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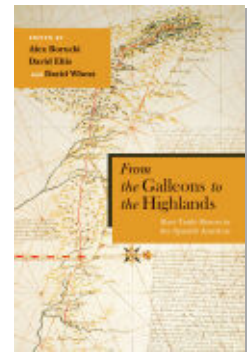
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CHAPTER 10

Routes into Eighteenth-Century Cuban Slavery

African Diaspora and Geopolitics

ELENA SCHNEIDER



‡ IN THE CENTURY OR SO BEFORE CUBA'S SUGAR BOOM IN THE 1790S, Africans and African-descended peoples arrived on the island through a variety of different routes. In reconstructing their journeys, this chapter aims to recover the experiences of a subset of the many individuals caught within the circuits of the slave trade and to demonstrate their ties not only to Africa but also to other areas of the Americas. This case study of the slave trade to Cuba during the long eighteenth century will look familiar to scholars of other American regions that relied more heavily on intra-American than on transatlantic slave trading. During the 150 years after the end of the Portuguese *asiento*, or monopoly contract, in 1640, and before Spain's declaration of "free trade in slaves" in 1789, most new arrivals in Cuba's population of African descent came via British, French, Dutch, and Danish slave traders and smugglers. Sometimes this commerce occurred through the Crown-sanctioned *asiento* and sometimes through channels of contraband and wartime regional trade. Given these characteristics, the slave trade to eighteenth-century Cuba presents challenges and opportunities that hold broader implications for our understanding of the African diaspora and geopolitics in the Atlantic world.

Although smaller in volume than its nineteenth-century counterpart, the slave trade to Cuba before the declaration of “free trade in slaves” in 1789 was significantly larger than historians previously thought.¹ Even current estimates are likely to grow as more research is done and more effective ways are found to assess regional Caribbean trade as well as contraband, especially on the southern coast of the island and in Oriente Province. The existence of this larger slave trade to eighteenth-century Cuba before its sugar boom affirms the growing scholarly consensus that during every stage of Spanish presence on the island of Cuba, the colonial project was built on the backs of free and enslaved Africans.²

A reevaluation of the size and shape of the slave trade to eighteenth-century Cuba has implications for our understanding of Cuba’s demographic strength, economic output, purchasing power, and broader political economy before the sugar boom. It also revises interpretations of the boom itself. As recent scholarship has shown, the takeoff of the 1790s was underwritten by a longer-term transition, which saw steady capital accumulation and growing numbers of enslaved Africans arriving in Cuba during the decades prior.³ Growth in the slave trade had enabled the expansion of a diversified economy that included sugar, as well as coffee, tobacco, ranching, and services; capital accumulation via this diversified economy financed the later sugar boom.

Closer attention to the slave trade to eighteenth-century Cuba also has implications for the social and cultural geography of the African diaspora. As a consequence of the slave routes leading to the island during that era, its African populations were connected not only to Africa but also to other zones of European colonialism in the Americas.⁴ Many African and African-descended peoples arriving in eighteenth-century Cuba had previously lived in non-Hispanic colonies, sometimes long enough to learn their languages. In order to better understand their experiences, we need to look backward along these routes of arrival. Africans and their descendants created black social networks across and between Caribbean islands that necessarily change how we conceive of Cuba’s communities of African descent. The case of eighteenth-century Cuba reinforces the need for models that are even more dynamic than the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (TSTD) or Paul Gilroy’s more Anglophone Black Atlantic, models that can better capture the fluid and interconnected nature of America’s African diaspora.⁵

Finally, the slave trade to eighteenth-century Cuba has implications for our understanding of broader political and economic landscapes. The

island's earliest and most powerful relations with non-Hispanic colonies in and around the Caribbean—and especially the Anglo-American system—predated the takeoff of the sugar economy and occurred within the context of intra-American slave trading. Cuba's merchant elites used the slave trade to forge ties with other American colonies, thus building a dynamic, diversified, and interdependent economy that allowed them to evade and gain leverage against political authorities in Spain. Via these slaving circuits, Cuba's eighteenth-century economy developed a symbiotic relationship not only with other Spanish colonies but also with their British, French, Dutch, and Danish neighbors, despite the Spanish Crown's prohibitions on interimperial trade.

What follows is a reconstruction of the multiplicity of routes of African arrival in Cuba—through the *asiento*, privateering, contraband, maritime marronage, and the disruptions of imperial warfare. These varied routes of arrival themselves demand study, beyond any contribution to revised slave trade volume estimates. By putting a variety of archival and published sources in conversation with recent research on the commercial records of the trade, this chapter seeks to reveal something of the identities, experiences, and cultural knowledge of arrivals and the web of connections between the island and its neighbors built under the auspices of the slave trade. The sale of enslaved Africans in Cuba and the circulation of the goods they produced played a key role in the development of multiple European colonialisms throughout the hemisphere. Historians have argued that the engines that drove early globalization and the first hemispheric relations in the Americas were the desire for free trade, the search for markets, and shared anticolonial sentiments. And yet before all that, and alongside it, the prime mover of the system was always the business of buying and selling Africans.⁶

Routes of Arrival

The slave trade to Cuba had more longevity than the trade to any other region of the Americas, lasting from 1511 to perhaps as late as 1863;⁷ however, most scholarship on it has focused on its dramatic takeoff after Spain's declaration of "free trade in slaves" in 1789, which helped to spark Cuba's sugar boom. In part, this is a question of volume. During the thirty-year period between 1790 and 1820, more than three hundred thousand Africans were brought to Cuba and sold as slaves. In the previous 250 years, by contrast, less

than half that many Africans were traded to Cuba.⁸ In the nineteenth century, Cuba became the world's leading sugar producer and imported upward of seven hundred thousand enslaved African laborers.⁹ According to the historiography, African arrivals to the Spanish Caribbean dropped off after the end of the Portuguese *asiento* in 1640. Other chapters in this volume argue that the slave trade to Spanish America in general followed a U-shaped curve, with heights during the union of the two crowns and then again (this time to Cuba in particular) during the period after 1789, during what has been described as a "re-Africanization" process.¹⁰ By contrast with later periods of peak transatlantic slave trading, there has thus far been relatively little study of the slave trade to Cuba across the long eighteenth century, during what has been called the bottom of the "U."¹¹

Another reason for the greater attention to the slave trade during the nineteenth century is that the vast majority of the scholarship on colonial Cuba focuses on that era. Within the framework of Cuban national history, the period before 1790 and indeed the entire "era of the *asientos*" represent the backstory to what has traditionally been seen as the main story, the take-off of sugar plantation slavery in the final decade of the eighteenth century. Within the framework of Caribbean history, eighteenth-century Cuba seems to inhabit a space largely outside the most important trends of the era—the sugar boom in the British and French Caribbean, the rise of plantation slavery, and the growth of global capitalism.¹² And yet by focusing only on the period of the takeoff of industrial production of sugar, we miss the human history that came before. Whether intentionally or not, we also reproduce a capitalist system that ascribed relative value to lives based on their commodity or productive value in the global economy.

As it has developed thus far, scholarship on the African slave trade to Cuba has shared the same initial emphases as TSTD: a focus on questions of scale and on the transatlantic passages connecting Africa and its cultures and peoples to the Americas. As noted in previous chapters in this volume, this emphasis has been of limited utility for a period of intensive intra-American trading and has resulted in an undercounting of arrivals in areas that were more likely to be endpoints of intra-American rather than transatlantic slaving voyages.¹³ For example, TSTD shows only 26,064 enslaved African arrivals in Cuba between 1526 and 1788, while for many decades now, scholars of Cuba working in Spanish and Cuban archives have been estimating fifty thousand African arrivals between 1763 and 1789 alone.¹⁴

Tracing the slave trade to Cuba before the era of the sugar boom—in other words, prior to the period in which transatlantic slave trading predominated—presents archival challenges that require a different methodology. Entry and exit logs for slave ships in the port of Havana have not been located for most of this period and may not survive.¹⁵ In addition, a large percentage of the trade was contraband and thus hard to quantify. Examination of the commercial records of non-Hispanic traders—not just British but also French, Dutch, and Danish—would help to expand our knowledge of the trade to Cuba, but there is still much more we need to know about a time when the slave trade was so often indirect and clandestine.¹⁶ Re-creating the varied routes of African arrival is essential to understanding the history of the island before its sugar boom and the dynamic, diversified economy that was able to transform itself when the opportunity arose in the final decade of the century. A deeper understanding of the multiple ways Africans and people of African descent arrived in Cuba can also help guide future efforts to evaluate the volume, nature, and impacts of the trade both within Cuba and beyond its shores. Yet interpreting this history requires making sense not only of commercial and shipping data that describes the volume of the trade but also local sources addressing *de facto* regional practices that were sometimes sanctioned by Spanish law but often were not.

As is well known among specialists, until 1789, much of the slave trade to Spanish America operated under *asiento* monopolies the Crown granted to international financiers or merchant houses who arranged for Spanish American ports to receive a specified number of enslaved Africans annually. In the eighteenth century, the most familiar and largest were the French *asiento*, held by La Compagnie Royale de Guinée (1701–1713), and the British *asiento*, held by the South Sea Company (1715–1739).¹⁷ Lesser known *asientos* include Spanish contracts granted to the Real Compañía Gadjitana in 1765 and the Real Compañía de Filipinas in 1785, as well as a second British *asiento* for Cuba issued to the large Liverpool firm of Baker and Dawson in 1784.¹⁸ The official end of the *asiento* system in 1789 combined with the multiple impacts of the outbreak of the Haitian Revolution in 1791 are thought to have catalyzed Cuba's sugar boom and the dramatic escalation of African slave trading to the island.

In general, the restrictions and inefficiencies of the *asiento* system have been blamed for the failure of the sugar industry in Cuba to rival its neighbors in Jamaica and Saint-Domingue before the Spanish Crown liberalized the slave trade in 1789. Promoters of the sugar industry in Cuba, such as the

influential creole lawyer and lobbyist at court Francisco de Arango y Parreño, perpetuated this view. Arango y Parreño blamed the asientos of the Royal Havana Company, the British firm Baker and Dawson, and the Real Compañía de Filipinas for retarding the growth of Cuba's economy by failing to meet the island's demand for enslaved Africans.¹⁹ Ongoing complaints about the asiento fed the sense that the slave trade to Cuba was relatively dormant during this period. It is important to remember, though, that Arango y Parreño's criticisms of the restrictions of the system were retrospective and shaped by his own opposition to trade monopolies during the era of "free trade in slaves." A close reading of sources in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville and the Archivo Nacional de Cuba in Havana reveals multiple routes of African arrival even under the asiento system.

The slave trade to Cuba during the era of the asientos was less monolithic and restrictive and more variegated and multipathway than it may appear. One of the reasons for the historical undercounting of African arrivals in Cuba during the eighteenth century may be a misunderstanding of the nature of the asientos. Alongside asientos the Spanish Crown issued to the merchant companies mentioned above, there were also lesser-known private asientos the captain general of Cuba granted to wealthy residents who petitioned for them. Under this Crown-sanctioned policy, the captain general gave small-scale licenses to property owners who wished to sail to a non-Hispanic colony and purchase enough enslaved Africans to expand or replenish the workforce on their own hacienda (ranch or estate). Property owners in Cuba might also receive permission to bring hundreds of additional captives to sell on the open market in order to help finance their trip. The practice developed during periods in which the French asiento failed to meet local demand and was especially popular after the end of the British asiento. In effect, many elites in Cuba took advantage of this custom to send ships directly to Kingston, Jamaica, to purchase enslaved Africans, engage in contraband on the side, and establish connections with merchants there. This practice was relatively common, and it was standard for either one Havana *vecino* (resident) or several who had pooled their resources for the journey to purchase several hundred enslaved Africans in Jamaica at a time. These private asientos were just one of several ways merchants and landholders in Cuba found ways to expand their own slave trading.²⁰

The Royal Havana Company—majority held by Havana-based merchants—also managed to secure an asiento for the slave trade to Cuba after the 1739 outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear between Britain and Spain,

which ruptured the British South Sea Company asiento.²¹ In response to the scarcity of laborers caused by the interruption of war, the Spanish Crown licensed the company to import 1,100 "*piezas de indias*" over two years.²² Enslaved Africans were supposed to be brought into Puerto Rico by friendly or neutral powers, such as the French or Dutch, and then transshipped to Havana. The idea was thus to bar foreign (non-Hispanic) merchants, with their spies and contraband goods, from critical Cuban ports such as Havana and to meet burgeoning demand in Cuba without trading with the British enemy.²³

As Royal Havana Company records reveal, its directors used the asiento to import far more enslaved Africans, mostly directly from British traders, than their contract permitted. During the War of Jenkins' Ear, they stationed an agent in Kingston to arrange shipments of enslaved Africans and foodstuffs for Cuba. Ex post facto, the Crown more than doubled the number of enslaved Africans the company was allowed to import, but the Royal Havana Company had already surpassed that number.²⁴ The Royal Havana Company's commissioner in Kingston did such brisk business with British merchants that according to company records, 3,508 enslaved Africans were imported to Havana and its surroundings between February 1743 and April 1747. The arrival of four more slave ships by October 1747 revises the total upward to 4,484 enslaved Africans, calculated at around 3,600 *piezas*.²⁵ Some of the early vessels hailed from Curaçao, Martinique, and Saint Eustatius, but over 90 percent—4,116 enslaved persons—had embarked for Cuba from Jamaica.²⁶ By 1751, the Royal Havana Company had introduced more than 50 percent more enslaved Africans in Cuba over a ten-year period than the South Sea Company had introduced in the ten years prior.²⁷ These figures are significantly larger than the numbers historians have previously claimed were brought to Havana under the royal monopoly company (the number of enslaved Africans arriving in Havana during these four years is only slightly less than previous slave trade volume estimates for the entire period from 1740 to 1760).²⁸ Indeed, company records indicate that it made a significant profit in the trade.²⁹

Parsing the intricacies of how a variety of asientos operated in practice will likely lead us to raise the number of African arrivals in Cuba. However, the asientos and licenses only reveal a small part of the story—the legal, Crown-regulated and -sanctioned portion. Perhaps as many Africans reached Cuba through the intra-American routes of contraband, privateering, and maritime marronage—all activities that are difficult to quantify,

though clearly evident in Spanish and Cuban archives. All of these practices were accentuated by the imperial war and rivalry endemic in the eighteenth-century Caribbean.

As during all eras of the slave trade to Cuba, it is likely that a majority of people were ferried to the island on smugglers' ships. The search for more enslaved Africans to purchase was the most powerful impetus to Cuban contraband, which grew in tandem with the activities of non-Hispanic merchants in a region once claimed exclusively (among European powers) by Spain. In the eighteenth century, the most active smuggling routes for human trafficking connected Cuba to Jamaica, Saint-Domingue, and Curaçao. The economy of Oriente, Cuba's eastern province, and Cuatro Villas, in the center of the island, depended heavily on contraband trade. In 1785, one government official estimated that more than half of Oriente's produce departed the island through contraband channels to Saint-Domingue, and the majority of the production of Cuatro Villas left for Jamaica via the town of Trinidad.³⁰ Though contraband was most rampant in Oriente Province and the center of the island, it also took place in Havana, even in broad daylight. In a telling example, one enslaved woman born in Jamaica described how she was smuggled into the port of Havana to be sold, without any duties being paid, in full view of government officials.³¹

In response to this situation, the Spanish government in Cuba granted pardons (*indultos*) every couple of years for all the enslaved Africans illegally introduced onto the island of Cuba via contraband. In exchange for payment of duties after the fact, local officials branded these enslaved Africans with the mark of the Spanish Crown and pronounced them legalized possessions of their owners.³² This practice provided tax revenue for the Crown and a pragmatic quasi-solution for a situation that had slipped beyond its control, in which its own officers were complicit. The practice of branding men, women, and children upon the payment of import duties physically manifested on black bodies the Spanish state's struggle to regulate their routes of arrival. Retroactively, it also legitimized the property rights of owners.³³

The frequent outbreak of war across the eighteenth century shaped the contours of Cuba's slave trade and may have actually increased the number of Africans arriving on the island. During wartime, disruptions to transatlantic commerce provided other opportunities for individuals in Cuba to purchase slaves directly from neighboring colonies, even those of Spain's enemies. During times of war, the port of Havana could be more open to the ships of other European powers, even its enemies, than during times of

peace. As we have seen, the War of Jenkins' Ear allowed the Royal Havana Company to commission British slave ships to sail human cargo into Havana's harbor. During the next major war and the British occupation of Havana in 1762–1763, British traders brought 3,500 enslaved Africans to sell to Havana vecinos.³⁴ The American War of Independence (1775–1783), in turn, was a period of rapid increase in trade and human trafficking between Cuba and British North America and the new United States. During that war, Spanish subjects in Cuba were permitted by royal order to import slaves from any neutral country. As Jorge Felipe-Gonzalez's contribution to this volume points out, it also facilitated neutral trade with France. Cumulatively, the series of wars leading up to and including the Haitian Revolution accelerated the intra-American slave trade and brought tens of thousands of people of African descent into Cuba.

During these imperial wars, privateering also brought many people of African descent into Cuba. Santiago de Cuba, Havana, and Trinidad were busy privateering bases, and the *guardacostas* (coast guard) patrolled the island's southern coast in search of foreign ships. During just two years of the War of Jenkins' Ear, between 1739 and 1741, Spanish privateers reportedly seized 316 ships heading to or sailing from British American ports.³⁵ Many of these ships were manned by sailors of African descent or carried enslaved Africans below decks. Upon capture, ships were transported into Cuba's ports, and these individuals were usually sold or ransomed into slavery.³⁶

Privateering records from the War of Jenkins' Ear and other eighteenth-century conflicts have yet to be assessed systematically, but as one remarkable memoir suggests, they likely contain further information about African arrivals. The account of Briton Hammon, an enslaved man from Massachusetts, is the first known slave narrative published in British North America. Hammon wrote of his experience of being captured at sea during the War of Jenkins' Ear and brought to Havana, where he was ransomed by the governor and held as a slave for nine years, between 1748 and 1757. Ultimately, he escaped the island of Cuba and returned to Boston to tell and even publish his tale, but other men with similar fates remained on the island and became a permanent part of Cuba's population of African descent.³⁷ Hammon's narrative illuminates the kinds of circulations through the interlocking worlds of contraband, privateering, and slave trading that could bring a North American-born man of African descent into Cuban slavery. As his story indicates, it is important to look widely for sources

about the many ways people of African descent arrived on the island of Cuba, within and beyond the confines of slave traders' and merchants' account books.³⁸

Maritime marronage presented another route of arrival for Africans and people of African descent in Cuba. Like privateering, this mode of arrival is not normally taken into account when assessing the origins of Cuba's population of African descent. Instead, the emphasis is usually exclusively on the slave trade. And yet across the eighteenth century, as many as several hundred people of African descent arrived from non-Hispanic colonies in boats under their own control. This Spanish policy of granting asylum to slaves who fled rival Protestant colonies was another outgrowth of increasing imperial competition in the Greater Caribbean region that evolved during the eighteenth century. Through the practice of maritime marronage, enslaved Africans in Jamaica stole small sea craft and escaped to Cuba, where they claimed the desire to convert to Catholicism in return for their freedom. Some of these individuals were manumitted upon their arrival in Cuba, according to royal proclamation, but others were captured or made royal slaves. Although their numbers were not large, they too form part of the sector of Cuba's population of African descent with significant experience in the American colonies of Spain's rivals. Some individuals had only spent a few months in such locations, but given the knowledge required to make these voyages, it seems likely that many others had lived there for a lifetime.³⁹

Through these various routes of arrival, eighteenth-century Cuba received more Africans before its sugar boom than we have yet to take fully into account. Slave owners in Cuba exploited the presence of subjects of their Crown's European rivals to purchase the enslaved Africans they desired to populate their island and grow and develop the economy. The ruptures and dislocations of wartime also led to interimperial slave trading and the circulation of more people of African descent into Cuba. These men, women, and children intermingled with preexisting communities of African descent on the island and together laid down the foundations of nineteenth-century society and culture. They also played a variety of roles in Cuba's eighteenth-century economy, which was larger, more productive, and more interdependent with the Atlantic system than an earlier generation of scholars thought. The next portion of this chapter will consider the impacts in social and cultural terms, followed by political and economic ones, both on and off the island.

Social and Cultural Geographies

A greater knowledge of both the numbers and routes of African arrival in pre-sugar-boom Cuba alters our understanding of the demographics and geographies of Cuba's population of African descent. Taking into account the contours of the routes of African arrival in Cuba leads us to think differently about the social and cultural origins of Cuba's population of African descent in the eighteenth century. To understand this population requires complicating our notion of what "creolization" looked like. Cuba's population of African descent included people born in Africa, Cuba, and other areas of the Americas, where they had exposure to a variety of European and African cultures in diaspora. At the same time, Cuba's African population in the eighteenth century also had exceptionally diverse origins in Africa, after three centuries of a slave trade that at various times had brought people from multiple regions of West, West Central, and Southeast Africa. Evidence suggests that the island's supposed "re-Africanization" (as discussed in broad demographic terms in this book's first chapter) likely began prior to the 1780s (as this chapter argues). From social and cultural standpoints, African cultures maintained a vibrant life in urban centers such as Havana throughout the eighteenth century, even when the direct transatlantic slave trade from Africa to Cuba was weak or nonexistent.⁴⁰

Thus far, research into Cuba's population of African descent has focused on periods before 1640 and especially on the years after 1789. Although very few slave ships are presently known to have arrived in sixteenth- or seventeenth-century Cuba, Alejandro de la Fuente identified forty-one distinct nations among the ethnic labels used to describe a selection of 1,456 Africans listed in notarial protocols and parish registers.⁴¹ Most scholarship on the slave trade to Cuba, which picks up with the sugar boom in the 1790s, describes a similarly striking variety of African peoples and cultures.⁴² Whereas Fuente's survey drew on local sources, Oscar Grandío Moráquez used slave ship voyage data to identify forty-four different African ports that sent an estimated 225,000 captives to Cuba's slave market between 1790 and 1865.⁴³ If populations of African descent in the Spanish Americas as a whole became more creolized and less directly connected to Africa during the intervening period, this played out in different fashions in different regions, as noted in chapter 1. A drop-off in the transatlantic slave trade by no means indicates that slavery, slave trafficking, or African cultures lost their local salience in Cuba.⁴⁴

A variety of archival sources beyond those documenting commercial aspects of the trade confirm the significant presence of African peoples in Cuba during the decades leading up to 1789. African languages, for instance, were clearly spoken in eighteenth-century Cuba. In the 1770s, the commander supervising royal slaves in the maintenance and construction of Havana's fortifications found it necessary to employ an interpreter identified as "a native of Guinea."⁴⁵ African vocabularies also continued to inflect Cuban Spanish. One of the first descriptions of the variety of Spanish spoken in Cuba, written in 1795 by a creole friar named José María Peñalver, refers not only to Africanized *castellano* (Castilian language) spoken by blacks in Cuba but also African words that had been incorporated into Cuba's Spanish and were commonly used by whites—such as "*funche*" (cornmeal porridge), "*fufú*" (mashed plantains), and "*quimbombó*" (okra). Peñalver included these words along with Amerindian terms such as "*cacao*" (cacao), "*hamaca*" (hammock), and "*plátano*" (plantain) in order to make a case for the necessity of compiling a provincial dictionary reflective of the Spanish spoken on the island, which was shaped by multiple Amerindian and African influences over the previous three centuries.⁴⁶

Other contemporary observers confirm this sense of the deep imprint of African cultures on eighteenth-century Cuba. Writing in 1757, the creole lawyer Nicolás de Ribera described *bozales* (Africans) in Cuba as belonging to fifteen or twenty different nations, hailing from zones of origin that ranged widely across West and West Central Africa.⁴⁷ Despite his status as an elite man of Spanish descent who spent the final years of his life at the court in Spain, Ribera was clearly aware of the diverse origins of Cuba's African population. Further confirming the visibility and variety of African cultures and languages in Havana, in 1755, the bishop of Cuba recorded the presence in Havana of twenty-one *cabildos de nación*, or mutual aid societies, affiliated with particular African nations. According to Bishop Morell's account, Havana's twenty-one *cabildos* in 1755 were associated with ten different African nations: *carabalí* (5), *mina* (3), *lucumí* (2), *arará* (2), *congo* (2), *mondongo* (2), *gangá* (2), *mandingo* (1), *luango* (1), and *popó* (1).⁴⁸

These sources describing African cultural institutions in Havana loosely correspond to what we know about ports of slave embarkation in Africa at the time. While we cannot take these numbers of *cabildos* of each African nation as proportional to the percentage of the population of each group, they do reflect the likely prominence of *carabalí* in Havana's eighteenth-century population of African descent. Though individuals identified as

“congos” (from West Central Africa) predominated over the entire course of the trade,⁴⁹ the presence of five carabalí cabildos in Havana at midcentury is not surprising. The British slave traders from Bristol and Liverpool who dominated the trade to Cuba in the eighteenth century had a large stake in the transatlantic traffic from the port of Calabar, or the Cross Rivers region of present-day Nigeria.⁵⁰ Notarial and baptismal records from Havana confirm the prominence of individuals belonging to these African nations in Cuba at the time, as well as many others.⁵¹

As noted above, local sources also indicate that Cuba’s African and African-descended population was more connected to other sites in the eighteenth-century Americas than we may have thought. As a result of the routes of the slave trade to Cuba during this era, individuals disembarked there were more likely than at later moments to be either creoles or people with some experience, connections, or cultural knowledge acquired in regions of the Americas controlled by non-Hispanic powers. Testifying to the cosmopolitan, multilingual nature of the African diaspora in eighteenth-century Cuba, individuals identified as “negros franceses” and “negros ingleses” are prevalent in archival sources from the era. Hammon’s extraordinary narrative gives a sense of how seamlessly these individuals were potentially able to integrate themselves into Cuba’s diversified labor market. He describes living “very well” for a time, hiring himself out for jobs in Havana’s bustling urban economy.⁵² It is interesting to speculate about the way that creoles like Hammon were able to leverage their skills and experience acquired in other American societies, thus enjoying better prospects than enslaved Africans who were newly arrived in the Americas.

Individuals arriving in Cuba through circuits of privateering or maritime marronage were likely to be creoles or have significant life experience in a non-Hispanic colony. But those who came through the circuits of the slave trade may also have had significant exposure to life elsewhere in the Americas. In his study of Jamaica as a transit hub for the eighteenth-century intercolonial slave trade, Gregory E. O’Malley has shown how slave ships arriving from Africa for the South Sea Company regularly stopped off in Kingston for several months before continuing on with their human cargo designated for the *asiento* trade to Spanish America. While such a short stopover might not have provided much of an introduction to Jamaica’s culture and society, other enslaved Africans who had been in Kingston longer were slipped into the holds of these slave ships in port to replace those who had died in transit or were deemed not healthy enough for sale.⁵³ In addition, those individuals

who arrived in Cuba through smuggling routes had often gone through an extended convalescence in Jamaica, in order to recover from the Middle Passage; some were potentially being sold after having lived in Jamaica for part or all of their lives. Smugglers on the south coast of Cuba, underserved by the island's *asiento* trades, often proved eager to purchase these men, women, and children arriving not so directly from Africa.

Historians of Africa have pointed out that processes of creolization among enslaved Africans in the Americas began not during transatlantic voyages but in Africa; for example, during journeys captives made to the coast before boarding slave ships, or in coastal barracoons, and in some regions perhaps even before they were enslaved.⁵⁴ As we get a better sense of the extended journeys of Africans in the Americas, sometimes lasting more than a generation, we can see how similar processes took place after the initial transatlantic passage and before arrival in destinations such as Cuba. Cultural exchange and much debated processes of creolization occurred not only on journeys *to* the Americas but also on extended passages *between* American societies.

Tellingly, ethnic labels used to refer to people of African descent in Cuba reflect the interaction of African and colonial European cultural markers. In his classic study *Los negros esclavos*, Fernando Ortiz lists among the ethnic labels applied to enslaved and free blacks in Cuba "*ingré*." By way of explanation, he notes that "*los carabali ingré*" formed a *cabildo de nación* in Havana, and he speculates that the label derived from "*caravalí inglés*" (English Caravalí).⁵⁵ Reflecting a similar pattern, a 1767 inventory of the enslaved Africans on two Jesuit sugar plantations outside Havana used such ethnic labels as "*lucumi martinica*" and "*carabali martinica*" (meaning, *lucumí* and *carabalí* from the French island of Martinique), as well as "*zape de antigua*" and "*mina de antigua*" (meaning individuals associated with or embarked on slave ships in Sierra Leone [*zape*] and the Gold Coast [*mina*] who had also lived in the British colony of Antigua).⁵⁶ In this case, imperial warfare had served as the conduit bringing these people to Cuba. The Jesuit priest Thomas Butler had purchased these enslaved individuals from British occupying forces in 1763, during their short rule over Havana. Butler bought them at a discount from the British commander Lord Albemarle, who had purchased them in Antigua and British-occupied Martinique in order to assist the expeditionary forces that invaded Havana. However, even five years later, they were being identified by crosshatched labels, reflecting the interaction between African and American identifiers and experiences.

Though more suggestive than comprehensive, such evidence demonstrates the multilingual, hybridized, and interconnected nature of the Americas' African diaspora. If Cuba's direct connections to Africa were stronger during the very late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a much larger percentage of African arrivals in Cuba during the eighteenth century came ashore with life experience and cultural knowledge from other zones of the Americas, in addition to African cultures and languages. To better understand their experiences, we need to interpolate transatlantic and intra-American journeys. Coming to terms with this lived reality gives us a more accurate view of Cuba's cultural DNA as well as of the people who populated the island and developed its economy before the sugar boom. Knowing that neighboring populations of African descent were networked with each other also changes how we think about responses of people of African descent in Cuba to major events that occurred in the eighteenth-century Caribbean. News of the maroon wars in Jamaica or the revolution in Saint-Domingue arrived in communities that had experience of and connections to these neighboring islands.⁵⁷ A negro inglés in Havana or a lucumí francés in Santiago de Cuba could have had a particularly well-informed and/or personal reaction to such events. Further research and imagination are needed to reconstruct this distinctive eighteenth-century world.

Political and Economic Landscapes

A fuller engagement with the complexity of slave routes into eighteenth-century Cuba provides new understandings of both the life histories of the people traded as slaves and the commercial relationships of those who purchased them. To a certain extent, Africans and African-descended peoples' networks mirrored those of the men of commerce who bought and sold them. Indeed, Cuba's first, most powerful relations with foreign colonies and especially the Anglo-American system were driven by the island's ongoing demand for enslaved Africans. The slave trade became a mechanism through which elites in Cuba—not exclusively but especially elites—brokered relations with other parts of the Americas, a sign of the fracturing of the island's most powerful political and economic relations. Effectively, Cuba's merchants and landholders were creating free trade through the avenues of the slave trade.

The slave trade to eighteenth-century Cuba provided an engine that built trade networks and drove development both on and off the island throughout a broader Atlantic system. Spain's overseas territories never constituted a closed imperial system, but the dynamic of its foreign trade changed in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The volume of contraband and transimperial trade intensified with the French and especially British acquisition of the *asiento* and the growing presence of the British merchants at Jamaica, French at Saint-Domingue, Dutch at Curaçao and Saint Eustatius, and Danish at Saint Thomas, Saint John, and Saint Croix. The *asiento* and contraband trade in slaves enabled whites in Cuba to open up a flow of commodities and enslaved Africans with foreign merchants despite the *de jure* trade monopolies of Spanish colonialism. These trading relationships with non-Hispanic territories sustained the island's economic and demographic growth across the century. The *asientos* provided an additional means to boost Cuban exports and to enable the island's producers to participate in a broader and more lucrative economic system, beyond the legal strictures of Spanish colonialism.

Together the history of undercounting African arrivals in Cuba during this period and the assumption that slaves arrived either directly from Africa or not at all have contributed to the mischaracterization of the size and strength of Cuba's economy and its relationship with the Atlantic system. The diversified economy of eighteenth-century Cuba circulated tobacco, hides, lumber, sugar, and livestock throughout the Atlantic world. Its capital city of Havana was the third-most populous in the Americas—fifty thousand at midcentury—and could not feed itself or find sufficient labor for its industries without this foreign trade.⁵⁸ Havana's busy service economy and naval shipyard drew in supplies and personnel, and its large silver reserves made commerce there especially attractive. Indeed, eighteenth-century Cuba's economic growth and military strength would not have been possible without a large population of African descent, arriving on the island by a variety of means and working in a range of industries. Cuba's boom of sugar and slavery in the 1790s could not have occurred without a preexisting slave-powered economy that produced sufficient capital to invest in enslaved Africans, land, and machinery.⁵⁹

The *asiento* system facilitated Cuba's multifaceted trade with foreign colonies. The French and British *asientos* provided the means for the circulation of goods produced in Cuba into foreign markets. These patterns of transimperial trade were long-standing before Spain began taking piecemeal steps

to liberalize the trade in goods and persons in the 1760s and the decades that followed, and they allowed for the economic growth that facilitated Cuba's sugar boom. During the period of the French *asiento* (1701–1713), La Compagnie Royale de Guinée often traded enslaved Africans in Cuba for tobacco, and the metropolitan market in Paris enjoyed access to popular “Havana snuff” and Cuban tobacco leaf. The British South Sea Company factors, in turn, purchased tobacco and hides, which they exported from the island to Jamaica, London, Amsterdam, and Hamburg. Shortly before the War of Jenkins' Ear, they sent a large shipment of Havana snuff to agents in Amsterdam who sold it all at public auction. So much Havana snuff was making its way through various routes off the island and into northern European markets that the price in Amsterdam had dropped almost by half.⁶⁰ In fact, the South Sea Company worried that the quantity of contraband trade going on alongside the trade in slaves in Havana was so great as to invoke the Spanish monarch's ire at the violation of the trade monopoly and could endanger the entire agreement with the rest of Spanish America.⁶¹

Residents of Cuba—including smugglers, Royal Havana Company agents, and large landholders—sailed directly to nearby non-Hispanic colonies themselves to purchase the workers, goods, and provisions they needed. Hector Feliciano Ramos's study of British contraband in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico from 1748 to 1778 found that the phenomenon of Spanish ships sailing directly into British American ports to transact openly in contraband was more common from Cuba than any other part of Spanish America.⁶² Indeed, in Governor Edward Trelawny's report on the state of the island of Jamaica for 1752, he commented that Spaniards from Cuba “of various appearances” brought large amounts of silver with them to trade, and that they consumed in total an estimated £100,000 worth of manufactures and salt provisions. An anonymous report to the Spanish Crown from 1763 pointed out that it was not hard to find nineteen or twenty ships from Cuba docked in Kingston at any given time.⁶³

An added incentive for these intra-American slave trading voyages for residents of Cuba was that trade with British America shielded capital accumulation from Spanish taxation and enforcement. Across the eighteenth century, Havana elites used the *asiento* factors, as well as trade contacts they made in Kingston, to remit silver and jewels back to Spain, often via London. Doing so had the dual benefit of avoiding the royal *quinto* tax and concealing from Spanish authorities the earnings they were making in extralegal regional trade.⁶⁴ Networks forged through the slave trade enriched both

residents of the Spanish Caribbean and the colonial projects of their British and British American neighbors in ways that are untraceable in Spanish archives.

The slave trade was an especially powerful bond not only cementing relations between Cuba and Jamaica but also between Cuba and British North America. The *asiento* included a provision for the trade in flour, which could be imported into Cuba from other regions of the Americas on vessels that were not necessarily slave ships. Through this concession, merchants in Cuba used the *asiento* to build trade networks with North American cities that possessed large flourmills, such as New York and Philadelphia. The 1760s and 1770s have often been viewed as the first moments that British North Americans legally entered into trade with Cuba,⁶⁵ but Anglo-American merchants had previously contracted with the South Sea Company and the Royal Havana Company to sail to Cuba with barrels of flour. It is no accident that during the American Revolution, Cuba provided a crucial link between Spain and the thirteen colonies, and a Cuban slave trader named Juan de Miralles served as the first Spanish spy and later emissary to the Continental Congress. The dynamics of the slave trade and the associated flour trade meant that Cuba's most prominent slave trader at the time already had contacts in Philadelphia when he first reached the city in 1778. The war he witnessed firsthand would deepen trade relations between the thirteen colonies and Cuba that had first been established in the context of the slave trade.⁶⁶

After the exit of the United States from the British Empire, Cuba began to take the place of Britain's West Indian colonies as a regional market for North American goods. As early as the summer of 1789, a group of wealthy Havana vecinos petitioned Captain General Salvador José de Muro, Marquis of Someruelos, for permission to send their children to the United States to study languages and science.⁶⁷ While it is important not to telescope forward these early relationships between the island's elite and the new nation to their north, this evidence suggests that these relationships originated with the slave trade, rather than with the sugar economy. Given this prior history, the opening of the slave trade to Cuba that occurred in 1789 might be viewed more accurately as an expansion of long-standing practices, rather than as an entirely new departure from them. During the first ten years of the free trade in slaves, US ships predominated among non-Hispanic slave ships arriving in Cuba, followed by British ones. Both Spanish/Cuban and US ships carried relatively small numbers of enslaved Africans per vessel, in a redistributive, often intra-Caribbean trade that was mixed with a trade in

foodstuffs and other kinds of commerce.⁶⁸ This development was not a rupture with prior practices but the rendering as legal—and consequently more legible in Cuban archives—of prior trading routes and their expansion. The proclamation of free trade in slaves in 1789 made the slave trade the first and only “free trade” permitted in Spanish Empire. But long before then, merchants and elites in Cuba had exploited the slave trade and the openings around it for multiple types of direct commerce, spurring economic growth and interdependence throughout the region.

Conclusion

The routes of the slave trade to Cuba took very different shapes and forms at different moments in the island’s past. These variations produced a constantly evolving community of African descent and a fluid network of connections between different nodes in the Atlantic system. Though new configurations in the nineteenth century may have statistically overwhelmed those that came before them, those prior generations were important bedrocks of the society and economy that made later iterations possible. To a certain extent, the historiographical focus thus far on nineteenth-century Cuba may have obscured our understanding of earlier eras, but in truth, there is still so much more we need to know about all eras, from the earliest sixteenth-century voyages through the clandestine slave trade into the 1860s.⁶⁹

Because the trade so often shifted course, its study requires a flexible strategy to adapt to the particularities of distinct time periods and the cooperation of a range of experts working in numerous archives on a variety of records. Within shipping records and other sources of quantitative data about the slave trade, we can also find qualitative evidence about the experiences of the enslaved and the impacts of this commerce on the development of individual colonies and broader Atlantic networks.⁷⁰ At the same time, descriptive sources from surprising archives can also provide insight into the nature of the trade. As we keep striving to improve our understanding of the routes of African arrival in the Americas, it is necessary to continue putting diverse types of sources into conversation with one another.

As I have argued, Cuba’s African diaspora of the eighteenth century enfolded both African and American journeys, knowledges, languages, and experiences. This understanding should potentially reshape how we think

about Africans and people of African descent in Cuba and their responses to hemispheric events.⁷¹ In addition, it should also push us to reconsider some of our narratives of increasing communication, exchange, and interconnection in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world. Cuba's first, most powerful relations with non-Hispanic colonies—and especially with the Anglo-American system—were driven by the island's insatiable demand for enslaved Africans. Though more research remains to be done, it is already evident that the routes through which individuals traveled in the Americas were more complex and varied than we once thought. This shared history of slave trading is more than just transatlantic. It also crisscrossed national, hemispheric, and imperial units, and it will require cooperation between scholars of many different regions to understand the broadest scope of its implications and meanings.

Notes

I would like to thank David Wheat and Alex Borucki for their very helpful comments on this piece, as well as David Eltis and Jorge Felipe-Gonzalez for sharing their findings.

1. See table 8.1, this volume. Eltis and Felipe-Gonzalez's estimate of 108,000 Africans arriving in Cuba between 1701 and 1790 combines transatlantic and intra-American slave trading. Prior estimates have been piecemeal and often disagree with each other: Alexander von Humboldt estimated the importation of "probably 60,000" Africans between 1521 and 1763 and 24,875 between 1763 and 1790, for a total of 84,875 over all the centuries before 1790; see Alexander von Humboldt, *The Island of Cuba* (2001), 138. Hubert H. S. Aimes and José Antonio Saco followed Humboldt's figure of 60,000 arrivals before 1763 but instead cite 41,604 for the period 1763 to 1789. To come up with this number for the period 1763 to 1789, von Humboldt used a faulty calculation that the British brought 10,700 enslaved Africans in 1762–1763, during the British occupation of Havana; see José Antonio Saco, *Colección de papeles científicos*, 1:164; and Hubert H. S. Aimes, *History of Slavery in Cuba*, 36–37. Other historians have added more contraband arrivals, but none have raised the totals dramatically or attempted a comprehensive review.
2. This argument has been made in two recent books about seventeenth-century Spanish America: Sherwin K. Bryant, *Rivers of Gold*; and David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*.
3. Historians disagree about the timing of the sugar boom in Cuba, but the most recent scholarship now points to multiple and overlapping origins, both

temporally and geographically. Most agree that the 1790s marked the most dramatic takeoff. See José Antonio Piqueras, *Las Antillas*; Mercedes García Rodríguez, *La aventura de fundar ingenios*; Mercedes García Rodríguez, *Entre haciendas y plantaciones*; Pablo Tornero Tinajero, *Crecimiento económico y transformaciones sociales*; and Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *El ingenio*. Authors who have argued for the earlier origins of Cuba's sugar boom, in the 1740s and 1750s, include Franklin W. Knight (*Slave Society in Cuba* and "Origins of Wealth and the Sugar Revolution in Cuba") and John Robert McNeill (*Atlantic Empires of France and Spain*).

4. As Eltis and Felipe-Gonzalez note in this volume, less than 20 percent of enslaved people arriving in Cuba between 1701 and 1790 sailed directly from Africa (see table 8.1).
5. Paul Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*.
6. For earlier work that makes a similar argument, see Barbara L. Solow, "Introduction" and "Slavery and Colonialism" in *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System*, 1–42.
7. The team of researchers Grupo de Estudios de Esclavitud en Cuba, directed by María del Carmen Barcia and working at the Archivo Nacional de Cuba (hereafter ANC), has found evidence of an illegal slave disembarkation in Cuba from as late as 1863. See María del Carmen Barcia, "Los años sesenta."
8. See chapter 9 by Jorge Felipe-Gonzalez, table 9.2.
9. See the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (hereafter TSTD), <http://www.slavevoyages.org>, estimates for arrivals in Cuba, 1800–1866.
10. See the introduction and chapters 1 and 8 of this volume.
11. For a study that covers the entire chronology of the trade to Cuba, see José Luciano Franco, *Comercio clandestino de negros*. For studies that focus on the period beginning with the declaration of free trade in slaves in 1789, see Herbert S. Klein, "North American Competition"; Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*; José Luis Belmonte Postigo, "Brazos para el azúcar," 445–67; and José Luis Belmonte Postigo, *Ser esclavo en Santiago*, 119–84.
12. Due to the scarcity of research on the period before 1763, even distinguished scholars of Cuba have shared the assumption that Havana at mid-eighteenth century was "under-populated," "sluggish," and "closed in on itself and closed out of the world." Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 25, 27, 38–48; Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar Is Made with Blood*, 30; and Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba*, 3.
13. See chapter 1 of this volume, and the Intra-American Slave Trade Database project directed by Alex Borucki and Gregory E. O'Malley, which received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.
14. TSTD estimates for arrivals in Cuba, 1511–1789. Over the period 1763–1789, competing figures for slaves imports into Cuba have been proposed, but they range from the 30,874 of von Humboldt (also used by Aimes) to the more than

- fifty thousand cited by Levi Marrero and Francisco Pérez Guzman. See Juan Bosco Amores, *Cuba en la época de Ezpeleta*, 158.
15. Port tax records have been consulted for the period 1600–1650; see Isabelo Macias Dominguez, *Cuba en la primera mitad*, 517–629.
 16. Alex Borucki, David Eltis, and David Wheat, “Atlantic History and the Slave Trade,” 443–44; Wim Klooster, “Curaçao and the Caribbean Transit Trade,” 203–18; and Gregory E. O’Malley, *Final Passages*, 351–81.
 17. Mercedes García Rodríguez, “El monto de la trata.” On the South Sea Company asiento, see Mercedes García Rodríguez, *Los ingleses en el tráfico e introducción de esclavos*; Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit*, 197–234; O’Malley, *Final Passages*, 219–65; Abigail L. Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire*, 172–95; and Adrian Finucane, *Temptations of Trade*.
 18. *Real cédula de erección de la Compañía de Filipinas*. On the Compañía Gaditana, see Bibiano Torres Ramírez, *La Compañía Gaditana de Negros*. Baker and Dawson were also selling enslaved Africans to Venezuela and the Río de la Plata under different contracts. See Alex Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers*.
 19. Francisco de Arango y Parreño, “Discurso sobre la agricultura de La Habana,” 147, 149, 160.
 20. The granting of private asientos was a long-standing practice sanctioned by the Crown in 1751. Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI), Santo Domingo (SD) 2209, Cádiz, December 11, 1753, Julián de Arriaga to the Marqués de la Ensenada; and Elena A. Schneider, *Occupation of Havana*, chapter 2.
 21. Montserrat Gárate Ojanguren, *Comercio ultramarino y la ilustración*.
 22. Slave importations in the late colonial Spanish Empire were counted not by individual enslaved persons, but by what were called “piezas de indias,” or “pieces of the Indies.” According to this system, a person between the ages of sixteen or eighteen and thirty-five equaled one pieza, two youths between the ages of twelve or fourteen and sixteen or eighteen equaled one pieza, and three children between the ages of six and twelve or fourteen were counted together as two piezas. These calculations mattered for taxation and pricing, and they varied according to gender and physical condition of the enslaved person. Enrique López Mesa, “La trata negrera.” For analysis of this term, see Pablo F. Gómez, *Experiential Caribbean*.
 23. AGI-SD 2208, Madrid, December 31, 1740, “La Junta formada sobre arvitrios en Indias para el actual armamento”; Madrid, March 15, 1741, “Memorial aprobado en 29 marzo de 1741, en Retiro, por Joseph de la Quintana, en lo qual cedió por Don Martín de Ulibarri y Gamboa.”
 24. Raised to 2,400 piezas. AGI-Ultramar 986. See also AGI-SD 2209B, por vía reservada.
 25. The 3,508 Africans were counted as 2,813 $\frac{2}{3}$ piezas and the 4,484 Africans as around 3,600 piezas.

26. Though Gregory E. O'Malley has found a certain degree of drop-off in Jamaica's slave trading to Spanish America during the War of Jenkins' Ear, other sources indicate an increase in interisland slave trading. The National Archive at Kew (hereafter TNA), Colonial Office papers (CO) 137.25, f. 87, "Jamaica: Account of Negroes Imported and Exported between the 1st day of July 1739 and 1 July 1749." The total for this period is cited as 69,140 enslaved Africans, 54,463 of whom were sold to the island's planters and 14,677 reexported after duties were paid in Jamaica. For the years 1743–1747, 36,731 Africans were brought into Jamaica, with 27,816 remaining and 8,915 finding themselves put to sea again to be sold elsewhere. O'Malley, *Final Passages*, 296, 361, 364.
27. AGI-Ultramar 986, no. 2, "Compañía de La Havana, sobre piezas de negros que se han introducido." Other company records affirm that the Royal Havana Company brought in more enslaved Africans, even just in the first ten years, than the South Sea Company asiento. AGI-Ultramar 986, no. 2, "Resumen de negros introducidos en la Habana desde 1741–1751."
28. Hugh Thomas argues that over the entire period from 1740 to 1760, only five thousand slaves were brought into Havana legally, with at most another five thousand illegally; see Hugh Thomas, *Cuba*, 31–51. That seems unlikely given the figures for just 1743–1747. Thomas's source is likely Hubert H. S. Aimes, who has the same number, citing José Antonio Saco. See Aimes, *History of Slavery in Cuba*, 23. The only manuscript source I have found for this number is Biblioteca Nacional Madrid, Mss. 14,613/23, which states that the Royal Havana Company brought in 4,986 slaves. However, this document is dated July 20, 1811. It in turn mentions another unnamed historian as the source of the number, which does not match company records.
29. The Royal Havana Company made the considerable profit of 112,242 pesos from the trade. López Mesa, "La trata negrera," 153.
30. AGI-SD 2018, Ignacio de Murgia, in Amores, *Cuba en la época de Ezpeleta*, 188–89. On contraband slave trading in Cuba, see Franco, *Comercio clandestino de esclavos*.
31. López Mesa, "La trata negrera," 148–58.
32. For "indultos de negros de ilícita introducción," see, for example, AGI-SD 2209. They were often issued as a sign of good faith upon the swearing in of a new governor. For indultos, see also ANC, Gobierno Superior Civil.
33. Historians have discussed these practices in the Río de la Plata and New Spain. See Fabrício Prado, *Edge of Empire*; and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, *Urban Slavery in Colonial Mexico*.
34. For the most thorough analysis of slave sales in the notarial protocols in the ANC during the British occupation of Havana, see Enrique López Mesa, "Acerca de la introducción de esclavos." López Mesa estimates 3,200 enslaved Africans sold, which I have rounded up slightly here. His estimate includes those enslaved Africans sold by the British agent Kennion and others sold

- clandestinely by members of the expedition or other merchants. Other scholars of Cuban slavery who agree with Enrique López Mesa's estimate include Tornero Tinajero, *Crecimiento económico y transformaciones sociales*, 35. On the controversy around slave sales in occupied Havana, see Schneider, *Occupation of Havana*, chapter 4.
35. Schneider, *Occupation of Havana*, chapter 2; and Peggy K. Liss, *Atlantic Empires*, 32. Between 1739 and 1741, Spanish privateers seized 329 British merchant ships. *A List of Merchant Ships Taken by the Spaniards* [n.p., 1742]; O'Malley, *Final Passages*, 250, 261. On an earlier era of Spanish corsairs based in Cuba, see Francisco Castillo Meléndez, *La defensa de la isla de Cuba*.
 36. Franco, *Comercio clandestino de esclavos*, 40.
 37. ANC, Asuntos Políticos, Orden 100.
 38. Briton Hammon, *Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings*.
 39. Schneider, *Occupation of Havana*; Linda M. Rupert, "Marronage, Manumission, and Maritime Trade"; and José Luis Belmonte Postigo, "'No siendo lo mismo.'" See also Mark Lentz, "Black Belizeans and Fugitive Mayas." For a classic study of this dynamic, see Jane G. Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida*.
 40. Here I borrow the argument and language of the following: Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt D. Childs, and James Sidbury, "Introduction"; and James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 116.
 41. While these labels are famously inexact, applied to individuals by slave traders and scribes, the great variety of African peoples identified suggests a strong demographic presence and varied cultural origins of African peoples in early colonial Cuba. Alejandro de la Fuente, "Denominaciones étnicas." In his study of the baptismal registers of Havana 1590–1600, David Wheat identified the use of fifteen different African ethnic labels associated with regions spanning from Upper Guinea to West Central Africa. Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, appendix 4, 295.
 42. Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*; Franco, *Comercio clandestino de esclavos*; Belmonte Postigo, *Ser esclavo en Santiago de Cuba*; Oscar Grandío Moráquez, "African Origins of Slaves Arriving in Cuba," 176–201; and Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*.
 43. Grandío Moráquez, "African Origins of Slaves Arriving in Cuba," 188.
 44. See Tatiana Seijas and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, "Persistence of the Slave Market."
 45. AGI-Contratación 5523, no. 2, f. 136r. See also Francisco Pérez Guzmán, "Modo de vida de esclavos"; and Evelyn Powell Jennings, "War as the 'Forcing House of Change.'"
 46. Fray José María Peñalver, "Memoria que promueve la edición de un Diccionario provincial," 37.
 47. Nicolás de Ribera, *Descripción de la isla de Cuba*, 102.
 48. AGI-SD 515, no. 51, Havana, December 6, 1755.

49. Grandío Moráquez, "African Origins of Slaves Arriving in Cuba," 184.
50. Of the sixty-three transatlantic slave trading voyages to Cuba recorded in TSTD for the period 1700–1788, fifty-three were made by British slave traders, accounting for 87 percent of disembarked African slaves in Cuba during that period.
51. Thousands of baptismal, marriage, and burial records of Africans and people of African descent in eighteenth-century Havana and Matanzas can be consulted at the Slave Societies Digital Archive (www.slavesocieties.org).
52. Hammon, *Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings*, 10.
53. O'Malley, *Final Passages*, 229–42.
54. See, for example, Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*. For a critique of "creolization" and "transculturation" models as largely ignoring African histories altogether, see Paul E. Lovejoy, "Identifying Enslaved Africans in the African Diaspora."
55. Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 50.
56. AGI-Cuba 1098, Jesuit inventory.
57. On the outward reverberations of the news of the Haitian Revolution, see Julius S. Scott, *Common Wind*; Julius S. Scott, "Negroes in Foreign Bottoms"; Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror*; and Ada Ferrer, "Speaking of Haiti," 223–47.
58. Cuba's first census was not conducted until 1774, so there are competing estimates for the city's population at mid-eighteenth century. For this estimate, which was performed by Bishop Morell in 1754–1757 and includes the *extramuros* (outside city wall) neighborhoods of Guadalupe, Regla, and Jesús del Monte, see AGI-SD 534, La visita del Obispo Morell, f. 55r–56r; and Levi Marrero, *Cuba*, 47–48. See also estimates of forty to fifty thousand in McNeill, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain*, 35–39; and AGI-SD 1587, Declaración de Juan Ignacio de Madariaga, April 14, 1763.
59. Schneider, *Occupation of Havana*, chapter 2; and Allan J. Kuethe, "Havana in the Eighteenth Century."
60. For the export of snuff, see TNA CO 111.200, Campbell vs. Orts, Exhibit E, Muilman and Sons to John Bland Jr., Amsterdam, September 14, 1764; William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan (hereafter CL), Shelburne Papers, vol. 43, f. 275; and Arthur S. Aiton, "Asiento Treaty as Reflected in the Papers of Lord Shelburne," 173. On Cuba's tobacco industry at this time, see Enrique López Mesa, *Tabaco, mito y esclavos*.
61. CL, Shelburne Papers, vol. 43, ff. 279–83. See also Finucane, *Temptations of Trade*.
62. Hector R. Feliciano Ramos, *El contrabando inglés*, 166.
63. Feliciano Ramos, *El contrabando inglés*, 174; and Archivo General de Simancas, Hacienda 2342, Intendencia de la Habana, 1764–1799.
64. British sources from the 1760s and 1770s refer to this practice of remittances as established and ongoing. BL Add. Mss. 38,339, ff. 225–27, in Allan Christelow,

- "Contraband Trade between Jamaica and the Spanish Main," 331; TNA CO 137.68, Jamaica, April 11, 1773, Tract on the Spanish Trade, in a letter from Lieutenant Governor Dallings; CL, Shelburne Papers, vol. 44, Memorandum on the Spanish Trade, f. 12–18; and Feliciano Ramos, *El contrabando inglés*, 204.
65. James A. Lewis, "Nueva España y los esfuerzos." For links between Cuba and, in particular, Philadelphia, forged through the flour trade in the 1760s and 1770s, see also Linda Salvucci, "Atlantic Intersections"; Sherry Johnson, "El Niño, Environmental Crisis, and the Emergence of Alternative Markets"; and Sherry Johnson, *Climate and Catastrophe in Cuba*.
 66. Schneider, *Occupation of Havana*, chapter 6; Helen Matzke McCadden, "Juan de Miralles and the American Revolution"; Nikolaus Böttcher, "Juan de Miralles"; and María E. Rodríguez Vicente, "El comercio cubano y la guerra de emancipación norteamericana."
 67. AGI-SD 1157, ff. 368–71, 1799 Oct 3, "Consulta de consejo referente a la solicitud de varios padres sobre que sus hijos vayan a instruirse al N. de America."
 68. AGI-SD 2207; and Herbert S. Klein, "North American Competition." See Jorge Felipe-Gonzalez's analysis of Klein's research and his overview of the complexities of the trade to Cuba in the 1790s in his chapter in this volume.
 69. For the clandestine period of the trade in the nineteenth century, see the ongoing, collaborative project headed by Marial Iglesias Utset and Jorge Felipe-Gonzalez at Harvard University's Hutchins Center. For earlier period of the slave trade to the Caribbean, see ongoing work by David Wheat and Marc Eagle, as well as their chapter in this volume.
 70. For a reminder of the dangers of an excessive focus on quantification, see Stephanie Smallwood, "Politics of the Archive"; and Jennifer L. Morgan, "'The Most Excruciating Torment.'"
 71. For useful works that examine this dynamic in Cuba during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror*; Scott, *Common Wind*; Jane G. Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*, 138–74; and Rebecca J. Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, *Freedom Papers*, 49–64.