

‘THE KINGDOM OF ANGOLA IS NOT VERY FAR FROM HERE’:
THE RÍO DE LA PLATA, BRAZIL, AND ANGOLA,
1580-1680

By

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For my parents

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Archives

- AGI Archivo General de Indias (Seville, Spain)
Ctdra Contaduría
Esc Escribanía de Cámara y de la Justicia
SD Gobierno: Audiencia de Santo Domingo
Charcas Gobierno: Audiencia de Charcas
Panamá Gobierno: Audiencia de Panamá
- AGN Archivo General de la Nación (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
RN Registro de Navíos
- AHPC Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Córdoba (Córdoba, Argentina)
Esc Escribanía 1
- AHU Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Lisbon, Portugal)
CU Conselho Ultramarino
- ANTT Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon, Portugal)
IL Inquisição de Lisboa
- ARSI Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (Rome, Italy)
- OLL Oliveira Lima Library (Washington, D.C.)
- LL Lilly Library (Bloomington, Indiana)

Citations

- n. número
r. ramo
s/n sin número
s/d sin data
leg. legajo
exp. expediente

Journals

- AHR* The American Historical Review
HAHR The Hispanic American Historical Review

JAH The Journal of African History
SA Slavery and Abolition
WMQ The William & Mary Quarterly

Published Collections

- AECBA* Archivo General de la Nación, *Acuerdos del Extinguido Cabildo de Buenos Aires*, publicado bajo la dirección del doctor Vicente F. Lopez. Serie I. 14 vols. Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos de la Penitenciaría Nacional, 1907-
- Heintze, I Beatrix Heintze, ed., *Fontes para a história de Angola do século XVII, Vol. I: Memórias, relações e outros manuscritos da coletânea documental de Fernão de Sousa, 1622-1635*. Stuttgart: Steiner-Verl. Wiesbaden, 1985.
- Heintze, II Beatrix Heintze, ed. *Fontes para a história de Angola do século XVII, Vol. II: Cartas e documentos oficiais da coletânea documental de Fernão de Sousa, 1624-1635*. Stuttgart: Steiner-Verl. Wiesbaden, 1988.
- MMA* Brásio, António Duarte, ed. *Monumenta missionaria africana: África ocidental [primeira série]*, 15 vols. Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca, 1952-1988.
- MBD* Molina, Raúl A. *Matrimonios, bautismos, y defunciones de la Catedral de Buenos Aires, 1601-1644 y Legajos I y II de expedientes matrimoniales del Archivo el Arzobispado de Buenos Aires (ex curia eclesiástica)*. Buenos Aires: Academia Americana de Genealogía, 2002.

INTRODUCTION

On an *estancia* (cattle ranch) outside of Buenos Aires at daybreak on January 14, 1643, a landowner named Agustín Rodríguez de la Guerra was inspecting his property when he came across a well-dressed “*negro bozal*” (unacculturated African man). From what Guerra could understand from the African, whose Spanish was limited, the individual in question was a runaway slave, named Juan, who had fled Chile in the company of a creole *ladino* man of African descent named Pedro. Guerra presented Juan before the Governor of the Río de la Plata, Don Geronímo Luis de Cabrera, in order for local officials to determine Juan’s legal owner. Governor Cabrera sent for Gonçalo de Villoldo, “a person intelligible in the language of Angola,” to take Juan’s deposition.

According to Juan, he had first arrived in Buenos Aires from Angola several years prior “on the ship of Sebastian de Sousa, who died in this port.” Juan stated that, along with several of his shipmates, he had been taken to the Buenos Aires residence of Captain Pedro de Rojas and sold to “a man from Chile named Francisco.” In the company of at least four Iberian men and other Africans, Juan was trafficked hundreds of miles over land to an undisclosed location in Chile. Soon upon arrival, Juan and Pedro, a “creole from Chile,” were sent on horseback to transport mules from one of their owner’s rural properties to another. After the pair passed the *chacara* (farm) where they were to collect the mules, Pedro explained that the two would be “going to serve in another place which he knew from coming and going to Chile” and showed Juan a sizeable pouch of silver that he had brought to “buy whatever we may need.” Riding for weeks through largely “deserted land,” the pair traveled at night, pausing to rest and trade for food and new horses with

indigenous communities. On the morning of 14 January, Juan had left their camp on the outskirts of Buenos Aires to fetch water for the animals when he was captured and brought before Spanish authorities. Pedro, who was waiting nearby, heard the commotion and managed to flee.¹

Juan and Pedro fit uncomfortably, at best, within extant narratives of African slavery in the early modern Atlantic world. Far removed from the sugar plantations and gold mines that have preoccupied scholars, Juan and Pedro used their geopolitical knowledge of the landscape to move throughout southern South America, accumulating wealth, trading with local communities, and ultimately seeking freedom. Juan’s arrival in Buenos Aires on the vessel of “Sebastian de Sousa”—a slave ship whose landing was not recorded in any known documentation—and his subsequent transport to Chile suggest how we might reconsider the American destinations of enslaved Africans.² As this dissertation argues, the slave trade fundamentally shaped the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century South Atlantic well beyond regions of plantation agriculture. Africans played key roles in the settlement and expansion of the southernmost reaches of Spanish and Portuguese America.

A South Atlantic Methodology

The “South Atlantic” has become a productive framework for scholars to assess bilateral commercial, political, social, and cultural exchanges between South America and the western coast of Africa during the era of the transatlantic slave trade. While South Atlantic approaches have been welcomed as a corrective to the Anglo-centrism of Atlantic history, these studies are frequently

¹ AGI Esc 892B, Pieza 5, “Gaspar de Azedo contra el Governador Don Geronimo Luis de Cabrera,” 1647; fol. 4r, “Manifestacion de Juan negro de chile—que hizo Agustin Rodriguez de la Guerra,” Buenos Aires, 19 enero 1643.

² An individual named “Sebastian de Sosa [*sic*]” served as shipmaster of the vessel *El Rosario* and, in 1637, obtained permission from the governor to export hides, flour, tallow, wool, and meat. No records of a slaving vessel owned by Sebastian de Sousa or in which Sousa served as shipmaster have yet surfaced. Manuel Ricardo Trelles, *Registro estadístico de Buenos Aires, Tomo Segundo* (Buenos Aires: Porvenir, 1869), 8.

limited to circulation between former Portuguese colonies.³ Though more enslaved Africans ultimately disembarked on Brazilian shores than of any other nation, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Brazil was part of a broader Iberian world. As one recent study has shown, events in West Africa reverberated far beyond the Lusophone Atlantic, “fuel[ing] transatlantic slaving networks that [also] disembarked captives” in “the Canary Islands, Spain, the Río de la Plata, and the Spanish circum-Caribbean.”⁴ This dissertation employs an expansive definition of the “South Atlantic” world to consider not only former Portuguese colonies, but also Spanish American regions south of the Equator that participated in these trans-imperial networks: the Río de la Plata, Tucumán, Chile, Paraguay, and Upper Peru (the modern-day nations of Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, and Bolivia).

I consider Spain’s colonization of the Río de la Plata and Upper Peruvian hinterland and Portugal’s colonization of Angola and Brazil as mutually reinforcing initiatives. Portuguese

³ On the importance of South Atlantic studies, see Peter M. Beattie, “‘ReCapricorning’ the Atlantic,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 45, no. 1 (2008), 1-5; Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, “Introduction: The Ethiopic Ocean—History and Historiography, 1600-1975,” in *The South Atlantic, Past and Present*, ed. Luiz Felipe de Alencastro (North Dartmouth, MA: Tagus Press, 2015), 1-82. Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987); Selma Pantoja and José Saraiva, eds., *Angola e Brasil nas rotas do Atlântico Sul* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand, 1999); James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); José C. Curto, *Enslaving Spirits: The Portuguese-Brazilian Alcohol Trade at Luanda and Its Hinterland, c. 1550-1830* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Estevam Costa Thompson, “Negreiros nos mares do sul: Famílias traficantes nas rotas entre Angola e Brasil em finais do século XVIII” (M.A. thesis, Universidade de Brasília, 2006) Kalle Kananoja, “Central African Identities and Religiosity in Colonial Minas Gerais” (Ph.D. diss, Abo Akademi University, 2012); Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Mariana P. Candido, *An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World: Benguela and Its Hinterland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Luiz Felipe de Alencastro’s seminal *O trato dos viventes* acknowledged that developments in Angola and Brazil took place within a larger Iberian world, due in no small part to the era he examined, yet limited discussion of the Spanish context to the biography of Salvador Correia de Sá. See Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes: Formação So do Brasil no Atlântico Sul, séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000) and the older, but still widely cited C.R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola, 1602-1686* (London: Athlone Press, 1952). For a critique of the tendency of recent scholarship on the South Atlantic to exclude the Spanish context, see David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 95.

⁴ Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 71, 16.

navigated the Río de la Plata estuary and passed over land from Brazil to Peru well before the establishment of a permanent settlement on its shores in 1580. Upon Buenos Aires' foundation in that year, individuals from Brazil and Angola flocked to the port to trade, settle, and pass to the Peruvian interior. Meanwhile, Spanish-appointed officials in Angola pursued aggressive military campaigns and collected tribute from subject Mbundu populations in order to obtain captives for Spain's American markets. As a channel for illegal Andean silver flows and Spanish South America's only Atlantic port, the Buenos Aires market for captives was readily incorporated into nascent slave buying networks in West Central Africa.

The complementarity between Iberian agendas in Atlantic Africa and the Americas was further reinforced during the period of the "joint crowns" between 1580 and 1640. Spain and Portugal were united for sixty years under Habsburg rule. While their respective global empires were administratively separate in theory, in practice, colonial officers, traders, soldiers, and commoners of either were perpetually "entangled" in the affairs of the others.⁵ This "blurring of the lines of division" between empires was challenged by Portugal's separation, but, as this study demonstrates, never dismantled. This study ends with 1680, the year in which the Portuguese founded their own competing settlement of Colônia do Sacramento across the Platine estuary from Buenos Aires. The location chosen by the Portuguese provided a better harbor than Buenos Aires for incoming vessels. Spain denounced the action as a threat to the Río de la Plata's Atlantic trade, but for the residents of the estuary, Colônia and Buenos Aires "constituted a single port complex" that "developed complementary rather than competitive roles in the commercial development of

⁵ Lauren Benton, "The Legal Regime of the South Atlantic World, 1400-1750: Jurisdictional Complexity as Institutional Order," *Journal of World History* 11, no. 1 (2000): 27-56; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640," *AHR* 2007, 1359-85. On "entangled" histories elsewhere in the Atlantic, see Eliga H. Gould, "Entangled Histories, Entangled Worlds: The English-Speaking Atlantic as a Spanish Periphery," *AHR* 112, no. 3 (2007), 765-766.

the region.” Nonetheless, for much of the following century Spain and Portugal disputed authority over the region.⁶

Spanish Sources for the History of West Central Africa and Brazil

This study sustains that we cannot understand early Angola and Brazil apart from a broader Iberian context that also included the Río de la Plata. The chief methodological intervention of this study is its use of Spanish-language sources to explore not only sixteenth and seventeenth-century Platine history, but also West Central African and Brazilian history. Scholars of the South Atlantic have largely ignored this formative period: extant studies have drawn upon a relatively limited corpus of material from Portugal, Brazil, and, to a lesser extent, Angola.⁷ Contemporaneous civil suits and investigations of illegal slaving housed in archives in Spain and Argentina provide a striking level of insight into a range of processes that unfolded in early West Central Africa and Brazil. Beyond gathering the testimonies of countless merchants, sailors, soldiers, passengers, and slaves who circulated between Angola, Brazil, and the Río de la Plata, Spanish legal suits reproduced documentation, such as account books, ship departure certificates, and even personal correspondence that are not known to have survived or have not yet surfaced in collections in the Lusophone world.

⁶ Fabrício Prado, *Edge of Empire: Atlantic Networks and Revolution in Bourbon Río de La Plata* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015). See also *A colônia do Sacramento: O extremo sul da América portuguesa no século XVIII* (Porto Alegre: F.P. Prado, 2002).

⁷ Mariana Candido and Roquinaldo Ferreira draw upon a wealth of eighteenth and nineteenth-century judicial cases from national and provincial archives in Angola. These sources have largely not survived for the earlier periods. See Candido, *An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World*, and Ferreira, *Cross –Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World*. On early Angola, see Ilídio do Amaral, *O consulado de Paulo Dias de Novais: Angola no último quartel do século XVI e primeiro do século XVII* (Lisbon: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 2000); Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes*; Beatrix Heintze, *Angola nos séculos XVI e XVII: Estudos sobre fontes, métodos e história* (Luanda: Kilombelombe, 2007); Linda Heywood and John Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Arlindo Manuel Caldeira, “Luanda in the 17th Century: Diversity and Cultural Interaction in the Process of Forming an Afro-Atlantic City,” *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 22, no. 1-2 (2013): 72-104.

In addition to shedding light on bicoastal commercial and kinship networks, Spanish sources enable the reconstruction of biographical information about the earliest Africans in the Americas. A number of sources ultimately recorded by Europeans and their descendants do not provide great detail on African ethnonyms and provenance zones. Surviving ecclesiastical records from Buenos Aires, for example, often recorded Africans only by their Catholic baptismal names. Manumitted Africans, meanwhile, commonly adopted the Iberian surnames of their former master. Countless other Africans were identified as “Angola,” a catch-all term that highlighted the centrality of West Central Africa as the region of origin for many of those forcibly transported to southern South America but which undoubtedly obscured a multitude of more specific identities.⁸ Similar silences in the records indicate how these terms made more sense to Iberians than to any identities that Africans themselves may have had. But if some records glossed over the specificities, in many records African men and women spoke for themselves. In judicial proceedings, wills and testaments, and even rosters of captives, Africans challenged their representation as anonymous “blacks” and cultural outsiders. Though, as with any source, we must be attentive to the circumstances in which narratives were produced and the ways in which they were shaped by the person who documented them, such sources offer a view to Africans’ own voices. Pieced together, these vignettes offer a rich social history of an era that predated “slave narratives.”⁹

⁸ For a discussion of African ethnic identities in the Americas, see Stephan Bühnen, “Ethnic Origins of Peruvian Slaves (1548-1650): Figures for Upper Guinea,” *Paideuma* 29 (1993), 57-110; Walter Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 8-12.

⁹ I draw upon biographical approaches to African history used by Randy J. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes, *O alufá Rufino: tráfico, escravidão e Liberdade no Atlântico negro, 1822-1853* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2010); Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); James H. Sweet, *Domingos Álvares, Atlantic Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

Quantitative and Qualitative Records for the Early Slave Trade

This dissertation analyzes a variety of little-used manuscript source material gathered from archives on three continents to drastically upwardly revise estimates of the early South Atlantic slave trade. Quantitative approaches pioneered by Philip Curtin and reinforced by *Voyages: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database (Voyages)* have been important in drawing scholarly attention to the broad regions of Africa from which slaves were obtained and to some of the American ports where they were disembarked. Some discussion of numbers is key for a region, the Río de la Plata, that has been dismissed as a marginal destination for enslaved Africans.¹⁰ Indeed, it appears not unrelated that sixteenth and seventeenth-century American ports of the South Atlantic are underrepresented on the *Voyages* database and that the majority of studies of American slavery in these regions focus on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹¹ The 41,000 slaves that landed on 339 voyages during Buenos Aires' first century may seem relatively insignificant within an Atlantic slave trade that disembarked more than 10 million Africans in the Americas over four centuries.¹² But these conservative sums for Buenos Aires, albeit extensively documented, belie the incompleteness of the data. Traders bent on avoiding duties consistently collaborated with royal officials to underrepresent the numbers of captives disembarked from slave vessels, while

¹⁰ See Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969) and David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 198.

¹¹ Contributors to *Voyages* have repeatedly acknowledged the database's major gaps with respect to the early Brazilian slave trade. See, for example, Daniel Barros Domingues da Silva and David Eltis, "The Slave Trade to Pernambuco, 1561-1851," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 95-129 and Alexandre Vieira Ribeiro, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade to Bahia, 1582-1851," in *Ibid.*, 130-154; and Gustavo Acioli Lopes, "Brazil's Colonial Economy and the Atlantic Slave Trade: Supply and Demand," in *Networks and Trans-Cultural Exchange: Slaving Trading in the South Atlantic, 1590-1867*, ed. David Richardson and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva, 31-70.

¹² David Richardson, "Consuming Goods, Consuming People: Reflections on the Transatlantic Slave Trade," in Philip Misevich and Kristin Mann, *The Rise and Demise of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Atlantic World* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016), 39.

many voyages were simply never recorded. Available figures from Buenos Aires, and for the South Atlantic as a whole, must thus be viewed with skepticism.

A focus solely on numbers misses thinking through the broader consequences of the Atlantic slave trade for African and American societies.¹³ The new sources analyzed in this study urge a re-evaluation of the individuals deemed eligible for enslavement in West Central Africa. Europeans' supposed preference for adult male captives and African reluctance to sell women to Atlantic traders has led scholars to presume that African women and children were a minority among slave cargoes until well into the nineteenth century.¹⁴ In fact, one recent study has dubbed the nineteenth century the "age of child enslavement," pointing out the irony of rising numbers of children in Atlantic markets and calls for the abolition of slavery during that century.¹⁵ Yet accounts from Bahia and Buenos Aires indicate that entire West Central African communities, including women and children, were sent to the Americas. Fiscal records tended to exclude children because, depending on their age, they were either not taxed or were taxed at lower rates than adults. Moreover, fiscal records did not distinguish between adults of different genders. Only

¹³ The problems with quantitative approaches to histories of Africans in the Americas are cogently argued in Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, "Africa and Africans in the African Diaspora: The Uses of Relational Databases," *AHR* 115, no. 1 (2010), 136-150; Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 6-12; and Toby Green, *The Rise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 4-9, 211-216.

¹⁴ Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 22, 34; Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa, Third Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 125, 137. I have yet to find a preference for adult male captives substantiated in the documentation.

¹⁵ Benjamin N. Lawrance, *Amistad's Orphans: An Atlantic Story of Children, Slavery, and Smuggling* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 5. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, "Fluctuations in Sex and Age Ratios in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1663-1864," *The Economic History Review* 46, no. 2 (May 1993): 308-323; Paul Lovejoy, "The Children of Slavery: The Transatlantic Phase," *SA* 27, no. 2 (2006): 197-217; Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller, "Editor's Introduction," in *Children in Slavery through the Ages*, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), 1-7 and Susan Eva O'Donovan, "Traded Babies: Enslaved Children in America's Domestic Migration, 1820-1860," in *Ibid.*, 88-102. On the importance of children and particularly males in the 19th-century Angolan slave trade, see Daniel Barros Domingues da Silva, "Crossroads: Slave Frontiers of Angola, 1760-1867," (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2011), 117-145.

by looking at both quantitative and qualitative sources can we begin to comprehend the significance of women and children among those forcibly transported to South Atlantic ports during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Most of the sites analyzed in this study never developed plantation economies (or developed them much later), yet Africans were omnipresent. Spanish sources not only highlight Buenos Aires as an active hub for the Atlantic slave trade from its 1580 foundation, but also the role of every Brazilian port, from Pernambuco in the northeast to the southern port of São Vicente, in outfitting, organizing, and receiving slave voyages. Time and again, we read that the labor needs of sugar “dictated the pace of growth” of Atlantic slavery; “determin[ed] which ports in the Americas would dominate slave arrivals at particular junctures;” and even “shap[ed] most aspects of European colonization in the Atlantic world.”¹⁶ Even regions that never developed plantation economies were home to sizeable African populations, challenging assertions that the rise and spread of African slavery was dependent upon plantation agriculture and mining. As this dissertation demonstrates, Africans were indispensable to animal husbandry, local and long-distance trade, maritime labor, and a host of industries in Atlantic ports and deep into the American interior. In sum, if we think through the history of the early Atlantic slave trade only in terms of the numbers of captives recorded in our admittedly limited sources, we miss seeing the larger picture: that Africans effectively settled much of the Americas.¹⁷

¹⁶ Richardson, “Consuming Goods,” 40; James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 2.

¹⁷ On African roles in the conquest and colonization of Spanish America and significance in the Atlantic world, see John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Matthew Restall, “Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America,” *The Americas* 57, no. 2 (2000), 171-205; Jane Landers, “The African Landscape of Seventeenth-Century Cartagena de Indias,” in *The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade*, ed. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt D. Childs, and

Chapter Outline

Chapter I, “River of Silver, River of Portuguese: Iberian Networks of Family, Friendship, and Finance,” reimagines sixteenth and seventeenth-century Buenos Aires not as an isolated backwater of Spain’s American empire, but rather as a vibrant, multiethnic port city with a dynamic population. The chapter examines the prominent roles of Portuguese mariners, soldiers, and merchants in the slave trade to Buenos Aires. Many of these individuals eventually settled in the Río de la Plata and the South American interior, fleeing the persecution of the Inquisition in Portugal and Brazil. By the early 17th century, Portuguese outnumbered Spanish *vecinos* in a number of towns in the interior (as this chapter and others note, the African population was nearly always even larger). But if the presence of Portuguese “of suspect faith” alarmed a few Crown officials, their presence was embraced by many others, who recognized their importance to the slave trade that sustained the region. In addition to detailing the vibrancy of these Portuguese slave trading networks, this chapter calls attention to the understudied collaboration between Spaniards and Portuguese in trade, specifically, the presence of Spanish merchants and officials in Brazil and Angola. Though ultimately fewer in number than their Portuguese counterparts, their involvement in slave trafficking challenges assertions that the Spanish were “uninterested” in the slave trade and that Spanish mediation in Portuguese commercial networks was impossible.

Most of our knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade is derived from studies of the infamous commerce at its demographic height during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Surveys of earlier periods have largely relied upon contracts for deliveries of captives issued from the Iberian Peninsula or on sparse port entry records to estimate slave shipments to the Americas. These sources significantly undercount slave shipments to Buenos Aires and

James Sidbury (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 147-162; and David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*.

Brazilian ports. *Voyages* lists 104 vessels arriving in Buenos Aires before 1640.¹⁸ Drawing on a range of other, little-examined sources, including investigations of illegal slaving and royal officials' correspondence, Chapter II, "The Muddle in the Middle Passage: The South Atlantic Slave Trade, 1585-1680," tracks the arrivals in Buenos Aires of over 41,000 slaves on 339 voyages. In addition to providing significantly more complete figures for the transatlantic trade to Buenos Aires, this chapter analyzes the movements of slaves between American ports subsequent to their first landings in the New World. My research shows how robust coastal trade with Salvador and Rio de Janeiro complicated the otherwise demographic dominance of West Central Africans in the Río de la Plata by introducing a number of Africans from Upper Guinea and Senegambia. Though geography imparted unique dimensions to the slave trade to the Río de la Plata, as this chapter demonstrates, the merchants and routes of the slave trades of Spanish and Portuguese America overlapped in ways hitherto unrecognized by scholars.

Chapter III, "From Port to Potosí: Slave Trails of the South American Interior," picks up from American seaports, where many examinations of the slave trade end. The overland trek from Buenos Aires to Potosí wound through over 1,000 miles of grasslands, forest, desert, and mountains. Successful execution of this grueling overland journey depended upon the labor and resources of a broad swath of the South American hinterland and its residents, including *encomienda* Indians and other enslaved Africans. This chapter begins in Buenos Aires, exploring the marketing of captives and the outfitting of slave caravans. It continues through several of the routes of the interior, examining the conditions that captives endured along the way and the participation of indigenous and African individuals in moving slaves upcountry. Analysis of these

¹⁸ www.slavevoyages.org (accessed 12/1/2016). Most of these voyages are drawn from Raúl A. Molina, *Las primeras experiencias comerciales del Plata: el comercio marítimo, 1580-1700* (Buenos Aires, 1966).

interior trade routes provides further insight into the goods that circulated throughout the Atlantic world in exchange for enslaved Africans. Finally, using notarial records from the interior city of Córdoba, a key hub for overland transport to Chile and destinations further north, this chapter examines slave sales in the interior between 1590 and 1650. As the records analyzed in this chapter demonstrate, the movement of slaves to the interior did not correspond with peaks in the transatlantic trade. Scholars have used sources from interior locations to argue that the slave trade to Buenos Aires began to wither in the 1620s. Rather than faithfully reflecting port activity, Córdoba records suggest how the African population of Buenos Aires and its environs grew as indigenous hostility and declining silver production in Potosí threatened the slave routes of the interior.

Chapter IV, “African Spaces of the South Atlantic,” opens in the 1630s, peak years for the growth of the Río de la Plata’s African populations. Scholars have presumed that seventeenth-century residents of Buenos Aires and the Río de la Plata were too poor to afford slaves (and that the slave trade to the early port was short-lived), thereby dismissing the possibility of, and hence failing to look for, a sizeable African population in this region. In this chapter, I demonstrate that Africans were essential to the region’s production of foodstuffs; defense; animal husbandry; and local and long-distance trades. Africans participated in these industries from the second foundation of Buenos Aires in 1580, yet a spike in the Atlantic slave trade to Buenos Aires and a decline in interior transport around the mid-1620s made the port and its environs more African. Although the Río de la Plata was predominantly rural, enslaved and free Africans readily circulated between urban and rural environs to trade, socialize, and participate in sacramental life. This chapter contextualizes the Río de la Plata within the Atlantic world beyond its tropical American

plantations, illustrating that the region was not exceptional among seventeenth-century American spaces in its lack of export commodity agriculture.

A note on terminology is necessary. The Río de la Plata refers to both the ocean estuary on which Buenos Aires is situated and the freshwater rivers that drain into it (a zone that includes parts of present-day Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil). As used in this dissertation, “Río de la Plata” refers to the estuary and parts of present-day Argentina and Paraguay. Tucumán (including the city of Córdoba) was administered separately; its jurisdiction theoretically covered much of northwest present-day Argentina up to the Andes Mountains. Chile, including the cities of Mendoza and Santiago de Chile, was also administered separately. “Upper Peru” roughly corresponded to the territorial limits of present-day Bolivia. The judges of the Audiencia of La Plata y Cancillería Real de los Charcas (referred to here as the “Audiencia de la Plata”), were headquartered in the city of La Plata (modern-day Sucre, Bolivia) and presided over Upper Peru, Tucumán, Paraguay, and the Río de la Plata region for much of the period under examination. All were dependencies of the massive Viceroyalty of Peru, which governed from Lima.

CHAPTER I

RIVER OF SILVER, RIVER OF PORTUGUESE:

IBERIAN NETWORKS OF FAMILY, FRIENDSHIP, AND FINANCE

Arriving in Rio de Janeiro from Luanda in November 1619, Manuel Rivero paused to write letters to business associates in his home port of Buenos Aires. “I arrived in this place exhausted of traveling [after] forty days at sea,” he reported in one letter; referring to his long absence from Buenos Aires, he wrote, “it is very taxing on me to be away from this house.” Rivero informed his associates that he would soon be departing for São Vicente, in the south of Brazil, and would then sail again for Angola. From Angola, Rivero planned to return directly to the Río de la Plata. By the following year, he would be in Chile. Rivero’s business partner, Miguel Henriquez, corroborated Rivero’s claims of homesickness, writing to Rivero’s eventual mother-in-law in Buenos Aires, Mariana Leal, that although Rivero was “in good health[,] he does nothing but cry constantly[...] I do not know whether to call him ‘Manuel Rivero’ or ‘Ribeiro [stream] of Tears.’” Henriquez added that he often invited friends to his home in Rio to “relieve their loneliness,” and that their only recourse was to “talk [about] Buenos Aires and in this way we pass the day and the night.”¹⁹

The correspondence of Rivero and his associate charted the trans-continental movements of “men in motion”—Portuguese traders, soldiers, colonial officials, and “passengers” who regularly sailed between the Americas and Africa on slave voyages. They indicate how ties of kinship,

¹⁹ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 9, fol. 76r-76v, “Carta de Miguel Henriques a la Señora Mariana Leal en Buenos Aires,” Rio de Janeiro, 15 noviembre 1620; fol. 80r-81v, “Carta de Manuel Riveiro a Nicolas Riveiro,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 noviembre 1620; fol. 81v-82v, “Carta de Manuel Riveiro a Juan Crespo,” Rio de Janeiro, 10 noviembre 1620; fol. 82v-84v, “Carta de Manuel Riveiro a Antonio del Pino,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 noviembre 1620; fol. 90r-94v, “Carta de Manuel Rivero a la Señora Mariana Leal en Buenos Aires,” Rio de Janeiro, s/d (likely November 1620).

friendship, and economic interest facilitated the slave trade in the South Atlantic.²⁰ Yet these men, all ostensibly born in Portugal, repeatedly professed feeling more at home in Buenos Aires than in Lisbon, Luanda, Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, São Vicente or any of the other Portuguese trade hubs of the Atlantic world. They had established families in the Río de la Plata and would have considered themselves Spanish subjects; by 1620, few would have remembered an independent Portugal.

This chapter opens by re-imagining Buenos Aires not as an isolated military fortification on the margins of Spain's American empire, but as a vibrant port city with a dynamic, multiethnic population. Next, this chapter turns to the trade networks that residents of Buenos Aires formed with family members and acquaintances scattered among ports of the Iberian Atlantic as well as in villages and towns in the South American interior to direct thousands of enslaved Africans to the Río de la Plata and beyond during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Recent studies of the African slave trade to the Spanish Caribbean during these same decades have challenged the view that Spain was uninterested in the slave trade; however, as one recent article has pointed out, most work has yet to grapple with the implications of the substantial magnitude of Spanish participation in the trade.²¹ In the case of Buenos Aires, scant examinations of the slave trade

²⁰ A.J.R. Russell Wood, *The Portuguese Empire, 1515-1808: A World on the Move* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 107-141.

²¹ Alex Borucki, David Wheat, and David Eltis, "Atlantic History and the Slave Trade to Spanish America," *AHR* 120, no. 2, 453-454. For works that emphasize Portuguese/New Christian traders as the chief protagonists of the slave trade to Spanish America during the Iberian Union, see Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos: Los asientos portugueses, 1595-1640* (Seville: EEHA, 1978); José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os cristãos-novos e o comércio no Atlântico meridional* (São Paulo: Pioneira, 1978) and *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro: séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Pioneira, 1981); Ana Hutz, "Homens de nação e de negócio: redes comerciais no Mundo Ibérico, 1580-1640," (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2014). On Buenos Aires specifically, see Ricardo Lafuente Machain, *Los portugueses en Buenos Aires, siglo XVII* (Madrid: Ológaza, 1931); Enrique de Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro y la condición social de los indios: Río de la Plata, Paraguay, Tucumán y Perú, siglos XVI y XVII* (Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, 1939), 20; Ricardo Zorraquín Becú, "Orígenes del comercio rioplatense, 1580-1620," *Anuario de historia argentina* V (1947), 78, 101-103; Alice Piffer Canabrava, *O comércio português no Rio da Prata, 1580-1640* (Belo Horizonte: Itaitia, 1944); Elena F.S. de Studer, *La trata de negros en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVII* (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1958); José Torre Revello, "Un contrabandista del siglo XVII en el Río de la Plata," *Revista de Historia de América* 45 (1958), 121-130 and *La Sociedad Colonial: Buenos Aires entre los siglos XVI y XIX* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Pannedille, 1964), 45; Zacarias Moutoukias,

during this period depict it as an erratic, short-lived commerce that drained the Spanish Empire of silver and lined the pockets of a few Portuguese merchants and corrupt royal officials.²² While acknowledging the pivotal role of Portuguese agents in both European colonization of the Río de la Plata and in many trade networks, I call attention to collaborations between individuals from multiple national, cultural, and economic backgrounds in this largely illicit commerce. As this chapter demonstrates, trans-imperial slave trading networks both preceded and outlived the Iberian Union (1580-1640).

An Atlantic Port in “Spanish” South America

Portuguese mariners, interpreters, and financiers were key contributors to Spain’s early forays in the Río de la Plata.²³ Juan Díaz de Solís, the leader of the first expedition that reconnoitered the massive Río de la Plata estuary in 1516, had worked as a pilot on Portuguese voyages to India and may have been of Portuguese origin himself. Attacks on the mission by local indigenous groups persuaded the explorers to cut short their plan to locate a passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and return to Spain, but one of the vessels, a caravel, foundered in the estuary. Some castaways from Solís’ expedition traveled north by land to what is today southern Brazil and served as guides for a second voyage to the Río de la Plata in 1526 led by Sebastian Cabot. Cabot’s return to Spain with modest quantities of precious metals and tales of a silver

Contrabando y control colonial en el siglo XVII: Buenos Aires, el Atlántico, y el espacio peruano (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988); Maria da Graça A. Mateus Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru ao tempo da União Ibérica: Mobilidade, cumplicidades e vivências* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2005), 58; Óscar Nocetti and Lucio Mir, *Geopolítica y relaciones económicas Hispano-Lusitanas. Cuenca rioplatense, 1494-1777* (Seville: Universidad Nacional de Andalucía/Fundación Caja Rural del Sur, 2009), 93-132.

²² Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos en Córdoba de Angola a Potosí, siglos XVI-XVII* (Córdoba, Argentina: Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1966), 27-28; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos*.

²³ Lewis Hanke, “The Portuguese in Spanish America, with Special Reference to the Villa Imperial de Potosí,” *Revista de Historia de América* 51 (1961), 2-3.

mountain somewhere in the South American interior persuaded the Crown to negotiate a contract with Pedro de Mendoza to look for these reputed mines and establish a permanent Spanish settlement in the region. Mendoza's massive fleet of eleven ships carrying 1500 men and women (among them were probably enslaved Africans) departed from Sanlúcar de Barrameda in August 1535. Upon reaching the estuary in February 1536, Mendoza established a settlement and named it Santa María del Buen Aire.²⁴ The ill-equipped expedition arrived too late in the summer to plant any crops and relied on supplies from Querandí Indians, obtained with the help of intermediaries from the coast of Brazil left behind on a previous Iberian expedition.

Within eighteen months of their arrival, disease, starvation, infighting, and conflict with Querandí had reduced the group to one-third of its original number. In 1536, a group led by Mendoza's deputy, Juan de Ayolas, traveled over one thousand miles up the Paraguay River in search of the fabled silver mountain and founded a new city in the Río de la Plata, Asunción del Paraguay, in 1537. Within four years, the struggling settlement of Buenos Aires was abandoned.²⁵ As *teniente de gobernador* (deputy governor) of the Río de la Plata, Domingo Martínez de Irala, left for Asunción, he reminisced that Buenos Aires provided, "the best [port] in this river for vessels and people...any that enter can leave people and ships where it appears convenient."²⁶

²⁴ Dorothy Jane Tuer, *Tigers and Crosses: The Transcultural Dynamics of Spanish-Guaraní Relations in the Río de la Plata, 1516-1518* (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2011), 52-63; 92; 100-101; Pablo García Loaeza and Victoria L. Garrett, "Introduction," in *The Improbable Conquest: Sixteenth-Century Letters from the Río de la Plata*, ed. Pablo García Loaeza and Victoria L. Garrett (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), 2-11, 18-22. On intermediaries in Spanish and Portuguese voyages of exploration in South America, see Allida C. Metcalf, *Go-betweenes and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500-1600* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

²⁵ David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsín* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 40; Rodolfo E. González Lebrero, *La pequeña aldea: Sociedad y economía en Buenos Aires, 1580-1640* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2002), 68-69; Barbara Ann Ganson, *The Guaraní under Spanish Rule in the Río de la Plata* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 23-29; Rodrigo Ceballos, 'Arribadas portuguesas: a participação luso-brasileiro na constituição social de Buenos Aires, c. 1580-c.1650,' (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2008), 34-39.

²⁶ 'La relacion q dexo domingo mnez deyrála en Buenos ayres al tpo q la despoblo,' Buenos Aires, Undated (likely June 1541), in Comisión Oficial del IV Centenario de la Primera Fundación de Buenos Aires, *Documentos históricos y geográficos relativos a la conquista y colonización rio-platense, tomo segundo: Expedición de Don*

Other locations in the 180 mile-long Río de la Plata estuary, such as the San Gabriel Island (site of the future Portuguese settlement of Colônia do Sacramento), would probably have provided a more suitable harbor.²⁷ The estuary teemed with sandbars and was impossible to navigate during the winter (June to September). Ships of a heavy port had to anchor far from the city and transfer their cargo to wagons or canoes, but even smaller vessels struggled to put in to the “Riachuelo” (Matanzas River) when the tide ebbed or during periods of low rain. The sheer length of the coast would make it difficult for Spanish officials to patrol illegal trade. Despite these topographical challenges, Buenos Aires would occupy a privileged position with respect to riverine and terrestrial routes that led deep into the South American interior.²⁸

Asunción then served as the base for Iberian expansion in the Río de la Plata and communication with Spain. Though by 1580, the year in which Buenos Aires was re-founded, the dreams of uncovering a wealthy Inca kingdom in the interior that had propelled earlier settlement of the estuary had faded, residents of Asunción as well as Santiago del Estero (founded 1553), Córdoba del Tucumán (1573), and the silver mining center of Potosí (1545) welcomed a new Atlantic port as an alternative to Lima merchants’ monopoly on maritime commerce through the Pacific and the Isthmus of Panama.²⁹ An Atlantic port in the Río de la Plata also facilitated

Pedro de Mendoza, Establecimiento y despoblación de Buenos Aires, 1530-1572 (Buenos Aires: Jacobo Peuser, 1941), 299-302. Also quoted in Ceballos, “‘Arribadas portuguesas,’” 28.

²⁷ On the history of Colônia do Sacramento, see Fabrício Pereira Prado, *A Colônia do Sacramento: O extremo sul da América portuguesa no século XVIII* (Porto Alegre: F.P. Prado, 2002).

²⁸ Description of Buenos Aires drawn from Susan Socolow, “Buenos Aires: Atlantic Port and Hinterland,” in *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World*, ed. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 241-245; Anthony Zacariah Helms, *Travels from Buenos Ayres, by Potosi, to Lima* (London: Richard Phillips, 1807), 64; Zacarias Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial en el siglo XVII: Buenos Aires, el Atlántico, y el espacio peruano* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988), 23-24; Fernando Alberto Jumar, ‘Le Commerce atlantique au Río de la Plata, 1680-1778’ (Ph.D. diss., École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2000), 348. On the importance of estuary settlements in the European imagination, see Lauren A. Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 43-59.

²⁹ Ceballos, ‘Arribadas portuguesas,’ 29-38.

Peruvian trade for residents of the neighboring Portuguese captaincy of São Vicente. Since at least the 1550s, merchants based in southern Brazil had traversed land routes, such as the Guairá trail that linked São Vicente to Asunción, to trade in the Peruvian interior.³⁰ But this arduous trek took months through territories controlled by indigenous groups well into the eighteenth century. As seventeenth-century legal scholar Antonio de León Pinelo quipped in a justification defending maritime trade between Brazil and Peru via Buenos Aires, though Brazil and Peru were “contiguous like Castille and Aragon,” travel between the two was so difficult that it would be wiser to say that they were contiguous “like Castille and Norway.”³¹ In 1581, a group of English merchants eager to pry open trade with southern Brazil docked *The Minion of London* in São Vicente’s harbor of Santos. The report of the purser on board, Thomas Grigs, suggests that regular commerce between Brazil and Buenos Aires was contemporaneous with Buenos Aires’ second foundation. Grigs explained that part of “Peru” was “but twelve dayes journey from the towne of Santos, and from thence it may be about foure or five dayes journey by water to the maine river of Plate.” From the head of the river, merchants could easily “trade and traffique by land into Peru by wagons, and horses or mules.”³² A Portuguese merchant in Rio de Janeiro echoed Grigs’ confidence about the relative advantage of Buenos Aires over the Atlantic fleet system that routed goods through Cartagena, the isthmus of Panama, and down the Pacific coast of South America, speculating that if Spanish and Portuguese merchants, “[knew] this trade, they would not send nor

³⁰ Canabrava, *O Comércio português*, 132-133; Marie Helmer, ‘Comércio e contrabando entre a Bahia e Potosí no século XVI’, *Revista de historia* (1953): 201-202; José Carlos Vilardaga, ‘São Paulo na orbita do império das Felipes: Conexões castelhanas de uma vila da América portuguesa durante a União Ibérica’ (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2010), 41.

³¹ León Pinelo quoted in Vilardaga, ‘São Paulo na orbita do império das Felipes,’ 220.

³² ‘Certaine notes of the voyage to Brasill with the Minion of London, aforesaid, in the yere 1580, written by Thomas Grigs Purser of the said ship’, in Richard Hakluyt, *The principall navigations, voyages, traffiques and discoveries of the English Nation*, E-book available through Early English Books Online. A description of Grigs’ voyage also appears in Salvador, *Os cristãos-novos*, 58.

venture so much merchandise to Cartagena as they doe...with ready money in hand [from Buenos Aires] in Angola a man shall buy better Negros, and better cheape.”³³

Enslaved Africans were among the first—and the most persistent—commodities “traded and traffiqued” into Buenos Aires soon after its second foundation. Evidence about arrivals in the port during much of the late sixteenth century is fragmentary, but Francisco de Victoria, a Dominican friar of Portuguese birth who became the bishop of Tucumán in 1577, is reputed to have been the first to launch slaving voyages from Buenos Aires. After obtaining a license from the Audiencia of Charcas, the Spanish high court that held jurisdiction over the Río de la Plata, Tucumán, and Upper Peru, to import African slaves for his personal service, in 1585 Victoria armed a frigate with 30,000 pesos worth of silver and sailed for Brazil. The expedition stopped first in São Vicente to purchase a new vessel before continuing to Bahia, where it acquired as many as 150 captives. As they neared the Río de la Plata, English pirates under the command of Robert Widrington attacked and plundered the Bishop’s two vessels, one bearing 45 “Negroes,” in addition to foodstuffs and livestock, and another whose cargo included “five and thirtie Negroe women,” “foure or five Friars,” and religious paraphernalia valued at over “1000 ducats.”³⁴

³³ “A letter of Francis Suares to his brother Diego Suares dwelling in Lisbon, written from the river of Ienero in Brasill in June 1596, concerning the exceeding rich trade newly begunne betweene that place and Peru, by the way of the river of Plate, with small barks of 30, and 40, tunnes.” In Hakluyt, *The principal navigations, voyages, traffiques...*, vol. III, 706-708

³⁴ “A briefe Relation of the severall Voyages, undertaken and performed by the Right Honorable, George, Earle of Cumberland, in his owne person, or at his owne charge, and by his direction: collected out of the Relations and Journals of credible persons Actors therein,” in *Samuel Purchas, B.D., Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrims: Contayning a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Lande Travells by Englishmen and Others*, Volume XVI (New York: Macmillan, 1906).

The English were aware that Iberian dominion over the Americas south of the equator was far from secure and viewed the Río de la Plata as a strategic access point to both Brazil and Peru. English merchants were in Brazil during the early sixteenth century to participate in the brazilwood trade and heard of Portuguese gains in sugar and silver in the river plate during the 1550s-1560s. During the 1570s (prior to the re-foundation of Buenos Aires), Richard Grenville and William Hawkins petitioned Queen Elizabeth to support voyages of exploration, trade, plunder, and settlement in regions south of the Equator not under Iberian control. Besides Drake’s famous 1577 voyage, during which he spent twelve days in the Río de la Plata estuary, other English voyages, mainly seeking involvement in the seal trade, traveled to the River Plate (or attempted to). In 1583, a Southampton merchant named Edward Cotton attempted a voyage for just those purposes but wrecked off the Guinea coast, where the vessel had

Disappointingly for Widrington and his crew, Victoria's vessels contained "neither Silver nor Gold." In spite of his first voyage's untimely end, Victoria continued to finance trade expeditions to Brazil throughout the rest of his term in office.³⁵ However, attributing the origins of the Río de la Plata slave trade to a "foreigner"—and, moreover, a Portuguese New Christian—belies the active role of the Río de la Plata's Spanish residents in building trade networks in Brazil and West Central Africa.³⁶

In 1585, the same year as Victoria's voyage, a royal appointee for governor of the Río de la Plata and Paraguay named Martín García Óñez de Loyola proposed importing "three or four thousand slaves" annually from "Angola, Cabo Verde, or wherever your highness sees fit." According to Loyola, not only was slave labor essential for the "good and the growth of [the Río de la Plata]," remittances from their sale could be used to augment his salary "and other things."

ostensibly stopped to acquire salt to trade in São Vicente and to use to preserve seal hides. It would not be amiss to suspect that these English traders participated in piracy or slave trading in some capacity, thus indicating that Victoria's slaves were not the first to pass to that region. On Cotton, see "Certaine remembrances of an intended voyage to Brasill, and the River of Plate, by the Edward Cotton, a ship of 260 Tunnes of Master Edward Cotton of Southampton, which perished through extreme negligence neare Rio grande in Guinic, the 17 of July 1583," in PN, 408-412; on English activity in the Río de la Plata, consult K.R. Andrews, "Beyond the equinoctial: England and South America in the sixteenth century," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 10, no. 1 (1981), 4-24; *ibid.* "On the way to Peru: Elizabethan ambitions in America south of Capricorn," *Terra Incognitae* 14 (1982), 61-75; *Trade, plunder and settlement: Maritime genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), esp. 149-165. Andrews asserts that English activity in the South Atlantic withered after 1583, "Beyond the equinoctial," 19.

³⁵ For a description of the Bishop of Tucuman's 1585 trade venture, see Canabrava, *O Comércio português no Rio da Prata*, 83; Helmer, 'Comércio e contrabando entre a Bahia e Potosí no século XVI', 197-198; Ceballos, 'Arribadas portuguesas', 39-42; Vilardaga, 'São Paulo na orbita do império das Felipes', 139-141. It is possible that the English ransomed the captives they took back to Spanish settlers in the Río de la Plata or sold them in Brazil. On the role of privateering and piracy in the early English slave trade, see chapter 1 of Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Gregory E. O'Malley, *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

³⁶ While much of the older scholarship stressed divisions and competition for political power between the Spanish and Portuguese residents of Buenos Aires, even during the Iberian Union, newer work emphasizes trans-imperial commercial and social networks. Ricardo Lafuente Machain, *Los portugueses en Buenos Aires, siglo XVII* (Madrid: Ologáza, 1931); José Goncalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro: séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Pioneira, 1981); Ceballos, 'Arribadas portuguesas'; Mateus Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*; Perusset, *Contrabando y sociedad*; Susana R. Frías, *Portugueses en Buenos Aires: mito y realidad, 1600-1699* (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Historia, 2011). On a later period, see Fabrício Prado, "In the Shadows of Empires: Trans-Imperial Networks and Colonial Identity in Bourbon Río de la Plata" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2009).

Low pay and a lack of resources motivated countless Crown officials, soldiers, and missionaries on both sides of the Atlantic to participate in the potentially lucrative business of the slave trade. Given that the Río de la Plata was “on the same coast” as Brazil, Loyola reasoned that it was only fair for traders to pay “the [same] duties [as] your vassals of the Portuguese Crown of Brazil.” Loyola suggested that the Crown further facilitate slave imports by permitting ship captains to depart directly from Buenos Aires for the African coast without first taking out a license in Seville’s *Casa de la Contratación*.³⁷

Though Loyola never served as governor of the Río de la Plata, he was one among many Crown officials to pursue a direct slave trade between Buenos Aires, Brazil, and the African coast, with or without royal authorization.³⁸ In 1587, the treasurer of the Río de la Plata and Paraguay, Hernando de Montalvo, wrote the king to request information about the duties he should be collecting on behalf of the royal treasury on slaves from “Brazil and Guinea,” indicating that the slave routes initiated less than a decade earlier were already thriving. In the same letter, Montalvo recounted that the Spanish governor, Juan de Torres Navarrete, had recently sent a Portuguese individual named Duarte Nuñez to the *pampas* (grasslands) to slaughter three or four hundred wild

³⁷ AGI Charcas 27, R.5, N.10, “Carta de Martin Garcia de Loyola a S.M.,” Madrid, 6 September 1585. On royal officials enriching themselves through the slave trade, see Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes: Formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul, séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000), 97; Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 36-44; David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 84-92.

³⁸ On bilateral commercial relations between Brazil and Angola, see Miller, *Way of Death*; Selma Pantoja, ‘Três Leituras e duas cidades: Luanda e Rio de Janeiro nos setecentos’, in *Angola e Brasil nas rotas do Atlântico Sul*, ed. Selma Pantoja and José Sombra Saraiva (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand, 1998); Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes*; Estevam Costa Thompson, ‘Negreiros nos mares do sul: Famílias traficantes nas rotas entre Angola e Brasil em fins do século XVIII’, (M.A. thesis, Universidade de Brasília, 2006); Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World*; Mariana P. Candido, *An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World: Benguela and its Hinterland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). For an alternative perspective that emphasizes the role of Lisbon-based investors in the seventeenth century slave trade, see Arlindo Manuel Caldeira, “Angola and the Seventeenth-Century South Atlantic Slave Trade,” in *Networks and Trans-Cultural Exchange: Slave Trading in the South Atlantic, 1590-1867*, ed. David Richardson and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 101-43.

horses for their tails because Navarrete insisted that they were “a very good commodity to take to the Guinea coast to barter for (*resgatar*) slaves.”³⁹ According to information compiled by Samuel Purchas, in Angola, horse tails “which commonly [traders] bring from the River of Plate” were “great jewels” that could fetch two slaves apiece.⁴⁰ Regardless of who can be said to have been the “first” to launch slaving voyages from Buenos Aires, diverse sources attest to Iberian enthusiasm for driving slave traffic from West Central Africa to the mouth of the Río de la Plata from 1580 onward.

Slaving and Settling

As in other regions of Spanish America, *encomiendas* of indigenous laborers were distributed to a number of the participants in the city’s second foundation. Within a few years, many of the original settlers, disappointed by the absence of precious metals and the difficulties of harnessing indigenous labor, decided to return to Spain, Asunción, and Santa Fe. One Spanish military captain who passed through the port in 1582 warned that Buenos Aires was “almost

³⁹ AGI Charcas 38, N.22, ‘Carta-relacion de los principales sucesos del Rio de la Plata, por el tesorero Hernando de Montalvo fecha en la trinidad y puerto de Buenos Ayres a 23 de agosto de 1587’, Buenos Aires, 23 August 1587. David Wheat has demonstrated that in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spanish Caribbean, “Guinea”—largely thought to be a catch-all term for sub-Saharan Africa—was actually shorthand for the “Rivers of Guinea” and referred to a specific region encompassing the Upper Guinea Coast, Senegambia, and Sierra Leone. Precise data on slave voyages originating in “Guinea” and landing in Buenos Aires have not yet been located, but occasional references to “negros de Guinea” as well as Buenos Aires’ close connections to Brazilian port cities where slaves were landed from diverse regions of Africa suggest that Buenos Aires was not tied exclusively to West Central Africa. See Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 21 and the discussion in Chapter II of this dissertation.

⁴⁰ Information about horse tails in Angola and Congo was probably gathered by Andrew Battell. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrimage In five books...* (London, 1614). E-book available through Early English Books Online. French engineer Barthélemy de Massiac, who lived in Luanda for a decade in the second half of the seventeenth century, noted that one of the most “admirable” ornaments of war in Angola was a “horse tail on the shoulder.” See “Memorias de la relación del viaje del Sr. de Massiac a Angola, y a Buenos Aires, 24 de marzo de 1667, in Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes: Formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul, séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000).

depopulated;” its inhabitants were limited to “20 melancholy and exhausted soldiers.”⁴¹ A few years later, the situation had evidently improved when English privateers observed that the port was one of “five Townes each of seventie households or more” in the region.⁴² Though the population was growing, the city’s built environment remained modest. Justo Van Suerck, a Jesuit priest passing through the port on his way to a Paraguayan mission in 1629, related that all of the churches and private residences were simple, one-level structures made of “mud and roofed with straw, and even then only a few have roofs.” The streets were unpaved, and, “Forget about windows made of glass...there are not even [windows] of fabric or paper.”⁴³ One of the most distinguished buildings in the early colonial city, according to a contemporary observer, was a brick gambling house, built around 1610 and adorned with doors and windows that had been imported from Brazil.⁴⁴

According to data compiled by Peter Boyd-Bowman, a paltry 5.1% (1,088 individuals) of legal Spanish emigrants seeking passage to the New World during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries declared their final destination as the “Río de la Plata” (including the province of Tucumán, in present-day northwestern Argentina, and Paraguay).⁴⁵ In spite of the growing pains of the port’s early years reported by Spanish officials, rough seventeenth-century population estimates (Table 1.1) indicate concurrent European and African population increases that can be explained only by the trade in enslaved Africans. While other cities in Upper Peru were founded

⁴¹ Captain Torres Pineda quoted in Miguel Ángel Lima, “Fundación de la ciudad de la Trinidad y su población en su primer cuarto de siglo,” *Boletín del Instituto Histórico de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* 1, no. 2 (1980), 20.

⁴² “A briefe Relation of the severall Voyages,” *op cit.*

⁴³ Guillermo Furlong, *Justo van Suerck y su carta sobre Buenos Aires, 1629* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Teoria, 1963).

⁴⁴ Raúl A. Molina “Los juegos de ‘truques’ y de ‘ajedrez’ se practicaban en grande escala en el Buenos Aires del 1600” *Historia* 3 (1956): 167-177

⁴⁵ Peter Boyd-Bowman, “Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies until 1600,” *HAHR* 56, no. 4 (November 1976), 600-602.

near centers of pre-conquest indigenous settlement, the indigenous population of the Río de la Plata basin was relatively more dispersed. According to Governor Diego de Góngora in 1622, Buenos Aires’ indigenous population was supplemented by Amerindians “from other nations” (Indians from a plurality of ethnic backgrounds), many of whom were from Brazil and all of whom were “*ladino* in the Spanish language.”⁴⁶

City	African population (% of total)	Indigenous population (% of total)	European/Creole population (% of total)	Year	Source
Buenos Aires	750 (48)	350 (23)	450 (29)	1605	Besio Moreno, <i>Buenos Aires, puerto del Río de la Plata</i>
Potosí	6,000 (5)	76,000 (65)	35,000 (30)	1611	Mangan, <i>Trading Roles</i> , 43
La Plata	1300 (33)	n/d	2600 (67)	1630	Wolff, “Esclavitud y trafico de negros,” 44

Table 1.1 Population estimates of select Upper Peruvian and Platine cities in the seventeenth century

Note: Buenos Aires population estimates are based only on estimates of “stable” populations, and do not take into account influxes of African slaves and indigenous laborers, etc. when the port was at its busiest. This figure appears to only reflect the urban population—even after devastating epidemic diseases, reductions in the district of Buenos Aires counted nearly 700 indigenous residents around 1620. (González Lebrero, *La pequeña aldea*, 56) These imprecise categories take into account individuals of mixed ethnic backgrounds (the European/Creole category inevitably included many of mixed European and indigenous heritage, while the “African” category included American-born individuals of African descent and individuals of mixed African and European heritage) and are meant only to provide a crude estimate of the size of the African and African-descended populations.

⁴⁶ AGI Charcas 27, R. 11, N. 154, fol. 6r, “Carta de Don Diego de Góngora a S.M.,” 20 mayo 1622.

Like any port city, Buenos Aires' population swelled when slave vessels docked. Ship crews spent an average of six months in port to realize commercial operations, effect repairs, load provisions, and complete Atlantic trade circuits, though some vessels remained for a year or longer. The arrival of vessels also brought "many Indians from the province of Tucumán" to the port, who were contracted from *encomenderos* in that region to convey goods and people to the interior.⁴⁷ In addition to introducing thousands of Africans to the Río de la Plata, slaving vessels facilitated the illegal emigration of countless European and European-descended individuals. Men who could not afford passage or who faced temporary unemployment often joined the crews of slaving vessels and abandoned ship once in their desired ports, reminding us that for many, being "a man of the sea" was not a vocation, but rather a stopgap.⁴⁸

Many of the so-called "passengers" who traveled on slave ships had shares in the captives on board. Their exact permanence is unknown, but most likely remained in the Americas long enough to oversee the sale of their captives. In 1603, a royal scribe noted that all five of the *armadores* (investors) on the slave ship *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, as well as eight of the vessel's original crew, were not on board when the vessel set sail one month after its initial landing. However, eight individuals who had not arrived on the ship, including "four Portuguese

⁴⁷González Lebrero, *La pequeña aldea*, 158. González Lebrero recounts that in 1603, Juan Martín de Ugarte, shipmaster of the vessel *Santa Catalina*, encharged two local residents (presumably investors in the slave voyage) with gathering a substantial list of items before raising sail for the African coast that included provisions, "gifts" for Angolan officials, and specie. These consisted of 30 *quintales* of hardtack and 3 *quintales* "for my table, pilot [and the other officers]," 10 heads of cattle, tallow, two dozen hides "to line stores," one dozen sacks for storing provisions, 4 bushels of beans, one half bushel of garbanzos, lentils, 3 pigs, 6 rams, 2 calves "to take to the Senhor Governor [of Angola], 2 dozen cheeses "for when one cannot cook," garlic, onions, oil, vinegar, 400 tallow candles "of a good wick" for use on the ship, a barrel of wine, conserves, and some coins to pay the crew. As González Lebrero notes, with the exception of the oil, all of these items would have been produced locally. Ibid., 158-160; on Indians from Tucumán, see "Carta anua de la Prov^a del Paraguay Chile y Tucuman Año de 1690," fol. 21v.

⁴⁸ On men signing up as soldiers or sailors on the Indies fleets to emigrate to the Americas illegally, see Pablo E. Pérez-Mallaina, *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*, trans. Carla Rahn Phillips (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 38-41 and Auke Pieter Jacobs, "Legal and Illegal Emigration from Seville, 1550-1650," in Ida Altman and James Horn, "*To Make America*": *European Emigration in the Early Modern Period* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 75-79.

passengers,” had embarked in Buenos Aires.⁴⁹ Some exercised professions directly related to slave labor or overland transport once in the Río de la Plata. For instance, Basque sailor Pedro de Arestigui, who arrived on a corsair’s ship that made an “emergency landing” in Buenos Aires, found employment as an overseer on the *chacara* (farm) of a local resident, where his duties were to “make the slaves work the land and [to] care for the cattle.” It is not known what sort of booty he and his crew had captured, but given the vessel’s prior ports of call in the Cape Verde archipelago and in various spots on the coast of Brazil, we might suspect that Arestigui’s days on the *chacara* were not his first experiences with Africans.

Originally a fisherman in northern Spain, Andre de Rizo spent nearly a year in the Río de la Plata after he was barred from re-embarking on the frigate on which he had arrived. Rizo made two trips between Buenos Aires and Santa Fe driving packs of mules and horses on behalf of merchants, earning nearly 600 *pesos* (a handsome sum that suggests that the people or goods conveyed with the livestock were quite valuable), until he was able to board a vessel bound for Spain. The ready employment that these men found in lines of work related to the slave economy is indicative of slavery’s omnipresence throughout the region and of the high demand for labor.⁵⁰

A few Crown officials complained that the slave trade facilitated “Portuguese” (crypto-Jewish) immigration and drained the Empire of silver. According to a lawyer for the Royal Treasury named Mateo Sánchez, so many Portuguese “suspect in the faith” entered the port of Buenos Aires via slaving vessels that “one could say that with each black a Portuguese enters and if one enters who does not bring blacks he [associates] with another who brings them and they put

⁴⁹ AGI Esc 892A, fol. 19r-32r, “Testimonio [de Gaspar de Azevedo, escribano de registros y de hacienda],” Buenos Aires, 10 octubre 1619.

⁵⁰ AGI Esc 1028B, fol. 16r-22v, fol. 22v-29r, “Fechos en razon de haver benido a este puertto el navio nombrado Sanctta Agueda del puerto de Buenos Ayres prov^a del Piru capⁿ y maestre Ygnacio de Maleo,” Santander, 1659. On Portuguese “passengers” to Havana finding temporary work on rural properties, see Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 117.

blacks [in his care].” Once these Portuguese sold the captives they transported, Sánchez alleged, legislation to ensure that they returned to their home ports was never enforced, and they remained in the Peruvian viceroyalty indefinitely. Sánchez proposed prematurely terminating Spain’s *asiento* contract with Pedro Gomez Reynel. Though Reynel was authorized to sell licenses to introduce 600 captives to Buenos Aires annually, Sánchez pointed out that he had introduced 1,828 slaves in the preceding two years alone. The silver he was paid for his captives, in turn, did not return to the Iberian Peninsula, but was paid to Dutch and English merchants on the coast of Brazil in exchange for cheap imported goods. To support his claim that the slave trade was merely a cover for diverting Andean silver, Sánchez discussed one slave vessel, *El Profeta Jonás*, that disembarked captives in Buenos Aires and loaded “more than 200,000 pesos [worth of] silver and gold.”⁵¹ Warnings like Sánchez’s probably influenced the Spanish Crown’s 1602 decisions to prohibit or severely curtail the entry of African slaves to the port in subsequent years, but these decrees did little to stem the arrival of slaves or Portuguese migrants to the region.

Although Potosí was a major center for trans-regional commerce, it does not appear to have been home to many of the Portuguese who passed through the Río de la Plata. About 135 Portuguese were registered residents of Potosí, comprising slightly more than half of the city’s European-descended non-Spanish population and a relative minority in a city whose population

⁵¹ AGI Charcas 45, s/n, “Avisos que a su magestad da Mateo Sanchez vezino de Buenos Ayres y defensor de la Real Hazienda deste puerto que es en el Rio de la Plata,” Buenos Aires, 28 noviembre 1602. Sánchez’s words were echoed in a number of official correspondence and edicts, including a royal cedula of 17 October 1602, which stated that the slave trade was the primary conduit for the entry of Portuguese “New Christians” and “Judaizers” into the Indies and, particularly, the viceroyalty of Peru. See real cedula de 17 octubre 1602 quoted in Boleslao Lewin, *El judío en la época colonial: Un aspecto de la historia rioplatense* (Buenos Aires: Colégio Libre de Estudios Superiores, 1939), 52.

According to my database, more than double the number of slaves Sánchez cited, at the very minimum, entered the port between 1600 and 1602. The argument that the slave trade was merely a cover for obtaining Andean silver is often repeated in literature on the Portuguese in the region; such a claim is often couched in the presumption that the African presence in the Americas was limited to tropical plantations and urban centers.

surpassed 100,000. The number of Portuguese in that city appears to have declined throughout the seventeenth century, a mark of the effects of government repression and declining silver production. But if the Portuguese presence in the silver city of Potosí was relatively smaller, it was much more substantial in places like Tucumán and Buenos Aires. Córdoba's registered Portuguese population counted 28 individuals out of a total of about 100 European *vecinos*, while in Jujuy, a key point for the transfer of people and merchandise from carts in the open plains to mules for the mountain passages, Portuguese outnumbered Spanish *vecinos*.⁵²

Some of the Portuguese migrants to the Río de la Plata accumulated a substantial fortune through participation in the slave trade. Diego Suarez, a native of the Alentejo, arrived in Buenos Aires around 1625 as a servant of Governor Francisco de Céspedes. In Buenos Aires, he married a locally-born woman of Portuguese parentage and, as part of her dowry, received agricultural plots “[through which he] worked and sustained” his family (we might imagine with some form of enslaved labor) and other property totaling nearly 1,000 pesos. In 1633, Suarez had served as shipmaster on a *patache* that brought 40 enslaved Africans from Rio de Janeiro to Buenos Aires.⁵³ Antonio del Pino, by 1643 the father-in-law of Manuel Rivero, owned seven slaves, a farm that produced foodstuffs, and an estancia where over 500 heads of cattle and 200 sheep grazed. He financed or personally trafficked captives to Potosí several times in the 1620s and 1630s; each of his four daughters with his Portuguese wife were married to men like Rivero who also exercised

⁵² Mateus Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, 96-97.

⁵³ “Registro y desarme,” 156; on the voyage of the patache *El Rosario*, see AGI Charcas 123, s/n, “Expedientes de revocacion por el Tribunal del Consulado de Lima de las licencias concedidas por Buenos Aires a navios de registros [1661-1690]”; AGI Esc 868A, Pieza 1, fol. 61r-84r, “Certificacion de Antonio de Linares depositario General de la Ciudad de la Trinidad en q zertifica los navios q an entrado desde el año 1612 asta este de 1639 asi de arrivada como de aviso lo que trujeron y se remato en almoneda por de su magd y entero en la RI Caja de este puerto,” Buenos Aires, 1639.

professions related to the slave trade.⁵⁴

In addition to Portuguese who settled in the region permanently, a number of colonial elites based in Angola circulated between Buenos Aires, West Central Africa, and sometimes the Spanish Caribbean. Domingos Fernandes, a resident of Luanda, landowner, and diplomat in the Kongo province of Soyo, owned a vessel, *Nuestra Señora de Nazaren*, on which he landed in Buenos Aires as a “passenger” in January 1621.⁵⁵ Baltasar Rodrigues Serpa, a military captain and “factor who oversaw copper mines” owned and captained a vessel that landed in Buenos Aires in 1605 (in addition to directing at least one voyage to Cartagena in 1617).⁵⁶ Gaspar Álvares, a slave trader-turned Jesuit novitiate who died a mere ten days after he was admitted into the society, sent slaves to the Río de la Plata on a number of voyages, though it is not known whether he ever traveled with the captives. From his will and testament, drawn up in Luanda in 1623, it is evident that he had extensive investments in the South Atlantic slave trade. Álvares instructed his executors to consult an account book in his “big desk” that would indicate “the large sum of money that I have sent via Brazil and the Río de la Plata...and from which I am owed a lot of *fazenda* (commercial goods).”⁵⁷

Many more Portuguese migrants were of a middling or lower economic status, if no less

⁵⁴ “Registro y desarme,” 163. All of these men resemble the Bahian “peripatetic commercial agents, ship captains, and shipmasters who functioned both as agents and as merchants in their own right, and the highly mobile pack traders and peddlers who distributed goods to the Reconcavo and the markets of the interior on consignment and on their own accounts,” described in Rae Flory and David Grant Smith, “Bahian Merchants and Planters in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries,” *HAHR* 58, no. 4, (1978), 573-574.

⁵⁵ Heintze, *Fontes* 1, 88.

⁵⁶ On Serpa, see Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 92; for a discussion of Luanda elites in the Spanish Caribbean, see *Ibid.*, 81-92.

⁵⁷ “Testamento de Gaspar Álvares,” 23 fevereiro 1623, in Brásio, *MMA VII*, 89-95. On Gaspar Alvares, see Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 351 and Ilídio do Amaral, *O consulado de Paulo Dias de Novais: Angola no último quartel do século XVI e primeiro do século XVII* (Lisbon: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 2000), 113-115.

involved in activities related to the slave trade. Miguel Borjes, a native of Lisbon, had arrived in Buenos Aires in 1595 on a registered slave ship and was employed as a schoolteacher in Santiago del Estero in 1607. The only property that a blind resident of Buenos Aires named Juan Rodríguez had to declare was a “*mulequilla*” (young enslaved girl) whom he “led by the hand to beg for alms.”⁵⁸ Gaspar Cardoso, a thirty-year-old native (*natural*) of Porto, arrived in Buenos Aires in 1624 on the slave ship *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*. A swordsmith by training, Cardoso’s first American port of call was Pernambuco. Once in Brazil, he enlisted as a sailor on at least one slaving voyage between Angola and Rio de Janeiro. Cardoso told Spanish officials that he had left Rio de Janeiro, the city in which he married around 1622, to work on another slaving voyage to Angola that planned to land in Buenos Aires because he had heard that “there is no one trained [as a swordsmith] in that city.” Cardoso had since commenced business in a “little house next to the convent of Santo Domingo” and hoped to “make enough in this port to buy a *muleque* (pre-adolescent boy) for [my] service.”⁵⁹ Cardoso’s testimony omitted a few details about his initial decision to sail for Pernambuco: namely, that he had been fleeing the Inquisition in Lisbon. Cardoso had appeared before the Lisbon tribunal in 1618 for his involvement in a weapons trading ring to Upper Guinea. Cardoso and other Lisbon artisans assembled and decorated short swords in their homes out of blades imported from Italy and Flanders. New Christian merchants then took

⁵⁸ “Registro y desarme,” 175; Lavallé, 127, 133; Mateus Ventura, *Portugueses no Peru*, 229

⁵⁹ AGI Esc 849A, Pieza 2, fol. 14v-15v, “Declaracion de Gaspar Cardoso,” Buenos Aires, 1 April 1624; fol. 60v-61v “lista de toda la gente blanca que viene en el dho navio...” Buenos Aires, 22 March 1624; fol. 173r-173v, “Testigo Gaspar Cardoso official espadero vino en el navio El Rrosario [*sic*],” Buenos Aires, 17 August 1624; fol. 173v-174r, “Auto del Licenciado Don Alonso Perez de Salazar,” Buenos Aires, 17 August 1624. ANTT, IL, libro 208, fol. 642r-642v; on the terciado ring, see Peter Mark and José da Silva Horta, *The Forgotten Diaspora: Jewish Communities in West Africa and the Making of the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 105; on New Christian networks in Senegambia and Upper Guinea, see also Toby Green, *The Rise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), esp. Ch 4-5. The merchants he was involved with were New Christians; Cardoso claimed that he was himself of Old Christian parentage.

the weapons to Upper Guinea, where they used them to buy slaves. Might he have fashioned similar weapons for sale in West Central Africa after his escape from the Iberian Peninsula? Cardoso was ultimately deported to Rio de Janeiro for reasons that are unclear (his relationship with the Inquisition Tribunal in Lisbon was not mentioned in the Buenos Aires investigation of the vessel on which he had arrived). Nonetheless, his story illustrates the interconnection of commercial networks in Lisbon, Upper Guinea, West Central Africa, Brazil, and the Río de la Plata.

Necessary to the Republic

If local officials sometimes complained about the omnipresence of Portuguese, they were reluctant to deport them. In 1606, a mandate from the Council of the Indies to expel resident Portuguese was rejected on the grounds that not only had many of them married locally and established families, but they also exercised professions that were vital to the sustenance of trade networks and daily life. According to Bishop Loyola, ejection of the Portuguese, “who have been in this land many years and work in mechanical trades and agriculture” would result in “the total destruction of this city.”⁶⁰ Buenos Aires’ town council, which itself counted a number of active slave traders among its members (such as Don Frances de Beaumont y Navarra, Fernando de Vargas, and Simon de Valdés, all of whom would later be implicated in a massive smuggling ring), similarly opposed the measure, asserting that “most of [the Portuguese]” occupied “useful and beneficial offices” and “the rest are farmers (*labradores*), and they sustain this republic.” The town council was reluctant to lose not only the military manpower needed in the case of an attack on the port by foreign enemies or “*indios de guerra*,” but also the trade in “fruits of the earth”—locally-

⁶⁰ “Carta del obispo Loyola” in Lewin, *El judío en la época colonial*, 81-82.

produced hides, grain, tallow, and other agricultural products, exchanged for slaves and merchandise—that sustained the port and to which the Portuguese were vital. Foreigners with special skills or occupied in particular trades were particularly welcome in the port. In the early seventeenth century, Governor Hernandarias de Saavedra spared a Portuguese blacksmith named Miguel Rodríguez from deportation because he was “established and at the service of the city.” Governor Saavedra adopted a similar position with respect to several Flemish men who were building a windmill, infrastructure that he observed “will be of much relief to this port.”⁶¹

The sustained flow of Portuguese migrants through Buenos Aires throughout the seventeenth century must be viewed in light of the “gaining momentum” of the persecution of Portuguese merchants by Inquisition tribunals in Cartagena and Lima and, relatedly, of the orientation of the slave trade towards the South Atlantic.⁶² Persecution in Spain and Portugal impelled a number of New Christians and those of “suspect faith,” like Cardoso, to migrate to Africa and the Americas.⁶³ Due to its distance from the nearest Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition (in Lima, some 3,000 miles away as the crow flies), the Río de la Plata was a particularly attractive place to settle. Indeed, relatively few individuals of questionable Catholic devotion who resided in the Río de la Plata or Tucumán appear to have been prosecuted.⁶⁴ Though the region lacked tribunals, local commissaries of the Inquisition were appointed in Buenos Aires

⁶¹ Susana R. Frías, *Portugueses en Buenos Aires*, 14-15, 30-31; on the Flemish men, see “Relacion de extranjeros en el Río de la Plata. Año 1607,” 160.

⁶² Quoted in Medina, 206-207. On Lima and Cartagena Inquisitions “gaining momentum” circa 1635 by targeting Portuguese/New Christian merchants, see Stuart B. Schwartz, “Panic in the Indies: The Portuguese Threat to the Spanish Empire, 1640–50,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 2, no. 1–2 (1993), 173-178.

⁶³ Ida Altman, “A New World in the Old: Local Society and Spanish Emigration to the Indies,” in Ida Altman and James Horn, *To Make America: European Immigration in the Early Modern Period* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 31; Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 128-130.

⁶⁴ “Carta del Procurador General de las Provincias del Río de la Plata y Paraguay, Capitan Manuel de Frias, al Rey, en que suplica se ponga inquisición en el Puerto de Buenos Ayres por las razones que expresa,” 3 febrero 1619, in Lewin, *El juicio en la época colonial*, 54-60.

and Santiago de Chile; in other towns, local bishops and other church authorities occasionally stepped in to enforce adherence to Catholic doctrine. Recognizing the flows of migrants from Brazil (where no regular tribunal functioned and where one Bahian clergyman wagered that as many as three quarters of the European residents were New Christians) to the Río de la Plata, Inquisition officials in Bahia and Buenos Aires maintained an active correspondence with one another.⁶⁵ The migration of Portuguese to the Río de la Plata was particularly pronounced when Inquisition visits to the Brazilian colony were conducted in 1591-93, 1618, and again in 1645 that largely inculpated New Christians. In April 1619, Bishop Francisco de Trejo reported that eight ships bearing a number of Portuguese passengers fleeing the Inquisition in Bahia had landed at Buenos Aires. Local authorities apprehended some of the prospective immigrants, imprisoned them, and ordered their deportation to Brazil. Franciscan friars posted bail on behalf of the prisoners and, along with local residents, offered shelter to the refugees until they were able to escape to the interior. Trejo even claimed that some clergy members presided over sham marriages between Portuguese immigrants and local women so that Portuguese would gain legal status within the port.⁶⁶

In 1640, the Audiencia of La Plata proposed establishing a small tribunal in Córdoba, a key trade hub in the interior, offering that the tribunal's salaries could be funded with the proceeds from taxes on slaves, yerba mate, mules, and cattle that passed through the local customs house. Though the Madrid official who responded agreed with the Audiencia that "many people of bad

⁶⁵ Anita Novinsky, *Inquisição: prisioneiros do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Expressão e Cultura, 2002), 22; Stuart B. Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) 177-192; Lewin, 61.

⁶⁶ José Toribio Medina, 215, quotation 161-162; also recounted in Seymour B. Liebman, *The Inquisitors and the Jews in the New World: Summaries of Procesos, 1500-1810, and Bibliographical Guide* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1974), 21 and Kevin Gordon, "Franciscan Friars and the Smuggling of Portuguese Jews: Resistance in Early 17th Century Buenos Aires," Unpublished conference paper based upon documents in Mario Saban, *Judíos Conversos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Distal, 1990-1993).

quality there reside, enter, and pass through,” and noted the region’s few Spanish settlements, he felt that establishing a tribunal that would primarily inculcate Portuguese was risky in light of the tensions between Spain and Portugal that followed Portuguese independence. Moreover, he “doubt[ed] very much” that the confiscations and fines of the accused would compensate for the cost of installing a tribunal in Córdoba because any potential convicts would be “of limited means” given the overall poverty of the region. Yet again, the limited means of most of the Portuguese who were active in the slave trade are highlighted.⁶⁷

Iberian Networks in the South Atlantic

Portuguese communities are often viewed as “closed microsocieties.” As Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert has written, Portuguese “formed closely knit neighborhoods in the various cities and ports where they settled” near trade stalls and docks. In Potosí, the so-called Portuguese neighborhood (*barrio portugués*) was “nestled between the markets of the central plaza and the mills and mine entrances flanking the Cerro Rico.” The Portuguese community in Mexico City “congregated in three blocks immediately behind the cathedral and the Plaza Mayor.” And in Seville, the Portuguese population was concentrated among four parishes in the city center.⁶⁸ But in the maritime peripheries and interior provinces of the early modern Iberian world, physical barriers between Spanish and Portuguese were less pronounced. Aside from a handful of studies of Spanish communities in a given locale, or references to elite blended families, such as the Sás

⁶⁷ “Carta del Conde de Chinchón a la Audiencia de la Plata,” Sevilla, 29 septiembre 1641, in Medina, *El tribunal del Santo Oficio*, 211-214. On the middling status of many of those who trafficked captives and eventually settled in the Spanish Caribbean, see Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 106-118.

⁶⁸ Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea*, 52-53 and *Ibid.*, “La Nación among the Nations: Portuguese and Other Maritime Trading Diasporas in the Atlantic, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” in *Atlantic Diasporas: Jews, Conversos, and Crypto-Jews in the Age of Mercantilism, 1500-1800*, ed. Richard L. Kagan and Philip D. Morgan (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 88.

of Rio de Janeiro, scholars have largely elided collaboration between Spaniards and Portuguese in early modern trade networks as well as the physical presence of Spaniards in Portugal, Brazil, and Angola.⁶⁹

Far from relying on Portuguese commercial agents to move locally-produced goods or acquire captives, Spanish residents of the Río de la Plata traveled to other Iberian port cities to form new trade partnerships of their own. In 1610, a Castilian named Alonso de Salinas sailed to Rio de Janeiro on behalf of his uncle and Buenos Aires' royal treasurer, Simón de Valdez. Salinas carried various commercial documents, including letters of credit and payment (*cartas de credito y abono*) addressed to the governor general of Brazil, Francisco de Sousa, and a representative of the Company of Jesus, Mateo de Acosta Amorim. In the letters, Valdez promised Rio traders that any goods they wished to consign to his nephew would be "well treated and well received" in Buenos Aires. Indicating how crucial reputation and interpersonal relationships were to early modern business transactions, though at first no traders were willing to entrust Salinas with merchandise because he was single and "not a known person in the city," his uncle's good name induced several individuals to consign goods to him. In 1611, Salinas fled two vessels to Buenos Aires bearing 79 Guinea "*piesas*," merchandise, and construction materials. Valdez ensured his partners that when the ships arrived in Buenos Aires, the shipmaster would break the masts (to aid in the deception that the vessel was in distress) and fire one musket shot for each slave on board. Upon hearing the musket shots, Valdez would determine how many captives he would have to find hiding places for and thus avoid paying duties on the slaves. Though his Rio investors initiated a lawsuit against him for failing to send the returns from their slaving venture, his reputation among

⁶⁹ Vilardaga, "São Paulo na órbita," discusses blended Spanish-Portuguese marriages in São Paulo and the links to the Río de la Plata. See also Tito Livio Ferreira, "O elemento espanhol na capitania de São Vicente," *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo* 69 (1971): 151-166. On the Sá family, see Boxer, *Salvador de Sá* and Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes*.

other Portuguese had evidently not been soured.⁷⁰ Just a few years later, Lisbon merchant João de Argomedo loaned Valdez 10,200 *reales* because he had “heard several times that they were friends with Xorxe Lopes Correa,” a fellow Lisbon *vecino*.⁷¹ Valdez was not the lone Spanish commercial agent in Portuguese territory. In a letter to one of his correspondents, he reported that a fellow Castilian merchant, Hernando de Rivero Mondragon, owed so many debts to creditors in Bahia that locals impounded his vessel and its cargo of hides when he arrived in the Brazilian port in 1615. Upset by the loss of his merchandise, Mondragon denounced the “evil Portuguese” to the governor of the Río de la Plata when he returned to Buenos Aires. Valdez disagreed with Mondragon’s accusations, remarking that the Portuguese in Bahia “have always shown me many graces.”⁷²

A number of Spaniards appeared as mariners and “passengers on the rosters of slaving voyages,” though they were often reticent to reveal much about their roles in the commercial aspects of the voyage. When questioned by local authorities, Martin de Herriz, the son of “Simon Herriz,” a Castilian *vecino*, revealed that he had left Buenos Aires to “seek a living” around 1620, “when all the ships departed for Angola.” Herriz insisted that he left the ship while it was docked in the Luanda harbor only “to hear mass.”⁷³ When seeking authorization in 1634 to marry Bárbola de Pimentera in Buenos Aires, Triana native Francisco de los Ríos testified that he had arrived in

⁷⁰ AGI Esc 880A, Pieza 11, fol. 134v-146r, “Provança del Braçil contra el tesorero Simon de Valdez,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 febrero 1612.

⁷¹ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 5, fol. 87r-90v, “Testigo Juan de Argomedo,” Lisbon, 5 April 1619. Argomedo partnered with Angolan governor Manuel Pereira (1607-1611) prior to the latter’s departure for Angola and financed slave voyages to the Spanish Caribbean. See Caldeira, “Angola and the Seventeenth-Century South Atlantic Slave Trade,” 126.

⁷² AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 5, fol. 465r-468r, “Carta de Simon de Valdez a Gaspar de Azevedo escribano de registros y hacienda real buenos ayres,” Bahia, 30 septiembre 1615. Mondragon appeared as the owner of two slave vessels, *NS de Monserrate*, which brought captives from Angola, and *San Christobal*, which brought captives from Bahia in 1612 and 1614, respectively. See AGI Esc 880A, Pieza 10, “Contra Hernando de Rivero Mondragon,” and *Ibid.*, Pieza 1, fol. 5r-7v, “Testimonio de Pedro Gutierrez, teniente del gobernador,” Buenos Aires, 16 julio 1616.

⁷³ AGI Esc 849A, fol. 312v-313v, “Testigo Martin Herriz,” Buenos Aires, 22 agosto 1624.

Buenos Aires in 1619 as a young boy in the company of “a man who came from Angola, named ‘the Castilian,’” likely as his servant.⁷⁴

The travels and transatlantic connections presented in this chapter thus far have focused on males. But if the women of Buenos Aires did not often traverse the Atlantic on slaving voyages (though they may first have arrived in the city as “passengers” on slave vessels), they embarked goods for sale in Angola and Brazil, extended credit, and of course took their returns in captives. One “Señora Doña Blanca” consigned foodstuffs to sell in Angola to a trader named Pedro Yañes Palos. While Palos was 280 leagues at sea, storms flooded the ship and forced him to divert his course to Rio de Janeiro. Palos lamented to his correspondent in Buenos Aires, Diego de Vega, that he would have to sell Doña Blanca’s “*quartos*” (a unit of measurement referring to agricultural products) in Rio de Janeiro “even though the profits will not be very great” because he feared that the goods would be damaged on the voyage to Angola. Nonetheless, Palos estimated that the returns would yield enough for her to purchase “one *pieça*.”⁷⁵

Other women in Buenos Aires handled business in conjunction with or on behalf of their husbands, who were often absent from the port. A Portuguese resident of Buenos Aires named Maria Leal independently managed affairs while her husband, Antonio del Pino, accompanied a group of captives to Potosí. Her son-in-law, Manuel Rivero, wrote to inform her that one “Thomas Ruiz [Rodriguez?], who is the one who owes your grace money” had just arrived in Rio de Janeiro on a ship from Angola. This may have been the same “Thomas Rodriguez” who captained a vessel that landed 278 Angolan captives in Buenos Aires in 1605.⁷⁶ Pending instructions from Leal,

⁷⁴ MBD, Legajo II, exp. 5, 4-II-1634, 121.

⁷⁵ AGI Esc 880B, fol. 74r-“[Carta de Pedro Yanes Palos] a Diego de Vega,” Rio de Janeiro, 25 noviembre 1620.

⁷⁶ The frigate was named *Nuestra Señora de la Salvación* and landed in Buenos Aires on February 6, 1605. AGI Charcas 123, s/n, “Certificazion de los negros que han entrado en Bs Ayres desde el año de 97 hasta el de 607= de permision conzedida a los asentistas Pedro Gomz Reynel y Gonzalo Baez Cotiño”; AGI Charcas 38, “Testimonios de todos los negros q an entrado por este puerto de Buenos Ayres desde el año de 1597 hasta el presente de 1606 y

Rivero promised that he would collect the money from Ruiz but believed that Ruiz would soon be “going to your land.” Additionally, Rivero told his mother-in-law that a correspondent in Bahia named Manuel Jorxe, to whom they had consigned hides, had divided the cargo among various ships and that confided that if the ships with the returns arrived first, she should “do with [them] what appears best to you and what Dominga [her twelve-year-old-daughter/his betrothed] wants.”⁷⁷

Further emphasizing the overlap between Spanish and Portuguese maritime routes in the South Atlantic, a limited number of individuals in Buenos Aires appear to have been sent as convicts to Angola. In the 1610s, several town council notaries and a sheriff who ran afoul of a group of influential royal officials, allegedly because they authored a *memorial* denouncing the smuggling activities of the latter, were imprisoned and stripped of their fortunes and property. A few were even banished to serve in the Portuguese military fortification on the Kwanza River in Angola at Massangano. According to Doña Ana Navarrete, the widow of one of the deportees who sought remuneration, deportation to Angola was akin to a death sentence “because it is a very unhealthy land.” Her husband was reported to have died soon after his arrival on the African coast. Diego de Vega and the other Portuguese based in the Río de la Plata had allegedly written a letter to the military captains of Angola depicting her husband, a scribe, as “the worst enemy of their nation” and stressed that Ramón must not be allowed to return alive “because he would impede their trade and profits.” One ship’s pilot of unclear origin, identified only as “Minaia [Minaya],” was also deported to Massangano on the same occasion and was said to have sailed for the Netherlands sometime thereafter, vowing to avenge his unjust banishment from the port by

veynte y uno de março de dho año por cuenta de los contratos de Pero Gomez Reynel y Juan Rodriguez Coutino," Buenos Aires, 1606.

⁷⁷ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 9, fol. 90r-94v, “Carta de Manuel Rivero a Maria Leal,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 noviembre 1620.

working to “turn [Buenos Aires] over to the Dutch.” The practice of sending convicts from Buenos Aires to Angola underscores both the Portuguese need for manpower to maintain its territories in Angola and the regularity of maritime traffic between the Río de la Plata and West Central Africa.⁷⁸

The End of the “Iberian Union”?

The slave trade to Buenos Aires was at its height when a coup placed João IV at the helm of an independent Portugal in December 1640, thus ending the “Iberian Union” (see Chapter II). Portugal’s independence initiated several decades of border wars on the Iberian Peninsula. Independence from Spain enjoyed a modicum of popular support, but the most pressing motivation for separation was Spain’s economic decline, compounded by a decrease in silver production and the persecution of Portuguese and New Christian merchants. Tellingly, much of the peninsular Portuguese nobility and commercial class were divided over secession from Spain, as many did not want to lose investments in Spain and American colonies, but others supported secession as a way to open new markets in northern Europe closed off due to Spanish conflict in the Netherlands.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ AGI Esc 848C, “El Señor Fiscal de S.M. con Antonio del Pino portugues s^{re} denuncia de varias piezas de esclavos y mercaderias,” La Plata, 1621; Testigo Miguel del Corro, 19 diciembre 1619, fol. 90r-92v; Charcas 52, R. 3, N. 67, “Carta de Doña Ana Navarrete a S.M.,” Buenos Aires, 19 mayo 1621; LL, Latin American mss., Argentina, 1627-1809, Box 1, Doc. 1, “Carta de Fray Juan de Vergara a S.M.,” Santiago de Chile, 8 diciembre 1627. On the use of convict labor in Angola, see Timothy J. Coates, *Convicts and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonization in the Portuguese Empire, 1550-1755* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); Mariana Candido, “Transatlantic Links: The Benguela-Bahia Connections, 1700-1850” in Ana Lucia Araujo, *Paths of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Interactions, Identities, and Images* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2011). On the transport of convicts on slave ships that departed from the Iberian Peninsula and convicts’ possible arrival in the Spanish Caribbean, see Wheat, “Afro-Portuguese Maritime World,” 24-27.

⁷⁹ David Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 35–66; Stuart B. Schwartz, “The Economy of the Portuguese Empire,” in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 31-32.

The Council of the Indies debated how to treat Spanish America's substantial population of Portuguese, particularly in maritime trade hubs. The Viceroy of Peru, Don Pedro de Toledo y Leyva (Marquis de Mancera), warned of a possible joint Dutch-Portuguese attack on Buenos Aires and, in 1643, ordered men and widows "of the Portuguese nation" residing in Buenos Aires as well as in the inland port cities of Corrientes and Santa Fe to register with local authorities and to manifest their weapons. On the orders of Governor Gerónimo Luís de Cabrera, in October of that year eighteen Portuguese *vecinos* of Buenos Aires were imprisoned and temporarily deported to Córdoba and Chile, and many of their possessions were confiscated.⁸⁰ One of the deportees, Ambrosio Pereira, described that he had been treated "like a slave," loaded into an "old and poorly equipped cart" in chains, along with eight or nine other men. During his three years' absence from his rural properties in Buenos Aires, Pereira estimated that the losses to his personal fortune were around 1400 pesos, a substantial sum.⁸¹ A Spanish "dealer of merchandise" reported that he had been conducting business in Bahia when he learned of the rebellion; according to him, the property of all Spaniards present in Bahia who were not married to Portuguese women was confiscated and the men were forced to dig and carry water to the fortifications.⁸² Though Portuguese independence challenged the bonds of the Río de la Plata with the South Atlantic, it ultimately did not break them.

Prior to the expulsion of the Dutch from Luanda in 1648, a number of Portuguese interests sought to re-instate the slave trade with Spanish America. Capuchin missionaries in Kongo sought

⁸⁰ Schwartz, "Panic in the Indies;" Rodrigo Ceballos, "'Arribadas portuguesas': a participação luso-brasileiro na constituição social de Buenos Aires, c. 1580-c.1650" (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2008).

⁸¹ AGI Esc 892B, Pieza 2, fol. 1r-2v, "Querella en Residenz^a Ambrosio Perera vez^o de Buenos Ayres q^a El g^{of} Don Ger^{mo} Luis de Cabrera," 19 febrero 1647.

⁸² AGI Esc 892B, Pieza 20, fol. 33r-39r, "Jorge de Aquaron y Pedro Sanchez Rrondon en su nombre q^a El governador Don Geronimo Luis de Cabrera," 13 diciembre 1643.

a license from the King of Spain to transport “blacks to the Indies of Castile” in exchange for bringing missionaries to Kongo on the trip back.⁸³ The Crown “with respect to the inconvenience that results to the vassals of this Kingdom,” authorized slave vessels from Cabo Verde, Angola, and São Tomé to sail for “the Indies of Castile.”⁸⁴

Salvador Correia de Sá sought to re-invigorate the slave trade between Angola and Buenos Aires, which had dwindled during Dutch occupation (1641-1648). There is some evidence of small slave shipments from Brazil during this period to fund the restoration of Pernambuco (see Chapter II). In 1649, Sá, who remained in Angola as governor, sent “a patache to Buenos Aires, in conformity with the permission of Your Majesty, to see whether the Castilians permit trade.”⁸⁵ The vessel, *San Pedro*, disembarked at least 303 “pieces of slaves.”⁸⁶ The captain of the patache, veteran trader Francisco Fernandez Barroca, was sent back to Angola with letters from the governor of the Río de la Plata, Jacinto de Laríz, promising that any slave vessels sent to the port would be “well received.” But on the vessel’s return in 1652, Governor Laríz seized the captives, imprisoned some of the crew and passengers, including a Capuchin friar, and had Barroca hanged, claiming that he had foiled a Portuguese plot to seize Buenos Aires.⁸⁷

⁸³ “Transporte de negros do Congo para as Indias de Castela,” 19 febrero 1647, in Brásio, *MMA*, v. 10, 18.

⁸⁴ Roquinaldo Amaral Ferreira, “Transforming Atlantic Slaving: Trade, Warfare and Territorial Control in Angola, 1650-1800” (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2003); “Alvará sobre a escravatura africana,” 1 junho 1647, in *MMA* v.10., 28-29.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Maria Luísa Esteves, “Para o estudo das relações comerciais de Angola com as Índias de Castela e Génova no período da Restauração (1640-1668),” *Studia* 51 (1992), 30-31.

⁸⁶ AGI, Charcas 123, fol. 20r, “Expedientes de revocación de licencias a navíos de registro,” Buenos Aires, 12 June 1682.

⁸⁷ AGI Charcas 3, s/n, Consulta del Consejo de Indias, “Da quenta a V. Mgd de lo que escreve el Presidente de la Audiencia de los charcas en la carta inclussa, sobre diferentes cossas tocantes al Puerto de Buenos ayres, y proçedimientos del Gov^o D. Jacinto de Lariz,” Madrid, 20 abril 1654; “Carta do vigário geral de Angola a El-Rei D. João IV,” Luanda, 10 maio 1653, in *MMA* v. 11, 300-304; the incident is also recounted in Esteves, 32; Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola, 1602-1686*.

In the 1650s, Portugal's Overseas Council resolved that vessels from Spanish possessions in the Indies were welcome in Angola, under the pretext that they purchased slaves with silver and not merchandise.⁸⁸ As Maria Luisa Esteves has concluded, a royal order of 1651 permitted ships that left from the Spanish Indies to anchor in Angola but not those that came directly from Spain, since peninsular ships would compete with Portuguese vessels.⁸⁹ Later in the 1650s, Portugal's Overseas Council concluded that ships from Spanish possessions that traded in Angola should bring silver as well as "hides, indigo, and other goods with which the vassals of Your Majesty trade, because this way [trade with] ships from the Indies will be facilitated."⁹⁰ Río de la Plata governor Pedro de Baigorri Ruiz (1653-1660) reassured the Spanish monarch that residents in Buenos Aires purchased slaves on credit "in exchange for hides and tallow," adding that the abundance of those products in the Río de la Plata made it easy for local residents to acquire slave labor.⁹¹

Rumors occasionally spread about foreign attacks but rarely gained steam, and locals were often no more willing to expel the Portuguese than they had been before the separation of the monarchies. The Council of the Indies reported learning of a Portuguese plot to capture the fort of Buenos Aires. According to their informant, the Portuguese would disguise warships as slave vessels by loading them with "blacks from the Kingdom of Angola," tapping in to the local "necessity of black slaves." The Council worried, moreover, that an attack would be difficult to

⁸⁸ AHU, CU, cx. 5, doc. 67; copied also in Esteves, "Para o estudo," 33.

⁸⁹ Esteves, "Para o estudo," 34.

⁹⁰ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 40-41.

⁹¹ AGI Charcas 28, R. 7, N. 62, "Carta del gobernador D. Pedro Baigorri a S.M.," Buenos Aires, 6 December 1653.

repel given the “few Spaniards and *naturales* (Indians) that reside in those provinces.”⁹² But if the Council worried that Buenos Aires’ thirst for slaves would lead to its ultimate demise, one unnamed Spanish informant who had served for “23 years in the militia in Brazil and in the Kingdom of Angola,” doubted that Luso-Brazilians would attempt an attack on Buenos Aires. As their informant explained, most Portuguese were already in Pernambuco fighting the Dutch; those who were not could ill afford to leave “their houses and lands, given that every day they [the Dutch] burn their property.” Residents of São Vicente, the Brazilian captaincy closest to Buenos Aires, were also not a great threat, as they were busy ensuring that “the Indian [slaves] that they have acquired do not revolt and kill their wives and children.” The slave vessel sent by Angolan governor Salvador Correa de Sá was hardly a threat to local security or Spanish silver stores, given that many of the slaves and merchandise were for “debtors and relatives of his wife” in Tucumán and were principally distributed to “some needy women” and local convents.⁹³ Echoing the nonchalance of the Council’s anonymous informant, Río de la Plata governor Pedro Baigorri Ruiz averred that the Portuguese [men] residing in his province were loyal vassals and that many were “married *vecinos* with creole (American-born) children and grandchildren.”⁹⁴

Although Spanish passage to Portuguese territories was technically circumscribed after the restoration of Portuguese independence, and vice versa, Spanish and Portuguese alike continued to circulate throughout the Iberian South Atlantic. The case of Pedro Marin Flores exemplifies how Spanish and Portuguese military, commercial, and familial networks remained

⁹² AGI Charcas 3, “Consulta del Consejo de Indias a S.M.: Da quenta a V.M. de las noticias que se an tenido de los Navios que se previenen en Lisboa para yr a tomar el Puerto de Buenos ayres, y de lo q con esta ocaasion conbendra ordenar,” Madrid, 6 abril 1650.

⁹³ AGI Charcas 3, s/n, “Consulta del Consejo de Indias: Da quenta a V. Mgd de lo que escribe el Presidente de la Audiencia de los charcas en la carta inlussa, sobre diferentes cossas tocantes al Puerto de Buenos ayres, y proçedimientos del Gov^o D. Jacinto de Lariz,” Madrid, 20 abril 1654.

⁹⁴ AGI Charcas 28, R. 7, n.62 “Carta del gobernador D. Pedro Baigorri a S.M.,” Buenos Aires, 6 diciembre 1653.

intertwined following the end of the Iberian Union. Marin Flores first appeared in known records in 1669, when his mother, Doña Margarita González de Escobar, lodged a civil complaint in Buenos Aires against Manuel Duarte, a Portuguese slave trader. González de Escobar explained that her son Pedro, a native of Buenos Aires of Castilian parentage, had been an *alferes* (ensign) in Luanda for years and had finally managed to secure passage to return to Buenos Aires on a vessel owned by Duarte and Manuel Quaresma, the *San Miguel*.

González de Escobar alleged that Duarte anchored the *San Miguel* in the southern Brazilian port of Santos under the pretext of careening the vessel for repairs and forced her son, “two little slave boys”—his only earthly property—as well as a fellow Spanish soldier to disembark, leaving them adrift in a small canoe. González de Escobar believed that her son and his country mate had been marooned because they were vassals of the Spanish Crown and would betray the true motive of the *San Miguel*’s “emergency landing”: to sell hundreds of African slaves in Buenos Aires. Several crewmembers of the vessel in question testified that Pedro Marin and Manuel Duarte had known each other from military service in Angola—Duarte had been a “*capitão mor*” in charge of one of the military presidios—and that Duarte had offered Marin passage on the *San Miguel*. According to sailor Juan de Barrios, Marin had persuaded the pilot to ground the vessel in Brazil because, “in Buenos Aires they do not have tar or lumber,” contradicting Duarte’s orders to proceed directly to Buenos Aires. Other witnesses stated that Duarte did not want Marin to come to the port because, as a “Castilian,” “he would give away what they were doing and they would not be able to conduct business” in Buenos Aires (one witness claimed to have seen Duarte threaten

Marin with a knife). Still other crewmembers claimed that Marin had disembarked in Santos with his two slaves voluntarily. Duarte was eventually acquitted of the allegations.⁹⁵

Regardless of the motives behind his sojourn in Brazil, Pedro Marin Flores eventually appeared in Buenos Aires two years later as a passenger on the smack *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción y Almas*, from Santos, accompanied by his wife, Maria; mother-in-law, Luisa de Gusman; and a “*mulata*” woman named Custodia and her three sons, Juan, Anastasio, and Antonio. Marin, now aged 24, petitioned to be allowed to disembark in Buenos Aires with his family and slaves. Marin alleged that he had been kidnapped by a Portuguese man named Antonio de Castro de Sousa while playing on the beach as a youth. Sosa took Marin to Rio de Janeiro and, eventually, to Angola, where he served as a soldier and *alferes* in a presidio for six years and three months before his ill-fated attempted journey to Buenos Aires on board the *San Miguel*. While in Brazil, Marin married a Luso-Brazilian woman and settled as a *vecino* of Bahia. With his family in tow, he embarked on a smack bound for Angola, insisting that ever since he had left Buenos Aires as a boy, he had “sought to return for the love of my mother and...to leave rebellious kingdoms where I have served by force as a captive.”

That it was even remotely plausible for Marin to secure passage to Buenos Aires by first sailing for Angola suggests that South Atlantic slave routes had been reopened. Marin’s mother-in-law, Luisa de Gusman, also presented a petition to remain in Buenos Aires, claiming that her father was Castilian. Gusman noted that she was pleased with her daughter’s marriage to a Spanish vassal because she felt “obligated to marry [her]...to a person like this who could liberate me from the oppression in which I found myself” as both a Portuguese subject and a widow of limited

⁹⁵ AGI Esc 876B, Pieza 2, fol. 1r- 20r, “Autos que se processarao em Buenos Ayres porque se deu a segunda snca,” 1669.

means. Though *porteño* officials doubted that the smack was actually bound for Angola, given its small size, they allowed Marin, his family, and his slaves to remain in Buenos Aires following payment of a “licensing” fee.⁹⁶

After the end of the Iberian Union, dozens of other Spanish and Portuguese subjects readily passed between Spanish and Portuguese dominions. In addition to landing over 600 captives in Buenos Aires in 1661, *NS del Destierro* also brought 25 Spanish passengers. One, a *vecino* of Madrid named Don Geronimo Faxardo, claimed that he had gone to “Guinea” and then to Angola in order to track down one of his debtors, a Portuguese merchant to whom he had loaned 15,000 pesos. Of the 15,000 pesos he was owed, Faxardo lamented, he had been able to recover only “43 *piestas de negros*” and some merchandise. Another Spanish subject, Fernando de Velasco, alleged that he had left Spain for Lisbon as a boy with his father, who was in the service of Spanish Habsburg princess Margarita Teresa. After his father passed away, Velasco departed for Angola, where he worked for two years “capturing (*rescatando*) some pieces of slaves, like the others who were there.”

The Portuguese subjects on board *NS del Destierro* expressed similar sentiments of loyalty to the Spanish Crown. Antonio Rodrigues de Almeida, an apothecary from Bahia, stated that although he was “of the Portuguese nation,” he had “always desired to pass to Castile and serve his Majesty” because of “the affection he has for the Castilian nation because his cousins are Castilians.” Antonio Barrosso, a sailor, had “lived out most of his days” on the Indies fleets ferrying goods between Spain and the Caribbean, beginning when he was twelve years old. Since the uprising, Barrosso had been limited to working slaving voyages between Brazil, Portugal, and

⁹⁶ AGI Charcas 39, s/n, fol. 1v-11r, “Los of^s de la RI Hazienda 20 de junio dan qta de haver ydo a aql puerto una çumaca nombrada La Concep^{on} y Almas Cappⁿ Antonio Guerrero portuges, a S.M.,” Buenos Aires, 20 junio 1671.

Angola and had acquired 9 *piezas* “through his work.”⁹⁷ While we might rightly view the petitioners’ claims of loyalty to the Spanish Crown with some degree of skepticism, given that each ultimately hoped to sell captives in Buenos Aires, their trans-Iberian networks testify to the entangled commercial, familial, and social connections around the South Atlantic, as well as to the continued “blurring of the lines” between the Spanish and Portuguese worlds.⁹⁸

Conclusion

While moments of tension in the South Atlantic occasionally surfaced after the 1640 separation of the two monarchies, the Iberian world’s consuming interest in the slave trade facilitated both Portuguese immigration and Portuguese permanence in the Spanish Río de la Plata. Importantly, these spheres were not exclusively limited to “Portuguese” networks. It has long been recognized that “Portuguese” individuals were present in Spanish American territories from the conquest eras. However, scholarly assumptions that Portuguese networks were insular and that few Spaniards were interested in commerce have blocked realization of the fully overlapping commercial, military, and political networks between Angola, Brazil, and the Río de la Plata. Understanding these interwoven spheres is key to comprehending the rapid development and remarkable endurance of the slave trade in the South Atlantic, as we will see in Chapter II. Kinship, commercial partnerships, and market opportunities were ultimately more important than dynastic loyalties or national origin in determining the extension of the credit that financed the trade, allowing some Spaniards to successfully navigate “Portuguese” networks. Ultimately, the

⁹⁷ AGI Esc 876A, Pieza 4, 5v-8v, 25v-28r, “Testimonio de los autos q el defensor de la Real Hazienda siguió contra El Capitan Abel Enrique de nación olandes, sobre aver apresado a vista desta ciudad el navio nombrado N^{ra} Señora del Destierro y San Juan Bautista que benia del rreyno de Angola,” Buenos Aires, 1661.

⁹⁸ On the “blurring of the lines” between empires, see Subrahmanyam, “Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640” *AHR* 112, no. 5 (2007), 1359–85

evidence presented in this chapter further reinforces the futility of projecting modern national identities back in time to examine the early modern Atlantic world.

CHAPTER II

THE MUDDLE IN THE MIDDLE PASSAGE:

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE, C. 1580-1680

In the afternoon of February 22, 1619, Governor Diego de Góngora sent Simon de Valdes, the treasurer of Buenos Aires, to board a vessel whose sails locals had first spied on the horizon some three hours earlier and that appeared to be navigating “directly for this port.” Valdes had orders to determine “whether it is a ship of good or evil [intentions]” as well as ascertain the shipmaster, the ship’s origin, and, most importantly, its cargo.¹ As Manuel Rivero, the shipmaster, reported, his vessel, *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción*, had departed Luanda for Rio de Janeiro on December 19, 1618 with three male passengers, ten crewmembers, and “150 *piezas*, more or less.”² But as they rounded Cabo Frio, to the east of Rio de Janeiro, two ships, “one large and one small,” began to pursue them, forcing the crew to reroute. By the time they lost the seemingly threatening enemy vessels five days later, a violent storm and contrary winds had driven them to the mouth of the Río de la Plata. Though Rivero did not have a license to land in Buenos Aires, he petitioned Governor Góngora to anchor his battered vessel in the port and barter for provisions, given that “it has been three days since all the men of the sea and blacks have had anything to eat.”³

¹ AGI Esc 892A Pieza 2, fol.21r, “Autos sobre el navio N^{ra} S^{ra} de la Concepcion maestre Manuel Riveros,” Buenos Aires, 22 February 1619. Rivero’s last name appears as “Ribero,” “Riveros,” and “Rivero.” As with all Spanish and Portuguese names whose contemporary and historical spellings differ, I have chosen to utilize one spelling in the text but maintained the original spelling used in the source in the citations.

² The meaning of “pieza de India” (and the Portuguese “*peça da India*”) shifted over time and later also meant a slave between 15 and 25 years old and of a minimum height. *Pieza de India* was also a unit of measurement. For the purposes of collecting duties, several less valuable slaves (whether children, the elderly, or sick adults) could be counted as one *peça*. See Beatrix Heintze, “The Angolan Vassal Tributes of the 17th Century,” *Revista de História Económica e Social* 6 (1980), fn 1, p. 65.

³ AGI Esc 892A, Pieza 2, fol. 1r-3r, “Declaracion Manuel Ribero,” Buenos Aires, 23 February 1619 and fol. 25v-27v, “Declaracion del maestre [Manuel Rivero],” Buenos Aires, 24 February 1619. Rivero’s two transcribed declarations differ slightly—in the first, he reports the number of slaves he embarked in Luanda (150 *piezas*) and in

Governor Góngora authorized Rivero to sell four slaves to one Doctor Francisco Pérez, with the agreement that Rivero would then resume his voyage to the Brazilian coast.⁴ The rest of the captives—59 adults and 82 children ranging in age from infancy to age 15—were parceled out among several local residents to recover from the Atlantic crossing, lodged in outbuildings usually reserved for curing meat and alongside livestock in animal pens. Compared to the three- to four-month crossing from Angola to the Spanish Caribbean, the two-month voyage to the Río de la Plata was relatively short. Still, in the words of one Jesuit observer, slaves arrived in Buenos Aires “in a deplorable state.”⁵

Rivero’s insistence that he had made an “*arribada forzosa*,” or “emergency landing,” in Buenos Aires was a common ploy that shipmasters throughout the Atlantic world used in order to sell their cargo in unauthorized ports.⁶ Since 1595, royal orders from Madrid had closed the port of Buenos Aires to most trade, except with a special dispensation. Slave trade *asientos* struck between the Spanish Crown and (mostly) Portuguese merchants between 1595 and 1640 made occasional accommodations for the delivery of up to 1200 captives in Buenos Aires in a given year, but metropolitan authorities reliably terminated these concessions due to a proliferation of

the second, the number of slaves who survived the crossing (110 *piezas*, as well as 85 *piezas* who died on the voyage and two who had perished in the preceding 24 hours).

⁴ AGI Esc 892A, Pieza 2, fol. 79v-80r, “Auto de Don Diego de Góngora,” Buenos Aires, 12 March 1619.

⁵ Ernesto J.A. Maeder, ed., *Cartas Anuas de la Provincia del Paraguay, 1637-1639* (Buenos Aires: FECIC, 1984), 65.

⁶ On “emergency landings” and contraband slave trading, see Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos: Los asientos portugueses, 1595-1640* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1977); Zacarias Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial en el siglo XVII* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988), 62-73; Kenneth J. Banks, “Official Duplicity: The Illicit Slave Trade of Martinique, 1713-1763,” in Peter A. Coclanis, ed. *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice, and Personnel* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 229-251; Rodrigo Ceballos, “‘Arribadas portuguesas’: a participação luso-brasileiro na constituição social de Buenos Aires, c. 1580-c.1650” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2008); Marc Eagle, “Chasing the *Avença*: An Investigation of Illicit Slave Trading in Santo Domingo at the End of the Portuguese *Asiento* Period,” *Slavery and Abolition* 35, no. 1 (2013): 1-22.

contraband in the silver accessible through the Plata estuary. For much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, then, the Caribbean ports of Cartagena and Veracruz were Spanish America's only continuously authorized ports for the slave trade. In order to skirt these restrictions, shipmasters would claim that storms or pursuit by enemy ships prevented them from landing in their intended destination on the Brazilian coast—usually Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, or São Vicente—and necessitated a layover in Buenos Aires to restock provisions and make repairs to their vessels. Pending the conclusion of an investigation, royal officials permitted the shipmaster to sell some captives to pay for these services; in the meantime, investors and royal officials alike reconnoitered opportunities to unload and illegally sell the rest of the captives.

This chapter details the volume and complex dimensions of Iberian slave trading in the South Atlantic, drawing upon a range of previously unexamined or underutilized archival sources, such as legal suits, the account books of various royal officials and colonial institutions, and merchant correspondence. Examined together, these sources provide nearly uninterrupted data for the period from 1586 to 1680 and furnish information on the arrival of over 41,000 captives on 339 voyages. Data from Buenos Aires underline the importance of studying the characteristics of slave ports individually, rather than extending patterns documented in Cartagena or Veracruz into the southern Atlantic. In addition to enumerating the slave trade to a dynamic slaving port whose traffic in this early era is virtually unstudied, these sources shed light on strategies for slave procurement in West Central Africa as well as on the individuals caught up in the trade. Above all, the vibrant slave trade to the Río de la Plata challenges the platitude that African slavery's expansion throughout the early Atlantic world was dependent solely upon the production of commodities, mostly sugar grown on large tropical plantations, for European markets.

Situating the South Atlantic within Slave Trade Studies

The South Atlantic, including the Río de la Plata, has long hovered around the margins of many pioneering works on the slave trade to more central parts of Spanish America. Pierre and Huguette Chaunu's classic *Seville et l'Atlantique*, though not exclusively focused on the slave trade, provided data on the names, shipmasters, and declared destinations of hundreds of vessels registered to carry captives to Spanish American ports or that planned to sail for the African coast.⁷ Yet the records on which they drew, and long favored by their successors—of departure taxes, licenses authorizing the purchase of slaves, and other notarial documents prepared on the Iberian Peninsula—are, at best, severely limited sources for understanding the full operations that drove the slave trade. Plans rarely correspond with the realities of eventual itineraries diverted by war and delayed by weather, recruiting and retaining ship crews along the way, or the numbers of captives vessels actually transported. In the case of ports that were almost entirely dependent upon illegal trade for their supply of enslaved Africans, such as Buenos Aires, the shortcomings of metropole-produced sources are even greater. The Chaunus, further, were primarily interested in the royal fleet system centered in the Caribbean and paid little attention to ports south of the Equator; *Seville et l'Atlantique*, accordingly, listed a mere handful of intended slaving voyages to the Río de la Plata. Returning to the same corpus of records a few decades later, Germán Peralta

⁷ Pierre and Huguette Chaunu, *Seville et l'Atlantique, 1504-1650* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1955), Tome IV, 56-57; Tome V, 252-253; Tome VI, partie 2, 686-687; Germán Peralta Rivera, *El comercio negrero en América Latina, 1595-1640* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal, 2005), 335, 422-466. The South Atlantic (namely, Recife and Bahia) receives slightly more attention in Pierre Chaunu, "Brésil et Atlantique au XVII^e siècle," *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 16, no. 6 (1961), 1176-1207, a review essay of Boxer's *Salvador de Sá* and of Frédéric Mauro's *Portugal, Brésil, et l'Atlantique*.

Rivera located nine voyages registered to sail for the Río de la Plata (and could confirm the arrival in Buenos Aires of only one vessel).⁸

Recognizing the role of contraband in the early slave trade, other scholars looked beyond licenses and metropolitan port clearance records to unearth modest numbers of additional slaving voyages to the Americas. Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, in his brief overview of the slave trade to Spanish America during the Iberian Union, underlined the importance of documents from the sections *Contaduria* (Accounting) and *Escribanía de Camara* (judicial records) for detailing unauthorized slaving voyages. Though his study was more focused on technical aspects of the trade, using a single piece of royal officials' correspondence, Garcia identified arrivals of 9,216 slaves in Buenos Aires from Angola and Brazil between 1588 and 1627.⁹

Enriqueta Vila Vilar's *Hispanoamerica y el comercio de esclavos*, first published in 1975, pioneered another innovative approach, adding arrival data from American ports to the inquiry. Vila Vilar identified Cartagena, Veracruz, and Buenos Aires as Spanish America's principal slave ports during the "Portuguese *asiento* period" (1595-1640). The yield of new information from her attention to broad patterns in the trade as well as to individual arrivals cannot be overemphasized, yet her work addressed the Río de la Plata only peripherally. Vila Vilar described Buenos Aires as an "exceptional place" in the Iberian slave trade, due both to the sheer proportion of contraband trade in the port and shifting legality of slaving there throughout the *asiento* period. The book's numerous appendices did not include Buenos Aires arrival data.

⁸ Germán Peralta Rivera, *El comercio negrero en América Latina, 1595-1640* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal, 2005), 335, 422-466.

⁹ Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, "Contribuição ao estudo do aprovisionamento dos escravos negros na América Espanhola (1580-1640)," *Anais do Museu Paulista* XVI (1962), 87.

The greatest body of scholarship on the Río de la Plata slave trade has developed in isolation from these major trends in work on Iberian slaving. The first (and arguably most influential) study of the volume and dimensions of the slave trade to the Río de la Plata—Elena F.S. de Studer’s 1958 *La trata de negros en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVIII*—operated well within the tendencies within the larger historiography of the Atlantic slave trade to minimize this region. Studer meticulously compiled data on hundreds of slave voyages from West Africa to Buenos Aires and Montevideo between 1703 and 1806, the century to which she confined her study. However, she assumed that transatlantic traffic to Buenos Aires was nonexistent prior to 1703; just one table enumerated the arrival of 12,778 slaves from “the coast of Brazil” between 1606 and 1655.¹⁰

Without a doubt, Studer’s detailed information on the itineraries, African provenance zones, genders and ages of captives, and shipboard mortality rates of 18th-century voyages made a significant contribution to understanding the later trade. Yet her neglect of the earlier period had a lasting influence on scholars’ tendency to leave the early Río de la Plata out of the then-nascent field of Atlantic slave trade studies. Frank Tannenbaum, among the first Anglophone historians to recognize the prominence of Africans in the histories of Latin American colonies, hailed Studer’s work as “a milestone on the road toward a history of the Negro in South America.”¹¹ Philip Curtin’s

¹⁰ Studer’s conclusion is puzzling, given that her data was taken from a published source (Manuel Ricardo Trelles) that often indicated whether impounded “cargo” originated in Brazil or Angola. Studer’s work has not yet been translated to English, nor have many studies that refined and even challenged her findings regarding the 17th-century trade. Many English-language scholars read Studer through Philip Curtin, while scholars able to read Spanish and Portuguese but working on a later time period appear to have taken Studer’s work as the authoritative account, despite the existence of Enriqueta Vila Vilar, Rozendo Sampaio Garcia, and others. Studer’s conclusions were supported by the *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, which, until recently, only included four voyages to Buenos Aires prior to 1640. Elena F.S. de Studer, *La trata de negros en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVIII* (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1958), 89-94.

¹¹ Frank Tannenbaum, “Review of *La Trata de Negros en el Río de la Plata Durante el Siglo XVIII* by Elena F.S. de Studer,” *AHR* 65, No. 3 (1960), 648.

paradigm-setting *Census* (1969) drew heavily on Studer as well as a handful of studies of seventeenth century notarial records in Upper Peru (Bolivia) and Chile to observe that “southern South America became dependent for slaves on Angolan sources even before the rest of Spanish America,” in the 1590s, when the decline of São Tomé’s sugar industry prompted Angolan slavers to send captives from the sources in which they had invested in Angola to burgeoning sugar plantations in Brazil (and then, by extension, on to the Río de la Plata). However, Curtin doubted that many vessels plied a direct route between the African coast and Buenos Aires. Like Studer, Curtin asserted that most slaves reaching the area were “re-export[ed] from Brazil,” and even then only until 1622, when the Spanish Crown stifled contraband trade to Potosí through the Río de la Plata by installing a customs house in Córdoba and traffic formerly directed to Buenos Aires was re-directed to the Caribbean.¹² Significantly, Curtin’s hypothesis regarding the South Atlantic shift to Angolan sources in the 1590s has yet to be proven with data on slave arrivals.

Since the publication of Studer’s *La trata de negros*, several economic historians have presented indirect evidence that challenges her implications that early Buenos Aires depended upon transshipments from Brazil or that trade to the port was blocked in 1622. Employing notarial records from Buenos Aires, Eduardo Saguier identified the period between 1621 and 1624 as the “highest point” of slave trafficking in the port, but observed expansions of credit to purchase slaves in 1631-1636 and 1640-1642. Saguier hypothesized that the 1628 Dutch capture of the Spanish silver fleet in the bay of Matanzas, Cuba, headed by Piet Heyn, led slave traders to “prefer the maritime routes of the South Atlantic to those of the Caribbean Sea.”¹³ Drawing on Dutch and Spanish records, Zacarias Moutoukias located information on 43 vessels that landed or planned to

¹² Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 110-112.

¹³ Eduardo Saguier, “The Uneven Incorporation of Buenos Aires into World Trade Early in the Seventeenth Century,” (Ph.D. diss., Washington University in St. Louis, 1982), 14-15, 100-109, 114-115.

land captives in the Río de la Plata between 1648 and 1702.¹⁴ Clearly, slave traffic to this southern Atlantic port was more robust and more enduring than Curtin and Studer's studies suggested.

Nearly every study of the early slave trade to Spanish America concludes with the end of the Iberian Union in 1640, a periodization that makes it appear as though slave traffic contracted following the restoration of Portuguese independence and presumed redirection of Portugal's slaving to Brazil. When the semi-monopoly of ships sailing under the Portuguese flag to the Spanish port of Buenos Aires was broken, the change in sovereignty did not alter the underlying international commercial networks of the trade. The financiers, commercial agents, and ship crews of "Portuguese" slave voyages before, during, and after the Iberian Union continued to be of diverse origins, and other merchant communities stepped in to meet the demand. As one recent article by Tatiana Seijas and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva illustrates, after 1640, Dutch and English merchants funneled West African captives to Mexico via *entrepôts* in Curaçao, Barbados, and Jamaica, in addition to American-born slaves and a smaller number of West Central Africans.¹⁵ Neither slave markets nor commercial networks totally evaporated; the range of participants in the trade merely expanded. Unlike Spanish American markets north of the Equator, however, Buenos Aires continued to receive slave vessels direct from West Central Africa and that had stopped over on the coast of Brazil.

This chapter builds upon a number of recent works in its systematic use of records from scattered European and American archives and in its attention to African history to detail the origins, destinations, and volume of the early South Atlantic trade. Yet by extending analysis of

¹⁴ Zacarias Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial: Buenos Aires, el Atlántico y el espacio peruano* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988), 134-150.

¹⁵ Tatiana Seijas and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, "The Persistence of the Slave Market in Seventeenth-Century Central Mexico," *Slavery and Abolition* 37, no. 2 (2016), 19.

Iberian slaving to 1680, well beyond the end of the Iberian Union and the “Portuguese *asiento* period,” it not only fills a crucial gap in scholarship on the Atlantic slave trade, it places emphasis on the Africans forcibly transported across the Atlantic rather than the legal and political frameworks within which their sale was negotiated. This chapter asserts that a longer periodization more accurately reflects South Atlantic realities.

Sources for the Study of the South Atlantic Trade

Royal officials’ correspondence provides a broad, though not exhaustive, overview of slave voyages to Buenos Aires. The Spanish Crown relied on royal officials to count and tax captives disembarked in the port and depended upon remittances from slave sales to sustain its colonial administration in the Río de la Plata. At the same time, many, if not most, royal officials were themselves privately involved in slave trafficking.¹⁶ In 1639, an eleven-year resident of Buenos Aires and veteran of five slaving voyages from Rio de Janeiro and Angola named Francisco Fernandez Barroco offered a frank account of the close collaborations between local officials and slave traders. Barroco reported that each time he landed in Buenos Aires, the governor “sent for

¹⁶ Zacarias Moutoukias, “Power, Corruption, and Commerce: The Making of the Local Administrative Structure in Seventeenth-Century Buenos Aires,” *HAHR* 68, no. 4, 772-779; Macarena Perusset, “Comportamiento al margen de la ley: contrabando y sociedad en Buenos Aires en el siglo XVII,” *Historia Crítica* (Universidad de los Andes) 33 (2007), 158-185. On Angolan officials participating in the slave trade, see also; Beatrix Heintze, “The Angolan Vassal Tributes of the 17th Century,” *Revista de História Económica e social* 6 (1980), 63-67; Mariana P. Candido, “Trade Networks in Benguela, 1700-1850,” in *Ibid.*, 150-152; Arlindo Manuel Caldeira, “Angola and the Seventeenth-Century South Atlantic Slave Trade,” in David Richardson and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva, *Networks and Trans-Cultural Exchange: Slave Trading in the South Atlantic, 1590-1867* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 126-127. In other American regions, see Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*; Kenneth J. Banks, “Official Duplicity: The Illicit Slave Trade of Martinique, 1713-1763,” in *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice, and Personnel*, ed. Peter A. Coclanis (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 229-251; Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 31, 141, 145-146; Karwan Fatah-Black, *White Lies and Black Markets: Evading Metropolitan Authority in Colonial Suriname, 1650-1800* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015), 60; David Wheat, “The First Great Waves: African Provenance Zones for the Slave Trade to Cartagena de Indias, 1570-1640,” *JAH* 52, no. 1 (2011), 9-10.

the shipmaster” and

“[the governor] would be waiting and would take him [the shipmaster] to his house without speaking to anyone and they would talk among themselves and the agreement with the said governor was that only the slaves who were to be found on the ship *visita* (official inspection) were to remain [on board] to be apprehended or denounced [on the account] of his majesty and placed on royal auction and the rest were hidden and disembarked on the beach at night as the governor knew ...”¹⁷

Royal officials sought to apprehend a number of the captives because they received a portion of the profits from public slave auctions (the rest went to the individual who denounced the captives and the royal treasury), whereas the voyage’s investors hoped to minimize expenditures by denouncing as few smuggled captives as possible. Testimonies underscore their consistent and significant underreporting of captives. Barroco, reflecting on his first voyage from Angola, recalled that nearly 600 *piezas* survived the Atlantic crossing but that local authorities recorded the arrival of only 70 of them. On his second voyage, Barroco claimed that just 50 of the 500 *piezas* he disembarked were sold at public auction, perhaps because he gave 4,000 pesos to the governor “for the entry fee” and an additional 1,500 pesos to “two royal officials and other ministers.”¹⁸ Officials accepted captives as well as specie in exchange for overlooking some of the arrivals. On his return to Buenos Aires from Bahia in 1614, one trader presented three enslaved women to the treasurer and the *justicia mayor* (chief justice), “so that things and the dispatch of the ship would have a good end,” in the words of one witness.¹⁹

Royal officials periodically copied (or compiled) account ledgers that prominently featured slave arrivals in addition to referring to slave voyages in their correspondence with the monarch.

¹⁷ AGI Esc 868A, Prim^o quaderno, fol. 7r-13r, “Testigo Francisco Fernandez Varroco,” Buenos Aires, 28 junio 1639.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ AGI Esc 880A, Pieza 11, fol. 95r-99r, “Testimonio de Sevastian de Orduña vecino desta ciudad,” Buenos Aires, 5 junio 1615.

Extant studies of the slave trade to the Río de la Plata have used only a handful of these accounts to extrapolate broad patterns in the trade. One such source is “Relazion de los negros de Guinea y otras partes que an entrado en Buenos Ayres desde su fundazion hasta el año de 1682,” a list prepared in 1682 by Don Miguel Castellanos, the *contador* (accountant) of the Royal Treasury of the Río de la Plata and Paraguay. “Relazion” enumerated the duties collected from the sale of 17,253 “*piezas de Indias*” who had entered the port of Buenos Aires illegally between 1586 and 1682. In many entries, the name of the vessel on which the captives entered and the shipmaster were also recorded. As the list’s compiler noted, he did not include *crias* (children under the age of seven) in the total of 17, 253 *piezas*, as they were sold duty-free. Use of the term “*pieza de Indias*” would also have undercounted the numbers of elderly and sick captives that arrived.²⁰

Accounts often diverged significantly from official to official, enabling us to see the differing stakes that each held in the slave trade. For example, a short list prepared by the Portuguese factor of *asentista* Manuel Rodriguez Lamego reported the number of *crias* that entered on eighteen vessels between 1622 and 1625.²¹ The ledgers of *depositario general* Antonio de Linares, the official responsible for safeguarding illegally-introduced slaves who were the subjects of suits or

²⁰ AGI Charcas 123, “Relazion de los negros de Guinea y otras partes que an entrado en Buenos Ayres desde su fundazion hasta el año de 1682,” Buenos Aires, 12 junio 1682. This list, along with AGI Charcas 123, “Certificaz^{on} de los esclavos que entraron en Bs ayres desde el año de 97 asta el de 607 = de permizion conzedida a los asentistas P^o Gomez Reynel y Gonz^o Baez Cotiño,” Buenos Aires, 12 junio 1682 has recently been used by Alex Borucki, David Wheat, and David Eltis to estimate the total Río de la Plata trade. See Alex Borucki, David Wheat, and David Eltis to estimate the total Río de la Plata trade in their recent article, “Atlantic History and the Slave Trade to Spanish America,” *AHR* 120, no. 2 (2015): 433-461. The meaning of “*pieza de Indias*” (and the Portuguese “*peça da India*”) shifted over time and between officials and later also meant a slave between 15 and 25 years old and of a minimum height. For the purposes of collecting duties, several less valuable slaves (whether children, the elderly, or sick adults) could be counted as one *pieza*. See Beatrix Heintze, “The Angolan Vassal Tributes of the 17th Century,” *Revista de História Económica e social* 6 (1980), fn 1, p. 65.

²¹ AGI Santo Domingo 55, R. 5, N. 29, “Testimonio de lo que a rendido el contrato en este puerto de Buenos Ayres desde primero de maio de 1622 asta oy siete de octubre de 1625,” Buenos Aires, 1625.

evidence in trials, recorded sizeable “deposits” of captives from more than two dozen vessels that landed between 1612 and 1639 and do not appear in the “Relazion.”²²

While royal officials’ correspondence help to sketch an overview of port traffic, records of investigations housed in the section *Escribanía de Cámara de Justicia* enable the reconstruction of even more aspects of the South Atlantic slave trade. Numbering hundreds and sometimes even thousands of pages long, these lawsuits offer an unsurpassed level of detail on voyages, such as the names, genders, ages, health, and markings of captives found on board; rosters of crew and passengers; and testimonies from crewmembers and voyage investors that touched on slave procurement, navigation, and the voyage’s ports of call. In some of these investigations, documentary evidence found on board, such as departure certificates drawn up on the African coast and merchants’ private letters, were also transcribed. Although similarly comprehensive records are not available for every “forced arrival,” the level of detail provided in extant investigations furnishes further evidence of how centralized tax accounts oversimplified voyage itineraries by listing only the vessel’s last known port of departure (or none at all). With an eye to personal profit, investigators often took greater care to record each captive apprehended on a vessel, regardless of age or health, and thus the numbers of captives reported to have been disembarked from a given vessel were invariably higher than those reported in tax records from the same vessel. In the cases of vessels appearing in multiple sources, I have privileged the accounts offered in *Escribanía* records over those in centralized summary lists.

²² Portions of Linares’ ledgers, copied during an investigation of corruption, can be found in AGI Esc 868A, fol. 61r-84r, “Certificacion de Antonio de Linares depositario General de la Ciudad de la Trinidad en q zertifica los navios q an entrado desde el año 1612 asta este de 1639 asi de arrivada como de aviso lo que trujeron y se remato en almoneda por de su magd y entero en la RI Caja de este puerto,” Buenos Aires, 1639.

The Voyage Data

Voyage data indicate that Buenos Aires' supplies of captives depended upon sources in Brazil and West Central Africa. Forty percent of slave voyages to Buenos Aires between 1586 and 1680 originated in Brazilian ports, while thirty percent originated in Angola. By contrast, just two percent of slave voyages are known to have departed from other African regions—three vessels from Upper Guinea, one from Lower Guinea, and two from the Loango Coast—all after 1640. The regions of departure of the remaining thirty percent of slave voyages that arrived in Buenos Aires are unknown, a consequence of the fact that much of our knowledge of Buenos Aires' illicit trade is derived from scattered accounts of lots of captives sold (often not recorded until years after their arrival in Buenos Aires) rather than consistent and comprehensive lists of port activity. Although a greater number of slave vessels originated in Brazil, vessels known to have originated on the African coast ultimately disembarked more captives (Table 2.1). Roughly forty percent of the captives were disembarked from vessels that originated on the African coast, as opposed to twenty percent disembarked from Brazilian slaving vessels. As one ship pilot explained, “all the ships arriving from Brazil or Angola bring slaves” though “those from Brazil bring fewer because they also bring *haciendas* (locally-produced goods) and merchandise [...] from the Kingdom of Portugal, and the ships from Angola bring more blacks because they are the principal cargo in Angola.”²³ The invariable presence of small groups of African slaves alongside commodities from Brazil such as construction materials, textiles, conserves, wine, and sugar suggests how the slave trade facilitated other commercial transactions in the port.²⁴ It is not implausible that most of the vessels that anchored in the Río de la Plata landed at least one captive.

²³ AGI Esc 868A, Pieza 1, fol. 3v-7r, “Ynform^{on} test^o Fran^{co} Fernandez piloto,” Buenos Aires, 27 junio 1639.

²⁴ On slave sales aiding other commercial transactions, see Gregory E. O'Malley, *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 177-178.

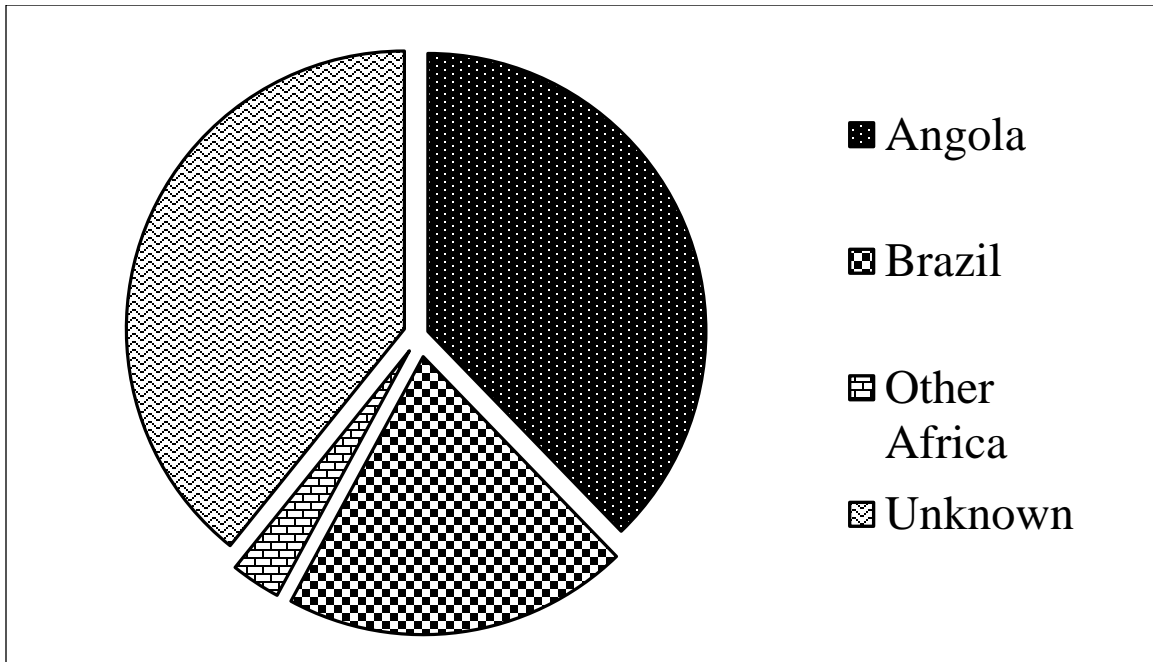


Figure 2.1 First known regions of embarkation of 41,023 captives landed in Buenos Aires, 1586-1680

Source: Appendix A

First known region of embarkation	Number of vessels	Captives disembarked in Buenos Aires (% of total)
Angola	100	15,051 (37)
Brazil	133	8,023 (20)
Cabo Verde	1	11 (<1)
Elmina	1	563 (1)
Rivers of Guinea	3	435 (1)
Loango	2	144 (<1)
Unknown	99	15,631 (38)
TOTAL	339	41,023 (100)

Table 2.1 First known region of embarkation of 41, 023 captives landed in Buenos Aires, 1586-1680

Source: Appendix A

As with the vessel data, the regions of embarkation of a number of the captives landed in Buenos Aires are not known. In addition to registering lots of captives sold from specific voyages, royal officials also recorded sales of individual slaves or groups of slaves “found wandering the

riverbank without an owner,” presumably dropped off by ship crew upriver to avoid apprehension by port authorities; slaves “manifested” by their owner as having been acquired illegally; and unlicensed captives confiscated by local authorities from travelers (who were presumed to have been slave traffickers in disguise). The category “unknown” includes captives whose arrival was not attributed to specific vessels and/or whose ports of embarkation were not given. This category also tallies discrepancies between surviving accounts and the number of slaves declared in *visitas* (official tours of inspection) and *residencias* (reviews of an official’s conduct following the conclusion of his term).²⁵ For example, for the twenty-six month period of November 1618 through December 1620, a *visitador* inspecting the royal treasury’s account books of Buenos Aires observed that local officials denounced 4,149 “piezas” from 63 different vessels, but our records detail the arrival of just fifteen vessels carrying a total of only 1,653 captives.²⁶ “Unknown” captives may also be evidence of voyages for which records have not yet surfaced. While the existence of so many voyages and individuals about whom we have so little information attests to major gaps in early modern port records, their inclusion in the dataset nonetheless comes closer to reflecting the scale of the slave trade to Buenos Aires.

Voyage data from Buenos Aires between 1586 and 1680, divided by five-year intervals, indicate consistent slave traffic in the port. (Figure 2.2). With the exception of the first peak in 1601-1605, which partly overlapped with the period of legal *asiento* trade to Buenos Aires, none of the subsequent surges in captives landed correspond to measures affecting legal trade, indicating that the trade’s legality had little bearing on slave trafficking.

²⁵ For captives “found on the riverbank without an owner,” see AGI-Charcas 38, s/r, n. 51, “qtas de negros del año de 1612=1613= en manos del s^f Pedro de Ledezma p^a q las den la conta de Yndias y hagase bean y junta con las q alla estan del puerto de buenos ayres” Buenos Aires, 1613.

²⁶ AGI Esc 903A, Pieza 1, fol. 35r, “Testimonio del auto q proveyo el visitador de buenos ayres declarando no correle el termino en los dos anos...” Buenos Aires, 28 agosto 1632.

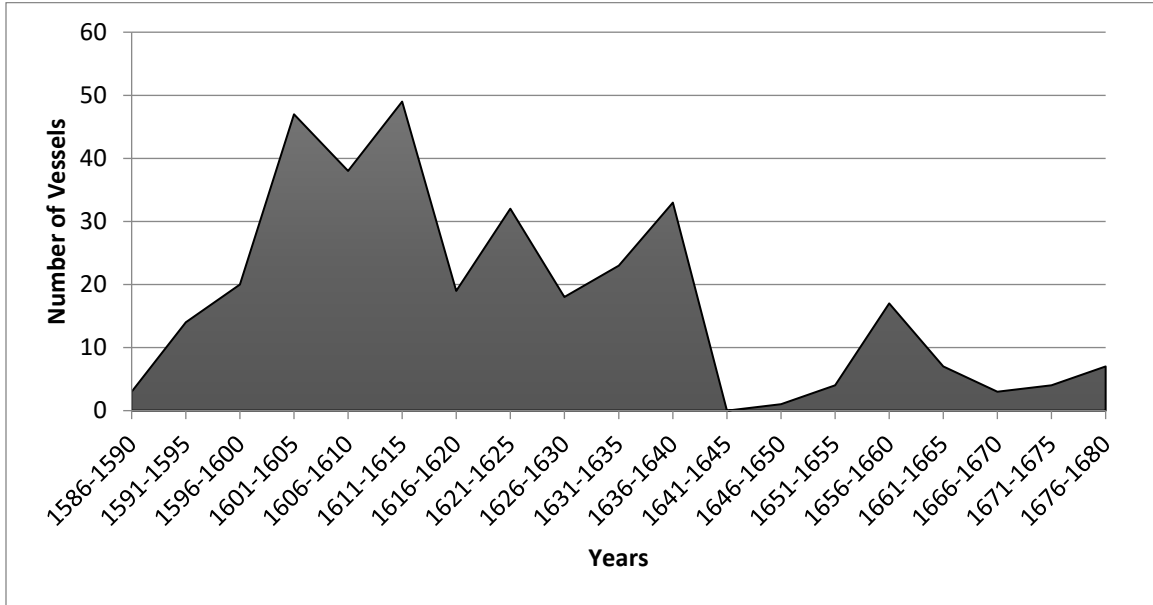


Figure 2.2 Slave trade voyages to Buenos Aires, 1586-1680, by quinquennium
 Source: Appendix A

We know relatively little about slave arrivals during most of the port’s first two decades. Prior to 1597, just eleven vessels carrying slaves are known to have landed, while none were recorded in the years 1590, 1591, 1592, or 1596. Several textual references indicate active slave trading during these years, suggesting that these gaps were due to a lack of fiscal diligence. According to the viceroy of Peru, in 1592, “the Bishop of Tucuman and other individuals” had thus far trafficked “more than 600 [slaves] without paying one *real* of duties;” by 1592, our records show that only 53 African slaves had landed in Buenos Aires.²⁷ The newly-appointed accountant of the Río de la Plata and Paraguay, Hernando de Vargas, echoed similar concerns in 1594. Vargas seethed that Buenos Aires officials “did not know what money was” and “even less how to deal with civilized

²⁷ “Carta del Marques de Cañete al secretario Juan de Ybarra dando explicaciones sobre ciertos actos de su gobierno, quejandose del trato del Consejo de Indias y de la designación de Martin Garcia de Lozoya para gobernador de Chile,” Los Reyes, 28 abril 1592, in *Gobernantes del Peru: Cartas y papeles, siglo XVI. Documentos del Archivo de Indias*, ed. Roberto Levillier (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1926), 241-247.

men,” having failed to tax slave arrivals because they allegedly “believed that one does not owe taxes on slaves brought with a license.”²⁸ Vargas and the Marques de Cañete’s letters further evince how extant fiscal records miss a great deal of early port activity. The first recorded transatlantic voyage recorded dates from 1597, but as early as 1585, horses were slaughtered in the *pampas* for their tails, which were traded in “Guinea” for slaves.²⁹

Sources of Slaves

Early Iberian supplies of Angolan captives were derived primarily from Portuguese military campaigns in the developing *conquista* and from *sobas*, defeated African authorities who swore vassalage to the Portuguese crown and paid an annual tribute in slaves in exchange for “protection,” rather than acquired by purchase at trade fairs (*feiras*) held in the interior.³⁰ The prominence of trade fairs early in the earliest Portuguese presence in Angola in supplying captives for Atlantic markets is highlighted in a late sixteenth-century Jesuit account which insisted that “the number [of slaves] that are captured in war is nothing compared to those that are purchased at *feiras*.”³¹ While this observation may reflect an idealization of Portuguese activity in West Central Africa, other reports indicate that some of the captives sold in *feiras* had been enslaved unjustly. One report, written in the early 1580s, optimistically proclaimed that most captives sold at *feiras* were either prisoners of war, criminals otherwise condemned to death, or had been proffered as tribute. The major African political authority in the Kwanza region, known by his title

²⁸ AGI-Charcas 112, “Carta de Fernando de Vargas a Don Fran^{co} de Çarate,” Buenos Aires, 1 mayo 1594.

²⁹ Refer to discussion in chapter one of this dissertation.

³⁰ David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2016); David Birmingham, Mbundu Society under the Influence of the Portuguese, 79-100.

³¹ “Historia da residência dos Padres da Companhia de Jesus em Angola, e cousas tocantes ao reino e Conquista,” 1 May 1594, in Brásio, *MMA IV*, 546-581.

as the *ngola*, appointed an authority at the main fair of Cabaça, some 150 miles inland from Luanda, to ensure that his subjects were not sold as slaves. As the report's author pointed out, however, to enquire about the legality of a person's enslavement was "laughable," as the circumstances surrounding their acquisitions were a "secret" guarded among the sellers.³² Brother Luis Brandon, rector of the Jesuit college in Luanda, reflected that European traders "could have greater scruple" in their purchase of captives because they acquired slaves from "other blacks and from people who have perhaps stolen them." Brandon conceded that some of the slaves proffered at fairs were kidnapped or had been enslaved for "offenses so slight that they do not deserve captivity," but doubted that such individuals were numerous among the "10 or 12,000 who leave this port every year." To Brandon, determining who had suffered unjust enslavement was impossible, as "no black will ever say he has been captured legally" but rather "will always say that they were stolen and captured illegally, in the hope that they will be given their liberty." Regardless of the circumstances in which Africans were enslaved, Brandon reasoned, to "lose so many souls as sail from here—out of whom many are saved" would not "be doing much service to God."³³ In their quests for a profit, few cared about the justice of enslaving their human property.

Purchasing captives at trade fairs in the West Central African interior required access to a variety of costly commodities that many South Atlantic merchants based in Brazil or the Río de la Plata would have been hard-pressed to acquire. For example, the goods desired at the fair of Masanga Caita included silk and cotton fabrics from India, England, France, and the Low

³²"Informação acerca dos escravos de Angola, 1582-1583," in Brásio, *MMA* III, 227-229. Crown officials repeatedly warned that any "Portuguese or creoles" found trading at the fairs in the interior would be imprisoned and that only *maculuntos* would be allowed to trade there, suggesting that the prohibitions were to little avail. See "Ordem de Fernao de Sousa a Paio de Araujo de Azevedo," Luanda, 14 September 1629, in Heintze, *Fontes*, vol. II, 307-308.

³³"Letter from Brother Luis Brandon to Father Sandoval," Luanda, 12 March 1610, in Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1930-1935), vol. 1, pp. 123-124. See also the discussion and reproduction of parts of this letter in Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud*, trans. Enriqueta Vila Vilar (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1987), 142-149.

Countries; scabbards (*bainhas*) produced in Guimarães, Portugal; hats; and mirrors.³⁴ According to Antonio Dinis, each “*pessa de Indias*” purchased “in the interior” cost traders 10,000 *reis* and sold to merchants on the coast for 20,200 *reis*. However, as Dinis shrewdly observed, “that is only when one buys them,” explaining that many Angolan colonists employed “*negros de guerra* [to] fight on [their] behalf, and everything that they take their owner has a part in, and these [captives] do not cost them any money.”³⁵ This report explicitly confirmed the discreet doubts of the Jesuits.

Kidnapping and capturing the people enslaved left Angolan colonists profits they could use to import foodstuffs and other basic necessities without investing in local sources of provisions for themselves or for the ships they filled with starving captives. Foodstuffs often took priority over luxury goods among the imports desired by Angolan colonists seeking to sell captives. On multiple occasions, Portuguese officials grumbled that, in contrast to vessels from Portugal, which brought “trade goods,” vessels from Spanish territories arrived in Luanda “loaded with wines, provisions, and other things” to “embark slaves for the Indies.”³⁶ In 1618, military commander Manuel Cerveira Pereira sent an infantry captain, Lourenço Dias Ferreira, from the newly-created port of Benguela north to Luanda with a consignment of slaves to purchase “some things for the service of this conquest as well as to eat” and “things for the soldiers to wear.” In Luanda, Ferreira negotiated with a shipowner named Cosme Carvalho to sell the captives. Though Ferreira’s certificate does not indicate the ultimate destination of the captives he offered, Carvalho is known to have made at least one earlier slaving voyage to Buenos Aires from Angola in 1615. On his

³⁴ “Preços e medidas que se haõde fixar na feira de Dongo que ElRej hade faser em Masanga Cajta pera a compra das pessas,” *Embaqua* [Ambaca], 15 October 1629, in Heintze, *Fontes*, vol. II, 311-312.

³⁵ “Relação de Antonio Dinis,” 1622, in *MMA* VII, 67-74.

³⁶ “Carta de Fernão de Sousa ao Governo,” Luanda, 6 September 1625, in Heintze, *Fontes*, vol. II, 141-144. On food shortages in West Central Africa, see Joseph C. Miller, “The Significance of Drought, Disease and Famine in the Agriculturally Marginal Zones of West-Central Africa,” *JAH* 23: 1 (1982).

departure from the Río de la Plata, he was apprehended with three horses and 355 *fanegas* (bushels) of flour, illustrating his role as a purveyor of provisions to under-supplied military contingents in West Central Africa.³⁷ Around 1615, Martín Ochoa de Arancivia, a Buenos Aires *vecino*, embarked wheat flour on behalf of several local residents to sell in Pernambuco. Upon arriving in Pernambuco, however, Arancivia had trouble moving the flour because a large shipment had recently arrived from Portugal, so he sent his cargo on to Angola. The high valuation of flour in Angola—nearly 25 pesos per bushel—meant that Arancivia was able to purchase a number of slaves, whom he then sold in Pernambuco.³⁸

In the early seventeenth century, military raids and vassal tributes probably surpassed slave fairs as sources of captives for the Atlantic trade. These developments were much to the chagrin of the Crown, which sought to resume operation of the fairs in order to ensure both greater fiscal control and avoid armed conflict, which drained royal coffers. Successive Portuguese governors assumed office in Angola with specific instructions to restore peace and ensure the operation of the *feiras* but, lured by the potential for profit derived from the enslaved spoils of wars, many abandoned their mandate. The second surge in slave arrivals to Buenos Aires, of 1611 to 1615, corresponded with the governance of Bento Banha Cardoso (1611-1615) in Angola. Whereas prior to his term, governors had subjected just fourteen chiefs to vassalage, Cardoso led military campaigns that subjugated over 80 chiefdoms, mostly from the *ngola*'s domain of Ndongo and allied polities. Though revenues from the sale of captives offered as tribute to the Crown were

³⁷ “Certificado de Lourenço Dias Ferreira,” Luanda, 15 junho 1618 in Brásio, *MMA* VI, 311-313; AGI-Esc 892A, fol. 3v-4r.

³⁸ AGI Esc 880A, Pieza 1, fol. 24v-26r, “Confesión [de] Martin de Arancivia,” Buenos Aires, 3 abril 1617. The importance of the African slave trade to the colonial Brazilian economy in providing an outlet for *geribita*, manioc flour, rice, and other items not sellable in European markets is highlighted in Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 445; 464-473.

ostensibly to be used to pay for local administrative expenses, munitions, and soldiers' salaries, officers exploited these tribute payments for their own ends, often using violence or the threat of violence to extract more captives from overpowered *sobas* than the treaties of vassalage specified.³⁹ During Cardoso's brief term, nearly fifty vessels arrived in Buenos Aires with slaves, disembarking over 5,000 captives. Angola traffic may have particularly been directed towards Buenos Aires, as failure to reach an agreement over the terms of the *asiento* contract between 1609 and 1614 resulted in a decline of legal traffic to Cartagena and Veracruz.⁴⁰

Following the boom years of 1611-1615, slave traffic temporarily dwindled, evincing how much Buenos Aires' slave supplies depended upon expanding Iberian military incursions in West Central Africa. Just 16 captives were reported to have arrived in 1616 and 1617, and no vessels or captives are currently known to have landed in Buenos Aires in 1618, patterns corroborated in Angolan records. Arriving in Angola in late 1617, Governor Luis Mendes de Vasconcelos, dismayed that trade was "extinguished" and the *feiras* "almost exhausted," blamed the lack of slaves on his predecessor in office, Manoel Cerveira Pereira, who had "destroyed the *sobas* who send [captives]."⁴¹ Rather than restoring trade fairs, however, Vasconcelos collaborated with Imbangala warriors to launch campaigns against Ndongo in 1618 and 1619. An enormous surge of around 50,000 slaves left Luanda during Vasconcelos' brief three-year tenure (1617-1621),

³⁹ Beatrix Heintze, "The Angolan Vassal Tributes of the 17th Century," and "Luso-African Feudalism in Angola? The Vassal Treaties of the 16th to the 18th Century," *Revista portuguesa de história* XVIII, 1980; "Angola nas garras,"; Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*, 124-133; Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 80-81.

⁴⁰ On declining numbers of voyages to Cartagena and Veracruz, see David Wheat, "The Afro-Portuguese Maritime World and the Foundations of Spanish Caribbean Society, 1570-1640," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2009), 114-116 and *ibid.*, "The First Great Waves: African Provenance Zones for the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Cartagena de Indias, 1570-1640," *JAH* 52, no. 1 (2011), 19-20.

⁴¹ "Carta do Governador [Luis Mendes de Vasconcelos] a El-Rei," Luanda, 28 agosto 1617 in Brasio, *MMA* v. 6, 284.

including over 5,000 to Buenos Aires.⁴² Among the 144 captives disembarked in Buenos Aires from the patache *São João Bautista* in January 1621 was “one black man who says he is called Quiloance,” likely a Spanish corruption of the Kimbundu *kiluanji*, a title of nobility for Ndongo leaders that meant “warrior” or “conqueror.”⁴³ The remaining 143 captives inventoried by local officials were listed by their Catholic baptismal names; Quiloance’s insistence in being referred to by his Kimbundu title suggests his pride in his elevated status. The *armador* (voyage financier) of *São João Bautista* was a forty-year-old “captain of a fortification in the kingdom of Angola” named Miguel Brandão da Serra, who embarked 92 *piezas*; other participants in the voyage included an *alferes* (ensign) named Domingos Carballo, who embarked four *piezas*. While the records do not specify on whose account Quiloance was embarked, it is likely that he was captured following an incursion on Ndongo or an allied polity.⁴⁴

The 1623 establishment of a customs house in the interior city of Córdoba (present-day Argentina), an important way station *en route* to northern and western destinations in Upper Peru and Chile, coupled with growing Dutch predations on Iberian shipping in the South Atlantic during that decade has led many scholars to presume that the Buenos Aires branch of the slave trade dropped off severely in the 1620s.⁴⁵ Dutch corsairs captured 545 Iberian vessels between 1623 and 1626 and occupied Bahia (1624-1625), attacked Luanda, and seized Elmina (1637) on West

⁴² John Thornton, “The African Experience of the ‘20 and Odd Negroes’ Arriving in Virginia in 1619,” *WMQ* 55, No. 3 (1998), 424; Heintze, “Angola nas garras do tráfico,” 15-22; Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 80-81. On Buenos Aires slave arrivals, see Appendix A.

⁴³ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 8, fol. 34v-39r, “Negros,” Buenos Aires, 23 enero 1621. See definition of “kiluanji” in António de Assis Junior, *Dicionário kimbundu-português, linguístico, botânico, histórico e corográfico* (Luanda: Argente, Santos, e Companhia, 1900).

⁴⁴ AGI Esc 880C, Pieza 10, fol. 183r-188v, “Traslado de la avença que mando hazer el señor governador...,” 16 octubre 1621.

⁴⁵ Alice Piffer Canabrava, *O comércio português no Rio da Prata, 1580-1640* (Belo Horizonte: Itaitia, 1944), 167; Stuart B. Schwartz, “Panic in the Indies: The Portuguese Threat to the Spanish Empire, 1640-50,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 2, 1-2 (1993), 169.

Africa's Gold Coast. Alice Canabrava's influential *O comercio português no Rio da Prata* stated that the Dutch effectively isolated the Río de la Plata "from supply regions in Europe, Africa, and Brazil," citing a 1627 letter from a Jesuit priest who described the waters as so infested with pirates that the year he arrived "no more than one single ship landed [in Buenos Aires], which brought monks from the order of San Francisco."⁴⁶ A number of studies presumed a similar decline across the Iberian Atlantic, buttressed by recent research on Cartagena and Veracruz that indicates a decline in slave traffic between 1626 and 1640.⁴⁷

One of the most significant findings in the research presented here is that slave traffic to Buenos Aires did not diminish greatly in the 1620s. Rather, steady numbers of slave vessels are known to have arrived every year from 1619 through 1640, including twenty-three vessels from Angola, ten of unknown provenance, and forty-one from Brazilian ports. Royal *visitas* hint that slave traffic was greater during this period than was reported in royal officials' ledgers. Various witnesses testified that over 8,000 slaves arrived under the watch of Governor Francisco de Céspedes (1624-1631), though royal officials noted the entry of only 2,346 slaves.⁴⁸ While there is little to support an overwhelming shift to the South Atlantic beginning in the 1620s, evidence from Buenos Aires is suggestive of the increasing importance of Rio de Janeiro as a destination for the trans-Atlantic trade. After 1627, no vessels are known to have departed from the captaincy of Pernambuco, while eight departed from Bahia. In contrast, thirty vessels originated in Rio de Janeiro. Though slave traffic to Cartagena in the Caribbean, Spanish America's largest slave port, outpaced that to Buenos Aires for the majority of the pre-1640 era, in 1640, only a single slave vessel is known to have landed in Cartagena, while nine vessels landed in Buenos Aires, including

⁴⁶ Canabrava, *O comércio português*, 174-175; Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 110-112

⁴⁷ Wheat, "The First Great Waves," 19-20.

⁴⁸ AGI Esc 868A, Pieza 1, fol. 1r-2r, 25 junio 1639.

four from Angola. The decline of Cartagena's port activity is even more striking when one considers that this central distribution point for Nueva Granada and Peru received slave shipments from a number of African regions, including the Cape Verde Islands, Senegambia, São Tomé, and Lower Guinea, as well as Angola, while, as far as we know, prior to 1640, Buenos Aires received direct shipments exclusively from ports in Brazil and West Central Africa.⁴⁹

Further Muddle: Transatlantic and Intra-American Slave Voyages in the Early Modern Atlantic World

The intra-American, sometimes called the intercolonial or regional, trade in slaves, has received less attention than its trans-Atlantic component. Scholars have assumed that large demand for enslaved Africans in Brazilian sugar-producing captaincies meant that few slaves were sold outside of Brazil. However, according to Joseph Miller, African captives “headed to a single Brazilian captaincy must, finally, be understood as moving through no more than an intermediate stage in a complex redistribution to further destinations” in the Brazilian interior or in other captaincies.⁵⁰ David Eltis and David Richardson speculated that “as many as 25 percent of Africans arriving in the Americas quickly entered the intercolonial traffic.” Enriqueta Vila Vilar nodded to contraband trade between Spanish American hubs and Dutch and English-controlled ports in the Caribbean, though her focus was on transatlantic slave voyages. However, Vila Vilar referred to intercolonial trade as the traffic in “ladino” (acculturated) slaves, implying that captives who arrived from other American ports were less “African” than those who crossed the Atlantic directly for Spanish America.⁵¹ Recently, Alex Borucki, David Wheat, and David Eltis identified Curaçao,

⁴⁹ On Cartagena, see Wheat, “The First Great Waves,” 19-20.

⁵⁰ Miller, *Way of Death*, 492.

⁵¹ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 158-159.

Barbados/Jamaica, and Brazil as the “three major branches” of a thriving intra-American trade to Spanish America, and calculated that 136,100 captives were ultimately transshipped from Brazil to the Río de la Plata, mostly from Rio de Janeiro.⁵² The broad scope of their article as well as the source materials they used—two pieces of royal officials’ correspondence—did not permit a detailed analysis of the role of Brazilian ports: as we shall see, during the early period, Bahia was also a significant source of slaves to Buenos Aires.

Due to gaps in early modern port records, it is difficult to distinguish “transatlantic” from “intra-American” slaving vessels. In his recent study of the intercolonial slave trade to British America, Gregory O’Malley defined an intra-American voyage as “a shipment between two American locales for which the enslaved people on board changed vessels or owners (usually both) after their arrival in the Americas,” excluding voyages that acquired captives in Africa but which made sales in multiple American ports.⁵³ The *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (TASTD)* uses a slightly different rubric. To designate a voyage as “transatlantic” in the case of unspecific port records of arrivals in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century Havana, David Eltis established a qualifying benchmark of 140 captives, the average number of slaves transported to Havana from that dataset on vessels known to have crossed the Atlantic; he classified smaller cargoes arriving in Havana as local, or intra-American. Eltis noted, however, that other contributors to the database may have used different criteria.⁵⁴ At present, a number of voyages that appear on *TASTD* are not definitively known to have acquired captives on the African coast but were included in the database merely because of the numbers of captives they brought to American ports.

⁵² Borucki et al., “Atlantic History and the Slave Trade to Spanish America,” 440, 444.

⁵³ O’Malley, *Final Passages*, 18.

⁵⁴ David Eltis, “Construction of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Sources and Methods,” www.slavevoyages.org, 2010 (accessed May 26, 2015).

When we classify early Iberian slaving voyages only according to the crude contrast of “transatlantic” or “intra-American,” we risk oversimplifying complex, multi-stage voyages in both categories. Nearly one quarter of the slave voyages that departed from Angola and terminated in the Río de la Plata called in at least one Brazilian port prior to their arrival in Buenos Aires, for weeks and sometimes months prior to their arrivals in Buenos Aires (Table 2.2). Our evidence of these Brazilian layovers has primarily surfaced through investigations of “forced arrivals,” as royal officials usually recorded only a vessel’s last known port of departure (if any was documented at all). As investigations were not conducted (or have not survived) on each vessel that landed in Buenos Aires, this practice was probably much more widespread than the figure of 22 vessels suggests. Regardless of whether a voyage originated in a Brazilian port or paused there en route from Africa, they would have trans-shipped or carried through almost entirely African cargoes. No more than a handful of the captives transported on either one throughout the one-hundred-year period under examination here were born in the Americas.

Stopover	Number of vessels
Bahia	1
Espírito Santo	1
Rio de Janeiro	19
São Vicente	1
TOTAL: 22 vessels	

Table 2.2 Brazilian stopovers of 22 vessels that originated in Angola
 Source: Kara D. Schultz, “Slave Arrivals in Buenos Aires, 1586-1680.” Unpublished dataset.

Vessels that reached the Río de la Plata stopped over on the Brazilian coast both for practical reasons and for surreptitious ends. The shallow, sandbar-ridden, and wind-plagued River Plate was best navigated between the summer months of December to March; countless travelers, soldiers, royal officials, and traders reported “wintering” in a Brazilian port prior to setting sail for Buenos Aires.⁵⁵ Vessels traveling from the Iberian Peninsula around the Horn to Chile as well as the Río de la Plata also needed to stop somewhere to replenish provisions, and the Río de la Plata was on their way.

The lower duties that traders owed on captives sold in Portuguese colonies were another incentive for sojourning in Brazil en route south. For much of the seventeenth century, contractors for the export duties imposed in Angola charged merchants embarking captives for Spanish American destinations 7000 *reis* per *pieza*, while those who declared a destination on the Brazilian coast owed between 3000 and 4000 *reis* per *pieza*.⁵⁶ In January and February of 1623, the *avençadores* (guarantors) of four slaving vessels, carrying a combined total of 1,046 *piezas*, claimed to be sailing for Bahia, but all four landed in Buenos Aires in the following months.⁵⁷ Angolan officials routinely complained about their inability to exercise fiscal control over the slave trade; such deception was so widespread and losses to the Royal Treasury so great that beginning in the latter part of the seventeenth century, contractors levied the same fees on all captives

⁵⁵ See, for example, the case of a Spanish armada en route to Chile in AGI Esc 880C, Pieza 12, “Testimonio de los autos que se hizieron en el Puerto de Buenos Ayres sobre la arribada que a el hizo Francisco de Mandozana con su nao almiranta nombrada el Buen Jesus...” Buenos Aires, 1623.

⁵⁶ Heintze, “Angola nas garras,” 19; Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes*, 70; Arlindo Manuel Caldeira, “Angola and the Seventeenth-Century South Atlantic Slave Trade,” in *Networks and Trans-Cultural Exchange: Slave Trading in the South Atlantic, 1590-1867*, ed. David Richardson and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 107-109. For examples of complaints, see Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Conselhos Ultramarinos (hereafter, “AHU-CU”), Angola, Cx. 2, Doc. 170, 20 febrero 1625.

⁵⁷ AHU-CU, Angola, Cx. 2, Doc. 207, “Oficio do Rui Dias de Meneses ao Conselho da Fazenda,” Luanda, 12 junho 1626. For a table detailing the voyages, see Kara D. Schultz, “‘The Kingdom of Angola is Not Very Far From Here’: The South Atlantic Slave Port of Buenos Aires, c. 1585-1640,” *Slavery and Abolition*, 435.

exported through Luanda, regardless of their destination. Regardless of Angolan officials' efforts to police tax fraud, it is estimated that as many as half of the vessels that set sail from Angola managed to avoid tax collectors altogether.⁵⁸

Once cleared out of Luanda, voyage investors sought to lessen the burden of import taxes owed in American ports, which were also lower in Brazilian ports. Since duties were not collected at all on captives being transported from one Brazilian port to another, a number of transatlantic vessels claimed on their arrival in Buenos Aires to be intra-Brazilian slavers. For example, in 1624 shipmaster Gonçalo Mateos declared that his vessel, *Nossa Senhora do Rosario*, had set sail from Rio de Janeiro for the southern Brazilian port of São Vicente but that storms and a lack of provisions forced him to land in Buenos Aires. Upon further investigation, Buenos Aires officials discovered that Mateos' vessel had indeed departed from Rio de Janeiro, but that his emergency landing in Buenos Aires was actually the continuation of a transatlantic voyage that had originated over a year earlier in Luanda.⁵⁹

Stopovers on the Brazilian coast enabled shipmasters to acquire additional documentation that (sometimes) lent a veneer of authenticity to their claims of an "accidental" arrival in Buenos Aires. Shipmaster Gonçalo Mateos presented Buenos Aires officials with a departure certificate signed by customs officials in Rio de Janeiro that inventoried the salt, wine, and captives he purported to have been carrying to São Vicente. Unfortunately for Mateos, royal officials' discovery that he was also carrying correspondence addressed to various residents of the Río de la Plata on board his vessel, *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, raised suspicion.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Caldeira, "Angola and the Seventeenth-Century South Atlantic Slave Trade," 111.

⁵⁹ On transatlantic slavers seeking cover as intra-American voyages, see O'Malley, *Final Passages*, 132-133.

⁶⁰ AGI Esc 849A, "Despacho Gonçalo Mateos su pataje por nombre Nuestra Señora del Rosario..." Rio de Janeiro, 7 henero 1624.

While the evidence presented here has focused on the Río de la Plata, traders who plied Caribbean routes adopted similar strategies to avoid taxation and prosecution. In April 1611, a Luanda-based factor named Francisco de Mar advised his correspondent in Lisbon, João de Argomedo, that in light of the recent number of legal suits levied against contraband traders (“*muchas caussas muy lizitas*”), it was better to sail for the Spanish Caribbean “via Pernambuco” rather than direct from the African coast. De Mar confided to Argomedo that one of his vessels, scheduled to depart Luanda within the coming days, would be following the Pernambuco route and that its shipmaster had received orders to divide the captives among four vessels upon their arrival in Brazil, presumably to disguise the illicit voyage as several smaller regional voyages that were blown off course.⁶¹ Similarly, in a 1620 letter to one of his associates in Buenos Aires, slave trader Manuel Rivero reported that a “quantity of *piezas*” had recently passed through Ilha Grande, an island off of the coast running west from Rio de Janeiro, in order to avoid paying the higher duties levied in Spanish American ports, including one Angolan vessel planning to sail for Cartagena de Indias.⁶² Further research in the lawsuits investigating “forced arrivals” in other Spanish Caribbean ports will likely yield additional evidence of transatlantic slavers that made surreptitious stopovers on the Brazilian coast.

Most significantly, stopovers on the Brazilian coast *en route* to Spanish America facilitated the spread of African slavery decades before the rise of large-scale plantation agriculture in the 1630s. Whether vessels called at Brazilian ports so that voyage investors could shuffle captives onto smaller craft, forge documentation, replenish provisions, or acquire trade goods, few departed without selling some proportion of the captives they had on board, if only to cover costs in port.

⁶¹ AHU, CU, Angola, Cx. 1, Doc. 18, “Carta de Francisco de Marques a Joan de Argomedo,” Luanda, 22 abril 1611.

⁶² AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 9, fol. 80r-81v, “Carta de Manuel Rivero a Nicolas Ribero,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 noviembre 1620.

For example, in 1621, shipmaster Lorenzo Gomes turned over 45 *piezas* to the *alfândega* (customs house) of Espírito Santo (the present-day city of Vitória) to pay duties on the captives and sold an additional five *piezas* to cover departure taxes, the cost of foodstuffs, and ship repairs. Gomes then proceeded to Buenos Aires, where he sold 220 of the remaining captives.⁶³ Taken together, these scattered examples evince how much of the early slave traffic to Brazil was a by-product of the Spanish American *asiento* trade.

Even ports viewed as minor within the history of the plantation-oriented early African slave trade to Brazil were important centers for organizing and outfitting slaving voyages. *Bandeirante* expeditions in the captaincy of São Vicente undertaken in search of mineral wealth and Indian slaves were supported by profits from the African slave trade. For example, Affonso Sardinha, a São Paulo resident and Portuguese military captain, led several punitive expeditions into the hinterlands of the captaincy of São Vicente; he also owned a sugar *trapiche*, or mill (ostensibly operated by indigenous and African slaves) in the captaincy, had business contacts in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Bahia, and loaned vessels to traders for voyages to Angola.⁶⁴ Merchant correspondence is replete with references to constructing vessels and outfitting slave voyages to Angola in São Vicente.⁶⁵

Even when considering the period of the Iberian Union (1580-1640), scholars have tended to examine the Spanish and Portuguese American slave trades separately. In the introduction to

⁶³ AGI, Esc 880C, Pieza 10, “Nuestra Señora de Nacaret maestre Lorenzo Gomez bino de Angola,” Buenos Aires, 1621; AGI Esc 868A, Pieza 1, fol. 61r-84r, “Certificacion de Antonio de Linares depositario General de la Ciudad de la Trinidad en que zertifica los navios q an entrado desde el ano 1612 asta este de 1639 asi de arriado como de aviso lo que trujeron y se remato en almoneda por su magd y entero en el RI Caja de este puerto,” Buenos Aires, 1639; AGI Charcas 123, s/n, “Expedientes de revocacion por el Tribunal del Consulado de Lima de las licencias concedidas por Buenos Aires a navios de registros [1661-1690].”

⁶⁴ José Carlos Vilaradaga, *São Paulo na orbita do império dos Felipes: Conexões castelhanas de uma vila portuguesa*, » (Ph.D. dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010), 114-118, 219.

⁶⁵ See, for example, AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 9, fol. 80r-81v, “Carta de Manuel Rivero a Nicolas Riveiro,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 noviembre 1620.

Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos, Enriqueta Vila Vilar asserted that the slave trade to Brazil “followed channels [that were] completely distinct” from those to Spanish America.⁶⁶ Recent studies of the slave trade to Pernambuco, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro have acknowledged that these ports served as *entrepôts* for other slave markets within Brazil, but rarely have scholars addressed the possibility that some of the captives who landed in Brazil were sold outside of Portuguese America.⁶⁷ From the perspective of slave traders, as David Wheat has described, American ports were “interchangeable, competing markets” and readily accessible “alternative slave trade destinations within the same system.”⁶⁸ Upon reaching American soil, merchants made decisions about where to sell captives next, sometimes radically altering their plans. For example, merchant Pantaleon Marquez Correa traveled as far as Córdoba with a consignment of slaves he had purchased in Angola before deciding that, rather than facing a saturated market in Potosí, his original destination, he would sell the captives in Lima. Correa continued overland to Valparaiso, in the territory of Chile, where he embarked the captives on a vessel bound up the Pacific coast for El Callao.⁶⁹ The recurring evidence of spontaneously altered plans, once again, underlines the

⁶⁶ Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamerica*, 15.

⁶⁷On movements between Brazilian ports, see Joseph C. Miller, “The Numbers, Origins, and Destinations of Slaves in the Eighteenth-Century Angolan Slave Trade,” in Joseph E. Inikori and Stanley L. Engerman, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economies, Societies, and Peoples in Africa, the Americas, and Europe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992); Daniel Barros Domingues da Silva and David Eltis, “The Slave Trade to Pernambuco, 1561-1851,” in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 95 and Alexandre Vieira Ribeiro, “The Transatlantic Slave Trade to Bahia, 1582-1851,” in *ibid.*, 130. Intra-American trading is given brief attention in Alex Borucki, David Eltis, and David Wheat, “Atlantic History and the Slave Trade to Spanish America,” *The American Historical Review* 120, no. 2 (2015), 444, 450-451, though the authors note that just “a handful of pre-1641 transatlantic slave voyages stopped in Brazil (usually Pernambuco or Maranhao) before disembarking captives in Venezuela, Jamaica, Honduras, and Veracruz.” The general assumption is that intercolonial trading in the Spanish Americas began in response to the end of the Portuguese *asiento* period/Iberian Union, and that residents of Spanish colonies excluded from Portuguese sources relied upon Dutch and English provisioners. Marisa Vega Franco, *El tráfico de esclavos con América: Asientos de Grillo y Lomelin, 1663-1674* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanas, 1984).

⁶⁸ Wheat, “Afro-Portuguese,” 44.

⁶⁹ Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos en Córdoba de Angola a Potosí, siglos XVI-XVII* (Córdoba: Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1966), 24-25.

importance of examining arrival data, rather than relying on contracts drawn up on the European continent (and even in Africa or the Americas), in order to understand the realities of the Atlantic slave trade.⁷⁰

Although all Brazilian ports were intricately integrated with the Spanish American slave trade, each had its own relationship to Buenos Aires (Table 2.3). Vessels arriving in Buenos Aires are known to have originated in every major Brazilian port city, but most departed from just two ports: Salvador da Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. Of 133 vessels known to have called in, or departed from Brazil, 71—more than half—arrived from Rio de Janeiro. By contrast, Bahia, the second largest Brazilian hub for the Buenos Aires trade, supplied 28 vessels, or almost half of the remainder of all intra-American voyages. Rio's importance as a South Atlantic hub is enhanced when we consider that an additional 19 vessels originating in Angola and two vessels originating in Bahia stopped over in Rio de Janeiro prior to landing in Buenos Aires. Just ten vessels (8 percent) are known to have originated in Pernambuco, surely owing to the region's greater distance from the Río de la Plata and use by African slavers heading for the Caribbean. Further, no vessels carrying slaves are known to have departed from Pernambuco after 1627, suggesting how Dutch occupation (1630-1654) cut off a supply of slaves to Spanish America. Though Bahia was attacked in 1624 and occupied by the Dutch until 1625, the Portuguese evidently resumed its slave trade shortly after they returned, though perhaps not on the same scale: in 1627, two vessels sailing from Bahia landed in Buenos Aires, disembarking 40 and 86 captives, respectively; six more disembarked captives in the following decade.⁷¹ In 1639, four ships from Bahia were in the port

⁷⁰ Wheat, "The First Great Waves," 8-10.

⁷¹ For the vessels, a bark and patache both named *San Francisco*, see AGI-Charcas 123, "Expedientes de revocacion por el Tribunal del Consulado de Lima de las licencias concedidas por Buenos Aires a navíos de registros [1661-1690]"; AGI-Esc 881A, fol. 26v-27v, "Testigo Manuel Rivero Correa," Buenos Aires, 22 May 1627; AGI-Esc 868A, Pieza 1, fol. 61r-84r, "Certificación de Antonio de Linares depositario General de la Ciudad de la Trinidad en

with slaves to exchange for “meat and foodstuffs for the Royal Armada sent to recover Pernambuco.”

First Known Port of Origin	Number of Vessels (% of total)	Known captives disembarked
Rio de Janeiro	71 (53)	4775
Bahia	28 (21)	1738
Pernambuco	11 (8)	671
São Vicente/Santos	4 (3)	141
Brazil, port not specified	20 (15)	968
TOTAL	133	8283

Table 2.3 Origin of 133 intra-American slaving vessels arriving in the port of Buenos Aires, 1586-1680

Source: Appendix B

The Dutch seizure of Luanda (1641-1648) appears to have disrupted the flow of captives to Brazil and the Río de la Plata more than Dutch occupation of Portugal’s American possessions. This interruption reflected the Angolan, rather than Brazilian, origins of most of the captives who reached Buenos Aires. No transatlantic vessels from Angola are known to have arrived from 1641 to 1648 and none from Brazil until 1663, when Dutch merchants introduced 56 slaves of diverse origin embarked in Bahia, including 6 “Guinea blacks” and one “male slave from India.” We know little of arrivals from American origins after 1640, but this lack of evidence may be a deliberate omission on the part of crown officials hesitant to openly condone trade with Portugal following its independence from Spain. In 1671, the governor of Bahia, Alonso Furtado de Castro, may have admitted as much when he emphasized that the two regions had a “long friendship” in a letter that

q zertifica los navios q an entrado desde el año 1612 asta este de 1639 asi de arriuada como de aviso lo que trujeron y se rremato en almoneda por de su magd y entero en la RI Caxa de este puerto,” 1639.

he sent to the governor of the Río de la Plata, Joseph Martínez de Salazar, along with a consignment of 76 captives. Though few other vessels are known to have arrived with captives from Brazil, between 1670 and 1672 alone, at least seven vessels from Bahia, Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, and Santos, all supposedly en route to Angola, called first in Buenos Aires with merchandise and captives to barter, suggesting both the continued relevance of goods from the Río de la Plata in facilitating African commerce and the broader reach of South Atlantic networks.

While the direct linkages between West Central Africa and Rio de Janeiro continued, although with brief disruptions, throughout the seventeenth century, the substantial variety of ethnonyms and racial descriptors of the captives acquired in Brazil further nuances our picture of the bilateral relationships between Brazilian and African port cities that a recent wave of South Atlantic historiography has emphasized.⁷² Their origins varied widely. In 1624, shipmaster Goncalo Mateos embarked slaves in West Central Africa and sailed from Luanda to Rio de Janeiro on the vessel *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*. In Rio de Janeiro, Mateos sold an unknown number of slaves and embarked at least 66 captives described as “*piezas de Guinea*” before proceeding to the Río de la Plata. Among the 133 captives landed in Buenos Aires were a 23-year-old woman known as “Andrea Fula,” indicating Fulani/Peul origins in West Africa, and a young man named Andres, described as a “*negro ladino*,” suggesting his familiarity with Iberian culture and probable fluency in Spanish or Portuguese.⁷³

⁷² On intra-American trade disrupting bilateral relationships, see O’Malley, *Final Passages*, 14-15. For a similar observation based on an analysis of late 18th/early 19th century Bahian communities in Benguela, see Mariana P. Candido, “Transatlantic Links: The Benguela-Bahia Connections, 1700-1850” in *Paths of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Interactions, Identities, and Images*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2011), 246. On Rio de Janeiro-Angola connections, see Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes*; Selma Pantoja, “Três leituras e duas cidades: Luanda e Rio de Janeiro nos Setecentos,” in Selma Alves Pantoja and José Flávio Saraiva, eds. *Angola e Brasil nas rotas do Atlântico sul* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Bertrand, 1998), 99-126.

⁷³ AGI Esc 849A, fol. 137r-138r, “Declaracion de Andres negro ladino que es de la partida de los negros que binieron en el nabio el Rosario maestre Gonçalo Mateos,” Buenos Aires, 21 junio 1624; *Ibid.*, fol. 137r-138r.

Beyond facilitating the circulation of African and African-descended individuals from different provenance zones, vessels that departed Brazil for Buenos Aires also transported indigenous captives. One vessel owned by Captain Lope Vazquez Pestaña that weighed anchor from an unspecified Brazilian port in 1593 transported 44 unregistered “Guinea blacks” and “one Indian slave woman from Brazil,” one of 47 indigenous Brazilian captives known to have been trafficked to Buenos Aires before 1604.⁷⁴

The early slave trade to Brazil—like that to Spanish America—was not necessarily a specialized and high-volume commerce designed to furnish laborers for entrenched plantation economies. Rather, enslaved Africans reached many parts of Brazil as parts of mixed cargoes of goods and commodities and provided the basic labor in towns, households, and rural properties needed to sustain human life. We might view Brazilian coastal settlements, as dynamic factories on the American side for the trade of slaves, the construction of vessels, and the provisioning of ships rather than as incipient or failed plantation zones. But if the Atlantic slave trade to Brazil was, for the first four decades of the seventeenth century, ostensibly secondary to that of Spanish America in terms of the number of African captives ultimately landed, Spanish sources reveal the extent to which the economy of the slave trade was vital to a number of Brazilian port cities by the early seventeenth century, beyond Pernambuco and Recife.

⁷⁴ Archivo General de la Nación (Argentina) Sala XIII, 42-7-2, fol. 19v-20v, “Libro Thesoreria de el ano 1586 hasta el de 1604.” Actual figures were probably much larger. On the sale of Indians from the Brazilian northeast in the Spanish Caribbean, see Wheat, “The Afro-Portuguese Maritime World,” 48-51. On “Indians from other parts” in 17th-century Buenos Aires, see AGI, Charcas 27, “Carta del gobernador Don Diego de Gongora a S.M.,” Buenos Aires, 1622.

Children in the Early Atlantic Slave Trade

In May of 1622, following a Portuguese military victory in Angola against Kasange, governor João Correia de Sousa sent his field commander, Pero de Sousa, to the Luanda hinterland to summon all of the “*sobas macotas*, who are counselors, *tendalas*, and *maculuntos*, ministers of his war” as well as four “*gingos*,” or “heirs apparent to Kasange” to the coast in order to swear vassalage to the Portuguese and select a successor to the deceased *soba*. Next, Correia de Sousa sent for the “people of each *soba*, both warriors as well as women and children.” Over 1200 individuals were marched to the coast and, along with the Kasanze elites, seized and dispatched to Bahia on five slaving vessels. Despite the large number of women and children among the captives—over half of the 628 survivors of the Atlantic crossing were women and a quarter were probably under the age of twelve—Sousa was reluctant to waste such a large number of “*pesas*” and proposed that that captives might best be employed in “the gold mines of São Vicente.”⁷⁵

⁷⁵ “Carta de João Correia de Sousa ao Marquês de Frecilha,” 3 junho 1622 in *MMA*, vol. VII, 17-24. AHU-CU, Angola, cx. 2, doc. 125, “Relação de Manuel Maciel Aranha discriminando o número de escravos que o governador e capitão-general de Angola, João Correia de Sousa, enviou para o governador geral do Brasil, Diogo Mendonça Furtado, distribuidos por cinco navios, contabilizando os que foram entregues em Angola e os que morreram na travessia,” Bahia, circa 1623. The incident is partially recounted in Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 136-137, though Heywood and Thornton were unable to locate the original document in the AHU, which appears to have been stored in a 19th century “Caixa de Angola” until a recent reorganization of the archive’s Angola section. Joseph Miller’s “Drought, Disease, and Famine,” cites this document from Kátia de Queiros Mattoso in order to comment on the large numbers of children in the slave trade during periods of famine. On the 17th-century hunt for mineral wealth in the captaincy of São Vicente, see José Carlos Vilaradaga, “As controvertidas minas de São Paulo (1550-1650)” *Varia História* (Belo Horizonte) 29, no. 51 (2013), 795-815.

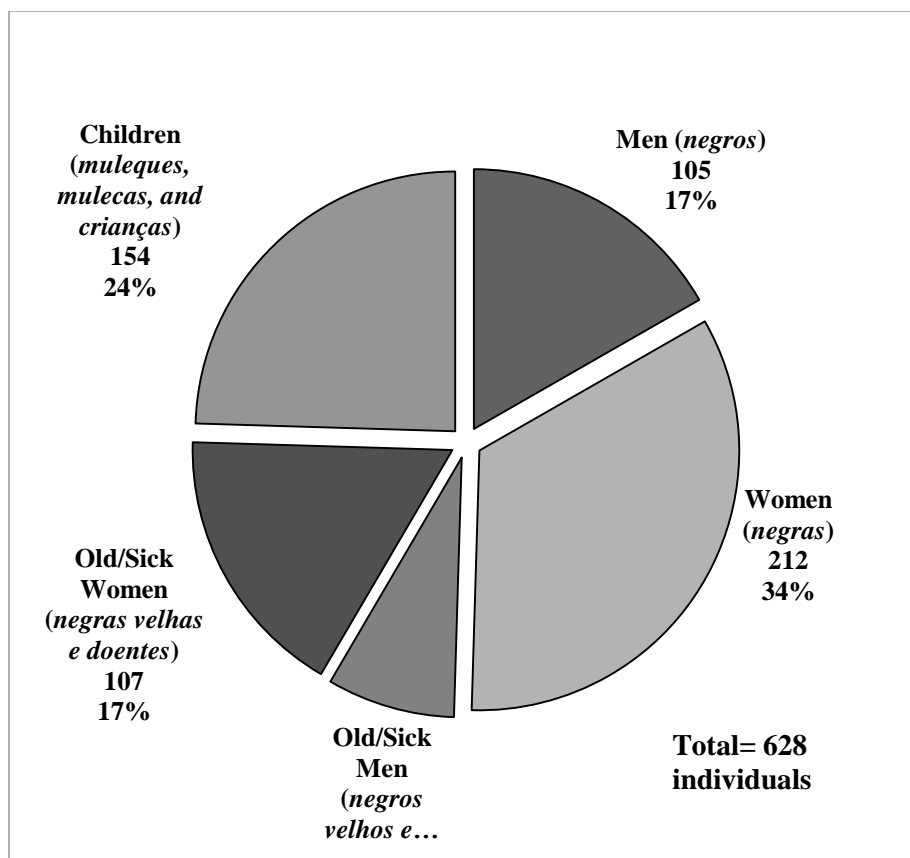


Figure 2.3 Kasange war prisoners disembarked in Bahia, c. 1622

Source: AHU, CU, Angola, Cx. 10, Doc. 25, ant. 1623.

Though the Royal Council mandated the *sobas*' and their people's re-embarkation to Angola because they judged them to have been wrongfully enslaved, like Correia de Sousa, Lisbon officials did not want to "lose the profits the Royal Treasury could have from [the sale of] these slaves." Instead, they suggested trans-shipping the captives to "Maranhão and other parts" (perhaps of Brazil, or in Spanish America) to avoid the possibility that "together they might attempt some disturbance."⁷⁶

⁷⁶ It appears that the governor of Brazil re-embarked at least some of the *sobas* for Angola, but it is unknown whether they survived a second ocean voyage. "Carta régia aos governadores de Portugal," 9-12-1622 in Brásio, *MMA VII*, pp. 64-64 and "Carta régia ao governador do Brasil," Lisbon, 17-12-1622 in *Ibid.*, p. 66; "Carta régia ao Vice-Rei de Portugal," 15-12-1624, in *Ibid.*, 204, "Repatriamento dos sobas e pretos enviados para o Brasil," Lisbon, 17-1-1624 in *Ibid.*, 197-198; "Carta régia aos governadores de Portugal," 05-02-1622, in *Ibid.*, 332.

The fates of the 628 men, women, and children transported to Bahia are not known. However, the large numbers of children and women among the Kasange war prisoners sent to Bahia on four separate vessels was not unique to that port. Rather, it was a broader phenomenon of the early Atlantic trade that distinguished the captives shipped from Angola from those from other ports.⁴⁷

Date of arrival in Buenos Aires	Vessel name	Region of slave purchase	Known captives landed	Number of children	Percentage of children among known captives landed
13 December 1612	<i>NS de las Nieves</i>	n/d	244	59 <i>muleques</i>	24%
17 March 1613	<i>Santa Cruz</i>	n/d	9	2 <i>muleques</i>	22%
7 January 1623	<i>El Angel Sant Rafael</i>	Angola	275	43 <i>crias</i>	16%
3 April 1623	<i>La Bendicion de Dios</i>	Angola	160	32 <i>crias</i>	20%
5 April 1623	<i>NS del Rosario</i>	Angola	116	52 <i>crias</i>	45%
6 April 1623	<i>NS de Candelaria</i>	Angola	31	7 <i>crias</i>	23%
20 April 1623	<i>NS del Rosario</i>	Angola	122	52 <i>crias</i>	43%
3 May 1623	<i>La Concepción</i>	Bahia	39	7 <i>crias</i>	18%
1632	Unnamed patache	Brazil	50	“many children among them”	n/d

Table 2.4: A selection of slave vessels arriving in the port of Buenos Aires with significant numbers of child captives

Source: Kara D. Schultz, “Slave Arrivals in Buenos Aires, 1586-1680.” Unpublished dataset. Full list of sources following Appendices A and B.

⁴⁷ Luis Felipe de Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes: Formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul - Séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000), 109. On the sale of children in North American locales that received few Africans or were relatively marginal, see O’Malley, *Final Passages*, 126, 129, 173.

Warfare, kidnapping, and tribute payment, which were ultimately more cost-effective methods of providing captives for cash-poor South Atlantic markets than purchase at slave fairs, had a direct impact on increasing the number of women and children transshipped to the Americas, rather than the “prime,” perhaps male adult *piezas* that slavers sought. Imbangala armies may have been another large source of children on Atlantic markets. The Imbangala recruited adolescents for their warrior bands and were said to kill infants and any others who might hinder their progress; as David Wheat has suggested, Imbangala may have turned to selling those whom they deemed unfit to join their ranks rather than killing them.⁷⁷

Vassals also frequently proffered children as the tribute imposed on them. In 1639, Portuguese official Fernão de Matos de Carvalhosa complained that *baculamentos*, or yearly tribute payments, were supposed to be made in “*peças de Indias*,” which he defined as “blacks between 20 and 22 years” old, but were often paid in “infants, small children and useless old people” who had little market value. *Sobas* in particularly war-ravaged areas may not have had adult slaves on hand to offer as tribute and may have had to sacrifice members of their own lineages to meet their treaty obligations. Alternatively, *sobas* may have retained more valuable members of society to sell to traders rather than offering them “voluntarily” to Portuguese officials.

In many regions of Africa, children were sold during periods of famine.⁷⁸ Pieter Van den Broecke, a Dutch merchant who participated in four trading voyages to the western coast of Africa during the early 17th century, noted this desperate move. When he put into Portudal, a Serer port town in Bawol, on the Senegalese coast, to barter for hides in January 1606, Van den Broecke found that locusts had provoked a famine so severe that “parents were forced to sell their children

⁷⁷ Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 96-97.

⁷⁸ Joseph C. Miller, “The Significance of Drought, Disease, and Famine in the Agriculturally Marginal Zones of West-Central Africa,” *JAH* 23, no. 1 (1982), 28.

for their subsistence and maintenance.” On a separate voyage to Cabo Verde, Van den Broecke reported that he purchased “a lovely girl of about ten years of age from her mother for the price of 130 lb of rice, and the mother acted so coolly, as if it were not even her child.” Indeed, the woman may not have been the girl’s mother, but merely posing as such in order to convey the title necessary to effect the transaction. Van den Broecke alleged that countless other parents “came to offer me the virginity of their children, aged seven or eight years, for a couple of handfuls of rice.” The shock and perhaps disgust Van den Broecke hoped to provoke in his European readers to illustrate the severity of famine also offered a justification against any qualms about the morality of enslaving young Africans by suggesting how the children who inevitably filled ship holds were otherwise condemned to starvation and lives of immorality, unwanted by their own families.⁷⁹

The settlement of previously uninhabited or sparsely populated arid coastal regions like the area around Luanda Bay in response to the advent of the Atlantic slave trade, as well as the massive quantities of food necessary to feed settler populations, temporary visitors, captives being held for eventual boarding, ship crews, and the slaves below decks provoked a massive crisis in food supplies in Luanda. New crops, such as manioc, were introduced to feed slave populations but provided little nutrition.

A royal decree issued in Madrid on 12 July 1624 declared that import fees were not to be collected on “*muleques* [boys] less than seven years old.” Traders making declarations before customs officials routinely inflated the numbers of young children that they intended to land in the Americas, passing younger children as *crias* [children under seven years]. In a letter to his associate Alonso Martinez, a Dominican friar in Buenos Aires, trader Manuel Rivero informed

⁷⁹ Pieter Van den Broecke’s *Journal of Voyages to Cape Verde, Guinea and Angola (1605-1612)*, translated and edited by J.D. La Fleur (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2000), 28, 38.

him that on an upcoming voyage, his associates would follow the example of one Domingo de Castro and “avoid damages” by passing “*muleques*,” prepubescent children over the age of seven, “as *crias*,” and that one Domingo de Castro “passes them like that,” who would be accompanying a “little boy in religious vestments” (*molequillo de falda*) by the name of Domingo.”⁸⁰

Even if we assume that traders fudged the ages of prepubescent captives by insisting that they were seven years old or younger before royal officials in Buenos Aires, given that most slaves arriving in the Americas had been in captivity for at least a year after traveling from the interior to the coast, and then enduring the Atlantic crossing, the average child's age at the time of enslavement must have been very young indeed.⁸¹ In this particular case, Domingo's young age is particularly striking, as he had been living among the friars of the order of Santo Domingo and receiving training from them for quite some time. Linda Newson and Susie Minchin have suggested that some traders may have deliberately chosen to purchase children because of their exemption from taxes.⁸² It was only in October 1689 that Angolan governor João de Lencastre ordered that “only toddlers still being breastfed by their mothers were to be dispatched as children free of duty;” but tax evasion probably continued.⁸³

The trade of so many women and children from Angola bore similarities to Iberian slaving precedents and to contemporaneous patterns of enslavement. Women and children comprised over 70% of the captives shipped from Arguin to Lisbon during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, drawing on a trade controlled by Arab and Berber merchants, as well as including a

⁸⁰ AGI, Esc. 880B, fol. 77v-79v, “Carta de Manuel Rivero a Padre Fray Alonso Martinez de la Orden de Santo Domingo,” Rio de Janeiro, 20 November 1620.

⁸¹ On one year from enslavement to departure from the coast, see Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes*, 147; Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica*, 146.

⁸² Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 64.

⁸³ Caldeira, “Angola and the Seventeenth Century South Atlantic Slave Trade,” 132.

significant proportion of Guanche captives (indigenous to the Canary Islands). In Brazil and the Río de la Plata, women and children continued to be a significant portion of coerced indigenous laborers.⁸⁴

Conclusion

The data presented in this chapter establish that Buenos Aires was a major hub for the slave trade in the southern Atlantic throughout the seventeenth century. Up to 1640, the trade was most tied to Portuguese military raiding in West Central Africa; after 1640, Dutch and English traders introduced captives from diverse provenance zones.

Buenos Aires' status as both a way-station and a final destination in the South Atlantic challenges scholarly assumptions that "slave imports followed the changing geography of cash crop, especially sugar, production."⁸⁵ The Río de la Plata, the Peruvian interior, and many Brazilian captaincies did not produce agricultural commodities on large scales for European markets at this time. Yet enslaved laborers, and the economy of the slave trade, were vital to these spaces, including the Río de la Plata, by the late sixteenth century. Moreover, attention to the large numbers of women and children in the enslaved cargoes not only prompt us to reconsider the roles of African labor in much of South America, but also the age and gender imbalances that the rise of the Atlantic slave trade created in West Central African societies.

Rather than viewing Spanish American and Portuguese American (i.e. Brazilian) slaving as two separate trades, it is more historically accurate to conceptualize a single Iberian trade with

⁸⁴ Antonio de Almeida Mendes, "Child Slaves in the Early North Atlantic Trade (XV-XVI centuries)," in *Children in Slavery: A Global History*, Vol. 1, *Children and Slavery through the Ages*, ed. Suzanne Miers and Joseph C. Miller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009): 19-34; Barbara Ann Ganson, *The Guaraní under Spanish Rule in the Río de la Plata* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

⁸⁵ David Eltis and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva, "Introduction," in David Eltis and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva, *Networks and Trans-Cultural Exchange: Slave Trading in the South Atlantic, 1590-1867* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 10.

multiple, overlapping branches, including one that linked a southern wing from Buenos Aires/Rio de Janeiro/Santos to the African coast and another northern branch that tied Pernambuco/Bahia to Angola, Upper Guinea, and the Spanish Caribbean. These routes overlapped, and traders frequently shifted opportunistically among them. Although more voyages en route to Buenos Aires ultimately stopped over (or originated) in Rio de Janeiro, Bahia continued to send ships carrying slaves to Buenos Aires throughout the seventeenth century.

These interlinking patterns from the South Atlantic also reveal the complexity of early modern slaving voyages and the strategic choices involved in their execution, choices that went beyond a simple distinction between “intra-American” and “transatlantic” voyages. Slaving voyages were complex, multi-stage operations.

CHAPTER III
FROM PORT TO POTOSÍ:
SLAVE TRAILS OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN INTERIOR

The 141 West Central African men, women and children who were disembarked from the vessel *Nuestra Senora de la Concepcion* faced uncertain futures following their sale in Buenos Aires in February 1619. In August of that year, Antonio del Pino, Manuel Rivero's business partner (and soon-to-be father-in-law), and two slave traders, Simon de Acosta and Baltazar Martinez de Acosta, boarded 50 of the captives onto a small craft, the *San Ambrosio*. The group sailed up the Paraná River to Santa Fe, where they transferred their human cargo to carts and headed toward the silver mining city of Potosí. The captives jostled for space alongside copies of *Don Quixote*, knives, soap, silk fabrics, chickens, beans, spices, and other trade goods loaded and sold along the way. The caravan made it as far as the Andean *pueblo* of Espiritu Santo de Caysa before being apprehended by royal authorities. The captives were then auctioned in the city of La Plata (present-day Sucre, Bolivia); though the outcome of these auctions is unknown, the petition of one Alvaro Pinto two and a half years later for the return of several of the captives offers a glimpse into their further dispersal. One man, known as "Gaspar sinbo of the Bolo nation," remained in the custody of the *alcalde ordinario* (alderman) of La Plata, Luis de Saavedra, and had traveled as far as "Monxoro," while a woman named Lucrecia had been sold to Barblosa Cisa, a "*mestiza* woman who wears Indian clothing." Lucrecia was then sold to an individual Pinto could only remember

had the last name “Cevallos,” who took her to Cuzco.¹ The enslaved Africans who passed through the port at Buenos Aires were thus passed on throughout the vast area of southern America.

Africans entered Potosí with the city’s first settlers in 1545. Until the foundation of Buenos Aires more than three decades later, African slaves largely followed the same routes as those destined for Lima. From the Iberian Peninsula and, increasingly, the African coast, vessels sailed to Nombre de Dios, on the Isthmus of Panama. Slaves were disembarked and crossed the isthmus by muleback and on canoes, before being reloaded onto vessels on the Pacific coast and sailing for Callao or Arica. Captives then climbed into the Andes Mountains.² The voyage via Brazil or Buenos Aires from the West Central African coast meant slightly less time at sea (thus offering Angolan slavers a substantial savings on the astronomical prices that provisions commanded in Luanda). It was also less risky, particularly as pirates preyed in the Caribbean and northeastern Brazilian waters in search of Spanish silver fleets. Panamanian merchants sought to block the South Atlantic route via Buenos Aires, complaining that “a great quantity of contraband clothing and blacks” entered “such that all Potosí and the provinces of the Charcas are filled.”³ Expediency, however, prevailed. The ascent into the Andes from the eastern side via Tucumán was more gradual and thus lessened the risk of altitude sickness.⁴

But if the maritime and terrestrial routes of the South Atlantic were slightly more advantageous from the perspective of profit-hungry slave traders, they offered little respite for the enslaved themselves. By all accounts, the conditions faced by the hundreds and thousands of

¹ AGI Esc 848C, Pieza 2, “El Real fisco Francisco Gonzales Pachecho denunciador con Simon de Acosta,” La Plata, 1621; Pieza 3, “El S^o Fiscal de S.M. con Antonio del Pino, portugués S^o Denuncia de varias piezas de esclavos y mercaderías,” La Plata, 1621.

² Inge Wolff, “Esclavitud y tráfico de negros en el Alto Perú,” *Historia y cultura* 4 (1981), 46-47.

³ AGI Panamá 30, N. 48, “Carta del cabildo [de Panama] a S.M.” 25 junio 1610.

⁴ Jane Mangan, “Potosí,” in Amanda Warnock and Toyin Falola, *Encyclopedia of the Middle Passage* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007) 310.

enslaved Africans who disembarked on the banks of the Río de la Plata each year were no better than those found in Cartagena de Indias, Pernambuco, Jamestown, or Veracruz. Perhaps the captives would have refreshed for a few months in and around Buenos Aires. A select number of the captives then faced a journey of over 1,000 miles, sometimes on rickety barges, on muleback, and much of it on foot or crowded into a cart with other captives and trade goods. It was a journey that traversed four vegetational zones, including grasslands, forest, desert, and alpine; and varying climates. Captives slept in makeshift tents; in cart beds; in animal pens; and under the open sky. Slave routes to the interior claimed the lives of countless souls; many more fled on foot.

The Buenos Aires-Potosí circuit was probably the most prolonged, and most dangerous, slave route in the Americas. A vast hinterland and a variety of individuals participated in the slave economy of the South Atlantic. Portuguese may have been more numerous on the maritime routes that linked Buenos Aires to the African and Brazilian coasts, but a host of people from other backgrounds were responsible for the further transport and repeated sales of Africans throughout the South American interior. In spite of the slave trade's prominence in these seventeenth-century economies, few studies have examined the trade to the interior. Most studies have either examined African slavery in particular locales, drawing heavily upon notarial records, or end "at the water's edge," ignoring the logistics of transport to the interior and the experiences of many of the enslaved, who faced journeys of varying lengths.⁵ Where studies examine the slave trade of the

⁵ "water's edge," see Gregory E. O'Malley, *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 265. The internal slave trade to Lima receives some attention in Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974) 52-87 and in Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 187-234; on the Río de la Plata, see Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos en Córdoba de Angola a Potosí, siglos XVI-XVII*; Zacarias Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial en el siglo XVII: Buenos Aires, el Atlántico y el espacio peruano* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988); Florencia Guzmán, "Negros, indios, e afro mestizos en el Tucumán colonial: Una aproximación a las identidades étnicas y al dialogo intercultural," in Marisa Pineau et al., *La Ruta del esclavo en el Rio de la Plata: Aportes para el diálogo intercultural* (EDUNTREF, 2011); Liliana Crespi, "El comercio de esclavos en el Río de la Plata: Apuntes para su estudio," *Cuadernos de Historia* 3 (2000), 242-243.

interior, they tend to focus on the period after the legal prohibition of the African slave trade and on redistributions of extant slave populations rather than on earlier years, when the landed diaspora were those who had arrived from Africa. Transport to the interior is characterized as “varied, often makeshift affairs,” a language that undercuts the intricate organization of the entire economy around slave trading.⁶

The discovery of silver deposits at Potosí in 1545 fueled Iberian expansion throughout the southern half of South America. At first, Spaniards relied on indigenous methods for refining silver, filling a perforated ceramic vessel, known as a *guayra*, with fuel and ore into and then placing the vessel on a hillside, allowing the “sloped surface so that downdrafts could raise the temperature of the fire and smelt the ore.” But by the early 1570s, the surface ore had been exhausted and the wood and charcoal needed to run the *guayras* were in short supply, leading refiners to turn to amalgamation, a process by which mercury and salt were mixed with unrefined ore. Amalgamation boosted silver production and, by the early seventeenth century, Potosí alone produced half of all the registered silver in Spanish America.⁷ Through the *mit’a* system, an adaptation of the Inca revolving labor pool, adult men from up to hundreds of miles away were drafted every seventh year to work in Potosí’s mines. Beyond labor concerns, the city’s high altitude (12,000-17,000 feet above sea level), remoteness from the sea (nearly four hundred miles),

The literature on the domestic slave trade in the U.S. South, particularly after the abolition of the African slave trade in 1807, is richer, though as Steven Deyle notes, “by the mid-eighteenth century a small, locally based domestic [slave] trade had also developed” in the U.S. See Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4 and Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Walter Johnson, ed. *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). On the early North America, see O’Malley, *Final Passages*, chapter 4.

⁶ O’Malley, *Final Passages*, 266.

⁷ Peter Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain: Indian Labor in Potosí, 1545-1650* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 16-26; Jeffrey A. Cole, *The Potosí Mita, 1573-1700: Compulsory Indian Labor in the Andes* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1985); Kendall W. Brown, *A History of Mining in Latin America: From the Colonial Era to the Present* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012), 23-24.

barren soils, and cold climate presented formidable barriers to local production and long-distance importation. The Spanish Crown was more concerned with conveying the silver produced at Potosí to the galleons at Callao than with ensuring food supplies or the availability of basic merchandise in the city. A host of local industries sprang up to meet demand in the city. Food, livestock, textiles, and other goods to support Potosí's growing population—which surpassed 100,000 by the early seventeenth century—were supplied by native communities in neighboring valleys and trafficked in from hundreds of miles away. Wine from the Orincata Valley; dried fish and coca leaves from Cuzco; corn, wheat, and cloth from the province of Tucumán; pears from Chuquisaca; and cheese from Paria were carried to the city on llamas and mules. Many of the foodstuffs and other necessities of daily life traded in Potosí were produced by Africans. The centrality of enslaved African labor to the production of foodstuffs, goods, land transport, trade, and artisanal production, rather than any substantial employment of Africans in Andean silver mines—fueled the spread of slavery to Potosí, Tucumán, and the Río de la Plata.⁸

Marketing Captives in Buenos Aires

Sixteenth and seventeenth-century South Atlantic slave merchants relied upon correspondence and word-of-mouth to advertise their enslaved cargos, often in advance of their arrival in Buenos Aires. Writing to his Buenos Aires associate, Luis de Abreu de Albornoz, several

⁸ Gwendolin B. Cobb, "Supply and Transportation for the Potosí Mines, 1545-1640," *HAHR* 29, No. 1 (1949), 25-26, 30-31, 33; Jane E. Mangan, *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosí* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 29-30; Lolita Gutierrez Brockington, *Blacks, Indians, and Spaniards in the Eastern Andes: Reclaiming the Forgotten in Colonial Mizque* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); Kris Lane, "Slavery in the Casa de la Moneda in Seventeenth-Century Potosí," in Mónica Ghirardi, ed. *Territorios de lo cotidiano, siglos XVI-XX: Del antiguo virreinato del Perú a la Argentina contemporánea* (Rosario: Prohistoria Ediciones, 2015), 101-114. On the Peruvian economic space, see Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *El Sistema de la economía colonial: Mercado interno, regiones y espacio económico* (Lima: 1982); Luis Miguel Glave, *Trajinantes: caminos indígenas en la sociedad colonial, siglos XVI-XVII* (Lima: Instituto de Apoyo Agrario, 1989).

weeks ahead of his planned departure from Rio de Janeiro, Pantaleón Márquez Correa instructed Abreu de Albornoz to contract someone to sew garments for the captives he had recently purchased in Angola, specifying that the garbs must be “long” because the shipment would not include “many boys” but rather “people [...] tall of body, including the females.” Abreu de Albornoz’s directives to procure more clothing for adults than the children provide further evidence of the prevalence of captives of young ages trafficked in the South Atlantic. Abreu de Albornoz must also secure a “big house well supplied with straw and rush mats on the floor,” to house the captives and twenty carts. Márquez Correa suggested the houses of one “Doña Jhoana;” if her lodgings were occupied, Abreu de Albornoz might ask Jhoan Ramirez or Jhoan de Castro, though Castro’s houses “have more in [their] favor [than those of Ramirez] because [they have] a way out to the countryside,” suggesting that the group intended to sneak out some captives without paying duties.⁹ We might imagine that as Abreu de Albornoz waited for Márquez Correa’s vessel to land in Buenos Aires, he spread the word that several hundred strong, virile captives would soon be on the market.

Counting on continued interest in the interior in purchasing slaves, merchants like Márquez Correa and Abreu de Albornoz formed economic partnerships—called “companies” or “societies”—with multiple associates to transport slaves to buyers there during one year or over several years.¹⁰ For example, in 1597, Pablo de Gúzman, a Córdoba *encomendero*, entered an agreement with Vasco Pinto, the Buenos Aires factor of Spanish *asentista* Pedro Gomez Reynel, to traffic slaves between Buenos Aires and Jujuy, at the entry of the eastern Andean range that led to Potosí. Gúzman agreed to deliver twelve carts to Buenos Aires, along with indigenous servants

⁹ “Carta de Pantaleón Márquez Correa a Luis de Abreu de Albornoz,” Rio de Janeiro, 19 diciembre 1601, transcribed as an appendix in Assadourian, *El Tráfico de esclavos*, 55.

¹⁰ A glimpse into six of these “*sociedades*” in the late 16th and early 17th centuries is provided in Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos*. See also Ceferino Garzon Maceda, *Economía del Tucumán: Economía natural y economía monetaria: siglos XVI, XVII, XVIII* (Córdoba, Argentina: Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1968), esp. 25, 36-37.

and oxen, by Christmas of that year (1597) and each year for the duration of Pinto's tenure as factor. He also agreed to supply 480 yards of *sayal* (a coarse woolen cloth) to make clothing for the slaves, for which Pinto would pay him at the rate of 7 *reales* per yard. Pinto also agreed to cover the costs of all of the food necessary for the captives who would be transported on his account—meat, corn, grain, and whatever else was deemed necessary—at market prices wherever the caravan stopped. Further, Pinto would pay Gúzman a sum of 160 *pesos* for each cart dispatched. If all went according to plan, Gúzman stood to make nearly 2,000 *pesos* on each run to Jujuy, less the paltry wages accorded to the indigenous servants. Gúzman and Pinto's contract did provide some flexibility; if Gúzman arrived in Buenos Aires and Pinto's were not yet in the port, he was free to negotiate with other merchants to transport their slaves to the interior and sell them the cloth.¹¹ A second Córdoba *encomendero*, Tristan de Tejada, also entered an agreement with Vasco Pinto around the same time, though on less advantageous terms. Tejada would furnish 25 carts annually, but Gúzman's carts would receive preferential dispatch, and Pinto was only obligated to buy only 100 yards of *sayal* from Tejada.¹²

Other interested buyers in the interior, usually requesting a slave (or slaves) with specified skills or characteristics, entrusted silver and goods to representatives headed to Angola or Brazil, leaving it to their representative to make transportation arrangements upon arrival in the port. A Córdoba clergyman named Bartolome Lopez de Silva delivered two indigo coverlets, a Moorish shortsword (*terciado morisco*), and twenty bushels of wheat flour to merchant Pedro de Chavez, *en route* to Angola, to purchase “a black woman or blacks” in 1603. The acquisition of an enslaved

¹¹ AHPC, Inventario 9, 1597, fols. 100r-102r, sin fecha, 1597.

¹² AHPC, Inventario 9, 1597, fols. 118v-129v, 22 abril 1597. See also “Sociedad celebrada entre Gabriel Garcia, Alvaro Gonzalez Enriquez y Lorenzo Garces,” Córdoba, 26 de junio de 1594, in Assadourian, *El tráfico de esclavos*, 29-32.

woman was Silva's priority, but Chavez was authorized to purchase multiple captives on Silva's behalf if his trade goods permitted. With the proceeds from Silva's merchandise, Chavez acquired a pregnant woman named Magdalena and her three-year-old son, Mateo. One of Chavez's representatives, Hernán Lopez, traveled to Córdoba to inform Silva that the two captives had been purchased on his account and had arrived in December 1603 on the vessel *Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria*, but that Silva's merchandise had not covered the cost of duties in Buenos Aires. Silva handed over thirty *pesos* to Lopez; several months later, the captives had yet to be delivered to his household. Instead, a Córdoba silversmith named Anton Pérez, who had evidently been able personally to make the trip to Buenos Aires, had purchased Magdalena and her children (she had since given birth to a daughter). Chavez, for his part, was rumored to have fled to Paraguay.¹³ It is not clear whether Silva was able to secure the return of Magdalena and her children, but similar frauds were not infrequent occurrences, underscoring the importance of trust and carefully-drawn contracts to early modern business transactions.

A few buyers interested in purchasing slaves gambled that they would find a ready supply of captives in Buenos Aires, timing their arrivals to coincide with the port's busy sailing season. One Spanish trader, ostensibly hoping to acquire imported cloth, was disappointed to find that none remained in the port and that most of his fellow travelers along the roads to Buenos Aires were headed to the port "mainly to purchase slaves and would [buy] some merchandise if they found it and it was good."¹⁴

¹³ AHPC Escribanía 1, Legajo 15, Expediente 16, fol. 125r-139v, "El Presb^o Bartolome Lopez de Silba con D. Anton Peres sobre una negra," Córdoba, 1604.

¹⁴ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 5, fol. 224r-228r, "Testigo Alvaro Enrriquez natural del lugar de Carvaxales Marquesado de Alcanicas reyno de Castilla la Viexa estante al presente en esta bahía," Bahía, 27 agosto 1619.

Slaves were lodged in a variety of improvised accommodations once disembarked in Buenos Aires. While perhaps a rudimentary barracks existed near the Riachuelo, most captives were accommodated in tents or in local residents' kitchens, smokehouses, animal pens, and other outbuildings while investors in their voyages sought out potential buyers or prepared for journeys to the interior. Local officials concerned with preventing the spread of disease from new arrivals sometimes ordered the removal of captives to makeshift tents, covered by an animal hide, on the city outskirts.¹⁵ In the oppressive humidity of the summer months, when most slave ships anchored, the swampy banks created an insalubrious environment. Gonçalo Rodrigues Minaya, a slave ship master who landed in 1614, successfully petitioned to move his captives, many of whom were suffering from scurvy (*mal de loanda*), to a drier location further inland because "many die on me each day because of the water and mosquitoes and horseflies" where they were lodged. Minaya's concern was probably less with alleviating the suffering of his ailing captives than with minimizing losses to mortality among his investments. For the sickest of the captives, the move to the other side of the river was to little avail: within a few days, ten men and women, two adolescent boys, and two girls were buried in the cemetery of the Iglesia Mayor of Buenos Aires.¹⁶ On another occasion, port officials disbursed sixty-six *pesos* and three *reales* to local priests to cover the costs of burials and new garments for nine slaves who had been confiscated by local officials and died while in deposit. Their clothing was "so dirty and revolting on account of the illnesses from which

¹⁵ "Acuerdo del cabildo del 14 de junio de 1621" in *AECBA Tomo V, Libro III-IV: Años 1620, 1621, 1622 y 1623* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos de la Penitenciaría Nacional, 1908), 79-80. On slaves being lodged in traders' backyards in the Caribbean slave port of Cartagena and in African ports of departure, see Jane Landers, "The African Landscape of Seventeenth-Century Cartagena de Indias and Its Hinterlands," in Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt D. Childs, and James Sidbury, *The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 149-150. On disease conditions in Cartagena, see Linda A. Newson and Susie Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 235-296 and Pablo F. Gómez, "Bodies of Encounter: Health, Illness, and Death in the Early Modern African-Spanish Caribbean (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2010), 62-68.

¹⁶ AGN, Registro de Navios, Leg. 1, Exp. 4, fol. 20r; 23r-30r, "Gonsalo Rodrigues Minaya maestre del navío nuestra sa de gracia," 18 marzo 1614.

they died” that officials could “see it with their eyes.” Churchyard enterrment was not unusual for captives in transit who had received the sacrament of baptism and whose passing had not escaped the attention of local religious authorities; unbaptized captives were buried in unmarked graves in the *pampas* outside the city limits, as was one of the nine captives from the same vessel.¹⁷

In the mid-17th century, one observer estimated that at any given time, “blacks [whom] the traders had to sell” occupied more than twenty local residents’ homes.¹⁸ Some captives went unsold for months and even years due to their youth or advanced ages, poor health, or market conditions. Young age was probably why a “little black boy of three or four years,” who had arrived from Brazil in March 1612 on the ship *San Benito*, was not sold until January 1613—nearly eight months after his arrival. It appears that the five other captives on board that vessel, including, perhaps, the young boy’s mother, had been sold earlier.¹⁹ Like any opportunistic businessperson, slave traders sometimes deliberately withheld slaves from the market in order to squeeze out every last possible peso of profit. For example, in 1622, Governor Diego de Góngora boasted that he had sold many “sick and healthy *pieças* of seven years or older” for “high prices” (between 140 and 150 pesos each), but added that he refrained from placing two “lots” on the auction block because he believed that they would fetch a higher price at a later date.²⁰

Royal officials had three methods at their disposal for effectively “legalizing” the sale of captives who had been introduced illegally to the Rio de la Plata and filling the coffers of the royal

¹⁷ See reference to the burial of a “negro ynfiel” (e.g. non-Catholic black man) versus eight other deceased captives from the same vessel, who were laid to rest in the churchyard in AGI Contaduría 1876, Buenos Ayres 4, fol. 36r, “Liquidazion y rreparos hechos en las q^{tas} del Contor Don Pedro de Alvarado y thesorero Don Francisco de Quintana Godoy 13 de mayo 1658 hasta 24 de marzo 1664,” Buenos Aires, 1664.

¹⁸ AGI Esc 868A, Primero quaderno, fol. 7r-13r, “Testigo Francisco Fernandez Varroco,” Buenos Aires, 28 junio 1639.

¹⁹ AGI Charcas 38, s/r, n. 51, “qtas de negros del ano de 1612=1613=en manos del s^r Pedro de Ledezma para q las den la conta de Yndias y hagase bean y junta con las q alla estan del puerto de buenos ayres,” Buenos Aires, 1613.

²⁰ AGI Charcas 27, R. 11, N. 160 “Carta de Don Diego de Góngora a S.M.,” Buenos Aires, 6 junio 1622.

treasury (and their own pockets). In a proceeding known as a *decomiso*, slaves and merchandise that arrived without requisite licenses were “confiscated” by *porteño* authorities, placed in deposit, and sold at a “public” auction. As numerous would-be buyers complained, these auctions were hardly fair or inclusive. The chief bidders were often voyage investors or their associates, who snatched up the “best” captives in large lots and resold them to interested parties at comfortable mark-ups.²¹ Captives were sold with a license or without—described as “with ears” (*con orejas*) or “without ears” (*desorejadas*)—with those who had licenses fetching higher prices. Many slaves who arrived never appeared on the public auction block and were instead sold in traders’ homes, a constant complaint of prospective buyers hoping for a bargain.²²

A second official intervention in the complex negotiations that moved slaves through the port and toward the interior were *manifestos*. These provided opportunities for Buenos Aires *vecinos* who had purchased slaves under the table within the previous year or so to register them with local authorities and pay a fee for licenses that provided legal title and authorized their further sales in “the Kingdom of Peru”—basically anywhere in Tucumán, Chile, or Upper Peru.²³ Depending on the age and health of the slave, this fee could range from 57 to 72 pesos.²⁴ One governor was alleged to have distributed these licenses in exchange for a very small sum, paid directly to his pocket, in addition to collecting as many as one hundred pesos on the sale of nursing

²¹ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 8, fol. 60r-62r, “Sentencia del gobernador,” Buenos Aires, 1621.

²² AGI Esc 880A, fol 30v-32v, “Testimonio de Antonio Ferreira,” Santa Fe, 17 mayo 1615. *Licencias* (licenses) in Buenos Aires appear to have been similar to the *fe de entrada* as described by Bowser: “an official document certifying that the proper duty had been paid, and that the black was part of a shipment authorized under the *asiento*,” in Bowser, 61-62.

²³ Jean-Arsène Yao, “La trata de los negros en el Río de la Plata: restricciones legales y contrabando en la época colonial,” in *La ruta del esclavo en el Río de la Plata: Aportes para el diálogo intercultural*, ed. Marisa Pineau (Buenos Aires: EDUNTREF, 2011), 178-181.

²⁴ AGI Esc 880A, Pieza “Negros manifestados en virtud del auto del g^{or} Her^{do} Arias Mtan mas de 11U ps^o para su mgd,” Buenos Aires, 28 julio 1615.

infants as well as toddlers.²⁵ Slave traffickers often purchased licenses detailing captives with similar characteristics or of ages similar to those they transported.²⁶

Fraud was so prevalent in the issuing of licenses that royal officials often called upon slaves to testify on their arrival and ethnic origin in order to help determine whether their licenses had been falsified. Thirty men, women, and children apprehended in San Juan de la Frontera (east of the Andes) testified through Francisco, a slave of the *sargento mayor* who was “*ladino* in our Spanish language,” that they had “arrived in the port of Buenos Aires three years ago,” holding up three fingers to emphasize their point, and that they had been divided among several *estancias* (cattle ranches) awaiting their transport to Chile. One can imagine that slave traffickers coached captives on what to say to officials, likely with the assistance of an interpreter. Seeking further clarification, officials questioned Luis, another slave in the service of the *sargento mayor*. Though Luis had been in Santiago de Chile for a year and a half, he recognized a number of the new arrivals as his fellow shipmates. Luis explained that his shipmates had been embarked on the accounts of various traders, and therefore had been trafficked from the port of Buenos Aires at different times.²⁷ The slaves’ licenses indicated that they had been sold at auctions of the captives from vessels that hailed from Angola and Rio de Janeiro, though two of the adults—Pedro and Juan—had been confiscated from local residents’ homes.²⁸

The prevalence of false licenses has significant ramifications for our ability to determine precise provenance zones for many of the captives traded in the Río de la Plata during this period.

²⁵ See AGI Esc 903A, Pieza 1, “Visita de las caxas reales de la ciudad de la Santissima Trinidad de Buenos Aires y sobre arribadas de navios a su Puerto...,” esp. fol. 44v-45r.

²⁶ On this practice in Cartagena, see Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru*, 62.

²⁷ AGI Esc 928C, “El fiscal de Su Magestad contra Diego Lopez de la Carrera que se den por perdidos los negros que trjo del Puerto de Buenos Ayres a este Rreyno por las causas alegadas por el dicho fiscal,” fol. 1v-4r, Santiago de Chile, 6 marzo 1624.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 14r and 46r, “nueve esclavos hallados en su cassa descaminadas”

Few inventories or licenses recorded ethnonyms more descriptive than “Angola” or “Guinea,” if they recorded any at all. These omissions reflect both Iberian inability to fully comprehend West Central African identities and traders’ desires to outsmart authorities. When Juan de la Sierra trafficked a number of captives through Córdoba in 1621, one young woman raised the suspicion of local officials when the name that she gave as her own, Ysabel, did not match the name Margarita, assigned on her license. Sierra claimed that Ysabel/Margarita had arrived in Buenos Aires from Pernambuco five years prior and was named Margarita at the time she was auctioned, but that it was normal for Angolan slaves to be baptized “two and three times,” presumably as they passed from trader to trader, and to receive new names each time; her testimony could not be trusted because she was “of little intelligence” and did not know how to measure time in years like most “*gente bozal angolana* (unacculturated Angolan slaves).” Sierra urged officials to refer to the “sign and mark” on her license, which corresponded to the branding that had been seared into her flesh in Angola. Local officials questioned the young woman, who testified through an interpreter (probably the first giveaway that she had not been in the Americas for five years, as Sierra claimed) that her name was Margarita. Margarita stated that she was “from a land that is called Lanpa in the kingdom of Angola” [likely “Lemba”] and that she was transported from Angola to Bahia in the company of her master, a Spaniard. In Bahia, Margarita worked for a priest and his enslaved interpreter (*lengoa*) for a few days. Soon after, Margarita was returned to the Spaniard and taken to Buenos Aires, where she was “given” to Juan de la Sierra. Margarita was not able to recall precisely how long she had been in Buenos Aires, but she explained that “[the blacks] count years by planting seasons (*sementeras*)” and that she “was not in Buenos Aires one *sementera*” before being transported on to Córdoba. Thus, in less than one year, she had had at least three owners. Margarita confirmed that she had given a different name during the “inspection” when questioned

by officials, but did not explain why. Her “mistake” suggests that she continued to use her African name in conversations with her fellow captives, who, as she indicated, were also from West Central Africa. At any rate, “Angola”—the ethnonym listed on Margarita’s license—obscured more specific West Central African identities.²⁹

A *manifiesto* held in May 1633 to collect duties on slaves whose sale had been supervised by Governor Céspedes offers a glimpse into the centrality of the slave trade to Buenos Aires’ economy (Table 3.1). Eighty local residents—nearly one-fifth of the city’s white population—manifested captives, and the presenters hailed from a variety of professions, including a *pulpero*, or owner of a general store/tavern; a priest; and owners of agricultural properties. When one considers that these were only individuals who had purchased captives in the previous year, had enough extra capital to buy licenses, and thus probably intended to sell their captives elsewhere eventually—the figure evokes the ubiquity of slave ownership. The youth of the captives manifested is striking. While most of the 385 captives were male—215 male slaves to 167 female slaves (the gender of three infants was not provided), nearly seventy percent of the males were described as “boys” (*muleques*). Over half of all male captives whose ages were estimated in the list were younger than fifteen. Similarly, slightly more than sixty percent of the female captives were taken to have been under age fifteen. In all, sixty-four percent of the captives manifested by local residents were under age fifteen. Among adult captives, women slightly outnumbered men—63 women to 60 men, suggesting how warfare and tribute collection in West Central Africa disproportionately furnished women and youth for sale in the Americas.³⁰

²⁹ AHPC, Escribanía 1, Legajo 57, Exp 23, “Don Juan Gimenes de Camerano denuncia una negra,” Córdoba, 1621. On “Lanba” as Lemba, see David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2016), fn. 49, pp. 136-137.

³⁰ AGI Esc 903A, Pieza 13, fol. 4v-75v, “Registro de esclavos,” Buenos Aires, 25 mayo 1633.

Classification	Count
Old woman (<i>negra vieja</i>)	1
Women (<i>negra</i>)	62
Men (<i>negro</i>)	60
Adolescent girl (<i>mulecona</i>)	3
Adolescent boy (<i>mulecon</i>)	5
Girl (<i>muleca</i>)	92
Boy (<i>muleque</i>)	143
Little girl (<i>mulequilla</i>)	10
Little boy (<i>mulequillo</i>)	7
Infant (<i>cria</i>)	8 (2 girls, 3 boys, and 3 unidentified)

Table 3.1 Captives manifested by local residents in the port of Buenos Aires, 1633

Source: AGI Esc 903A, Pieza 13, fol. 4v-75v, “Registro de esclavos,” Buenos Aires, 25 mayo 1633.

A single trafficker frequently transported slaves on behalf of multiple traders, whose captives often arrived on different vessels (in order to minimize risk and skirt the threat of prosecution). Departures of caravans may have been delayed as traffickers attempted to reach bargains on captives with differing physical attributes or special skills in order to satisfy their customers. Gerónimo López de Vergara, a *vecino* of Potosí, transported “forty *piezas*,” including “three *crias*,” to the city of Potosí in 1619. In addition to eight captives for his own “service,” Vergara transported a 10-year-old girl name Justa on behalf of Martin de Ormache, a pregnant woman named Antonia for Potosí resident Maria Delgado, a 15-year-old named Juana for “the wife of Pedro de Montalvo,” and ten *piezas* on behalf of Buenos Aires-based Pedro Sanchez.³¹

Between pre-arranged buyers and individuals who descended to the port to purchase people, demand was usually high enough to sell captives within a reasonable time after their arrival. But in the year 1622, evidently, the arrival of a record number of captives (a minimum of

³¹ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 5, fol. 637r-640v, “testigo Ger^{mo} Lopez de Vergara hombre que dixeron llebar partido de negros,” Jujuy, 18 noviembre 1619.

2,000, though the actual number of captives who disembarked was probably much larger) saturated markets; as one resident of Buenos Aires observed, “not as much silver came to this port from Peru as in past years.” Investors in several slaving voyages negotiated with soldiers headed to Chile to help transport the captives over land. The soldiers promised to take a “very indirect” route to Chile from Córdoba to avoid the authorities. To the Spanish Crown’s notoriously underpaid soldiers, trafficking slaves would have been a welcomed opportunity to make enough money to live on.³²

Outfitting Caravans

The conditions of overland transport in the Río de la Plata, Tucumán, and Upper Peru were longer and more arduous than those developed across Panama. From Cartagena, in the Caribbean, to Portobello, slaves traveled by ship, a journey that took about nine or ten days. To cross the Isthmus of Panama, slaves either traversed an eighteen-league mountain trail or navigated the Chagres River to Venta das Cruces, before continuing their journeys by mule back. Depending on the mode of transport, crossing the Isthmus could take between four days and two weeks, before the slaves were boarded onto vessels for the Peruvian port of Callao.³³

By contrast, terrestrial journeys in the Río de la Plata and Tucumán took months. The *carreta*, the low, two-wheeled cart widely used for transport in the seventeenth-century Río de la Plata, was made entirely of wood; it had an arched roof, which was covered with animal hides to provide captives and cargo with nominal protection from the elements. The bearing surfaces had to be greased daily to prevent excessive wear, and a carpenter, usually enslaved, accompanied

³² “AGI Esc 928C, Pieza 1, fol. 156r-159v, “El fiscal de su magestad contra el Sargento mor Rui de Sossa y otros que trujeron negros de buenos ayres...” 27 noviembre 1623. On slave arrivals in 1622, see sources described in Appendix A.

³³ Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 187-216. See also Enriqueta Vila Vilar, “Las ferias de Portobelo,” in *Aspectos sociales en América colonial de extranjeros, contrabando y esclavos* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 2001), 41-103.

most journeys to repair the inevitable wear and tear. When Pedro de Bustamonte freighted five carts to Mendoza in 1623, he specified that his associate, Fernando Bravo, was not to load each cart with more than sixty *arrobas* (roughly 1,920 pounds) of merchandise; if transporting slaves, “[no more than] ten and a sack of food” were to be loaded.³⁴ Food, probably a basic mash of ground grains, varied depending on the region through which individuals were passing, supplemented by fish when available; rhea; and wild game. Rather than weighing down carts with foodstuffs, some caravans drove livestock for slaughter. One Córdoba resident supplied 25 heads of cattle to be used “for the maintenance of the slaves,” in addition to draft animals, for a journey from Córdoba to Mendoza in 1600. The contract specified that ten cattle would be slaughtered *en route* and that the rest would be consumed in Mendoza, presumably as the captives awaited sale.³⁵

A number of factors, including geographic and climactic conditions; illness; slave flight; and the ability of traders to secure the necessary provisions and lodging along the way, affected the lengths of overland journeys. The distance from Buenos Aires to Potosí was around 535 leagues, or over 1,500 miles. The average caravan could expect to cover between ten and fourteen miles each day, thus a round-trip journey between Buenos Aires and Potosí took the better part of one year. However as on the maritime routes, in which crew and passengers disembarked upon reaching desired destinations along the way, caravan operators worked only segments of the entire route. Often, the only individuals forced to complete the trek were the captives themselves.³⁶

³⁴ AGI Esc 928C, unmarked pieza, 233r-235r, “Escriptura de Fletamento,” Buenos Aires, 23 agosto 1623. Another agreement for “10 slaves per wagon” can be found in AHPC, Inventario 9, 1597, fol. 100r-102r between General D. Pablo de Guzman and Captain Vasco Pinto.

³⁵ AHPC, Inventario 13, fols. 162r-165v, 2 julio 1600.

³⁶ The carrying capacity of the carts used to transport enslaved Africans and merchandise throughout the Rio de la Plata suggests that they were somewhere in between the size of the medieval Spanish *carreta* and the 18th century *carro* used in Argentina; the ubiquitous term for “cart” in 16th and 17th century documentation analyzed in this chapter was “*carreta*.” On carting in Spain, Argentina, and Mexico, see David R. Ringrose, “Carting in the Hispanic World: An Example of Divergent Development,” *HAHR* 50, no 1 (February 1970), esp. 33-42; and the descriptions in Concolorcovo: *El lazarrillo: A guide for inexperienced travelers between Buenos Aires and Lima, 1773*, trans.

Slave ships overwhelmingly landed in Buenos Aires during the summer, with peak numbers of vessels arriving in December, the height of the southern hemisphere summer heat and humidity. However, the summer season was not ideal for traversing the humid *pampas*, as it was the rainiest; in the winter, the desert regions of the north and west were at their driest, severely limiting available pasture for the animals on which transport depended. Traders aimed to leave Buenos Aires during the spring (August to November); if planned correctly, they would arrive at the foot of the Andes by the summer, when the snow melted enough to enable their ascent north to Potosí or, if approaching from the east, west in the direction of Santiago de Chile. Regardless of the season in which caravans departed, the lack of potable water continually threatened their success. According to one priest who made the journey in the early seventeenth century, caravans often traveled “sixty or seventy leagues” between settlements, treks on which they found “so little water that people and livestock risk death.” Watering holes were often “flooded and odorous gullies where many animals drink,” and evidently also defecated; even taking advantage of these unwanted sources, it was not uncommon to travel two days between them.³⁷

Riverine transport up the Paraná River to Santa Fe (before heading west in carts to Córdoba, the route followed by Simon de Acosta and his associates, discussed at the beginning of this chapter) or further north to Asunción was similarly unbearable.³⁸ Twenty or perhaps more captives were shuffled onto barges made of timber, where their only protection from the elements was a

Walter D. Kline (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), 90-91; Reginaldo de Lizarraga, *Descripción del Perú, Tucumán, Río de la Plata y Chile*, ed. Ignacio Ballesteros (Madrid: Historia 16, 1987), 417. French traveler Acaete du Biscay took 63 days to reach Potosí from Buenos Aires in 1658; we can imagine that caravans transporting dozens and even hundreds of enslaved people took much longer to complete the same journey.

³⁷ P. Provincial Pedro de Oñate quoted in Canabrava, *O comércio português*, 40-41. See also the description in Pedro de León Portocarrero, *Descripción del Virreinato del Perú* (Lima: Universidad Ricardo Palma, 2009), 93. Information drawn from Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial*, 31; Madaline Nichols, “Colonial Tucumán,” *HAHR* 18, no. 4 (1938), 461-485; and Canabrava, *O comércio português*, 25-42.

³⁸ Du Biscay, *An Account of a Voyage*, 24.

small canopy of animal hides. Though barges often had some kind of sail, nearly all of their maneuverability in the silty, sandbank-ridden Paraná River depended upon the efforts of indigenous and African rowers. These craft frequently ran aground and it could take the entire crew “between three and five days” of round-the-clock labor to extricate a vessel from an unexpected shifting sandbar.³⁹

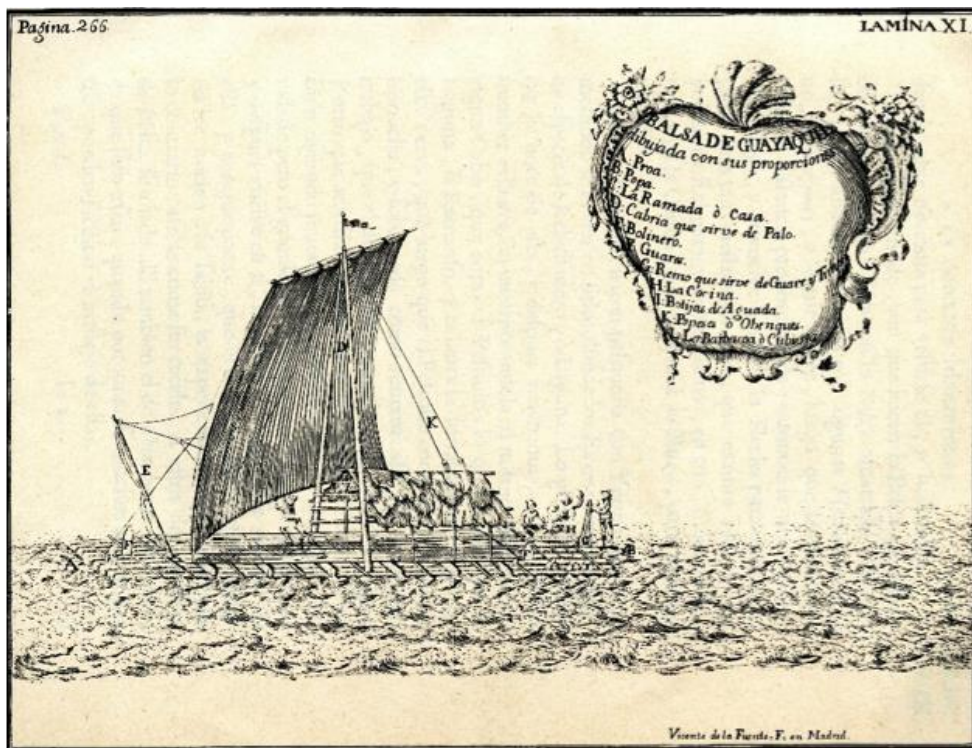


Figure 3.1 18th-century drawing of a *balsa* in Guayaquil, Ecuador, similar to some of those used to navigate the Paraná River.

Source: Antonio de Ulloa and Jorge Juan, *Relación Histórica del Viaje a la América Meridional, hecho de Orden de Su Majestad Católica para medir algunos Grados de Meridiano Terrestre...* (Madrid, 1748).

³⁹ On fluvial transport in Argentina, see Juan Carlos Garavaglia, *Mercado interno y economía colonial* (Mexico City: Editorial Grijalbo, 1983), 427–467; Ramón José Cárcano, *Historia de los medios de comunicación y transporte en la República Argentina*, vol. I, n.d., 222–240. Captain Juan Francisco Aguirre quoted in Garavaglia, 435–436.

Otherwise, when carts arrived at a river crossing, sacks and trunks were first loaded on the rafts, made of cattle hides stretched out over a wooden base, then, passengers were placed in the middle and guided across by indigenous carriers. The carts were ferried across on casks or forded by livestock. Conveying all of the people, draft animals, and goods across a river could take days.⁴⁰

Slave caravans paused at population centers for a few days' rest while traders procured treatment for sick captives. If captives remained ill beyond an appointed day, the caravan proceeded without them. One priest sold three men and one woman from Angola to a Córdoba resident in 1599, specifying that the woman, named Andrea, was in the house of Captain Garcia Barata at the time of sale, presumably recuperating from an illness, and that her buyer was entitled to a refund if she died before he was able to take possession of her.⁴¹ Some of the captive women were pregnant and gave birth along the way. In 1624, a trader *en route* to La Plata sold a Córdoba resident an enslaved woman "of the Angola land" named Esperanza and her newborn son, Miguel. The notary reported that one-month-old Miguel had been baptized, but that it was too early to discern whether he was "black or mulatto" (i.e. whether his father was European or African), acknowledging as a matter of course the particular violence that enslaved women endured on the middle passage.⁴² Esperanza and Miguel's sale in Córdoba, rather than the Upper Peruvian markets to which their trader was bound, suggests how some traders may have sold off weak or very young captives, retaining only the hardiest for the rigorous ascent up the Andes. Nonetheless, we have evidence that two five-year-old boys, both named Francisco, and a pregnant woman named

⁴⁰ Biscay, *Journey from Buenos Aires*, 130-132.

⁴¹ AHPC, Inventario 12, fol. 114v-117v, 22-X-1599

⁴² AHPC, Inventario 40, fol. 219r-220v, 3-X-1624.

Antonia, all identified as Angolan, were in Jujuy in November 1619 awaiting transport to Potosí, along with 46 other West Central Africans ranging in age from 10 to 35 (see Appendix D).

The poor conditions under which many captives were transported and high death tolls that plagued routes to the interior are highlighted in a 1598 lawsuit initiated by slave trader Pedro Sánchez Valenzuela against a Portuguese doctor named Asencio Telles. On a stopover in Córdoba, Valenzuela had hired Telles, who affirmed that he had practiced medicine in Lisbon as well as on the Spanish royal armada and in Brazil, to treat seven of his captives, all suffering from shooting pains (*puntada*) in their stomachs. A barber named Geronimo de Miranda administered Telles' prescribed treatment, placing hot cloths on the bodies of the afflicted in the region of their pain and bleeding them three or four times a day. Within a few days, unsurprisingly, all of Telles' patients had died.

Valenzuela accused Telles of misdiagnosing the slaves' illness by ordering the bloodletting that had ultimately led to their deaths; his failure to take the captives' pulses or examine their urine led Valenzuela to suspect that he was not a licensed doctor as he had proclaimed, but rather a less trained practitioner, a "barber and surgeon." One fellow slave merchant, Estacio Garcia Robayo, reported that he had seen "many slaves" in a hospital in Potosí suffering from the same illness as Telles' and asserted that the correct treatment was hot cloths on the region of their pain alone, not bloodletting. According to Garcia, the slaves had fallen ill because they originated in a "hot [land], Guinea and this one is the opposite and cold." Another witness speculated that the slaves fell ill because they had arrived as late as July, the height of the winter season when "this city is very cold." One resident observed that the deceased all had "white foam emanating from their mouth, from which one could infer that they all died from the same illness." Similar illnesses were evidently shared by many of the Africans trafficked through Córdoba; that same resident,

obviously confident in Telles' medical expertise, requested that Telles perform an autopsy on the body of one of the deceased "so that from here on we can have knowledge of the illness that kills the blacks." Telles refused to do so without a payment of one hundred pesos.

Other testimonies suggest that the slaves' high mortality was not entirely due to the barbarous medical care they received, but resulted rather from their meager rations and lack of suitable clothing and lodging. Valenzuela refused to give meat to his captives "because of the sickness that was spreading" among them; instead, he distributed a paltry seven ears of corn daily to the slaves who walked alongside the wagons and wheat porridge to the ill. Some of the captives slept outside in the open air, while others slept "in the corner of a chamber with very little straw." A few captives were provided with sheepskin coverlets, and a few of the sickest had wool clothing, but the rest of the captives went without. Illnesses ran rampant among slave caravans. Telles pointed out that six of Valenzuela's captives whom he did not treat had died and that Valenzuela left the captives "on the floor, naked, without any comfort" and refused to follow Telles' recommendations regarding adequate food and clothing. Telles added that "if I were able to cure the illnesses of every sick person in the world, which naturally is impossible, all the kings and princes of the world would seek to have me in their service." Other witnesses alleged that Telles was a local angel of death, having administered a purgative to Dona Maria Pereyra that made her so sick that her teeth fell out, and having bled a "*negra*" in the service of Sebastian Herrera for a stomachache, from which she also died. Though, perhaps, bloodletting was ineffective in the case of the captives treated by Telles, it remained in use in Cordoba.⁴³

⁴³ "Pedro Sánchez de Valenzuela contra Ascencio Telles Rojo," Cordoba, 1598. The first 100 folios of the case, once housed in Córdoba's Archivo de Tribunales and now in the Archivo Historico de la Provincia de Córdoba, are missing from the volume in which they were originally bound (or perhaps never made it to binding). A transcription of several depositions taken during the case can be found in Feliz Garzon Maceda, *La medicina en Córdoba: Apuntes para su historia, Tomo I* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos Rodríguez Giles, 1916). What remains of the original can be found in AHPC, Escribanía 1, Legajo 7, Expediente 1. Though ineffective in treating Telles' charges, bloodletting remained in use in Córdoba. In 1604, the Cabildo authorized local barber and swordsmith Manuel de

Multiethnic collaborations were responsible for the successful execution of the overland slave commerce from the Río de la Plata. Though the native peoples contracted to guide caravans, drive livestock, and care for captives perhaps enjoyed marginally better rations than the enslaved Africans whom they transported, they labored under conditions that closely resembled slavery. Desertion was common, both on land and on the river. One indigenous witness reported that slave traders chained an indigenous man named Miguelillo as punishment for his failure to report the flight of guide “Juan ladino,” who refused to cross the Andes.⁴⁴ The frequency of Indian desertions of caravans led some traders to take precautions against them. When Manuel Gomez hired two Indian men to accompany him from Córdoba to Buenos Aires in 1622—one from “the coast near Buenos Aires” and the other from Córdoba—he agreed to pay each a monthly salary of four *pesos* for the duration of the trip. In the case that the native of the Plata basin escaped upon their arrival in Buenos Aires, Gomez would owe Vera for the months he was in his service and a penalty of 20 pesos. Unlike the men contracted by Gomez, many other contracts specified no further remuneration than new clothes and the promise of Christian instruction and medical treatment.⁴⁵

Places to camp out along the way were often arranged ahead of time. Known as “*tambos*,” the Quechua word for the inns and supply posts along Inca roads, these stopping places could be as simple as the outbuildings of a rural property owned by one of the associates in the joint venture. Gregorio Rodrigues, a customs official in Córdoba, denounced one Rui de Sosa for hiding wagons “filled with clothing” and “some blacks” for whom he had failed to pay duties on his *estancia* in

Fonseca to fix the prices of sword repair at two pesos, bloodletting or beard trimming a Spaniard at one half peso, and bloodletting “an Indian, mestizo, or slave or cutting their beard in his store” at two *reales*. “Arancel de [15 noviembre] 1604,” in *Ibid.*, *Tomo III*, 211.

⁴⁴ AGI Esc 928C, fol. 165v-166v, “yndio ladino em la lengua espanola y se dijo llamar Don Juan de Soc Sua y ser de la encomienda de Don Jeronimo de Ca[b]rera vecino de la ciudad de Cordova,” Buenos Aires, 24 diciembre 1623.

⁴⁵ AHPC Inventario 38, 1622-1623, fol. 74r-v, 18 abril 1622.

1623. Inspectors sent to investigate Sosa's property found only a few barrels of almonds and empty water jugs.⁴⁶ Similarly, Juan de Cabrera referred to inspecting his *haciendas* "in the Sierra of this jurisdiction" and, "arriving at one which is the *tambo*" discovered Dominican clergymen bearing "18 or 19 thousand pesos [worth] of merchandise" as well as seven slaves.⁴⁷ In cities like Córdoba, traders and their associates often rented dwellings as they prepared for the next stage of their journey. In 1600, Tristan de Tejada, an *encomendero* and major slave trader, spent 4,220 pesos on buildings that ringed Córdoba's central plaza.⁴⁸ We might suspect that Tejada intended to use the houses as rental properties for his associates. In the 1630s, the Córdoba *cabildo* (town council) conceded a license to one Luis de Arguello to construct a travelers' lodge, complete with locking doors, *barbacoas* (raised wooden platforms for sleeping), and a corral.⁴⁹ Barring the availability of *tambos* or other built structures, caravans made camp near water sources. Negroes *capitanes* and other slaves of the caravan's investors would have watched over the captives to make sure that they did not flee; nonetheless, not insignificant numbers of captives and indigenous crews managed to escape.

Enslaved Africans served in roles of defense and to prevent uprisings on overland treks, akin to "guardians" on slave ships.⁵⁰ While Indians were usually employed as guides on trips to the interior, free and enslaved Africans accompanied caravans, probably to discipline and

⁴⁶ AHPC Escribanía 1, Legajo 32, exp. 8, "Dn Gregorio Rodrigues teniente y Alguacil Mayor denuncia a Rrui de Sosa por haber entrado a su estancia con unas carretas de ropa y unos negros," Córdoba, 1623.

⁴⁷ AGI Charcas 123, s/n, "Carta de los Oficiales Reales de Cordoba a S.M.," Córdoba, 26 enero 1680.

⁴⁸ AHPC, Registro 1, Caja 2, Inventario 13, 1600, fol. 45v-48r, 24 marzo 1600.

⁴⁹ Josefina Piana de Cuestas, *Los indígenas de Córdoba bajo el régimen colonial, 1570-1620* (Córdoba, Argentina: Dirección General de Publicaciones de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1992), 221. On *barbacoa*, see Newson and Minchin, *From Capture to Sale*, 333.

⁵⁰ On guardians, see Stephanie E. Smallwood, "African Guardians, European Slave Ships, and the Changing Dynamics of Power in the Early Modern Atlantic," *WMQ* 64, No. 4 (2007), 679-716; Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Penguin, 2007), 214; Mariana P. Candido, "Different Slave Journeys: Enslaved African Seamen on Board of Portuguese Ships, c. 1760-1820s," *SA* 31 (2010): 395-409.

translate for captives. Travel through sparsely populated lands and territory controlled by Indians meant that traders to the interior had to bring sufficient protection, in addition to indigenous guides. Don Juan de Soc Sua, a *ladino* Indian from the *encomienda* of Gerónimo de Cabrera, reported that one caravan was armed with harquebuses and that “even the blacks carried spears.” According to a Portuguese who “understands the language of the blacks,” the men had been armed by their masters and “instructed to fight against the Spaniards of Córdoba,” presumably customs collectors. Francisco Lopes Correa, a *vecino* of Córdoba, reported that “the blacks came armed[,] some with *desjarretaderas* [poles with a hooked blade at the end, used to debilitate livestock] and others with knives.”⁵¹ Enslaved women also served on these long-distance journeys. For example, on their trek from Buenos Aires to Potosí, a caravan formed by Joan Baptista Palavezino, Antonio del Pino, Francisco de Ceballos, and Baltasar de Acosta (the company mentioned at the opening of this chapter) was accompanied by “a black man from Santa Fe” owned by Joan Lopez and a black slave owned by Joan de Tapia, in addition to two enslaved women who had accompanied the party from Buenos Aires.⁵² These occupations echoed the roles of women in West Central Africa who traveled in baggage trains behind soldiers to cook and maintain their cargo.

The vibrant slave economy fostered the physical occupation of space in the South American interior and nurtured commercial exchanges between European, indigenous, and African populations. Julian Pabon, a *vecino* of Buenos Aires, was familiar with the road that one of the caravans with soldiers took because he had used them to “*maloquear*” [i.e. capture

⁵¹ AGI Esc 928C, Pieza 1, fol. 170r-172r, “Por denunciacion del capitan Joan Bautista de Santa Maria...” Córdoba, 7 enero 1624.

⁵² AGI Esc 848C, fol. 9r-9v, “[Testigo] Don Francisco de Ceballos e Baldes,” Nuestra Señora de Talavera, 27 noviembre 1619.

indigenous slaves] many times. On his last visit, Pabon reported encountering a *rancheria* (indigenous village) that had been “recently inhabited by Spaniards” and was growing corn, wheat, and barley crops, presumably to sell to passing caravans.⁵³ Another witness noticed that a new road rutted “with the tracks of many wagons” had recently opened between Buenos Aires and Chile.⁵⁴ When they made camp on rural properties, caravans would have stayed principally in the indigenous settlements that formed a part of an associate’s *encomienda*, and would have relied upon Indians for food and medical care. One slave trader named Julian Cardoso reportedly carried a box in his cart “from which he takes combs and needles to barter for chickens[,] corn[,] and other things from the Indians.”⁵⁵ Caravans also contracted new guides *en route* with local knowledge to help them evade authorities. The overseer of an *encomienda* near the Valley of Humahuaca reported that one passing trader paid two local Indians to “take [him] off of the royal highway [to Potosí] and led him through some shortcuts such that he would not run in to people that he knew.”⁵⁶ Indigenous guides were also hired to apprehend runaway slaves. Customs records report the flight of an enslaved woman named Magdalena, who “escaped from the ship *Nuestra Señora de las Nieves*,” where she had been in the service of the ship’s pilot, to the “*banda del norte* [“north bank,” the territory of modern-day Uruguay], land of the *charruas*.” As the scribe noted, upon her return, presumably by Charrúa Indians, Magdalena resumed her service to the pilot and his wife in Pernambuco.⁵⁷

⁵³ AGI Esc 928C, fol. 167r-168r, “Testimonio Julian Pabon,” 7 enero 1624

⁵⁴ Ibid., fol. 222v-224v, “Autos sobre la tropa que se fue a Chile,” 5 diciembre 1623

⁵⁵ AGI Esc 848C, fl. 18v-19r, “Testigo Juan Dominguez Perero casado en la ciudad de Santa Fe,” 29 noviembre 1619.

⁵⁶ AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 5, fol. 374v-375r, 14 enero 1620.

⁵⁷ AGI Charcas 38, Simón de Valdés y Thomas Ferrufino, “Relacion de los negros q an entrado por el puerto de Buenos ayres,” 30 junio 1611.

Passing slave caravans also offered opportunities for smaller traders to participate in trans-Andean commerce. In one instance, in the city of Esteco, Alvaro Pinto protested royal officials' confiscation of all of the merchandise that one slave caravan conveyed, insisting that his only stake was "19 pouches of soap, a *tercio* of thread, and two sacks of beans" on behalf of the Convent of San Francisco in Potosí and, on his own account, "a trunk of clothing and a pouch of squash seeds."⁵⁸ Notarial records often obscure these smaller transactions, which were nonetheless essential to commerce.

Slave Sales in the Gateway to Peru

The city of Córdoba was founded in 1573. At the time of its foundation, neighboring populations of Comechingón Indians numbered perhaps as many as 15,000. However, in order to escape impressment into the *mit'a* labor system of Upper Peru and tribute obligations, many fled west. Indigenous people who remained behind were conscripted into domestic servitude in Córdoba, Santiago del Estero, and Buenos Aires.⁵⁹ Córdoba's residents participated in periodic *malocas*, raids of indigenous settlements aimed at obtaining slaves and food, to compensate for their perpetual labor shortage. The initial population was small: one 1581 estimate placed the population at 25 *vecinos* and twelve soldiers.

The 1580 foundation of Buenos Aires stimulated Córdoba's demographic and economic growth. Situated midway between the port and Potosí, and close to westward routes across the Andes into Chile, the city became a busy waystation and a bustling commercial center. The large

⁵⁸ AGI Esc 848C, fol. 13r, "Alvaro Pinto en nombre de Melchor Rodriguez..." Córdoba, 1621.

⁵⁹ Cushner, *Jesuit Ranches*, 11-12; Ann Zulawski, "Forasteros y yanaconas: la mano de obra de un centro minero en el siglo XVII," in Olivia Harris, Brooke Larson, et al., *La participación indígena en los mercados surandinos: Estrategias y reproducción social, siglos XVI a XX* (La Paz: Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social, 1987), 160-161. On indigenous population estimates, see Jane Pyle, "A Reexamination of Aboriginal Population Estimates for Argentina," in William M. Denevan, ed., *The Native Population of the Americas in 1492, Second Edition* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 181-204.

indigenous population in the province of Tucumán often proffered tributary obligations in the form of personal service, supplying caravans, or providing other goods that lubricated the Potosí-Buenos Aires commerce. For example, the villages of Guamacha, Saldán, Cantaclo, Tulián, and Ulayon paid a thrice-yearly tribute in tar, sacks, rigging, halters, riding crops, wool cloth, wax, and honey, among other goods.⁶⁰ The Tucumán region produced cotton to sell to Potosí beginning around 1585 or 1590. Textile workshops (*obrajes*) that relied upon indigenous and, increasingly, African labor forces sprang up in city and its peripheries. As local textile production began to decline in the 1610s, Córdoba's main employer became raising mules, cattle, and sheep for export to mining regions. Between 1596 and 1600 alone, 7,050 head of cattle were registered for transport north; in 1640-1644, that number surged to 42,626, and only continued to grow in the following years. By 1630, local officials referred to mule breeding as the "trade and sustenance of the land."⁶¹

Tracking slave sales in the interior city of Córdoba offers some sense of the movement of slaves towards Potosí. Between 1590 and 1650, sales of 1,027 African and African-descended captives were registered. In Figure 3.2, we can observe a marked drop in slave sales that began in the middle of the 1620s and continued to decrease in subsequent years, increasing only slightly around 1645-1650. Yet, as we saw in chapter II, slave traffic to the port of Buenos Aires in fact increased during the 1620s and was particularly robust in the 1630s. As other scholars have noted, the establishment of a customs house at Córdoba in 1624 did little to suppress contraband

⁶⁰ Cuestas, *Los indígenas de Córdoba*, 109-112.

⁶¹ Quoted in Gustavo L. Paz, "A la sombra del Perú: Mulas, repartos y negocios en el norte argentino a fines de la época colonial," *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Dr. Emilio Ravignani"* 3, no. 20 (1999), 47.

trade in cloth and goods imported via Buenos Aires to take to Upper Peru.⁶² After 1624, most slave traffickers altered their routes to avoid passing through Córdoba or, as before, paid handsome bribes to local officials. Relying on limited sources regarding maritime traffic to Buenos Aires and samples of records produced in the interior, however, most scholars have concluded that the persecution of New Christian merchants by the Inquisition, decreasing silver production, and increased vigilance on the part of royal officials led to a decline in slave traffic beginning in the early 1620s.

While notarial records confirm a decline in slave sales during these years, making conclusions about maritime traffic based on records from the interior, and vice versa, misrepresents the data. Data presented in Chapter II depicts a robust and even increasing slave traffic to Buenos Aires through 1640; when analyzed in conjunction with notarial records showing decreased transactions in Córdoba, they indicate that the same number or perhaps even more captives disembarked in Buenos Aires than before but that lower proportions of captives were sent on to Upper Peru. In 1633, Córdoba's city council complained that local residents could not buy slaves because they were "all being bought up in Buenos Aires [and] remained in the Río de la Plata or in Asunción."⁶³ The African population of the Río de la Plata thus increased.

⁶² On customs house choking off lucrative Buenos Aires-Potosí routes, see Canabrava, *O comercio português*; Escobari de Querejazu, *Producción y comercio*, 359-360.

⁶³ Cabildo of Córdoba quoted in Cushner, *Jesuit Ranches of Colonial Argentina*, 86.

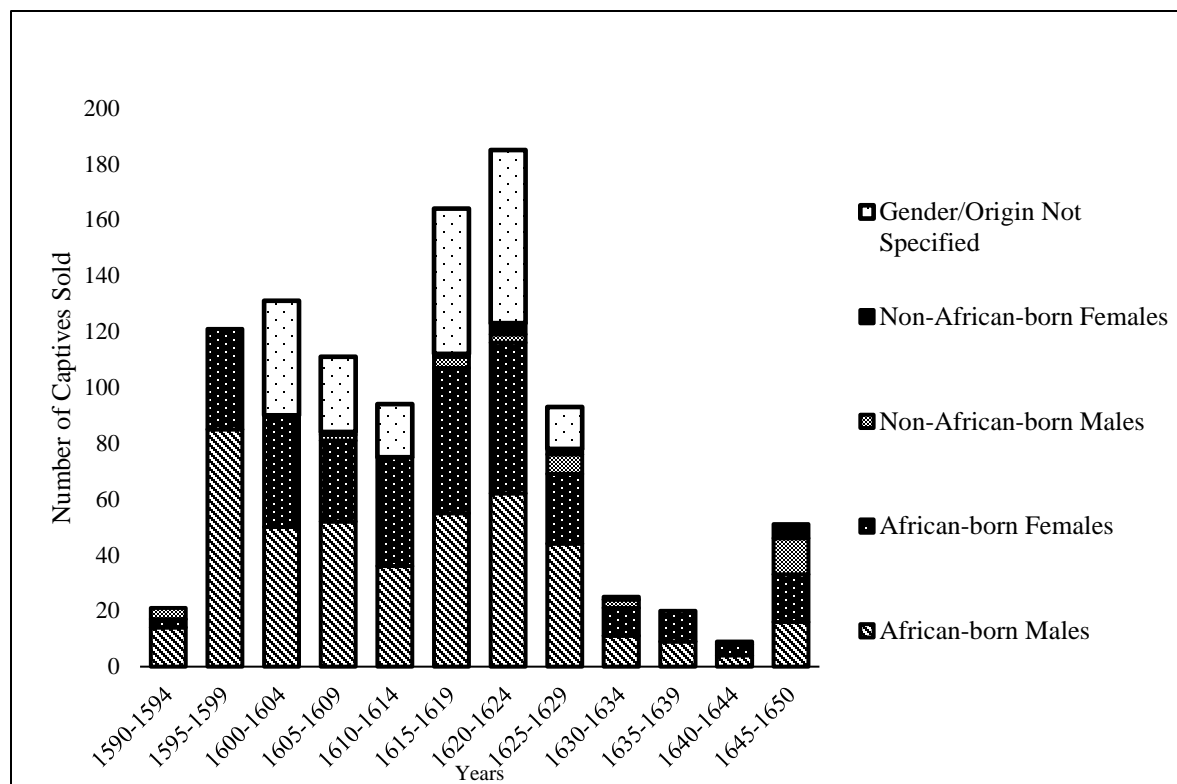


Figure 3.2 Slave Sales in Córdoba, 1590-1650, by gender and origin of captives

Source: See Appendix C

Notarial records provide an incomplete picture of Córdoba’s African population in the early seventeenth century. Beyond receiving significant numbers of African captives in order to work in its textile mills and mule ranches, as well as serve in the homes of local residents, Córdoba was also an important waystation for people and goods headed to and from Upper Peru and Buenos Aires. Many captives changed hands in the city. Some of these transactions involved sizeable groups of captives, who were most likely headed to markets elsewhere rather than retained locally. For example, in 1601, Baltasar Ferreyra, a vecino of Córdoba, purchased 28 “Angola slaves” from a local lawyer/slave trader, Antonio Rosillo, for 230 *pesos* each and promised to deliver payment for the full amount plus interest by the following Christmas. That same day, Ferreyra struck a deal with a priest from Mendoza, Gregorio de Astudillo, on a 25-year-old enslaved woman from Angola named Maria, selling her for 350 pesos. It is unclear

whether Maria was from the lot of 28 slaves Ferreyra had just purchased, though if she was, Ferreyra had made a profit of nearly fifty percent in no time at all.⁶⁴

Like Ferreyra, a number of other buyers in Córdoba purchased slaves on credit or in exchange for locally-produced goods. The latter category of transactions may be particularly underrepresented among notarial records, but five percent of slave buyers recorded by notaries paid in kind, like Miguel Rodriguez, who in 1597 exchanged 34 yards of “*pano de Chile*” [cloth from Chile] for a 10-year-old Angolan boy named Domingo, or Doña Maria de Silva, who paid for an enslaved woman named Magdalena and her two young sons with wheat flour and three coverlets. Still others signed notes for slaves that promised deliveries of horses, mules, and cattle, beasts of burden essential in order for slave merchants to reach any number of destinations, both in the interior and to Buenos Aires.⁶⁵ Notarial sources from Córdoba, as elsewhere, underrepresent the volume of these non-monetary transactions.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the slave routes of interior southern America depended upon such transactions for their successful operation.

As might be expected from the preponderance of slave vessels landing in Buenos Aires that originated in Angolan ports, West Central Africans were strongly represented among the slaves sold in Córdoba (Figure 3.3; Table 3.2). Of 1,027 captives, nearly half hailed from “Angola,” with the next largest proportion—about 7%—recorded under West African ethnonyms. Fewer than five percent of the captives recorded in Córdoba’s notarial archives had been born in the Americas. Among American-born slaves, most were from Buenos Aires,

⁶⁴ AHPC, Inventario 14, fol. 99r-100r; 103r-105r, 19 marzo 1601.

⁶⁵ AHPC, Inventario 16, fol. 184r-v, 26 marzo 1604.

⁶⁶ The question of the representativity of notarial records is raised in Kathryn Burns, “Notaries, Truth, and Consequences,” *The American Historical Review* 110, no. 2 (2005): 350–79.

Córdoba, and other cities along the trade route that brought them there, but two captives had been born in New Spain: a 27-year-old black man named Juan Garcia, described as a “creole from Mexico”, and Maria de las Nieves, a black woman from Mexico City.⁶⁷ It is unclear whether 20-year-old Juan Chancay (a port city north of Lima) and 40-year-old Mateo de Cartagena, both described as “*ladino*,” were African or American-born, yet they had clearly resided elsewhere in the Americas for years prior to being trafficked to Córdoba.⁶⁸ Juan and Mateo may have traversed the Andean Mountains from the west; the official route of the Indies fleet, which delivered slave cargos to the Viceroyalty of Peru via the isthmus of Panama, continued to introduce slaves to South America. Mateo and Juan were sold by a *vecino* of Santiago de Chile; some slave vessels disembarked in Valparaiso, the port serving Santiago, in the seventeenth century. Córdoba scribes also recorded the sale of a “black man from Portuguese India” and of a native of Japan. Regardless of the precise manners by which captives arrived in Córdoba, the overland and maritime routes of the Americas clearly overlapped.

⁶⁷ AHPC, Inventario 19, fol. 193v-195r, 11 septiembre 1606 and *Ibid.*, Indice 21, fol. 130v-132r, 1 agosto 1609.

⁶⁸ AHPC, Inventario 35, 298r-299v, 27 mayo 1620.

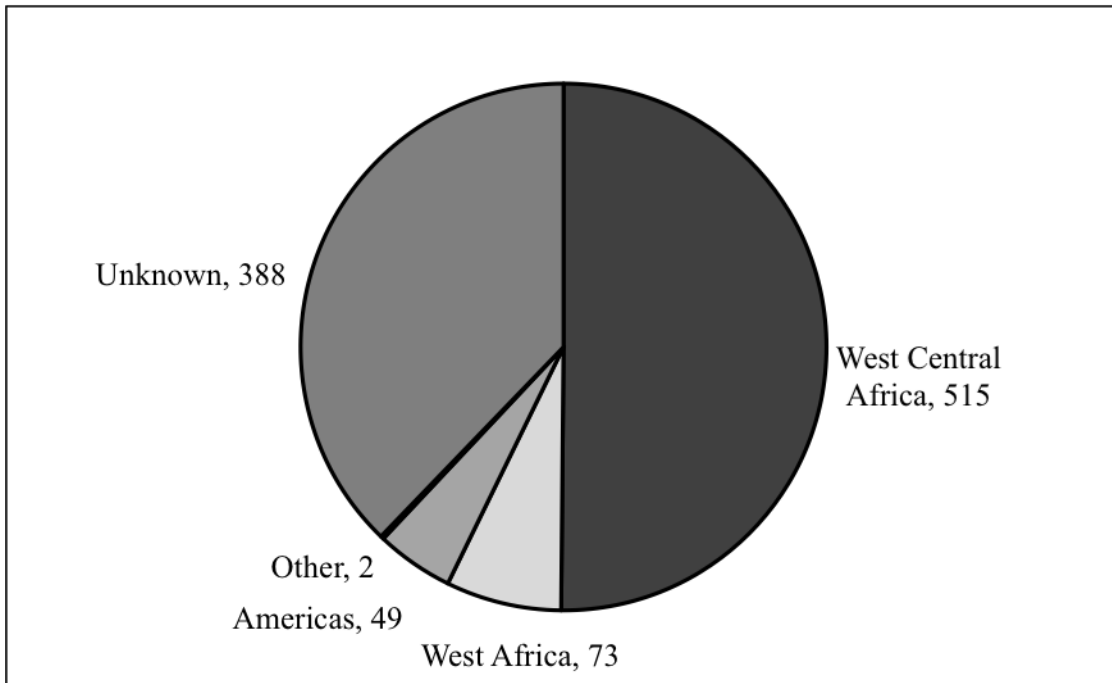


Figure 3.3: Origin of 1,027 captives sold in Córdoba, c. 1590-1650
 Source: See Appendix C

Region	Count
<i>West Central Africa</i>	
Angola	515
Cabinga (Cabinda)	1
Cayongo	1
Congo	2
Natural de Luanda	3
Malamba	1
Mocolongoso	1

Molongoso	1
Quialo (Kialo)	1
Quiloange (Kiluanje)	1
Qesara	1
Salana	1
<i>West Africa</i>	
Guinea	73
Benin	1
Jolofo	1
Vozas	1
<i>Americas</i>	
Brazil	5
Córdoba	7
Buenos Aires	7
Mexico	1
Mexico City	1
Santa Fe	1
Santiago del Estero	1
American-born, not specified	9
<i>Other</i>	
Seville	1
Portuguese India	1

Table 3.2 Ethnic Designations of 639 African and African-descended captives sold in Córdoba, 1590-1650

Source: See Appendix C

Conclusion

South America's interior slave routes extended the African diaspora well beyond the port cities of the southern Atlantic during the seventeenth century. A variety of individuals and communities were responsible for the successful execution of caravans carrying slaves to the interior of the Río de la Plata and to the fabled silver-mining city of Potosí (and beyond). From pueblos in the northwest to the port city of Buenos Aires, few native communities, *encomenderos*, or ranchers remained uninvolved with South American slave routes. Caravans bolstered local economies wherever they passed: residents of indigenous communities and urban hubs produced food, lodged captives, and provided other services. But if circuits linking Upper

Peru, Tucumán, and the Río de la Plata were regular, they were hardly regularized, not least because caravans transported human cargo. A number of factors, from slave flight to attacks by indigenous groups and broken equipment, could and did hinder the trade.

Comparing notarial records of sales involving slaves in Córdoba alongside port entry records from Buenos Aires reveals the extent to which the patterns in slave arrivals at the port did not correspond to buying and selling slaves in the interior. Data on slave sales in one location can be used only to draw reliable conclusions about local patterns in the slave trade. Scholars must exercise caution when projecting patterns in records of interior places distant from port cities in order to hypothesize about the arc of maritime Atlantic trade, and vice versa.

CHAPTER IV

AFRICAN SPACES OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

In July of 1635, Jesuits initiated a lawsuit against the sergeant major of the fort of Buenos Aires, Francisco Velázquez. They alleged that during the previous month, Velázquez and a company of soldiers from the fort had raided a Jesuit-owned *chacara* (farm) located a few miles outside of Buenos Aires. According to a representative of the Society of Jesus, P. Tomás de Urueña, the soldiers had brandished their swords and “with injurious words” took power of the *chacara*. Alleging that the Jesuits were harboring soldiers, passengers, and probably valuable merchandise, the soldiers forced the “blacks and Indians” who worked there to lay open all of the “rooms and pantries” on the property. Velázquez’s men sent for a “black man,” appropriately named Francisco del Camino, who was carting supplies to Córdoba for the Provincial Superior, and forced him to return to the *chacara* with his cart and all of the goods. Soldiers apprehended a second unnamed individual “in the service of the college” (very likely also African or indigenous), *en route* to an undisclosed Jesuit-owned ranch, and stole his horse. Worst of all, alleged Urueña, the raiders had kidnapped the *mayordomo* (overseer) of the *chacara*, a “*negro ladino* named Francisco,” and imprisoned him in the city fort, leaving the Company’s property “defenseless and in the power of the blacks, [risking] that they would steal.”¹

As Urueña’s suit reveals, rural labor in the seventeenth-century Río de la Plata depended upon Africans. Far from an isolated rural enclave, the *chacara* in question was a teeming transit point for Atlantic commerce and trade with the interior. Africans on the Jesuit-owned *chacara*

¹ “Testimonios y autos hechos con motivo de una querrela presentada por el P. Tomás de Urueña, Procurador general de la Compañía de Jesús, ante el Provisor y Vicario general Maestro Lucas de Sosa, Canónigo á la vez de la santa iglesia Catedral del Obispado del Río de la Plata,” Buenos Aires, 15 julio 1635, in Pablo Pastells, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia del Paraguay (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Perú, Bolivia y Brasil) según los documentos originales del Archivo General de Indias, Tomo I* (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suarez, 1912), 511-513.

occupied positions of trust, independently conveying products and merchandise between local properties and to cities as far as five hundred miles away; they interacted with transient populations and runaway soldiers (some of whom must also have been of African descent); and supervised a mixed yet increasingly African labor force.

If Africans and their descendants comprised only around 5% of the residents of Potosí (6,000 out of a total population of 120,000) at the city's demographic height, while a bare minimum of 41,000 African slaves are known to have landed in Buenos Aires between 1580 and 1680, it stands to reason that a relatively limited number of Africans passing through the port were trafficked to Potosí, even accounting for very high death rates along the way and in the city.² Still, a number of works assert that "the majority of slaves" who disembarked in the Río de la Plata "passed through the [port] on their way to plantations and Andean mines far upcountry."³ When scholars have investigated Africans in the Río de la Plata and Tucumán, they have focused on the late colonial period and primarily on slavery in urban settings, with particular attention to the military service of Africans and African-descended individuals in Argentine and Uruguayan wars of independence in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴ They mention the region's long history

² On Africans in Potosí, see Jane Mangan, "Buying and Selling in Potosí: Quotidian Acts of Trade and the Place of Africans in Colonial Society" (Everyday Negotiation between Native Americans, Africans and Iberians and the Construction of Empire," 52 Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, Seville, 2006) and Kris Lane, "Slavery in the Casa de la Moneda in Seventeenth-Century Potosí," in Mónica Ghirardi, ed. *Territorios de lo cotidiano, siglos XVI-XX: Del antiguo virreinato del Perú a la Argentina contemporánea* (Rosario: Prohistoria Ediciones, 2015), 101-114.

³ See, for example, Marta B. Goldberg, "La población 'negra,' desde la esclavitud hasta los afrodescendientes actuales," in *Historia de la Provincia de Buenos Aires I: Población, ambiente, y territorio* (La Plata: UNIPE, 2012), 283; Andrew Sluyter, *Black Ranching Frontiers: African Cattle Herders of the Atlantic World, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 143; and David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 199; Andrew Sluyter, *Black Ranching Frontiers: African Cattle Herders of the Atlantic World, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 143.

⁴ Irene Diggs, "The Negro in the Viceroyalty of the Rio de La Plata," *The Journal of Negro History* 36, no. 3 (July 1951): 281-301; Leslie B. Rout, *The African Experience in Spanish America: 1502 to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Marta B. Goldberg, "La población negro y mulata de la ciudad de Buenos Aires, 1810-1840," *Desarrollo Económico* 16, no. 61 (1976): 75-99; George Reid Andrews, *The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires, 1800-1900* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980); Borucki, Chagas, and Stalla, *Esclavitud y trabajo: Un estudio sobre los afrodescendientes en la frontera uruguaya, 1835-1855*; Betancur and

of slave trading and slavery only in passing. Slavery, we are told repeatedly, “did not constitute the central nucleus of the relations of production” in the Río de la Plata; small landholders are believed to have been too poor to afford slaves.⁵ My research has proven that local residents enthusiastically trafficked hundreds and thousands of enslaved Africans to Buenos Aires each year, a number of whom were purchased or hired out locally. In the rural Río de la Plata, slave labor was employed to produce the hides and foodstuffs sold on Atlantic markets; African slaves could also be found serving liquor in the city’s *pulperias*; wandering the streets hawking foodstuffs; caring for the sick in the hospital; working as town criers; wet nurses; or artisans; and, like Francisco del Camino and the unnamed servant of the Jesuit *chacara*, engaging in local and long-distance trade.⁶

“Rural” Spaces

Taking their cues from studies of slavery on the plantations of the Caribbean, Brazil, and the United States, scholars of rural slavery in the Río de la Plata and Tucumán have looked to the local institutions that employed the largest numbers of slaves: the large agricultural estates owned

Aparicio, *Amos y esclavos en el Río de la Plata*; Hormiga, *Colonos canarios y negros esclavos en el origen del Estado Oriental del Uruguay*.

⁵ Juan Carlos Garavaglia, “The Economic Role of Slavery in a Non-Slave Society: The River Plate, 1750-1860,” in *Slavery and Anti-Slavery in Spain’s Atlantic Empire*, ed. Josep M. Fradera and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 74.

⁶ “Cabildo del 2 de abril de 1618,” in *AECBA Tomo IV, Libro III: Años 1618, 1619, y 1620* (Buenos Aires: Archivo General de la Nación, 1908), 41-44; “Acuerdo del cabildo del 17 de agosto de 1620” in *AECBA Tomo IV, Libro III*, 419-422. See also “Cabildo del 24 de enero de 1622,” “Cabildo del 14 de febrero de 1622,” and “Cabildo del 18 de agosto de 1622” in *AECBA Tomo V, Libro III-IV: Años 1620, 1621, 1622 y 1623* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos de la Penitenciaría Nacional, 1908), 165-166; 188-190; and 233-234; “Cabildo del 18 de febrero de 1632” in *AECBA Tomo VII, Libros IV-V*, 318-321. On the diverse occupations of Africans in other Atlantic port cities, see Alejandro de la Fuente with César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2008), 151-161; Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

by the Society of Jesus. The estate of Alta Gracia, located outside of Córdoba, stretched over one thousand square miles and counted over 15,000 head of cattle as well as horses and mules at its peak in the late eighteenth century. On Alta Gracia, slaves cultivated and harvested wheat, corn, barley, and fruit; manufactured bricks and tiles, and even produced textiles. In total, as many as 1,000 enslaved Africans labored on Jesuit properties near Córdoba during this period. Closer to the port, a Jesuit-owned cattle and mule ranch northwest of the city of Buenos Aires featured “a bunk house for about 100 black slaves.”⁷

While, apart from the Jesuits, the traditional image of rural landholders in the Río de la Plata was of powerful, wealthy *estancieros* who owned vast swaths of land, commanded herds of thousands of cattle, and employed independent, possibly *mestizo* gauchos, more recent studies have described the region as “a somewhat more complex agrarian society that included small-scale herders and farmers” who worked “countless small and tiny ranches with hundreds or even a few dozen cattle.”⁸ Moreover, livestock (and derived products of hides, tallow, and jerky) were not the only exports of the Río de la Plata. As in other port hinterlands in the early Iberian Atlantic, large *estancias* and small farms alike produced corn and wheat for local consumption, to supply ships and military expeditions, and for export to Atlantic markets; small producers also stocked regional markets with a variety of fruits and vegetables.⁹ Scholars have begun to acknowledge that the Río

⁷ Nicholas P. Cushner, *Jesuit Ranches and the Agrarian Development of Colonial Argentina, 1650-1767* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 13–14, 38–39, 56; Jeanette C. de la Cerda Donoso de Moreschi and Luis J. Villarreal, *Los negros esclavos de Alta Gracia: Caso testigo de la población de origen africano en la Argentina y América* (Córdoba, Argentina: Ediciones del Copista, 1999), 43–47.

⁸ Juan Carlos Garavaglia and Jorge D. Gelman, “Rural History of the Río de La Plata, 1600-1850: Results of a Historiographical Renaissance,” *Latin American Research Review* 30, no. 3 (1995), 78. On the stark sociocultural contrasts between *hacendados* and gauchos, see Richard W. Slatta’s “Rural Criminality and Social Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Buenos Aires Province,” *HAHR* 60, no. 3 (1980): 450–72 and “Pulperías and Contraband Capitalism in Nineteenth-Century Buenos Aires Province,” *The Americas* 38, no. 3 (n.d.): 347–62.

⁹ On the variety of products grown in the Río de la Plata (and enslaved Africans as the people who cultivated them) see Acarete du Biscay, *An Account of a Voyage up the River de La Plata, and Thence over Land to Peru: With Observations on the Inhabitants, as Well as Indians and Spaniards, the Cities, Commerce, Fertility, and Riches of That Part of America* (London: Samuel Buckley, 1698). On the production of foodstuffs throughout the Atlantic

de la Plata's late colonial "productive establishments, whether large or average in size, relied on a steady supply of slaves," yet assumptions that most residents were too poor to afford enslaved laborers have hindered acknowledgement of the central role of Africans to agricultural production and ranching. Based upon data from the late eighteenth century, they have assumed that most slavery was urban, and that rural workers in the Río de la Plata were 80% "Spanish" (a category that included some with some "mestizos from the interior") in spite of the fact that the region sat on a major hub for the slave trade and struggled to attract and retain indigenous labor.¹⁰ While European-descended individuals may have predominated during later periods, the majority of the rural workforce in the seventeenth century was African.

Spanish settlers encouraged the importation of enslaved Africans to work the land from at least the second foundation of the city in 1580. Petitioning the Spanish Crown to authorize the importation of Angolan slaves in exchange for locally-produced goods, one priest noted that the shortage of laborers was so acute that even "noble women born in Spain go to the river for water."¹¹ We already know that the Río de la Plata and Tucumán were sparsely populated throughout the colonial period and that landowners struggled to harness indigenous labor, a problem that was compounded as their communities moved further away from lowland centers of Iberian population and towards the Andes to escape tribute obligations or, as in many parts of the Americas, were

world, see Ciro Flamarion S. Cardoso, "The Peasant Breach in the Slave System: New Developments in Brazil," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 25, No. 1 (1988), 49-57; Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida*, 95-101; Catarina Madeira Santos, "Luanda: A Colonial City between Africa and the Atlantic, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Liam Matthew Brockey, ed., *Portuguese Colonial Cities in the Early Modern World*, 249-272 (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2008); Alejandro de la Fuente et al, *Havana and the Atlantic; Wheat, Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 181-213.

¹⁰ Raúl O. Fradkin, "El mundo rural colonial," in *Nueva Historia Argentina, Tomo II: La sociedad colonial* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1998), 248.

¹¹ AGI Charcas 47, "Fray Baltasar de Navarro a S.M.," Buenos Aires, 21 febrero 1606.

killed by epidemics.¹² In Chapter I, we saw how a number of Portuguese involved in slave trafficking (either on the Middle Passage or in transport to the interior) settled in the Río de la Plata and Tucumán and owned rural properties, ostensibly worked by the African slaves they also declared as part of their capital.¹³ David Wheat has demonstrated that Africans in the rural hinterlands of the Spanish Caribbean performed roles that “closely resembled those of Iberian peasants known in Spain as *trabajadores* or *jornaleros*: agricultural workers and day laborers who did not possess draft animals, land, or tools of their own.” Many enslaved people in the circum-Caribbean were akin to “peasants” who “cultivat[ed] crops on their garden plots in their spare time and res[sold] the surplus produce” in local and regional markets.¹⁴

Buenos Aires and its hinterland grew more African during the seventeenth century. Some number of enslaved Africans had labored in the region since its second foundation; though periodic epidemics, such as a 1621 smallpox outbreak, took a toll on “nearly all the slaves and service.”¹⁵ Yet, precisely as markets in Tucumán, Chile, and Upper Peru felt the pressure of declining silver production beginning in the 1620s and as warfare with Cachalqui Indians disrupted interior trade routes, conflict elsewhere in the Atlantic world motivated increasing numbers of slave merchants to direct their cargoes to the mouth of the Río de la Plata. Determining a precise count of the rural African population of the Río de la Plata is impossible. One seventeenth-century observer, who

¹² Josefina Piana de Cuestas, *Los indígenas de Córdoba bajo el régimen colonial, 1570-1620* (Córdoba: Dirección General de Publicaciones de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1992); Raúl J. Mandrini, “Las fronteras y la sociedad indígena en el ámbito pampeano,” *Anuario del IEHS* 12 (1997), 23-34; Gabriela Sica, “Del tráfico caravanero a la arriería colonial indígena en Jujuy. Siglos XVII y XVIII,” *Revista Transporte y Territorio* 3 (2010), 23-39.

¹³ On the lack of legal Spanish settlers, see Peter Boyd-Bowman, “Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies until 1600,” *HAHR* 56, no. 4 (November 1976): 580–604.

¹⁴ David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 181-187. On Spanish peasants’ aversion to rural labor in the New World, see James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532-1560: A Social History*, Second Edition (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 258-259.

¹⁵ AGI Charcas 33, s/n “Memorial de Antonio de Leon, abogado de la Real Audiencia de los Reyes, que vino por Procurador General del Rio de la Plata, a S.M.,” Madrid, 1623.

commented that Buenos Aires was so rustic and underdeveloped that it was not even comparable to the most war-torn hamlet in Europe, noted that the port and its Jesuit colleges were filled with Africans who were employed in “baking bread, cooking; washing clothing; planting; [and] herding pigs, sheep, and cattle.”¹⁶ By the early 1630s, Jesuits remarked on the “many blacks” who inhabited the “*chacaras* and rural properties (*cortijos*)” in the district of Buenos Aires.¹⁷ One study of wills and inventories detailing thirty-four early seventeenth-century rural properties in the Río de la Plata posited that over one-third of the *chacras* and nearly half of the *estancias* employed slave labor. As the author of the study admits, this limited sample did not take into account the circulation of slaves hired out between properties, landowners, or between countryside and port.¹⁸

Rather than remaining in clearly separated “urban” and “rural” spheres, most individuals moved back and forth between both. Many of Buenos Aires’ residents, free and enslaved alike, devoted at least part of their years to agricultural pursuits. The steward of the local San Martín hospital tasked with collecting alms in 1624 grumbled that it was impossible to do so during “the months of September, October, November, and December” (spring planting season) because “everyone goes to the countryside.”¹⁹ Slaves “in deposit” in Buenos Aires barracoons were hired by local property owners to help harvest wheat and corn while awaiting purchase or transport to the interior; on a separate occasion, permanent as well as temporary residents were enjoined to present their “slaves and other *peones* (unskilled laborers)” to contribute to the port’s defense by

¹⁶ *Justo van Suerck y su carta sobre Buenos Aires*, ed. Guillermo Furlong (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Teoría, 1963).

¹⁷ “Anales de la Provincia del Paraguay desde el año de 32 hasta el de 34. [Padre Diego de Boroa, provincial del Paraguay] a nuestro muy Reverendo Padre Mucio Vithelesci Preposito General de la Compañía de Jesús,” in Academia Nacional de la Historia, *Cartas anuas de la provincia Jesuitica del Paraguay, 1632 a 1634* (Buenos Aires, 1990), 75-79,

¹⁸ Gonzalez Lebrero, *La pequeña aldea*, 146.

¹⁹ Quoted in González Lebrero, *La pequeña aldea*, 16.

manning the fort, making repairs, and constructing embankments.²⁰ The Córdoba council complained of a “lack of service” in 1665 and proposed that new slave imports could be used to reinforce local troops already fighting the “Indians of Calchaqui.”²¹ City dwellers participated in rural endeavors, and vice versa, particularly seasonal ones.

Just as historiography has not fully acknowledged the circulation of laborers between urban and rural spaces, it continues to perpetuate the myth that labor in rural areas was equivalent to social and economic isolation. In fact, enslaved and free Africans and Indians laboring on rural properties regularly traveled to the city to sell the fruits of their labor. Governor Velásquez Meléndez complained that “blacks, Indians, mulattos, and other people” employed on nearby *chácaras* and *estancias* regularly brought a variety of provisions, including mutton, pigs, beef, and flour to Buenos Aires to “sell clandestinely [...] in *pulperías* (taverns/general stores) and other houses.” The governor believed that these farmworkers had stolen foodstuffs from their masters and were using the proceeds to purchase food and liquor in the taverns; he imposed a strict penalty of two hundred lashes upon any individual who did not carry written permission from his or her owner to sell foodstuffs. Clearly, the policy was hardly enforced, as successive governors and the town council repeated it numerous times. Indicating that women were equally active in petty

²⁰ AGI Esc 849A, Pieza 2, “Testim^o de la causa fulminante sobre la maliciosa arribada del nabio el Rossario maestre Goncalo Mateos que vino cargo de esclavos al Puerto de Buenos Ayres y ocultación dellos contra...” Buenos Aires, 1624; “Bando del gobernador de 1636,” in *Los bandos de buen gobierno del Río de la Plata, Tucumán y Cuyo (época hispánica)*, ed. Víctor Tau Anzoátegui (Buenos Aires: Editorial Dunken, 2004), 154

²¹ AGI Charcas 123, s/n “Carta de la Audiencia de Córdoba a S.M.,” Córdoba, 3 enero 1665. See also Rolando Mellafe, *La introducción de la esclavitud negra en Chile: Tráfico y rutas* (Santiago de Chile: Universidad de Chile, 1959), 45-49; Eugene Clark Berger, “Permanent War on Peru’s Periphery: Frontier Identity and the Politics of Conflict in 17th Century Chile,” (Ph.D. dissertation Vanderbilt University, 2006). On Africans in military service prior to the Bourbon reforms, see Matthew Restall, “Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America,” *The Americas* 57, no. 2 (2000), 171-205; Jane Landers, “Transforming Bondsmen into Vassals: Arming Slaves in Colonial Spanish America,” in Christopher Leslie Brown and Philip D. Morgan, *Arming Slaves: From Classical Times to the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 122-126; Matthew Restall, “Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America,” *The Americas* 57, no. 2 (2000), 171-205

commerce, one prohibition blocked *vecinos* from purchasing “chickens and eggs” from “*negros, negras, indios, and indias*”—African and indigenous women and men.²²

Within urban marketplaces, Africans and other people of color would have traded with other Africans. Africans were officially barred from running *pulperías* in Buenos Aires, again ostensibly because they would facilitate the circulation of “stolen” goods and because they would serve alcohol to enslaved and indigenous laborers. Yet these prohibitions only draw further attention to the substantial participation of nonwhites in both the marketplace and the labor force. In 1642, four owners of *pulperías* petitioned Buenos Aires’ city council for permission to staff their establishments with “black *pulperos*.” An exception was evidently made for General Gonzalo de Carabajal. The council agreed that “an old black woman named Catalina” could continue to run Carabajal’s *pulpería* for nine months, ostensibly while Carabajal found an acceptable replacement for her, as long as his establishment closed for business at eight o’clock in the evening.²³ We can presume that a number of other Africans, especially women, continued to stand behind the counters of *pulperías*, selling food, liquor, and dry goods, and extending credit to African and indigenous as well as European clientele who worked nearby.²⁴

²² “Cabildo del 18 de agosto de 1622,” in *AECBA*, Tomo V, Libro III-IV, 233-234. On African women in the trade of foodstuffs in the Americas and Africa, see Robert Olwell, *Masters, Slaves, and Subjects: The Culture of Power in the South Carolina Low Country, 1740-1790* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 166-167; David Wheat, “*Nharas and Morenas Horras: A Luso-African Model for the Social History of the Spanish Caribbean, c. 1570-1640*,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 14 (2010), 119-150; Mariana P. Candido, *An African Slave Port in the Atlantic World: Benguela and its Hinterland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 140-141; Vanessa dos Santos Oliveira, “The *Donas* of Luanda, c. 1770-1867: From Atlantic Slave Trading to ‘Legitimate Commerce’” (Ph.D. diss., York University, 2016), 66-127.

²³ Pablo Pastells, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia del Paraguay (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Perú, Bolivia y Brasil) según los documentos originales del Archivo General de Indias*, vol. Tomo I (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suarez, 1912). It is not known whether Catalina was free or enslaved at the time; when she served as the godmother to the twin daughters of Felipa, a “slave from the Rivers of Cabo Verde” in January 1636, she was recorded as a Don Gonzalo de Carabajal’s slave. *Nuestra Señora de la Merced, Bautismos de Mestizos, Mulatos, y Negros, 1645-1700*.

²⁴ Ricardo E. Rodríguez Molas, “La pulpería rioplatense en el siglo XVII: Ensayo de historia social y económica,” *Universidad* 49 (1961), 111-113; Slatta, “Pulperías and Contraband Capitalism,” 358 and the essays in Carlos A.

Free and enslaved Africans who participated in long-distance trade routes regularly traversed urban and rural spaces. Pedro Serrano, described as a “free *moreno*,” made frequent trips between Córdoba and Mendoza, carrying wine, goods, and passengers, on behalf of Gerónimo de Cabrera. On one occasion, he was hired to convey the governor’s wife, Doña Maria de Garay, to Córdoba from Buenos Aires, a distance of over five hundred miles. In addition, Serrano owed a substantial debt of four hundred pesos to Baltasar Gonzalez, a *vecino* of Córdoba, suggesting that Serrano carted goods on his own behalf. Serrano had been a slave and had arrived in Buenos Aires “on the account of the governor” nine years prior; in Córdoba, he had worked on an estancia owned by Cabrera, likely engaged in an occupation similar to the one he had as a free man, and was eventually granted freedom. Though Serrano’s origin was almost certainly African (later in the same suit, he was referred to as “Pedro Serrano, *negro*”), his classification as a “*moreno*” suggests how his participation in trade, employment in the service of an elite landowner, and his freedom conferred a higher social status. Yet if Serrano had attained a respectable position within colonial society, his status was never fully secure. In 1613, Serrano was arrested on the charges of assaulting and robbing a white *vecino* of fifty pesos. The only evidence placing Serrano at the scene of the crime was an old hat, which an Indian man had found in the street the night of the assault and which was reputed to be Serrano’s; his accuser claimed that he saw Serrano wearing a new hat “rimmed with taffeta” several days after the attack. Though the conclusion of the case is not known, a number of residents testified on his behalf throughout the judicial proceedings,

Mayo, ed., *Pulperos y pulperías de Buenos Aires, 1740-1830* (Mar del Plata: Universidad Nacional Mar del Plata, 1997).

asserting that Serrano was “very friendly with the Spaniards...and the blacks” and had “made a lot of money” for his employer.²⁵

In August 1602, a royal cedula (order) granted the *vecinos* (citizens) of Buenos Aires permission to export “fruits of the earth”—2,000 *fanegas* of wheat, 500 *arrobas* of tallow, and 500 *quintales* of cured meat annually—to Brazil, Angola, and other neighboring Spanish possessions in exchange for such “necessities” as fabric, construction materials, and food. The permission, which was originally granted for six years, was renewed continuously until 1618 and specified that the products must be loaded on vessels owned by *vecinos* (“citizens”) of Buenos Aires; that royal officials must inspect the vessels two days prior to their departure to ensure that precious metals and other contraband were not also embarked; and that under no circumstances could agricultural products be exchanged for slaves. *Vecinos* relied upon slave labor to take advantage of these permissions; at the same time, this “frequent communication” with vessels from Brazil and Angola had enabled residents to sell or exchange flour, tallow, wool, jerky, and hides and obtain slaves “at little cost.”²⁶ Though permission to sell “fruits of the earth” in Brazil and Angola was theoretically limited to *vecinos*, evidence also confirms the participation of small producers and petty traders in commercial transactions with ship crews. At times, royal officials grumbled, small producers were more concerned with supplying Atlantic markets, slave populations in transit, ship stores, passengers, and wagons than selling to local residents.

Royal officials worried about bread shortages despite an “abundance of wheat” because residents preferred to divert local stores to “[make] hardtack for the seafarers;” an injunction several years later reiterated that no one could sell flour or wheat to “any foreigners [*gente de mar*

²⁵ AHPC Esc 1, Legajo , exp. 19, fol. 39r-139v, “Probanza por rezeto de la real auda de la plata para el qto de pº serrano negro,” Córdoba, 1613.

²⁶ AGI Charcas 123, s/n, “Memorial de Don Alonso de Solorzano y Velasco,” Buenos Aires, 22 mayo 1667.

en fuera], whether captains, ship owners, shipmasters, passengers, sailors, or any other person” without permission.²⁷ Local elite women, Maria Leal and the wife of Juan Pérez de Arce held the contract to supply the city hospital with *pan bizochado* (hardtack) in the early seventeenth century. Given that both of these women owned African slaves, we might imagine who was ultimately responsible for baking for the hospital. Trade with ship crews would have offered enslaved Africans an opportunity to barter for merchandise and acquire specie that they could eventually use to purchase their freedom.

The ability to participate in urban, regional, and Atlantic trade, whether licit or illicit, and the relatively lower prices that enslaved Africans commanded at the port offered opportunities to own slaves to a broad swath of the free population, including indigenous people and former slaves as well as Spaniards. For example, a *ladina* (Latinized) indigenous woman who resided in Buenos Aires and who belonged to the *encomienda* of Antonio Fernández Machado stated in her will that at the time of her marriage to Pedro Montero, also indigenous, she owned “a girl [*muleca*] named Maria” whom she had “earned with [her] work.” In addition to Maria, now an adult, the couple had owned “another black woman whom we sold and from her we have a child [*cría*] who is currently in our house, [and he is] three years old more or less, and he is named Diego.” A free black man named Sebastián, similarly, owned an Angolan woman named Maria, whom he had bought “in Buenos Aires” and with whom he had four children. It appears that he freed his wife and children at his death.²⁸ *Encomiendas* were simply not sustainable as granted in the founding of cities, and in subsequent years many rural properties were divided up and rented out or sold in

²⁷ (AECBA, “Cabildo del 25 de junio de 1630,” in AECBA Tomo VII, libros IV-V, 136-137; also quoted in G-L, “Trigo,” 12, 13.

²⁸ Miguel Á. Rosal, “Manumisiones de esclavos en Buenos Aires (1600-1670),” *Estudios Historicos* (Uruguay) 5, no. 11 (2013).

subsequent years. While evidence of free black ownership of land and dwellings has not yet surfaced, free Africans in a number of Iberian colonies that counted substantially less arable, unoccupied land than the early Río de la Plata, free Africans purchased land and livestock. To the north, in the Upper Peruvian Valley of Mizque, two free black men named Francisco Corzo and Geronimo Bosa appeared in the notarial records as interested buyers of a livestock ranch put up for sale in 1603.²⁹

Sacred Spaces

Religious orders consistently complained that the numbers of clergy in Buenos Aires were insufficient to attend to the spiritual needs of the large number of slaves who disembarked each year on the shores of the Río de la Plata. Jesuit Provincial Trujillo complained in 1632 that the Jesuit College of Buenos Aires employed just one priest to “minister, hear confession, and care for the teaching of the blacks, who are very numerous in this city and its district.” Provincial Trujillo suggested sending two more priests to attend to the souls of the African and Indian “people of service” who labored on nearby farms.³⁰ In spite of a perpetual shortage of available priests trained in African and indigenous languages, rural slaves were able to participate in sacramental life in the city. Trujillo noted that an enslaved African woman who lived on an estate thirty leagues (over one hundred miles) outside of Córdoba was able to petition her owner (and was granted permission) to travel to the city and confess before a Jesuit priest, in another indication of regular circulation between urban and rural spaces.³¹

²⁹ Lolita Gutiérrez Brockington, *Blacks, Indians, and Spaniards in the Eastern Andes: Reclaiming the Forgotten in Colonial Mizque, 1550-1782* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 142. See also Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida*, 92-93; Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean*, 207-215.

³⁰ AGI Charcas 148, s/n, “Carta de Francisco Vazquez Truxillo a S.M.,” Buenos Aires, 2 julio 1632

³¹ “Décima tercera carta [del Provincial Francisco Vázquez Trujillo] en donde se relata lo acaecido en los años de 1628-1631...” in Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, *Documentos para la historia Argentina, tomo XX: Iglesia:*

The presence of clandestine slaves posed a problem not only for local officials, but also for clerics concerned that slaves would be trafficked to the interior or perish before they could be catechized and baptized.³² According to the Provincial, it was difficult to attend to the spiritual needs of slaves “from the coasts of Brazil and the port of Luanda” not only because of their usual inability to understand Spanish, but also because they arrived “starving and usually mistreated by their owners.” Provincial Trujillo noted that the College now employed a “very good *lengua*” (interpreter) who facilitated the instruction of the Angola slaves; he boasted that, thanks to the interpreter’s services, “those who observe the *Santa Doctrina* and take the Sacraments are [now] great [in number].”³³ In 1627, Jesuits described a slave vessel that brought an undisclosed number of sick slaves to the port, and that many perished within a few months of arriving. The work of instructing them before they died was particularly trying for the lone novitiate who spoke their language, with the aid of other *ladino* slaves. Many of the captives were “together on a rush mat, which is the bed of these miserable people,” but he boasted that they were able to hear the confessions of the ill on their deathbeds “without sacrificing their discretion because they were all together.” Many captives were baptized a second time because their first baptism, presumably in Angola, as required by royal decree, had been “dubious.” By 1627, Jesuits preached weekly to a reported crowd of three hundred in the central plaza in the “language of Angola.”³⁴

Cartas Anuas de la Provincia del Paraguay, Chile y Tucumán de la Compañía de Jesús (1615-1637) (Buenos Aires: Jacobo Peuser, 1929), 389.

³² Junta de Historia Eclesiástica Argentina, *Actas y Documentos del Cabildo Eclesiástico de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires, 1943), 34-35

³³ “Décima tercera carta [del Provincial Francisco Vázquez Trujillo] en donde se relata lo acaecido en los años de 1628-1641...” in *Documentos para la historia argentina, tomo XX Iglesia: Cartas anuas de la provincia del Paraguay, Chile y Tucumán, de la Compañía de Jesús (1615-1637)* (Buenos Aires: Casa Jacobo Peuser, 1929), 417-418.

³⁴ “Letras annuas de la Provinica de Paraguay de los años de 1626 y 27, de los collegios y misiones de la Comp^a de IHS,” in *Documentos para la Historia Argentina*, 243-244.

Maritime Spaces

A number of records detail the participation of free and enslaved people of African descent in maritime labor and trade in the early South Atlantic. Among the first recorded entries in Buenos Aires' treasury records is "Anton de Çarate," a freed man "of the black color," who paid eight *reales* worth of duties on "a little [bit] of *azero*" (iron) that he disembarked from a vessel that had come from São Vicente.³⁵ In Buenos Aires and ports around the Atlantic, Africans were vital parts of ships' crews.³⁶ One man named Ventura, a *ladino* slave from Angola, was purchased in 1622 by Juan de Cabrera in Buenos Aires and served his master on at least one slaving voyage between Angola and Buenos Aires the following year.³⁷ Around the same time, a twelve or thirteen year old boy named Antonio, described as "of the Ambundo nation," was employed below deck on the vessel *Nuestra Señora de Grazia*. Antonio's master had freed him in Luanda in recognition of the care that Antonio had given him during a particularly severe bout with illness, but only under the condition that he would serve his master for the duration of his master's life. As Antonio's difficult work below deck, likely caring for the captives embarked on his master's account, indicates, freedom often came at a price. Some of the enslaved Africans who worked on board slaving vessels were Luso-Africans. A soldier in the presidio of Buenos Aires who delivered corn and butter to a Dutch pingue "stranded" in port in the early 1660s reported witnessing a local merchant purchasing

³⁵ AGN Sala XIII-42-7-2, fol. 4v, "Libro Thesoreria de el año 1586 hasta el de 1604."

³⁶ W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Alexander X. Byrd, *Captives and Voyagers: Black Migrants across the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009); Mary E. Hicks, "The Sea and the Shackle: African and Creole Mariners and the Making of a Luso-African Atlantic Commercial Culture, 1721-1835," (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2015).

³⁷ AGI Esc 849A, 86r-91r, "Ynbentario 2o", Buenos Aires, 27 March 1624 and 95v-96v, "Juan de Cabrera exsibia el despacho de un negro q llebo del puerto," Buenos Aires, 28 April 1624.

a “*mulato*” boy named “Manuel Criollo.” According to the shipmaster, Juan Brum, the boy in question did not have a name (at least, he did not have a European name) but was able to speak “Guineo, Portuguese, and a little Dutch.” Brum’s willingness to sell a multilingual captive may be explained by the fact that he traveled with his 16-year-old son, Jacobo, on this particular voyage. Jacobo been born in Angola to a local woman and, though he did not speak Spanish, offered his fluency in Dutch and likely Kimbundu.³⁸

Although maritime work is commonly believed to have been a male-dominated sphere, the shipmaster of one vessel that landed in 1621 casually remarked that fifteen of his female captives were not able to appear for an inventory roster because they were below deck pumping water off of his vessel’s bilge, which, like many, had arrived in Buenos Aires badly weathered.³⁹ African and African-descended women also served as interpreters and translators on slave voyages. One notarial record described by Miguel Ángel Rosal details Maria Teixeira, a 30-year-old “*mulata*” (woman of mixed African and European heritage) native to the island of Madeira and owned by a priest named Francisco Caballero de Bazán, accumulated 400 pesos to purchase her liberty from the priest “through the intervention of some important people” but was bound to serve Captain Mateo de Grado, a local official, in his home and on his upcoming voyage to Brazil. The record additionally mentioned that Grado was a relative of Governor Diego Marín Negrón, a noted slave trafficker whom we might reasonably suspect was one of the contributors to Teixeira’s manumission fund. Teixeira’s likely fluency in Portuguese would have helped her to facilitate commercial dealings on the Brazilian coast on Grado’s (and perhaps Negrón’s) behalf.⁴⁰

³⁸ AGI Esc 876B, “Declarassion Jacobo Brum,” 10 octubre 1663.

³⁹ AGI Esc 880C, Pieza 10, fol. 11v-14r, “Visita del navio Nuestra Señora del Nazare maestre Lorenço Gomes,” Buenos Aires, 8 January 1621, and fol. 18v, “Segunda visita,” Buenos Aires, 16 January 1621.

⁴⁰ Rosal, “Manumisiones de esclavos en Buenos Aires (1600-1670).” On African interpreters and translators on slave voyages, see Candido, “Different Enslaved Journeys,” 402-403.

Some Africans performed multiple functions on board slaving vessels. Matias de Meneses, a 40-year-old free black man from Cape Verde, described as “bearded,” was found by local soldiers on the river bank outside of the city, along with 114 “*piezas*,” whom he had helped rescue from a sinking vessel, *Nuestra Señora del Destierro y San Juan Baptista*, following the vessel’s sinking by the Dutch. He was deposited in government custody with the enslaved people he had saved. Meneses protested being lumped together with the new captives, insisting that he was both a free man and a Christian. Meneses reported that he had been hired by one of the voyage investors, Gabriel Vaez Pereira, to work as the “healer, interpreter, and *capataz*” because he knew “the good treatment and procedures” necessary to care for “a big load of slaves.”⁴¹ Three witnesses corroborated Meneses’ testimony that he was a free man, including crewmembers and one local *vecino*. One Portuguese resident of Buenos Aires named Antonio Merino de Barros had known Meneses for over a year because he had been “present in the city of Angola” [Luanda] and averred that Meneses “is known as a *horro*...among all the people [there].” A fellow passenger on the vessel, and the brother of Meneses’ employer, Lionel Gomez Pereira, had known Meneses for four years, and testified that he had traveled in the service of his brother to Rio de Janeiro and Portugal, presumably on other slaving voyages.⁴²

Scholars of Argentine history have long pointed to the lack of plantations in the Río de la Plata and Tucumán and sparse evidence of armed rebellion to argue that slaves on the whole received benevolent treatment from their masters that “was not very different...from that of poor whites” and that many of the enslaved “[never] received a single whipping, knew nothing of

⁴¹ On free and enslaved African healers in Iberian slave ports, see Pablo Fernando Gómez Zuluaga, “Bodies of Encounter: Health, Illness, and Death in the Early Modern African-Spanish Caribbean,” (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 2009) and Mariza de Carvalho Soares, “African Barbeiros in Brazilian Slave Ports,” in Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra et al, *The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 207-232.

⁴² AGI Esc 876A, fol. 59r-69v, 116v-124r, Buenos Aires, 1660.

torments, and were taken care of when sick.”⁴³ Most of the cited evidence of benevolent treatment comes from research into the substantial slaveholdings of the Jesuits, who, as we have seen, took the religious indoctrination of their captives seriously, if they also relied upon a steady supply of enslaved laborers to operate their numerous urban and rural properties. Beyond ensuring spiritual education, decent treatment would have lessened motives for slave flight or rebellion. The economic advantages of benevolent treatment were highlighted in orders distributed to Jesuit priests and brothers on agricultural properties. These orders declared that “the development of the hacienda depends on the good treatment given to slaves and other workers. By not pushing them too much and exercising a bit more love they will work better.”⁴⁴ Members of the Society of Jesus were themselves never to administer punishment to slaves: such duties were reserved for “the *mayordomos* or another slave or Indian.” Enslaved Africans who worked in animal husbandry and overland transport, as did many who resided in the Río de la Plata, occupied positions that conferred “considerable responsibility, autonomy, and trust.” A number of opportunities to earn wages and, eventually, purchase freedom were motivations for many to remain. When dissatisfied with working conditions, slaves could and did flee; some number may have chosen not to because they had established families.⁴⁵

Maroon communities are known to have existed in every other region of the Atlantic world, and it would be surprising if at least one did not exist somewhere in the Río de la Plata. In 1678,

⁴³ Elena F.S. de Studer, *La trata de negros en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVIII* (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1958), 331-332; Catalina J. Pistone, *La esclavatura negra en Santa Fe* (Santa Fe: Junta Provincial de Estudios Históricos de Santa Fe, 1996); Jorge Troisi Melean, “Catholic Ethics and Labor: The Salavery Policy of the Jesuits in Colonial Argentina (Second Half of the Eighteenth Century)” in F. Landi, *Confiscations of the Estates of the Regular Clergy and Capitalistic Accumulation in Early Modern Europe and the American Continent* (Milan: F. Angeli, 2003).

⁴⁴ 1663 Ordenes quoted in Cushner, *Jesuit Ranches*, 41.

⁴⁵ Lolita Gutierrez Brockington, *The Leverage of Labor: Managing the Cortes Haciendas in Tehuantepec, 1588-1688* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), 143-144.

doctor Gregorio Suarez Cordero, had reported learning from Pampa Indians of “a very large number of blacks [who] live in the valleys on the coast.” Cordero believed that their “conversion and service” was more “necessary and useful than that of the Indians, because they are people who embrace...the [Catholic] faith.”⁴⁶ Settling along the estuary [“the coast”] would have given fugitive slaves an opportunity to participate in fluvial commerce; the north bank of the River Plate (present-day Argentina) was largely ignored by Europeans yet offered some of the best places for vessels to land.⁴⁷

Conclusion

While recent studies have shown that the African presence in Potosí was far from insignificant during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the lure of Upper Peruvian markets alone is not enough to account for the initial rise and continued expansion of the slave trade to Buenos Aires. Africans were present in the Río de la Plata from at least the second foundation of Buenos Aires, and in the 1620s and 1630s, the Río de la Plata became more African. Residents of the Río de la Plata saw a variety of uses for enslaved African labor, from domestic service and street vending to agriculture and animal husbandry to overland transport and maritime commerce.

The sources analyzed in this chapter challenge the perception that slaves who lived primarily in rural areas were socially or culturally isolated, indicating that enslaved men and women frequently circulated between urban and rural spaces. Though Buenos Aires’ earliest ecclesiastical records pertaining to its African and indigenous residents have been missing for

⁴⁶ “Carta del doctor Gregorio Suarez Cordero al Rey, incluyendo copia de otra que elevava al Gobernador de Buenos Aires, todas ellas relativas a los indios infieles de las gobernaciones de Buenos Aires, Tucuman y Paraguay,” Asuncion del Paraguay, 1678 in *Documentos históricos y geográficos relativos a la conquista y colonización Rioplatense, Tomo I* (Buenos Aires: Talleres S.A. Casa Jacobo Peuser, 1941), 291.

⁴⁷ On Africans in river transport, see Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*.

several decades, future research will explore extant baptismal records from the second half of the seventeenth century to examine familial and godparentage networks among the Río de la Plata's African and indigenous residents. Although geography, climate, and settlement patterns affected the agricultural development of Iberia's American colonies, none developed plantation slavery as it would be known in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Comparison to other regions of the Atlantic world reveals that, both in terms of demography and the roles that Africans occupied within colonial society, the Río de la Plata was hardly unique.

EPILOGUE

Attention to the South Atlantic indicates that Spain and Portugal's early overseas empires overlapped in more ways than scholars have acknowledged. Portuguese migrants readily passed between the Río de la Plata, Brazil, and Angola in connection with slave voyages, which began anchoring in the estuary shortly after the second foundation of Buenos Aires in 1580. Far from sitting on the sidelines of major commercial developments in the Atlantic world, Spaniards also circulated between these spaces. In their capacities as soldiers, "passengers," convicts, and traders, they participated in commercial networks that encouraged slave traffic to both the Río de la Plata and the hinterlands of South America. The free movement of Spaniards and Portuguese between empires was facilitated by the Union of the Iberian Crowns (1580-1640), but long outlived it. In contrast to beliefs that Portuguese separation cultivated proto-nationalist sentiments, Spaniards and Portuguese in the South Atlantic remained interwoven through kinship, friendship, and financial ties. The strength of these trans-imperial linkages helps to explain the remarkable endurance of the South Atlantic slave trade.

This study documented hundreds of previously unknown slave voyages to South Atlantic ports. But if these numbers significantly revise extant figures for the slave trade, they remain far from complete. Due to the ubiquity of contraband and the idiosyncracies of record-keeping, surviving fiscal records drastically undercounted slave arrivals. Looking beyond the numbers, women and children were a significant component of slave cargoes. The presence of so many women and children among captives shipped from West Central Africa urges us to rethink not only the consequences of the slave trade for African societies, but also cultural transmission and retention in the Americas.

The slave trade did not end in American ports. This study followed enslaved Africans along several of the major trade routes of the South American interior, exploring the marketing of captives; outfitting of slave caravans; conditions of transport; and the participation of indigenous and African individuals in moving slaves to a variety of spaces. Interior slave routes extended the African diaspora well beyond Atlantic ports, reaching Santiago de Chile, Mendoza, Córdoba, Asunción, and Potosí. The ability to purchase slaves on credit in exchange for modest agricultural products and other “fruits of the earth” facilitated slave ownership for individuals of middling and lower socioeconomic statuses. Significantly, movements of slaves to the interior did not correspond with trends in port arrivals. Scholars must therefore be wary of using records produced outside of port cities to gauge the robustness of maritime commerce.

The free and enslaved African men and women who appeared in this narrative—as market women, farmers, healers, dockworkers, tavern keepers, cart drivers, sailors, ranch hands, soldiers, and traders—occupied a variety of roles in South Atlantic societies. Africans comprised a significant proportion of the population of port cities and the hinterlands of southern South America centuries before the development of large-scale plantation agriculture. If few of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Africans forcibly transported to these regions labored on sugar plantations or mined precious metals, the conditions of slavery were no more humane. While the geography, labor needs, and settlement patterns of the region offered some enslaved Africans opportunities to run away or to accumulate wealth and eventually purchase their freedom, as the cases presented in this study illustrate, freedom was tenuous for Africans and their descendants who resided on both sides of the Atlantic during the era of the slave trade.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Mariana P. Candido, “O limite tênue entre escravidão e liberdade em Benguela durante a era do comércio transatlântico,” *Afro-Ásia* no. 47 (2013), 239.

Appendix A:
Slave arrivals in the port of Buenos Aires, 1586-1680,
by vessel's first known port/region of departure and quinquinnium

Quinquinnium	Angola	Other Africa	Bahia	Rio de Janeiro	Pernambuco	Sao Vicente/Santos	Brazil, unspecified	Unknown	Total
1586-1590	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	6	56
1591-1595	0	0	0	142	70	0	44	75 [4]	331
1596-1600	13	180	0	0	0	0	149	848 [805]	1190
1601-1605	3040	0	14	974	8	1	400	22	4459
1606-1610	870	0	143	575	122	0	47	259	2016
1611-1615	1845	0	374	390	0	0	374	1358	4341
1616-1620	1129	0	341	175	10	0	0	272 [24]	1937
1621-1625	2751	0	226	318	259	0	0	322 [156]	3876
1626-1630	1100	0	238	712	130	0	0	341 [196]	2521
1631-1635	770	0	0	394	0	78	130	89	1461
1636-1640	2264	0	141	512	0	28	0	474	3419
1641-1645	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1646-1650	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1651-1655	373	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	375
1656-1660	1488	303	0	0	0	0	0	477	2268
1661-1665	45	385	185	0	0	0	0	10	625
1666-1670	344	0	0	0	0	0	0	912	1256
1671-1675	0	0	76	450	0	0	0	14	540
1676-1680	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	57	68
TOTAL	16,032	879	1738	4642	589	107	1194	5538	30,729

**Appendix B:
Intra-American traffic to Buenos Aires, 1586-1680
by quinquennium and number of captives disembarked**

Quinquennium	Rio de Janeiro	Pernambuco	Bahia	Sao Vicente/Santos	Brazil— Not Specified	Row Total
1586-1590	0	0	0	0	50	50
1591-1595	70	142	0	0	51	263
1596-1600	0	0	0	0	149	149
1601-1605	979	8	14	1	400	1402
1606-1610	662	122	143	0	47	974
1611-1615	390	0	374	0	141	905
1616-1620	175	10	341	0	0	526
1621-1625	315	259	226	34	0	834
1626-1630	712	130	238	0	0	1080
1631-1635	394	0	0	78	130	602
1636-1640	611	0	141	28	0	780
1641-1645	0	0	0	0	0	0
1646-1650	0	0	0	0	0	0
1651-1655	0	0	0	0	0	0
1656-1660	8	0	0	0	0	8
1661-1665	0	0	185	0	0	185
1666-1670	0	0	0	0	0	0
1671-1675	450	0	76	0	0	526
1676-1680	9	0	0	0	0	9
TOTAL	4775	671	1738	141	968	8283

Sources for Appendices A and B: Kara D. Schultz, "Slave Arrivals in Buenos Aires, 1586-1680." Unpublished dataset based upon the following archival and published sources:

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**Appendix C:
Slave sales in Córdoba by year, 1590-1650**

Year	Slaves sold	Male	Female	Not specified
1590	2	2	0	0
1591	4	4	0	0
1593	2	1	1	0
1594	9	7	2	0
1595	3	1	2	0
1596	11	7	3	1
1597	54	32	20	2
1598	19	16	3	0
1599	37	29	8	0
1600	21	13	7	1
1601	57	17	12	28
1603	20	1	9	10
1604	33	19	12	2
1605	8	5	3	0
1606	26	12	7	7
1607	32	16	7	9
1608	22	8	5	9
1609	20	11	7	2
1610	1	0	1	0
1611	15	4	0	11
1612	15	8	7	0
1613	25	5	12	8
1614	38	19	19	0
1615	33	13	17	3
1616	53	12	14	27
1617	3	1	2	0
1618	31	15	15	1
1619	24	17	7	0
1620	26	17	9	0
1621	89	16	21	52
1622	27	13	11	3
1623	11	8	3	0
1624	31	10	14	7
1625	18	14	4	0
1626	13	10	3	0
1627	49	22	15	12
1628	4	1	1	2
1629	8	4	4	0
1630	3	1	2	0
1631	16	9	7	0
1633	1	1	0	0
1634	5	3	2	0
1637	2	1	1	0
1638	15	6	9	0

1639	3	2	1	0
1640	3	2	1	0
1643	5	2	3	0
1644	1	1	0	0
1645	8	4	4	0
1646	9	5	4	0
1647	2	2	0	0
1648	7	5	2	0
1649	9	6	3	0
1650	16	7	9	0
TOTAL	999	467	335	197

No slave sales were recorded in the notarial records for the years 1592, 1602, 1632, 1635, 1636, 1641, or 1642.

Source: AHPC, Indices de protocolos notariales de la provincial de Córdoba, Registro 1, Cajas 1-5; Inventarios 5-58.

Appendix D:
Captives in transit to Potosí apprehended on the *chácara* of Alonso de Tovar, outside of Jujuy, and in the *rancho* of property owned by Lopez de Vergara, 19 November 1619

Name	Age	Description
<i>MALE CAPTIVES</i>		
Anton Angola	20	Medium Build
Anton Angola	20	
Diego Angola	20	
Diego Angola	20	
Francisco Angola	22	Tall, missing some of his lower teeth
Jorge Angola	26	<i>Ya barbado</i>
Juan Angola	14	
Manuel Angola	12	Chubby (<i>gordillo</i>)
Manuel Angola	18	
Manuel de tierra Angola	18	Sick
Pablo Angola	16	
Sevastian Angola	22	<i>Ya barbado</i>
Xpoval de Angola	20	Medium build
Manuel Congo	35	<i>Chico</i> (small)
Sevastian Encholo	20	
Anton Malamba	20	Sore on his lower lip
Domingo Malamba	17	
Francisco Malamba	18	
Xptoval Malamba	30	Tall, barbado
Agustin de tierra Unbamba	18	
Pedro Yssama	16	
Anton ladino	17	Sick
Clemente	16	
Francisco (negro)	35	In Jujuy shoeing mules at the time of inspection of Tovar's chacara; is a carpenter and slave of Miguel de Vergara, a <i>vecino</i> of Steco
Francisco (negro)	4-5	Son of Catalina Angola, 35
Francisco	5	Son of Maria, age 22
<i>FEMALE CAPTIVES</i>		
Antonia Angola	20	Pregnant
Catalina Angola	11-12	
Catalina Angola	18	
Catalina Angola	35	With negro Francisco, 4-5 years old
Crestina Angola	30	
Elena Angola	13-14	

Gracia Angola	14	
Gracia Angola	25	
Juana Angola	15-16	
Maria Angola	18	
Maria Angola	20	Tall
Maria Angola	20	
Maria Angola	22	
Maria Angola	24	
Susana Angola	12	
Vitoria Angola	12-13	
Ysabel Angola	15	
Ysabel Angola	18	Tall
Gracia	13-14	
Juliana	18	
Justa	10	
Maria	10	
Maria	24	Mother of Francisco, age 5

Source: AGI Esc 880B, Pieza 5, fol. 640v-644v, “En la chacara de el capn. Alonso de Tovar cerca de la ciudad de Jujuy...” 19 noviembre 1619.

**Appendix E:
Captives on the Dutch pingue *El Naranjo***

Name	Approximate age	Description
<i>MALE CAPTIVES</i>		
Quinquinbi	24	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Mafunbo	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Antonio	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Bumba	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Vensa	30	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Vatista	30	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Antonio	34	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Vajissa	30	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Manuel	38	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Pai Viejo Cano (old gray hair)	“Very old”	Not a <i>pieça de Yndias</i> because of his age
Fula	24	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Changa Chango	“More than 30 years old”	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Bula	40	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Panso	40	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Vonbal	40	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Mucuabi	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Juan	24	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Garssia	24	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Don Juan	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Buanga	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Muima	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Guamba	30	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Mafungo	10	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Maluta	10	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Pissi	10	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Malongo	10	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Casumbo	6	<i>1/3 pieça de Yndias</i>
Chalabe	6	<i>1/3 pieça de Yndias</i>
Mutate	6	Son of unnamed woman?
<i>FEMALE CAPTIVES</i>		
Quinbangala	6	<i>1/3 pieça de Yndias</i>
Vaquissi	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Maria	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Catalina	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Mutula	“More than 30 years old”	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Unnamed woman	20	Very sick and very thin
Mucunda	20	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Bua	25	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Mutula	30	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>

Funama	26	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Catalina	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Violante	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>
Cristina	18	<i>pieça de Yndias</i>

Source: AGI Esc 876B, fol. 90r-93v, “Autos sobre aber comersiado en este Puerto Eduardo Gaspar con Francisco de Norriega y bendiale 3 piasas de negros la primera bes que arrivo a este Puerto...” Buenos Aires, 24 octubre

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Escribanías Antiguas
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Boxer Mss. II
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