(4)
	May		2	1		3	29v(1) – 29v(3)
	July	2				2	29v(4) – 30r(1)
	Sept	4	5	6		15	30r(2) – 33r(1)
	Oct	3	8	7		18	33r(2) – 34v(6)
	Nov	2	4	4	1	11	35r(1) – 36r(3)
	Dec	4	5	6		15	36r(4) – 38r(2)
1594 ⁷	Jan	2	2	6		10	38r(3) – 39v(2)
	Feb	5	2	4		11	39v(3) – 40v(4)
	Mar	2	1	4		7	41r(1) – 41v(4)
	Apr	2	5	1	1	9	42r(1) – 42v(4)
	May	1	1	2		4	43r(1) – 43v(1)
	June		1	2		3	43v(2) – 44r(1)
	July	1				1	44r(2)
	Aug		2		1	3	44r(3) – 43v(1)
	Sept		2	1		3	44v(2) – 45r(1)
	Oct	2	1	2		5	45r(2) – 45v(3)
	Nov		1			1	46r(1)
	Dec	10	7	23		40	46r(2) – 52r(2)
1595	Jan	4	3	5		12	52r(3) – 54r(1)
	Feb		3	3		6	54r(2) – 55r(1)
	Mar	2	4	5		11	55r(2) – 56v(1)
	Apr	1				1	56v(2)
	June		1	1		2	56v(3) – 57(1)
	July	4	6	5	2	17	57r(2) – 59r(3)
	Aug	9	1	3	1	14	59r(4) – 60v(5)
	Sept	11	6	6		23	61r(1) – 63r(2)
	Oct	9	3	4		16	63r(3) – 65r(3)
	Nov	9	3	7		19	65r(4) – 67v(2)
Dec	7	6	5		18	67v(3) – 70r(2)	
1596 ⁸	Jan	22	2	8		32	70r(3) – 73v(1)
	Feb	2	6	5		13	73v(2) – 75r(2)
	Mar	2	1	12		15	75r(3) – 77r(4)
	Apr	6	1	2		9	77v(1) – 78v(1)
	May	2				2	78v(2) – 78v(3)
	June		1			1	79r(1)

⁷ Baptismal entry 41v (1), dated Saturday, 19 February 1594, is out of order chronologically.

⁸ February 1597 baptisms in chronological order, by folio, are 92v (4), 93r, 93v, 94r, 96v, 95r, 94v (1-3). The last entry for February 1597 appears to be incorrectly labelled as “28 diciembre 1597.” March 1597 baptisms in chronological order, by folio, are 94v (4), 96r, 95v, 97r, 97v, 98r (1).

	July	2	3	4		9	79r(2) – 80r(3)
	Aug	1	8	10		19	80r(4) – 82v(2)
	Sept	13	1	5		19	82v(3) – 85r(1)
	Oct	13	2	5		20	85r(2) – 87r(4)
	Nov	7	2	7		16	87v(1) – 89r(4)
	Dec	5	2	4		11	89v(1) – 90v(4)
1597 ⁹	Jan	9	2	3	1	15	91r(1) – 92v(3)
	Feb	10	4	7		21	92v(4) – 94v(3)
	Mar	13		4		17	94v(4) – 98r(1)
	Apr	2	1			3	98r(2) – 98r(4)
	May	10	6	4		20	98v(1) – 100v(3)
	June	8	7	3		18	101r(1) – 103r(3)
	July	13	3	4		20	103v(1) – 106r(1)
	Aug	10	8	7		25	106r(2) – 109r(5)
	Sept	4	5	8		17	109r(6) – 111v(1)
	Oct	6	6	5		17	111v(2) – 113v(2)
	Nov	9	4	10		23	113v(3) – 116r(2)
Dec	9	2	5		16	116r(3) – 117v(5)	
1598	Feb		1	6		7	118r(1) – 118v(3)
	Mar	16	2	4		22	119r(1) – 121r(4)
	Apr	10	1	5		16	121r(5) – 123r(4)
	May	15	3	4		22	123r(5) – 125r(4)
	June	9		8		17	125v(1) – 127v(1)
	July	4	1	4		9	127v(2) – 129r(3)
	Aug	4		3		7	129r(4) – 130r(1)
	Sept	5	3	5		13	130r(2) – 131v(2)
	Oct	1	1	7		9	131v(3) – 133r(1)
	Nov		3	9		12	133r(2) – 134r(4)
	Dec	4	8	9		21	134v(1) – 137r(1)
1599	Jan	13	4	7		24	137r(2) – 139v(3)
	Feb	6	4	5		15	139v(4) – 141r(5)
	Mar		5	7		12	141v(1) – 142v(4)
	Apr	1	1	10		12	143r(1) – 144v(1)
	May	1	3	1		5	144v(2) – 145r(3)
	June	1	4	2		7	145r(4) – 146r(3)
	July	1	1	1	2	5	146v(1) – 147r(2)
	Sept	1	3	4		8	147v(1) – 148v(2)
	Oct	5	9	10		24	148v(3) – 151v(1)
	Nov	5	3	9		17	151v(2) – 153v(3)
Dec	6	1	11		18	153v(4) – 156r(1)	
1600 ¹⁰	Jan	9	4	5		18	156r(2) – 158r(4)

⁹ February 1597 baptisms in chronological order, by folio, are 92v (4), 93r, 93v, 94r, 96v, 95r, 94v (1-3). The last entry for February 1597 appears to be incorrectly labelled as “28 diciembre 1597.” March 1597 baptisms in chronological order, by folio, are 94v (4), 96r, 95v, 97r, 97v, 98r (1).

¹⁰ Havana Cathedral’s baptismal register ends in January 1600.

	Africans	Afrocreoles	Iberians	Others	Total	
Total Baptisms ¹¹	472	284	456	11	1,223	
Percentage of Total	38.6 %	23.2 %	37.3 %	0.9 %	100 %	

¹¹ As indicated here, there are many months for which no baptisms are recorded, particularly during the years 1591 and 1592. Given Havana's frequent reliance on itinerant priests to provide basic Catholic sacraments, additional baptisms administered in Havana's Cathedral during this period may yet be found elsewhere. We may also note that relatively few slave ships (legally) disembarked captives in Havana. If captives were typically baptized in their first major port of disembarkation, i.e. Cartagena or Veracruz, then these records reflect only a fraction of the African migrants actually arriving in Havana during this decade.

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AGI-Contaduría
AGI-Contratación
AGI-Escribanía
AGI-Indiferente
AGI-Justicia
AGI-México
AGI-Panamá
AGI-Patronato
AGI-Santa Fe
AGI-Santo Domingo
- AGN Archivo General de la Nación (Bogotá, Colombia)
AGN-Fondos de Negros y Esclavos
- AHU Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Lisbon, Portugal)
AHU-Angola
AHU-Cabo Verde
AHU-Guinea
AHU-São Tomé e Príncipe
- AMN Archivo del Museo Naval (Madrid, Spain)
AMN-Colección Guillen
AMN-Colección Navarrete
AMN-Colección Sanz de Barutell
AMN-Colección Vargas Ponce
- ANC Archivo Nacional de Cuba (Havana, Cuba)
ANC-Protocolos Notariales de La Habana
- ANTT Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon, Portugal)
ANTT-Chancelarias Reaes
ANTT-Corpo Cronológico
ANTT-Mesa da Consciência e Ordens
- APS Archivo de Protocolos de Sevilla (Seville, Spain)
APS-Oficio I, Barrera Farfán
- CH Archivo del Catedral de La Habana (Havana, Cuba)
CH-Libro de Barajas, Bautismos, 1590-1600
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