
Atlantic History and the Slave Trade to Spanish America

ALEX BORUCKI, DAVID ELTIS, AND DAVID WHEAT

WITHIN HALF A CENTURY OF COLUMBIAN CONTACT, the most powerful state in Europe had taken over the two most powerful polities in the Americas: the Aztec and Inca empires. From that point until at least 1810, Spanish America was the largest and most populated European imperial domain in the New World, stretching eventually from California to Buenos Aires. Both the first and the last slave voyages to cross the Atlantic disembarked not very far from each other, in the Spanish colonies of Hispaniola (1505) and Cuba (1867).¹ This continent-sized group of colonies developed the first and, until the late eighteenth century, the largest free black population in the Americas.² Spanish America was therefore the part of the Americas with the most enduring links to Africa. Yet while the French, the British, and even the Portuguese empires have reasonably precise data on the origins, composition, and de-

¹ The first African slaves probably arrived in 1501 from Seville, Spain, but not on a slave voyage in the usual sense. António de Almeida Mendes, “The Foundations of the System: A Reassessment of the Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” in David Eltis and David Richardson, eds., *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (New Haven, Conn., 2008), 63–94.

² Spain’s American possessions, the size and complexity of which should not be underestimated, were the linchpin of an empire that was genuinely global in scope during the eras of Hapsburg and Bourbon rule. In Europe, it stretched from the Spanish Netherlands to Sicily, and from Oran in North Africa to the Canary Islands. It included the Philippines in Asia, and the Mariana Islands and Guam in Oceania. During the Iberian Union, which lasted from 1580 to 1640, the Spanish crown also ruled over Portugal and the entire Portuguese empire, including Brazil and Angola, and territories in North Africa, India, and the Moluccas, among many other sites. Until the Constitution of 1812, Spanish territories in the Americas were considered kingdoms or provinces under the rule of the Spanish crown (much like the kingdoms of Aragon and Naples), and were typically grouped into larger administrative units known as audiencias. The audiencias, in turn, nominally fell under the jurisdiction of viceroalties, though some retained a considerable degree of autonomy. The main center of Spanish power in North America was the Viceroyalty of New Spain, which encompassed all of modern Mexico plus the provinces of Upper California, New Mexico, and Texas. Stretching across the circum-Caribbean, the Audiencia of Santo Domingo included the islands of Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Cuba, as well as Florida. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it also included most of present-day Venezuela and its neighboring islands, and it would add the Floridas (again) and Louisiana during the eighteenth century. The neighboring Audiencia of Guatemala encompassed most of Central America, including territories that correspond to the modern nations of Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica. Immediately to the south, the Audiencias of Panamá, Santa Fe, and Quito—more or less corresponding to the modern nations of Panamá, Colombia, and Ecuador—fell within the jurisdiction of the expansive Viceroyalty of Peru, as did the audiencias of Charcas, Chile, and Lima (where the viceroyalty was headquartered), including territories in what are today Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. In short, Spain laid claim to all of South America, with the exceptions of Brazil and the “Wild Coast” of Suriname and the Guyanas; the Viceroyalty of Lima ostensibly held sway over this vast region until the establishment of additional viceroalties and audiencias as in Buenos Aires during the eighteenth century.

mographic evolution of their black populations, most of the information we have for the Spanish colonies is on nineteenth-century Cuba. How puzzling that we know less about the size, nature, and significance of the African connection with Spanish America, especially the Spanish role in the slave trade, than we do about any other branch of the transatlantic traffic.³ While there is an ancient and well-developed historiography on Latin America, Africans in the Spanish-speaking Americas, and indeed the Spanish themselves, have yet to receive their due in Atlantic history—at least for the years after 1640.

Using the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database at www.slavevoyages.org, as well as new archival sources, we have conducted a new evaluation of the slave trade to the Spanish colonies. Our reassessment has given us a new appreciation of not only the African presence in the Spanish Americas, but also—given the links between slavery and economic power before abolition—the status of the whole Spanish imperial project. Overall, more enslaved Africans permanently entered the Spanish Americas than the whole British Caribbean, making Spanish America the most important political entity in the Americas after Brazil to receive slaves. We now believe that as many as 1,506,000 enslaved Africans arrived in the Spanish Americas directly from Africa between 1520 and 1867. We further estimate that an additional 566,000 enslaved Africans were disembarked in Spanish America from other European colonies in the New World, such as Jamaica and Brazil. Our new, upwardly revised figures will appear on the updated estimates page of the Voyages section of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (hereafter Voyages); however, it is important to note that the database does not address the trans-imperial intra-American slave trade, a lacuna that obscures the picture of how the slave traffic functioned in Spanish America.

Two-thirds of the more than two million enslaved Africans arriving in the Spanish Americas disembarked before 1810—prior to the era of large-scale sugar cultivation in Cuba and Puerto Rico—which necessitates a reconsideration of the real significance of slavery in Spain's American colonies. This large inflow is indeed remarkable when we remember that the labor force sustaining the most valuable export of these colonies—silver—was largely Amerindian. In every other European empire in the Americas, by contrast, it was slaves of African descent who produced all significant exports until well into the nineteenth century. British military and industrial ascendancy in the eighteenth century and the meteoric rise and fall of St. Domingue have blinded scholars to the continued expansion of the Spanish colonies and their populations of African descent through to their independence. Nevertheless, black populations had a key role in the growth of the Spanish Americas before 1800.

In addition to the importance of the slave trade for the colonization and development of the Spanish Americas, the Spanish colonies have significance for the broader history of the transatlantic slave trade, and consequently for Atlantic history. The history of the slave trade to Spanish America had implications for the whole

³ Nationally bounded works on slavery do exist, but they tend to say little about the African origins of captives. For broad overviews, see Rolando Mellafe, *La esclavitud en Hispanoamérica* (Buenos Aires, 1964); Leslie B. Rout Jr., *The African Experience in Spanish America, 1502 to the Present Day* (Cambridge, 1976); Jean-Pierre Tardieu, *Le destin des noirs aux Indes de Castille, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles* (Paris, 1984). Even the rollovers on the map displayed on the home page of www.slavevoyages.org ignore Spanish America.

Atlantic in the sense that it drew on *all* European branches of this traffic, and captives from *all* African regions engaged in this traffic landed in at least one of the many Spanish colonies. It was not only the metropolitan authorities of the different European powers who fought over and negotiated slave-trade contracts, but also, at the local level, officials, merchants, and Africans—often the very subjects being trafficked—who shaped the trans-imperial trade flows of the New World.

For the first decades of the slave traffic, as for the last, the slave trade provides a previously overlooked means of gauging the economic strength of the Spanish Americas relative to other European empires. Riverine gold and copper mined by slaves guaranteed the preeminence of Hispaniola prior to the invasion of the mainland, and Cuba's sugar sector ensured that this island probably had a higher per capita output than the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, as well as the first railroad network in Latin America.⁴ But even in the eighteenth century, exports to Europe from the Spanish Americas had a far greater value than those from their British, French, Dutch, and Portuguese counterparts. In 1700, the total output of the non-Hispanic Caribbean, more than 90 percent of which consisted of sugar and sugar by-products, amounted to 1.7 million pounds sterling or 7.6 million pesos.⁵ In the Spanish possessions, by contrast, bullion production alone averaged 8 million pesos annually from 1696 to 1700, an amount that made them also more valuable to Spain than Brazil was to Portugal, and than both mainland and Caribbean colonies were to the British. Seventy years later, the supremacy of the Spanish was only slightly eroded. The total annual value in pesos of French Caribbean output was 23.1 million, and of British, 16.2 million, whereas the Spanish Empire generated exports worth close to 31 million pesos—29.2 of which was bullion. Even if we include the thirteen mainland colonies in the British total, the Spanish Americas still come out well ahead—it is just that they no longer out-produced all their competitors combined.⁶ The cession of Jamaica to Britain and St. Domingue to France apparently did not enable the British and French to catch up prior to the era of independence; Spanish America grew vigorously until at least 1800.⁷ Alongside specie exports and population estimates, the slave trade can be used as an indicator of the continued dynamism of Spanish America in the Atlantic prior to 1800, and in Cuba specifically

⁴ Laird W. Bergad, *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States* (Cambridge, 2007), 18; "Introduction," in David Eltis, Frank D. Lewis, and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, eds., *Slavery in the Development of the Americas* (Cambridge, 2004), 1–6; David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York, 1987), 235–236; Stanley L. Engerman, Stephen Haber, and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, "Inequality, Institutions and Differential Paths of Growth among New World Economies," in Claude Menard, ed., *Institutions, Contracts and Organizations: Perspectives from New Institutional Economics* (Cheltenham, 2000), 108–134.

⁵ Calculated from David Eltis, "The Slave Economies of the Caribbean: Structure, Performance, Evolution and Significance," in Franklin W. Knight, ed., *General History of the Caribbean*, vol. 3: *The Slave Societies of the Caribbean* (New York, 1997), 105–137, here 110, 118. The Caribbean total does include the Spanish Antilles, though removing them would not change our assessment.

⁶ *Ibid.* For bullion production and shipments, see John J. TePaske, *A New World of Gold and Silver*, ed. Kendall W. Brown (Leiden, 2010), data from 315. For exchange rates, see John J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600–1775: A Handbook* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1978), 104, 106. For a similar argument on the importance of Spanish colonies, see Javier Cuenca-Esteban, "Statistics of Spain's Colonial Trade, 1747–1820: New Estimates and Comparisons with Great Britain," *Revista de Historia Económica* 26, no. 3 (2008): 323–354.

⁷ Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, *Economic Development in the Americas since 1500: Endowments and Institutions* (Cambridge, 2012), chaps. 1 and 2. See p. 10 on comparative GDP and p. 45 on population.

to 1867. Economic divergence between the Spanish Americas, on the one hand, and the United States, on the other, began only in the nineteenth century.⁸

Indigenous peoples mined most of the silver that underpinned colonial exports, but the role of Africans has been poorly understood in an Atlantic world historiography that has emphasized export-oriented plantations. With the possible exception of nineteenth-century Cuba, the Black Atlantic is still defined in terms of links between Africa, on the one hand, and the English, French, and Lusophone worlds, on the other. From 1640 to the end of the eighteenth century, the Spanish Empire's links with Africa are seen as moribund, compared to the millions of Africans pouring into the non-Spanish Americas.⁹ References to a "second Atlantic" have recently appeared, denoting the period dominated by Northwestern Europe (England, France, and to a lesser extent the Netherlands), in contrast to the Iberian-led "first Atlantic."¹⁰ Our calculations counter this view. The slave trade remained of central importance during all four centuries of Spanish colonialism in the New World. The slave trade was pivotal not just for the early colonization of the Spanish Americas, when varied regional economies emerged in both highlands and lowlands. It was also of key importance throughout the eighteenth century, when the Spanish transformed their empire.¹¹ Thereafter it sustained the rise of export-oriented sugar and coffee plantations in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Figure 1 provides an overview of our new assessment. While the major British (and indeed Portuguese) transatlantic slave trade rose and fell in a regular parabola from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, Figure 1 shows the bi-modal pattern of the traffic to Spanish America, with a first peak around 1620 and a second, higher peak in the nineteenth century. The U shape in between was emphatic. But the figure also adds information on intra-American voyages, that is, slave expeditions departing from the non-Hispanic Caribbean and Brazil for the Spanish colonies.

⁸ For explanations stressing factor endowments, sustained growth, and relative equality in the U.S. and Canada vis-à-vis Latin America, see Stephen Haber, ed., *How Latin America Fell Behind: Essays on the Economic Histories of Brazil and Mexico, 1800–1914* (Stanford, Calif., 1997).

⁹ For Spanish echoes of this view, see Josep M. Fradera and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, "Introduction: Colonial Pioneer and Plantation Latecomer," in Fradera and Schmidt-Nowara, eds., *Slavery and Antislavery in Spain's Atlantic Empire* (New York, 2013), 1–12. "Spain was the first Atlantic empire to establish sugar plantations in its American colonies, but it was also the last to engage directly in the transatlantic slave trade" (1).

¹⁰ The terms "first" and "second" Atlantic appear in P. C. Emmer, "The Dutch and the Making of the Second Atlantic System," in Barbara L. Solow, ed., *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System* (Cambridge, 1991), 75–96, here 78. Elinor G. K. Melville argues that "the Spaniards remained primarily agro-pastoralists of the temperate highlands and latitudes; they avoided the humid tropical lowlands where possible," unlike the Portuguese in Brazil. Melville, "Land Use and the Transformation of the Environment," in Victor Bulmer-Thomas, John H. Coatsworth, and Roberto Cortés Conde, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Latin America*, vol. 1: *The Colonial Era and the Short Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2006), 109–142, here 125. More bluntly, Robin Blackburn in his widely read *Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776–1848* (London, 1988), 16–17, contrasts the "vigour" of the English and French colonies with that of the Spanish, where the creole elite outside the plantation sectors were "sunk in provincial torpor." For a more realistic view of how the Spanish Empire shaped the Atlantic world, see Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford, Calif., 2001).

¹¹ Aaron Alejandro Olivás, "The Global Politics of the Transatlantic Slave Trade during the War of the Spanish Succession, 1700–1715," in Francisco Eissa-Barroso and Ainara Vázquez Varela, eds., *Early Bourbon Spanish America: Politics and Society in a Forgotten Era, 1700–1739* (Leiden, 2013), 85–109. On the late colonial period, see Jeremy Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic* (Princeton, N.J., 2006), chap. 2.

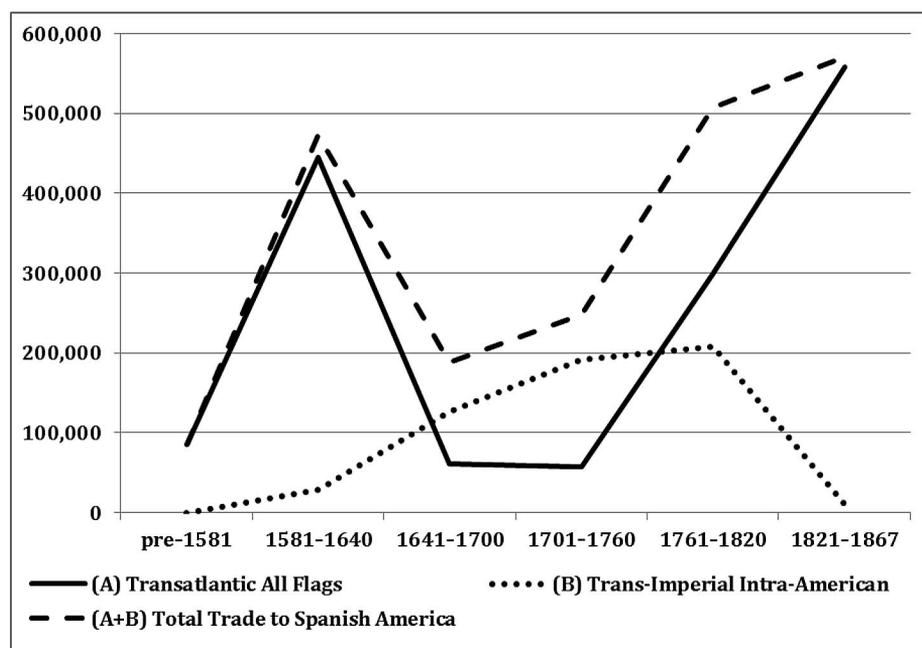


FIGURE 1: The Slave Trade to Spanish America

More than a quarter of the slaves arriving in Spanish America had departed from colonies of other European powers in the New World rather than directly from Africa. Figure 1 shows that the lowest point of the transatlantic Spanish trade's U trend was offset to some extent by the trans-imperial intra-American traffic from 1640 until its ending by 1820, during the era of independence for the Spanish American mainland, but not completely so.

Cartagena, Veracruz, Buenos Aires, and Hispaniola received the majority of slave arrivals shown by the first peak in Figure 1, with many captives then re-exported to additional destinations, including Lima and Mexico City. By contrast, Cuba and Puerto Rico account for almost all of the second peak. Nevertheless, some regions, such as the Río de la Plata—today's Argentina and Uruguay—and to a lesser extent Venezuela, did experience this U-shaped trend. The Río de la Plata both absorbed slaves and was a major entrepôt, supplying Chile and Peru, whereas slaves arriving in Venezuela tended to remain there. In Mexico the slave trade declined from the 1650s to the last recorded transatlantic slave arrival in 1735. There was nevertheless a vibrant and naturally growing population of African ancestry, probably made possible by the less brutal working conditions (notably the absence of a dominant sugar sector) and Spain's reliance on a large Amerindian labor force, both coerced and free, for the harsh work in the mines.

The dual-peak structure of the slave trade to Spanish America also points to two major cycles of demographic change related to African arrivals (Africanization) and the intermixing of indigenous peoples, Africans, and Europeans in the Americas (*mestizaje*). These cycles provide a chronological framework that helps to explain why identities evolved differently in the Spanish colonies than they did in what be-

came the United States. While some Spanish American colonies experienced a cycle of Africanization followed by *mestizaje* during the first slave-trade peak, and others experienced the same during the second peak, some regions can be said to have experienced both. The relative weight of these two processes varied across the Spanish colonies. With the possible exception of New Orleans (itself a Spanish colony from 1769 until 1803), it is difficult to imagine any city in the early-nineteenth-century United States in which people of mixed origins outnumbered those of either full European or African ancestry, as was the case in Venezuela in 1810. For the antebellum U.S., it is equally difficult to visualize the almost complete disappearance of “black” as a category of identity in official records, subsumed by multiple *mestizo* labels, as in early independent Mexico. Further, there was no equivalent in the United States of the diversity of African-based associations and religions that existed in Cuba and the Río de la Plata as late as the 1830s.

HOW CAN WE BE SURE THAT the broad trends shown in Figure 1 are correct? To explain the Spanish slave trade, we first have to define it. Two rather different concepts are possible—on the one hand, the traffic into the Spanish colonies; and on the other, the smaller and less significant slave trade carried out on Spanish vessels. For anyone working with official documents of the early modern era, it must often appear that incompetence, smuggling, venal officials, and the hazards of everyday life undermine the reliability of any state-generated data. For the slave trade, skepticism takes the form of doubt regarding whether every actual voyage could have left behind evidence, and whether the numbers of people on board such vessels are likely underreported. These problems loom large for the Spanish Atlantic, notwithstanding the fact that the Spanish bureaucracy probably generated more documentation per imperial subject than any other empire before the nineteenth century. Thus, for Colin Palmer, tracking the British *asiento* in the first half of the eighteenth century, “Contraband traders . . . may have sold the Spaniards as many or even more slaves than their legal counterparts but this dimension of the trade . . . will forever be confined to the realm of scholarly speculation.” Juan Amores’s study of the traffic into Cuba (1760–1790) describes an uncontrollable slave trade and a huge contraband, with officials pointing to a coastline, “almost all of it open and unguarded.” For Leslie Rout, “all efforts aimed at making an acceptable estimate of the Spanish American slave traffic [are] innately flawed.”¹² Contraband, slaves landed in Spanish colonies outside the official record, seemed impossible to stop.¹³

¹² In the context of the transatlantic slave trade, *asientos* were monopoly contracts in which the Spanish crown granted permission to individual merchants or merchant houses to orchestrate the transportation of a fixed number of enslaved Africans to specific Spanish American ports over a set period of time. On contraband, see Colin A. Palmer, “The Company Trade and the Numerical Distribution of Slaves to Spanish America, 1703–1739,” in Paul E. Lovejoy, ed., *Africans in Bondage: Studies in Slavery and the Slave Trade* (Madison, Wis., 1986), 27–42, here 40; Juan B. Amores, *Cuba en la época de Ezpeleta, 1785–1790* (Pamplona, 2000), 133; Rout, *The African Experience in Spanish America*, 66. We thank Henry Lovejoy for drawing our attention to Amores’s book.

¹³ Due to limitations of space here, we cannot adequately address the extensive body of scholarship devoted to examining the nature and significance of contraband in colonial Spanish America. Suffice it to say that Spanish sources prior to 1800 rarely used the word *contrabando* to describe contraband trade, which is illustrative of the very thin line (if such a line even existed) between legal trade and

But is the situation quite so hopeless? For the British, French, Dutch, and Luso-Brazilian slave trades, internal and external (to the state, that is) checks are possible for some periods, so that one might be able to assess the probability that ships were omitted from the Voyages database.¹⁴ Such checks are not yet possible for most of the Spanish transatlantic slave trade, but readers should keep in mind a broader perspective on the size and direction of the traffic into Spanish colonies. During the second half of the seventeenth century, the era in which Britain entered the transatlantic slave trade and solidified its presence in the Americas, observers in Jamaica indicated that slave prices were higher in the Spanish markets than in the British Caribbean.¹⁵ And Joseph Massie, an acute observer of the English sugar business, pointed out in a book published in 1759 that in the previous thirty years, low slave prices had underpinned the success of the English plantations.¹⁶ Contraband was significant, but it was not large enough to integrate the Spanish and British markets in the Caribbean to the extent that price differences reflected no more than the cost of sailing from one market to another. After 1790, by contrast, captains typically checked out slave prices in at least two of the major markets of Kingston, Havana, and Charleston (where prices by then were similar) before deciding where to sell. The same voyage from Africa frequently shows up in more than one of these ports within the space of a month.

New archival data have enabled us to reassess the key routes by which Africans entered the Spanish Americas, as well as to carry out a more refined inquiry into contraband. As a result, we are able to shed new light on two large branches of the slave trade to Spanish America: the transatlantic traffic for the period before the breakup of the Iberian Union (when Portugal and its colonies were under the Spanish crown) in 1641, and the intra-American traffic that from 1661 to about 1800 became the Spanish Americas' major source of African slaves. We offer little new information on nineteenth-century Cuba and Puerto Rico, a branch of the trade that has been subject to greater scholarly scrutiny than inflows into other Spanish American colonies.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of slave arrivals across broad regions of the Americas, together with a separate column to the right that presents our estimates of

contraband. Seemingly an oxymoron, the category of "legalized contraband" best describes the interplay of strategies between metropolitan and colonial authorities on this issue.

¹⁴ David Eltis and Paul F. Lachance, "Estimates of the Size and Direction of Transatlantic Slave Trade," 2–3, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/downloads/estimates-method.pdf>.

¹⁵ Walter Riding to the Royal African Company [hereafter RAC], July 27, 1691, British National Archives [hereafter BNA], T70/17, fol. 26; William Noël, Sainsbury, J. W. Fortescue, Cecil Headlam, and Arthur Percival Newton, eds., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series*, 44 vols. (London, 1860–1969), 5: 36, "Narrative of the buying and forfeiture of a shipload of negroes . . .," June 4, 1661; Chaplin and Parke, January 29, 1707, T70/8, fols. 20, 23, 24; Beckford and Galdy, January 16, 1708, T70/8, fol. 30.

¹⁶ "British Sugar planters have all along had a considerable advantage over the French Sugar Planters; . . . the British traders . . . have not only supplied our . . . colonies with Sufficient Numbers of Negroes, at moderate prices, but have likewise been able to furnish several Thousands yearly, for the Spanish Colonies . . . [N]o People who trade in or to the West Indies, navigate so cheap, or carry any commodities in, to, or from the West Indies, for so little money as the English do." J. Massie, *A State of the British Sugar Colony Trade* (London, 1759), 22, 26. Modern research supports this viewpoint; David Eltis and David Richardson, "Productivity in the Slave Trade," *Explorations in Economic History* 32 (1995): 465–484.

TABLE 1: Slaves Arriving in the Americas by Broad Region and Slaves Arriving under the Spanish Flag Direct from Africa, 1525–1867

	Mainland								Slaves arriving under Spanish flag
	North America	British Caribbean	French Caribbean	Dutch Americas	Danish West Indies	Spanish Americas	Brazil	Totals	
pre-1581	0	0	0	0	0	84,900	4,100	89,000	84,900
1581–1640	100	100	0	0	0	444,900	261,400	706,500	222,450
1641–1700	15,000	308,000	38,700	124,200	18,100	61,700	523,000	1,088,700	21,700
1701–1760	188,900	807,000	393,700	162,700	20,500	56,800	1,084,600	2,714,200	300
1761–1820	184,200	1,173,200	640,500	154,300	62,300	298,900	1,696,600	4,210,000	133,600
1821–1867	500	11,000	47,300	3,500	8,100	558,800	1,269,400	1,898,600	563,100
Total	388,700	2,299,300	1,120,200	444,700	109,000	1,506,000	4,839,100	10,707,000	1,026,100
Adjustment for intra-American trade		–247,500	–19,000	–115,900	–47,800	566,300	–136,100		
Total after adjustment	388,700	2,051,800	1,101,200	328,800	61,200	2,072,300	4,703,000	10,707,000	

Source: <http://Slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866>, with modifications. For column 6 see text, and for row 8 see Alex Borucki, David Eltis, and David Wheat, “Notes on the Estimates of the Intra-American Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas” and “IntraAmer-toSpanAmer.xlsx,” both downloadable at <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/download.faces>.

Note: The Spanish and British totals have been adjusted to reflect the changing status of Trinidad. On the 2010 estimates page of the Voyages database, Trinidad is classed as part of the British Americas even though British occupation began only in 1797. Here, the 16,500 captives taken there before 1797 are reassigned to the Spanish Americas.

captives carried on Spanish vessels alone. The non-Spanish data in columns 1 through 5 and column 7 are all from the 2010 version of the Voyages database, but the two Spanish columns—one for the Spanish Americas (column 6) and one for the slaves transported under the Spanish flag (column 9)—are new. The Spanish figures previous to 1641 draw on new archival data and in addition incorporate a fresh approach to estimating the large illegal influx of slaves into Spain’s colonies that occurred throughout the slave-trade era. Table 1 shows that in the pre-1641 period, 529,800 captives arrived in the Spanish Americas from Africa. Thus, according to our calculations, almost 60 percent more Africans arrived in the New World than the 2010 Voyages estimate page displays. For the later period, too, new transatlantic voyages to Venezuela and the Río de la Plata have come to light.¹⁷ For the whole period, we found that 14 percent more slaves entered the Spanish Americas directly from Africa than are shown on the Voyages estimate page.

Whereas the 2010 Voyages dataset contains 998 voyages prior to 1641, we now have information on 1,843 transatlantic slave voyages to the Spanish Americas. The new material permits us to construct robust lower-bound estimates of the size and direction of the first half-century of the traffic. Iberian registration and port-de-

¹⁷ For arrivals direct from Africa into the Río de la Plata, 1641–1760, we use the list of voyages in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1641&yearTo=1760&mjstptmp=42000, with 10 percent added for unreported captives. For the later period, see Alex Borucki, “The Slave Trade to the Río de la Plata, 1777–1812: Trans-Imperial Networks and Atlantic Warfare,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 20, no. 1 (2011): 81–107; Borucki, “Trans-Imperial History in the Making of the Slave Trade to Venezuela, 1526–1811,” *Itinerario* 36, no. 2 (2012): 29–54.

parture records constitute our only source of information for many slaving voyages up to 1580. Thus most volume estimates for the years prior to 1581—including Antonio Mendes's estimates for those years, and the estimates page of Voyages based on his work—are heavily influenced by research on slave-trade *licencias*, permits that were awarded by the Spanish crown but did not necessarily result in slaving voyages.¹⁸ Our data for this period, by contrast, consist primarily of intended slaving voyages and vessels that actually arrived in Spanish American ports. Despite the different methodologies, the two approaches generate similar outcomes: 84,900 vs. 82,000 slaves for 1526–1580. For the period 1581–1640, we now have 583 more voyages than are shown in the 2010 Voyages database. While the work of Enriqueta Vila Vilar previously grounded our knowledge of the traffic during the Iberian Union, it now appears that her data account for less than half of all known arrivals for the years 1595–1640 alone.¹⁹ More important than the additional voyages is the much clearer idea of how many captives slave vessels carried when they arrived in the Americas.²⁰ The improved data indicate that the slave trade to the early Spanish Americas has been greatly underestimated.

The additional archival data permit us to take a new approach to the question of contraband, slaves landed in Spanish colonies outside the official record. Of the 1,843 voyages recorded in our dataset, 748, or about 40 percent, have no information on the number of slaves carried, leaving 1,095 for which we know at least one of three indicators of how many were on board. The first is the number that captains declared they had on board at the port of entry (800), the second is the number that the vessel was licensed to carry before the voyage began (721), and the third is the number that were actually carried (65). Voyages fell into this last group because they had become the subject of intense investigation by colonial authorities. Such inquiries generated sufficient data that we feel reasonably certain of knowing the actual number of slaves

¹⁸ Mendes, "The Foundations of the System." The foundational study of sixteenth-century licenses is Lutgardo García Fuentes, "Licencias para la introducción de esclavos en Indias y envíos desde Sevilla en el siglo XVI," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* 19 (1982): 1–46.

¹⁹ Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos: Los asientos portugueses* (Seville, 1977).

²⁰ The additional information comes from sources in the Archivo General de Indias [hereafter AGI] not previously consulted, as well as published sources. For the former, see Alex Borucki, David Eltis, and David Wheat, "Notes on the Estimates of the Intra-American Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas," downloadable at <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/download.faces>. For the latter, see Raúl A. Molina, *Las primeras experiencias comerciales del Plata: El comercio marítimo, 1580–1700* (Buenos Aires, 1966); Eduardo Arcila Farías, ed., *Hacienda y comercio de Venezuela en el siglo XVII, 1601–1650* (Caracas, 1986); Esteban Mira Caballos, "Las licencias de esclavos negros a Hispanoamérica, 1544–1550," *Revista de Indias* 54, no. 201 (1994): 273–297; Elsa Gelpi Baíz, *Siglo en blanco: Estudio de la economía azucarera en Puerto Rico, siglo XVI, 1540–1612* (San Juan, 2000); Nikolaus Böttcher, "Negros portugueses y la Inquisición: Cartagena de Indias, siglo XVII," *Memoria* 9 (2003): 38–55; Rafael M. Pérez García and Manuel F. Fernández Chaves, "Sevilla y la trata negrera atlántica: Envíos de esclavos desde Cabo Verde a la América española, 1569–1579," in León Álvarez Santaló, ed., *Estudios de historia moderna en homenaje al profesor Antonio García-Baquero* (Seville, 2009), 597–622. Huguet and Pierre Chaunu's multi-volume work also provides Iberian port-departure data for more than 400 voyages, nearly half of which can presently be matched with Spanish American port entry records. Chaunu and Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique, 1504–1650*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1955–1959), vols. 2–5. Our examination of AGI, Contratación 2898–2899, suggests that the Chaunus identified all vessels sailing to the Cape Verde Islands, the "Rivers of Guinea," or some other African port en route to Spanish America as slavers. They consulted several *legajos* in AGI-Contaduría, providing additional data for twenty-one voyages arriving in Nombre de Dios (Panama), and one voyage arriving in Veracruz in the years 1549–1569.

on board. For some cases, we know two or all three of the indicators. On average, we found that vessels were licensed to carry 156 slaves, and that, unsurprisingly, captains declared they had 153 on board when they arrived in the Americas. By contrast, the mean of the 64 Iberian slave ships (the 65th was a Dutch intruder) for which we have data on actual slaves disembarked was 287, suggesting that vessels delivered 80 percent more slaves than their captains were permitted to or admitted to.²¹

A subset of these 64 voyages comprising 61 cases also contained information on either licensed or declared numbers of captives, and thus we were able to estimate a simple regression equation that allowed us to predict actual numbers on board for the 1,030 individual voyages (1,095 less 65) for which the documents yield only licensed or declared numbers.²² For the 748 voyages that lacked information of any kind on slaves, we simply assigned that same derived mean of 287. For the pre-1581 period, these procedures point to 84,900 captives disembarking (from 299 voyages) in the Spanish Americas, with 444,900 (on 1,544 voyages) estimated to have arrived between 1581 and 1640. This total is only for slaves coming directly from Africa, but even so, it does not include several thousand Africans carried across the Atlantic from Spain in small groups on the Indies fleets before 1641. Neither does it include any of the 666 vessels that Huguette and Pierre Chaunu identified as registered to depart from the Canary Islands for Spanish America before 1580, some of which likely carried slaves off from Africa on the way.²³ Finally, it includes only a few documented incursions of French, English, Dutch, and Portuguese slave ships during an era in which Spanish American colonists regularly engaged in *rescate* with such intruders despite the risk of penalties.²⁴ Thus, while our total for pre-1641 is substantially greater than previous estimates, it is readily apparent why we describe it as “lower-bound.”

After 1640, slave arrivals to the Spanish Americas declined precipitously. Be-

²¹ These findings are consistent with Marc Eagle, “Chasing the *Avença*: An Investigation of Illicit Slave Trading in Santo Domingo at the End of the Portuguese *Asiento* Period,” *Slavery & Abolition* 35, no. 1 (2014): 99–120.

²² Inspection of the resulting estimated values indicated some forty-seven anomalies for which further adjustment was required. For forty-eight cases, declared slaves in the historical record were equal to or less than forty. Almost all of these were identified as non-specialist slave ships. For these we set actual numbers equal to declared numbers. A further four cases turned out to have predicted values (calculated from the regression equations) lower than declared slaves. For these, too, we substituted declared values. The breakdown of the estimated 1,843 cases in the slave arrival column is as follows—65 with actual slaves reported, 52 with declared values, 979 with values predicted from registered slaves (via a simple regression), and 747 assigned a simple average of 287.

²³ Chaunu and Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, 2: 416–419, 448–451, 466–471, 486–489, 498–503, 508–513, 522–527, 552–554, 564–570, 586–589; 3: 38–43, 54–59, 72–74, 82–85, 102–107, 116–121, 132–135, 142–149, 154–161, 170–177, 184–187, 196–201, 252–257, 264–265.

²⁴ *Rescate* (in this context meaning ransom or barter) referred to Spanish American colonists' acquisition of untaxed merchandise and slaves from merchants who were not authorized by the House of Trade in Seville. Merchants who eschewed Spain's mercantilist Atlantic fleet system by engaging in this type of direct commerce were often French, English, or Dutch traders arriving from non-Iberian colonies, or indeed from Western Europe. In many cases, these non-Iberian interlopers captured Spanish or Portuguese vessels at sea, then sailed to Spanish American ports, where they would attempt to sell any confiscated goods or captives. I. A. Wright, “Rescates: With Special Reference to Cuba, 1599–1610,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 3, no. 3 (1920): 333–361; Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530–1630* (New Haven, Conn., 1978); Alejandro de la Fuente, “Introducción al estudio de la trata en Cuba: Siglos XVI y XVII,” *Santiago* 61 (1986): 155–208; Carlos Esteban Deive, *Tangomangos: Contrabando y piratería en Santo Domingo, 1522–1606* (Santo Domingo, 1996).

tween 1641 and 1789, Spanish vessels brought in only 23,500 captives directly from Africa, compared to a non-Spanish transatlantic component accounting for 128,100 people, with the British alone carrying more than half.²⁵ But in this same period, over four times more captives entered the Spanish Americas from other parts of the Americas, an activity summarized in row 8 of Table 1. Thus, soon after the collapse of the Iberian Union, Spanish merchants began to purchase captives from ports under the control of *all* European powers with a presence in the Americas, but especially the Dutch, Portuguese, and British. Sometimes this was under an *asiento* or contract, and sometimes not. The surviving record means that estimating these various streams of coerced migrants requires us to focus either on departures from major entrepôts such as Curaçao and Jamaica, or on arrivals at major Spanish American ports such as Cartagena. For the Río de la Plata during the whole period, the documentation is such that we can reconstruct an annual series of slave arrivals. For all other regions under Spanish control, however, we use both approaches. Before 1789, we focus on what the foreign entrepôts sent to the Spanish colonies; after 1789, data on inflows of captives into Spanish ports form the basis of our estimates.²⁶

For the Spanish Americas, the intra-American slave trade had three major branches. The best-known of these centered on Curaçao, the Caribbean island close to Venezuela that, from 1662 to 1728 and intermittently thereafter, functioned as an entrepôt through which captives on Dutch transatlantic ships reached Spanish colonies. A second branch of the intra-American slave traffic originated in Barbados and Jamaica, while a third, based in Brazil, delivered slaves to the Río de la Plata for more than two centuries until the 1830s alongside its better-known transatlantic counterpart. In addition to these three distinct streams of traffic, there was a fourth, multi-branched inflow of shorter duration that drew from a wide range of Caribbean islands, intensifying between 1790 and 1808, and focused mostly on Cuba, as the sugar boom got underway, and to a much lesser extent on Venezuela.

The outlines of the Dutch entrepôt trade in Curaçao have become much clearer recently.²⁷ Between 1658 and 1777 (but mostly between 1662 and 1728), Curaçao was a major source for slaves entering the Spanish Caribbean islands and mainland, including the Gulf of Mexico. This internal traffic was almost identical to that part of the Dutch transatlantic slave trade that disembarked slaves in the Dutch Caribbean, given that most *asentistas* (holders of an *asiento*) in this period, whatever their nationality, resorted to Curaçao as they tried to meet their commitments to the Span-

²⁵ <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1642&yearTo=1789&flag=2.3.4.5.6.7&disembarkation=702.703.701.705.704>.

²⁶ A key resource for both approaches is a database of 7,000 intra-American slave-trade voyages first assembled by Greg O'Malley and subsequently augmented. Although incomplete, the database allows us to understand the broad direction and fluctuations of the flows into the Spanish Caribbean from foreign islands. See Gregory E. O'Malley, "Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North America, 1619–1807," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 66, no. 1 (2009): 125–172.

²⁷ Wim Klooster, "Curaçao and the Caribbean Transit Trade," in Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, eds., *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817* (Leiden, 2003), 203–218; Klooster, "Slavenvaart op Spaanse kusten: De Nederlandse slavenhandel met Spaans Amerika, 1648–1701," *Tijdschrift voor Zeegeschiedenis* 16, no. 2 (1997): 121–140; Han Jordaan, "The Curaçao Slave Market: From Asiento Trade to Free Trade, 1700–1730," in Postma and Enthoven, *Riches from Atlantic Commerce*, 219–258; Borucki, "Trans-Imperial History in the Making of the Slave Trade to Venezuela."

ish.²⁸ Between 1658 and 1714, 63 percent of the Dutch slave traffic was directed to the Dutch Caribbean (largely to disembark slaves destined for Spanish colonies) or to Spanish America directly. Close to 116,000 slaves passed into Spanish America through Dutch hands.²⁹ If the Dutch were the first major suppliers of captives, the British were not far behind. Spanish merchants began buying slaves from the Company of Royal Adventurers to Africa (the precursor of the Royal African Company) in Jamaica and Barbados in the early 1660s and continued until at least 1801. As late as the 1820s, several thousand English-speaking slaves are reported to have been moved from British islands to Cuba, in this case by their owners. Overall we estimate a total flow of 247,500 from British to Spanish jurisdictions.³⁰ The third major intra-American source for slaves, Brazil, focused almost entirely on the Río de la Plata and was anchored mainly in Rio de Janeiro. A handful of pre-1641 transatlantic slave voyages stopped first in Brazil (usually Pernambuco or Maranhão) before disembarking captives in Venezuela, Jamaica, Honduras, and Veracruz. New data suggest that Hispaniola was a significant locus for unauthorized Brazilian-Caribbean shipping in the sixteenth century. After the mid-1600s, however, slave ships from Brazil would not reach the Caribbean again until 1811. Slave traffic from Brazil to mainly the Río de la Plata (but including minor shipments to the Spanish Caribbean) brought 136,100 captives, as Table 1 shows, which makes it larger than the Curaçao traffic.³¹ In the pre-1790 era, slaves also arrived in Spanish colonies via the French

²⁸ After a few years of sailing to Africa for slaves, even the British South Sea Company, the largest slave trader after 1700, began buying its slaves in the Caribbean.

²⁹ <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1730&disembarkation=501>. Curaçao was the dominant Dutch distribution center before 1750, and St. Eustatius thereafter. Ninety percent of the transatlantic arrivals at both islands were re-exported, with almost all of the Curaçao departures taken to the Spanish Caribbean mainland. St. Eustatius supplied mainly the French and British possessions, but the O'Malley database suggest that 10 percent went to Spanish colonies in the seventeenth century, rising to 40 percent in the late eighteenth century. Of the 148,700 captives disembarked in the Dutch Caribbean before 1790 (see <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1789&disembarkation=501>), 115,900 are estimated to have reached Spanish colonies. For arrivals in the Dutch Caribbean, see <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1660&yearTo=1789&disembarkation=501>. The total was then distributed across the Dutch colonies using ratios calculated from <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1660&yearTo=1789&mjslptimp=32100>. Many of the Curaçao departures went to Venezuela. See Borucki, "Trans-Imperial History in the Making of the Slave Trade to Venezuela."

³⁰ The Spanish bought one-third of the captives brought to Jamaica and 15 percent of those going into Barbados between 1661 and 1667; calculated from BNA, T70/869. For 1668 to 1700, we estimate an annual average of 1,000 based on departures from Jamaica and Barbados in the first eleven years of the eighteenth century—prior to the British *asiento*. The years 1668–1700 thus are not based on hard data but are broadly consistent with comments on the Spanish traffic made by RAC agents in Jamaica and Barbados referenced in Borucki, Eltis, and Wheat, "Notes on the Estimates of the Intra-American Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas." For annual re-exports of slaves from Jamaica, 1701–1789, see Richard B. Sheridan, "Slave Demography in the British West Indies and the Abolition of the Slave Trade," in David Eltis and James Walvin, eds., *The Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Origins and Effects in Europe, Africa, and the Americas* (Madison, Wis., 1981), 259–285, here 274. We use Sheridan's preferred series, augmented with a series from Sheila Lambert, ed., *House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century*, 147 vols. (Wilmington, Del., 1975), 67: 239, for two quinquennia. We add 10 percent to these figures to accommodate undocumented transactions. We do not know where all these captives were taken, but O'Malley's database shows destinations for a large sample of 722 voyages leaving Jamaica before 1790 that allows us to distribute the Jamaican outbound series across the slave markets of the Caribbean. For the much smaller flows from other British islands—which together supplied less than 10 percent of the Jamaican total—we draw directly on O'Malley's database. See *IntraAmertoSpanAmer.xlsx* at www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/download.faces.

³¹ Zacarías Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial en el siglo XVII: Buenos Aires, el Atlántico y el espacio peruano* (Buenos Aires, 1988), 62–65; Molina, *Las primeras experiencias comerciales del Plata*; AGI-Charcas 123, sin número, "Certificazion de los esclavos que entraron en Bs Ayres desde el año de

and Danish islands.³² After 1789, captives could be entered at most Spanish American ports without restriction, with the result that records of arrivals from both foreign New World colonies and Africa become more abundant and more reliable.³³

The transatlantic slave trade introduced 1.51 million slaves into the Spanish Americas, and the intra-American traffic a further 0.57 million, for a total of 2.07 million Africans (after rounding). If the intra-American traffic is taken into account, the Spanish areas received 80 percent more slaves than did the French Americas,

97 asta el de 607,” Buenos Aires, June 12, 1682, and “Relazion de los negros de Guinea y otras partes que an entrado en Bs Ayres desde su fundazion asta el año de 1682,” Buenos Aires, June 12, 1682. Moutoukias and Molina did not consult these two AGI sources. These sources list slaves arriving from both Africa and Brazil; by attempting to isolate the latter and by applying the ratio of estimated to declared slaves from the transatlantic traffic, we can obtain an estimate series. Between 1683 and 1777, the Portuguese ferried thousands of slaves from Brazil to their outpost of Colônia do Sacramento—across the Río de la Plata from Buenos Aires—whence they were smuggled into Spanish territory. See Enrique M. Barba, “Sobre el contrabando de la Colonia del Sacramento, siglo XVIII,” *Academia Nacional de la Historia, Separata Investigaciones y ensayos* 28 (1980): 57–76. For a transcribed copy of one of Barba’s sources, see Anónimo, “Discursos sobre el comercio legitimo de Buenos Aires con la España y el clandestino de la Colonia del Sacramento: Medios de embarazarle en la mayor parte y poner a cubierto de enemigos a aquella provincia” (1766), Biblioteca de la Academia Nacional de la Historia, Buenos Aires. We thank Fabrício Prado for drawing our attention to this document. For 1777–1812, see Borucki, “The Slave Trade to the Río de la Plata.” A few hundred more arrived thereafter, as late as the 1830s. See *IntraAmertoSpanAmer.xlsx* for a detailed derivation of our estimates.

³² The French were more likely to buy slaves from the Dutch and English than to sell them to the Spanish given the dominance of St. Domingue. But during the U.S. War of Independence, particularly toward the end, French planters could not get their sugar to Europe, and slave prices in St. Domingue declined temporarily as a result. Unspecified numbers moved to Cuba from 1777 to 1779, then 7,000 from 1781 to 1783, and nearly 5,000 went to Venezuela. Borucki, “Trans-Imperial History in the Making of the Slave Trade to Venezuela,” 49; Amores, *Cuba en la época de Ezpeleta*, 129, 134; and <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1777&yearTo=1790&natinimp=10> for slave prices. A doubling of the documented number allows for unrecorded inflows. From 1680 to 1789, the Danish Islands (St. Croix and St. Thomas) received only 64,300 captives from Africa, and the great majority were put to work on sugar plantations, the value of whose output was only slightly behind that of Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1770; Eltis, “The Slave Economies of the Caribbean,” 113. Thus the Danish Islands could not have supplied large numbers before that year. The O’Malley database has 1,500 captives leaving Danish islands for Spanish colonies before 1790, with destinations centered on Cartagena before 1710 and Puerto Rico in the 1780s. We estimate 6,000 taken to the Spanish colonies before 1790. For post-1790, see Svend E. Green-Pedersen, “Colonial Trade under the Danish Flag: A Case Study of the Danish Slave Trade in Cuba, 1790–1807,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 5, no. 1–4 (1980): 93–120.

³³ Only three colonies north of the Río de la Plata received slaves from ports in the Americas between 1790 and 1818—Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela. We estimate that the first received 60,300, the second 3,900, and the third 10,000. See Borucki, Eltis, and Wheat, “Notes on the Estimates of the Intra-American Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas”; *IntraAmertoSpanAmer.xlsx*; Borucki, “Trans-Imperial History in the Making of the Slave Trade to Venezuela.” The combined total of 74,300 is distributed across American regions of departure using ratios calculated from the O’Malley database. This procedure allows us to estimate that 25,300 came from the British Caribbean, 1,900 from St. Eustatius, 41,900 from the Danish Islands, 2,500 from St. Domingue, and 2,700 from Brazil. After 1820, some English owners moved their slaves illegally to Spanish islands, for which we allow 5,000. Such activity reportedly created an English-speaking enclave between Holguín and Gibara in Cuba in the 1820s. See Great Britain, Parliament, House of Lords, *Second Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, Appointed to Consider the Best Means Which Great Britain Can Adopt for the Final Extinction of the African Slave Trade, Parliamentary Papers, 1850*, vol. 9, 75–79; also Richard Madden to James Stephen, Colonial Office, January 1, 1841, BNA, FO313/33, and Attorney General to Foreign Office, December 2, 1841, *ibid.* A much smaller movement went from Anguilla and Tortola to Puerto Rico; see George Grey to Palmerston, November 29, 1835, BNA, FO84/186, and George Canning to Sir William A’Court, October 24, 1823, FO84/24. To the south, 1,536 captives were removed from Brazilian vessels by Argentine privateers during the Argentine-Brazilian War (1825–1828), some of whom left from Brazil.

and, most strikingly, more than the whole of the British Caribbean. Of even greater significance, however, is that in the colonial era in both the Spanish and the British imperial domains, many times more people came in from Africa than from Europe, a central demographic point that receives scant recognition in the literature on transatlantic migrations to Latin America.

But can we say more than just “Africans”? What was the ultimate provenance of these two million captives? The broad pattern is one of heavy reliance on Upper Guinea and Angola through to the mid-seventeenth century, when the direct link with Africa prevailed, followed by a remarkable inflow of African peoples and cultures as the intra-American trading routes emerged. The founder generations in the Caribbean, Mexico, and Peru left overwhelmingly from northern Upper Guinea—“the Rivers of Guinea” feature strongly in the records, suggesting the coast of modern Guinea-Bissau.³⁴ The first vessel bringing captives directly from elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa—actually the first known transatlantic slave ship—sailed from São Tomé in 1525, and other sixteenth-century voyages from this island would follow, carrying captives from both Lower Guinea (probably eastern Nigeria) and West-Central Africa. However, Upper Guinea remained the dominant source until the early seventeenth century. In the mid-1590s, vessels from what is now Angola supplied the majority of slaves in Veracruz, but in the larger slaving port of Cartagena, Angola and Upper Guinea accounted for roughly equal shares from about 1590 until 1620. After 1620, close to seven out of ten slave ships arriving in both Cartagena and Veracruz came from Angola.³⁵ This pattern ended abruptly after 1640, when Dutch and English slave traders began supplying the Spanish colonies. Both of these slaving powers had a strong presence on the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin through to the early eighteenth century. Thereafter, from 1720 to 1790, almost all *bozales*—a term that referred to newly arrived Africans who did not yet speak Spanish or Portuguese or practice Catholicism in ways that Spanish colonists could easily recognize—arrived via Jamaica, the African provenance of whose captives in this era is well established. It is likely that for 150 years after 1640, three out of four Africans arriving in the Spanish Americas left from the coast between Elmina in Ghana and the Cross River in Nigeria.³⁶ Today, no fewer than 716 languages are spoken in the hinterlands of this most densely populated part of sub-Saharan Africa.³⁷

On the other side of the Atlantic, the African inflow into Mesoamerica diminished after 1640, though occasional arrivals in Mexico are recorded until 1735. Other Spanish-speaking regions relied on non-Hispanic slave traders sailing from West Africa. When the Spanish direct trade reemerged—starting slowly in 1792 but growing rapidly after 1808—they not only were able to restore their old links with Upper Guinea, but drew on the whole range of slave markets from Senegambia in the north

³⁴ David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570–1640* (to be published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming in 2015), chap. 1.

³⁵ David Wheat, “The First Great Waves: African Provenance Zones for the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Cartagena de Indias, 1570–1640,” *Journal of African History* 52, no. 1 (2011): 1–22.

³⁶ See the decadal breakdowns of captives arriving in Jamaica between 1721 and 1790 at <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1721&yearTo=1790&disembarkation=301>.

³⁷ See <http://www.ethnologue.com> for Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria. Most Africans were multilingual, and some languages were mutually intelligible, but cultural divisions within language groups could also be profound.

to Mozambique in the southeast (not least because most of their European rivals had pulled out). Cuba became the main Caribbean buyer of African slaves, and thus continued the pattern of extreme African diversity established earlier in the rest of the Spanish possessions. The Spanish had the most mixed African-descended population of any region in the Americas. Rio de Janeiro received 85 percent of its two million slaves from Luanda and Benguela; half of the large inflow into São Salvador de Bahia came from the Mina coast (the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin); a similar proportion of slaves from St. Domingue left from a region stretching just 250 miles north of the Congo River estuary. Of the major Spanish ports, only the Río de la Plata's dependence on Angola is comparable, and perhaps Mexico's reliance on the widely separated Guinea and Angola regions given the early end of the slave trade there. Much of the circum-Caribbean drew from all African provenance zones except Mozambique.³⁸ Yoruba influence was certainly strong in nineteenth-century Cuba, but languages based on African elements in Spanish America survived in only the most remote locations, and can be observed in fragmentary form in the rituals of modern African-based religions.³⁹ Confraternities and African "nations" in the Iberian Americas were in the long run inevitably highly syncretic across African cultures.

The overall diversity of the Spanish Empire's black population was further increased by *mestizaje*, which sometimes developed in regions very close to places receiving new slave arrivals. By 1800, 30 percent of the inhabitants of Buenos Aires were of African ancestry, the large majority of whom had been born in Africa and were identified as "black" in official documents. However, 800 kilometers northward, in the city of Córdoba at the core of modern Argentina, colonial census-takers recorded the majority of the non-white population as *pardos*, an ambiguous term referring to people of mixed African, Amerindian, and European ancestry.⁴⁰ Late-colonial Venezuela had a similar repertoire of colonial *casta* categories, from the recently arrived Africans on the coast to the long-established *pardos* inland.⁴¹ Our findings suggest that those toiling in the export sector after 1790 were predominantly African-born, whereas the mainly free populations of mixed ancestry remained on the fringes of the Atlantic economy—which sometimes led them to migrate to port cities in search of better prospects.

THE SLAVE-TRADING ACTIVITY ON THE part of the Spanish—as opposed to the introduction of slaves into the Spanish Americas—is harder to track than the involvement in the trade of any other national group. Spain's participation in the slave trade began

³⁸ This assessment incorporates the ultimate sources of the intra-American traffic. One small example of this diversity is that more people with Arabic/Islamic names arrived in Cuba than in Bahia. Daniel B. Domingues da Silva, David Eltis, Olatunji Ojo, and Phil Misevich, "The Nineteenth Century Transatlantic Islamic Diaspora in Atlantic History" (unpublished paper, 2015).

³⁹ Armin Schwegler, "*Chi ma nkongo*": *Lengua y rito ancestrales en El Palenque de San Basilio (Colombia)*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1996); John M. Lipski, review of "*Chi ma nkongo*" by Armin Schwegler, *New West Indian Guide* 72, no. 3–4 (1998): 356–360.

⁴⁰ Erika Edwards, "Mestizaje, Córdoba's Patria Chica: Beyond the Myth of Black Disappearance in Argentina," *African and Black Diaspora* 7, no. 2 (2014): 89–104.

⁴¹ John V. Lombardi, *The Decline and Abolition of Negro Slavery in Venezuela, 1820–1854* (Westport, Conn., 1971), 132.

nearly half a century before Columbus's landing in 1492. While the Portuguese pioneered early modern European expansion along the coasts of Africa, it is often forgotten that Spanish mariners and merchants were close behind. During the mid- and late 1400s, Castilian ships sailed from Andalusia to Upper Guinea, and even as far as the Mina coast.⁴² Spanish voyages transported enslaved Africans to the Canary Islands from the late fifteenth century; not only did these voyages increase in the 1530s, but a small number of them continued to the Americas with their captives, three decades before the Portuguese began a regular slave trade to Brazil.⁴³

Only Spanish vessels were allowed to enter ports in the Spanish Americas until 1580, at least in theory. Thereafter the union of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns provided much greater access to Portuguese vessels. In this era (1580–1640), slaving expeditions were generally organized by merchants in the Iberian Peninsula and in practice were sometimes Spanish, sometimes Portuguese, and sometimes both.⁴⁴ Portuguese ships frequently left from a Spanish port, or visited such a port prior to sailing to Africa, and often our only knowledge of a particular voyage emerges from Spanish sources, which in this era habitually Hispanicized the names of vessels, their captains, and sometimes their owners. Thus it is difficult and somewhat anachronistic to attempt to separate Spanish from Portuguese voyages for the years prior to 1641, particularly during the era of the Iberian Union. Additionally, there is the question of the true nationality of the owner of a vessel or venture. How do we label the 1594 venture owned by the Florentine investor Francesco Carletti and his father, Antonio, who first journeyed to Seville from Florence to obtain a license from the Spanish authorities and then fitted out their expedition before proceeding first to Upper Guinea, then to Cartagena, and ultimately to Peru with eighty-nine slaves? Their vessel certainly sailed under the sanction of the Spanish authorities, as did many others that were not owned by Spanish subjects, and is counted as such here.⁴⁵

A parallel situation with different roots existed at the end of the slave trade, when the Spanish again emerged as major carriers of slaves to their colonies. The Bourbon reforms that liberalized trade meant that by the early 1790s, Spanish ports in the New World were effectively open to slave vessels of all nations. At the same time, the revolution in St. Domingue and the rising demand for plantation produce stemming from industrialization boosted Spanish American slavery and the slave trade itself.

⁴² Florentino Pérez Embid, *Los descubrimientos en el Atlántico y la rivalidad castellano-portuguesa hasta el Tratado de Tordesillas* (Seville, 1948); Antonio Rumeu de Armas, *España en el África Atlántica*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1956–1957), 1: 71–75, 101–104, 185–214; John Vogt, *Portuguese Rule on the Gold Coast, 1469–1682* (Athens, Ga., 1979), 10–18; George E. Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000–1630* (Boulder, Colo., 1993), 136.

⁴³ Manuel Lobo Cabrera, *La esclavitud en las Canarias orientales en el siglo XVI (negros, moros y moriscos)* (Las Palmas, 1982), 103–104; Cabrera, “Viajes canarios a Guinea,” in *Vice-Almirante A. Teixeira da Mota: In Memoriam*, 2 vols. (Lisbon, 1989), 2: 129–153; P. E. H. Hair, “A Note on French and Spanish Voyages to Sierra Leone, 1550–1585,” *History in Africa* 18 (1991): 137–141; Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers*, 168, 294.

⁴⁴ The Voyages database assigns national character to a voyage first on the basis of the country in which the ship was registered, and second—given that only one in five voyages have that information—on the basis of the attribution of a national character by a contemporary observer.

⁴⁵ Francesco Carletti, *My Voyage around the World*, trans. Herbert Weinstock (New York, 1964), 3–33. For earlier *asientos* backed by Genoese investors, see Georges Scelle, *La traite négrière aux Indes de Castille: Contrats et traités d'asiento* (Paris, 1906), 150–177. It is likely that if we were able to identify all the Italian-owned vessels in the early trade, Italy would displace Denmark as the sixth-largest European slave-trading nation.

The initial beneficiaries were British and U.S. slave traders, who from 1790 to 1807 together brought in seven out of every ten transatlantic captives landing in Hispanic colonies. Merchants of Buenos Aires and Montevideo with trans-imperial networks stemming from their eighteenth-century links with the Portuguese Colônia do Sacramento became the first to revive Spanish transatlantic slaving. In the fifteen years after 1790, they introduced two times more slaves directly from Africa into the Americas than did their Cuban-based counterparts.⁴⁶

Not until the U.S. and the British largely withdrew from the traffic in 1808 did the Spanish come to dominate the slave trade to their remaining insular colonies. In the quarter-century after 1810, after all the mainland Spanish American republics had abolished this traffic, Spanish traders brought 306,000 African captives into Cuba and Puerto Rico, well over three-quarters of an estimated overall total of 347,000 arrivals in the Spanish Americas from Africa in these years.⁴⁷ In 1835, facing extended diplomatic and naval pressure from the British, Spain agreed to a treaty that allowed British cruisers to detain Spanish vessels suspected of slave-trading activity even if they had no slaves on board. In response, most Spanish slave merchants registered their vessels under other flags, especially those of Portugal and to a lesser extent the United States, neither of which had a major naval presence off West Africa. And when the British imposed similar terms on the Portuguese a few years later, some Cuban-bound Spanish slave ships began to sail without any registration papers. Overall, however, the pattern of the nationalities of those organizing the massive influx of Africans into the Spanish Americas is clear. After a transitional period lasting about a decade after 1807 that saw some Spanish merchants acting as fronts for U.S. or British citizens, 90 percent of traders bringing slaves into Cuba were a mixture of Cuban and Spanish (especially Catalan). They were born or lived overwhelmingly in Cuba and Puerto Rico, some of them trading even to Brazil.⁴⁸

What was the nature of Spanish involvement in the transatlantic trade between 1640 and 1790? For the first twenty-two years of this period—until the establishment of the Grillo and Lomelín *asiento* in 1662—close to *de facto* free trade existed in the Spanish Americas, largely as a consequence of the crisis in Spanish Atlantic commerce.⁴⁹ The old licensing system collapsed, and while the Spanish managed at least

⁴⁶ Fabrício Prado, “In the Shadows of Empires: Trans-Imperial Networks and Colonial Identity in Bourbon Río de la Plata” (Ph.D. thesis, Emory University, 2009); Borucki, “The Slave Trade to the Río de la Plata.”

⁴⁷ <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1791&yearTo=1807&disembarkation=701.703.705.702.704>; <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1811&yearTo=1835&disembarkation=701.703.705.702.704>.

⁴⁸ Leonardo Marques, *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas* (Yale University Press, forthcoming in 2015); Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, 125–163. For Catalan traders, see Josep M. Fradera, “La participació catalana en el tràfic d’esclaus, 1789–1845,” *Recerques: Història, economia, cultura* 16 (1984): 120–139.

⁴⁹ The slave-trade *asiento* awarded to the Genovese merchants Domingo Grillo and Ambrosio Lomelín was the first such contract organized after Portugal’s renewed independence from Spain in 1640, and was responsible for the disembarkation of more than 18,000 enslaved Africans in Spanish American ports between 1663 and 1674. Though it lasted only eleven years, the Grillo and Lomelín *asiento* exemplifies Spain’s shift away from a reliance on Portuguese slaving networks based in Africa and the Atlantic Islands, toward Dutch and English networks that could provide captives from their own American slaving outposts such as Curaçao and Jamaica. See Marisa Vega Franco, *El tráfico de esclavos con América: Asientos de Grillo y Lomelín, 1663–1674* (Seville, 1984).

eleven transatlantic slaving expeditions, sixty-four non-Spanish slave ships (mainly Portuguese and Dutch) entered Spanish American ports in the same period.⁵⁰ For the next twenty-eight years, to 1690, only twenty slaving vessels set out under the Spanish flag, mostly between 1677 and 1681, an average of less than one a year.⁵¹ By contrast, for the seventy-five years from 1691 to 1765, the Voyages database contains only a single transatlantic Spanish voyage. But then, in response to the short British occupation of Havana (1762–1763), when the British disembarked 3,500 slaves in ten months, the Spanish crown made determined efforts to revive their own transatlantic slave-trading role. They established the *Compañía Gaditana* and attempted to funnel all slaves destined for the islands and Caribbean mainland ports through Puerto Rico.⁵² The company brought an estimated 3,000 slaves into San Juan between 1766 and 1769, but it was a financial disaster and ceased operations.

Next, the Spanish crown obtained the islands of Fernando Po (now Bioko), Anobón, and Corisco and commercial rights to the mainland between the Niger and Ogoue Rivers in the Bight of Biafra from Portugal in the 1778 Treaty of El Pardo. Their attempt to establish slave-trading bases there also resulted in financial disaster and severe loss of life, with only a few slaves arriving in the Río de la Plata (mainly from Corisco Island, now part of Equatorial Guinea).⁵³ In 1784, the Spanish crown contracted with the large Liverpool firm of Baker and Dawson to bring slaves to Venezuela and Cuba. In the late 1780s, the crown also arranged for Spanish personnel to sail on Baker and Dawson vessels, subcontracted by the Company of the Philippines to carry slaves to the Río de la Plata. These personnel were expected to learn the trade and form a pool of skilled labor on which Spanish merchants would be able to draw to reestablish a strong presence in the transatlantic traffic. This, too, was unsuccessful. In the twenty years after the *Compañía Gaditana* shut down, only four Spanish slaving voyages show up in the most recent Voyages database, as opposed to 2,000 British, 1,100 French, and 1,000 Portuguese.⁵⁴

In two of the major branches of the intra-American slave trade, the Spanish were hardly any more successful. Dutch merchants dominated the slave traffic through Curaçao (though Hispanic slave traders were certainly involved), and the Portuguese played a similar role in the traffic from Brazilian ports to the Río de la Plata from 1585 (just five years after the founding of Buenos Aires) through to 1777 (when the Spanish conquered *Colônia do Sacramento*). Thereafter, Spanish American merchants came close to sharing the traffic equally with Luso-Brazilian slave traders.⁵⁵ Rio de Janeiro resumed its earlier position as the largest point of transshipment to

⁵⁰ <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1641&yearTo=1662&mjstimp=31100.31200.31300.4000>.

⁵¹ British sources suggest that the Spanish transatlantic trade from Portuguese Guinea in the 1670s and early 1680s is underreported. Thomas Thurloes, Gambia, to Royal African Company, March 15, 1678, BNA, T70/10, fol. 1; Edwin Steede and Stephen Gascoigne, Barbados, to Royal African Company, April 11, 1683, T 70/16, 50.

⁵² Bibiano Torres Ramírez, *La isla de Puerto Rico, 1765–1800* (San Juan, 1968), 195–211; Torres Ramírez, *La Compañía Gaditana de Negros* (Seville, 1973).

⁵³ See the internal memo dated February 26, 1841, in BNA, FO84/383, fol. 262; and the Spanish documents in FO84/299, fols. 19–25.

⁵⁴ <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1770&yearTo=1789&natinimp=3.6.7.8.9.10.13.15.30>. We know for certain that only one of the four actually embarked any slaves.

⁵⁵ Barba, “Sobre el contrabando de la Colonia del Sacramento”; Borucki, “The Slave Trade to the Río de la Plata.”

Buenos Aires and Montevideo, and the Río de la Plata briefly became the most important destination for slaves leaving Rio de Janeiro for all secondary markets (Rio de Janeiro also being a major slave entrepôt).⁵⁶ Of course, the Spanish were largely responsible for the now-centuries-long land slave-trading routes connecting Veracruz, Mexico City, and Acapulco and linking Cartagena with Lima, especially after the rupture of the Iberian Union and the concomitant withdrawal of Portuguese merchants.

In the British Caribbean—the largest intra-American market for Hispanic America—Spanish merchants had a larger role. Both the Company of Royal Adventurers and its successor, the Royal African Company (RAC), usually refused to deliver slaves to Spanish colonies, though they did sell them to all comers from their factories in Kingston and Bridgetown. Beginning at least as early as 1661, Spanish merchants carried off purchases from Kingston and Bridgetown in their own vessels both before and after Grillo and Lomelín, the first *asentistas* of the post-1640 system, began their activities.⁵⁷ Some English merchants operating outside the RAC's monopoly did, however, carry slaves into Spanish ports.⁵⁸ Whole shiploads of enslaved people newly arrived from Africa were handed over to the Spanish in Kingston and Bridgetown—so many, in fact, that in 1680 the Jamaican legislature imposed a tax on slaves traded to foreign colonies.⁵⁹ The major Spanish figure here was Santiago Diego del Castillo, a native of Barcelona who eventually became an English subject. His official title from 1688 was Commissioner-General for the Introduction of Negroes.⁶⁰ In 1690, when war brought shortages of slaves and high prices in Jamaica, it was Castillo who organized expeditions from Kingston to Curaçao to relieve the situation—a Spanish slave trader serving the needs of English planters.⁶¹

After the mid-1690s, as English Caribbean slave entrepôts gradually became the

⁵⁶ On the first slaving expedition from Buenos Aires, see Molina, *Las primeras experiencias comerciales del Plata*, 25. On the significance of the late-eighteenth-century traffic to the Río de la Plata for Brazilian internal markets, see Borucki, “The Slave Trade to the Río de la Plata,” 91–94.

⁵⁷ The first recorded instance was when the soon-to-be-dismissed Cromwellian governor of Jamaica bought 180 slaves from a Dutch ship, then sold 40 to a Quaker plantation owner and the rest to a Spanish merchant. See George Frederick Zook, *The Company of Royal African Adventurers Trading into Africa* (New York, 1919), especially 79–80, 87–96; for journal entries about Spanish involvement, see BNA, T70/869, fols. 14, 38, 39, 50; <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&voyageid=21196>.

⁵⁸ See the Minutes of Court of Assistants (of the RAC), June 16, 1675, BNA, T70/76, fol. 46: “That as to the proposition of transporting the Negroes in English ships & to deliver them . . . it is too great an hazard & trouble to the Company.” For the links between English “interlopers” and the slave trade to Spanish ports, see Hender Molesworth and Charles Penhallow to RAC, September 20, 1682, BNA, T70/10, fol. 29, and Molesworth and Penhallow to RAC, February 20, 1683, fol. 30. For non-RAC ships after 1698, see Dalby Thomas, October 22, 1709, T70/5, fol. 63.

⁵⁹ Thus, the Spanish bought all the captives on the *Merchant Bonadventure* (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&voyageid=9870>) for silver in 1683 in Kingston; Hender Molesworth and Charles Penhallow to RAC, October 20, 1683, BNA, T70/16, fol. 69. For legislation, see Curtis Nettels, “England and the Spanish-American Trade, 1680–1715,” *Journal of Modern History* 3, no. 1 (1931): 1–32. The imperial government disallowed the tax, but the colonial legislature periodically reinstated it over the course of the next century. It thus was not always collected.

⁶⁰ He circulated between Cádiz, Jamaica, Barbados, Curaçao, Cartagena, and Veracruz in the 1680s and 1690s but was based in Jamaica for two decades from 1684, first as agent for Nicolas Porcio, and for most of the 1690s as Porcio's *asentista* partner. He also had an extensive private business in slaves. F. J. Osborne, “James Castillo—Asiento Agent,” *Jamaican Historical Review* 7 (1971): 9–18.

⁶¹ “A Memoriall of what is desired by Don St. Iago del Castillo, Comisioner Generall for Introduction of Negroes into the Spanish . . .,” n.d., but ca. 1687, BNA, T70/169; Charles Penhallow and Walter Ruding to RAC, July 1, 1690, T70/12, fol. 84; Walter Ruding to RAC, February 2, 1692, T70/17, fol. 51.

dominant source for the nearby Spanish colonies, Spanish participation fell away. When first the Portuguese and then the French assumed the *asiento* between 1694 and 1713, they drew on English ports and Curaçao without using Spanish intermediaries. More importantly, a huge expansion of the English transatlantic trade began with the effective curtailment of the RAC monopoly in 1698.⁶² The London, Bristol, and Liverpool slave dealers who now entered the trade were much less inhibited than the RAC about smuggling slaves into Spanish colonies. And for most of the 1713–1739 period, the South Sea Company could legally bring slaves into Spanish ports. References to Spanish colonies are abundant in English sources after 1700, but most slave shippers were not Spanish. The Spanish seaborne slave trade, except for activity between Spanish ports in the Caribbean and the Pacific, became largely moribund for nearly a century. Even the twenty-four vessels recorded as bringing slaves from Africa into Cádiz after 1662 were Dutch or English.⁶³ While the Bourbon reforms signaled the gradual return of the Spanish to transatlantic slave-trading, their immediate impact was to increase the Spanish presence in the intra-American trade rather than on the African coast. The years 1790–1810 saw the last great surge of slave arrivals into Spanish territory from other parts of the Americas (chiefly Rio de Janeiro, Jamaica, and the Danish West Indies), and one-fifth of Cuban arrivals were on Spanish vessels.⁶⁴

We can develop a rough estimate of the Spanish slave trade direct from Africa following the same intervals that we used to reassess the inflow into the Spanish Americas. For the earliest era, we have records of 299 transatlantic vessels carrying an estimated 84,900 slaves. Despite considerable Portuguese participation, we assume that these vessels were all “Spanish” because ships sailing to the Spanish colonies had to first register with Spanish authorities, departing from Seville or other authorized ports.⁶⁵ For the Iberian Union—given the impossibility of separating out Spanish from Portuguese vessels—we follow Mendes in dividing the number of slaves carried evenly between the two flags. The Spanish portion of this total is 222,500. For the third period, 1641–1789, the most recent Voyages database shows 56 Spanish slave voyages from Africa—48 of them either in the forty years after the collapse of the Iberian Union or under the *Compañía Gaditana* in the late 1760s. Together they disembarked an estimated 15,700 slaves, or fewer than 150 per year. Even if the actual figure was double this number, the Spanish transatlantic traffic was

The governor of Jamaica made Castillo a naturalized English subject, and the English crown gave him a knighthood.

⁶² For a new political interpretation of this expansion and the Royal African Company’s withdrawal from the traffic, see William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom’s Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672–1752* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2013), 115–150, 159–172.

⁶³ <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1661&yearTo=1866&mjstlptimp=10100>. The hyperlink shows fifteen such vessels. Ruud Paesie references the other nine in “Overzicht van getraceerde lorrendraaiers, 1674–1730” (unpublished ms., updated December 2009), kindly supplied by the author. Victoria Gardner Sorsby, “British Trade with Spanish America under the *Asiento*, 1713–1740” (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1975), 282–420, lists the vessels carrying slaves to Spanish ports in the English *asiento* period, and these are almost all British.

⁶⁴ Calculated from the augmented version of Greg O’Malley’s intra-American slave-trade database.

⁶⁵ This is in contrast to the practice on slavevoyages.org, where, following Mendes, the assumption is that half of the ships were Portuguese and half were Spanish.

operating at trivial levels. In many years, not a single Spanish slave voyage set sail from Africa.

This pattern changed drastically after 1789. Before 1867, there were only two years (occurring in wartime in 1805 and 1806) for which there is no record of the Spanish flag, or at least Spanish owners, in the transatlantic slave trade. Spanish ships disembarked nearly 10,000 slaves from Africa between 1790 and 1808, several times greater than the annual pre-1790 flow, but still only one-seventh of total transatlantic inflows into Spanish colonies. Despite the fact that the revolution in the Río de la Plata interrupted the regular inflow of slaves in 1812, Spanish deliveries of captives to America increased nine-fold from 1809 to 1820, to 120,200 captives, almost all of them taken to Cuba. Initially—say, prior to 1814—many of them arrived on ships that had Spanish papers but were actually owned or part-owned by citizens of the United States. But even before the 1820 Piracy Law that made slave-trading a capital offense, direct U.S. ownership had become unusual, and the Spanish flag accounted for more than 80 percent of the trade into the Spanish Americas in the second decade of the century.⁶⁶ It is hard to imagine anything approaching this expansion without U.S. and British abolition of the slave trade.⁶⁷ From 1816 to 1819, the Spanish traffic appears to have surpassed the previous peak of Spanish slaving, achieved as long ago as the 1610s and 1620s.

But there was further growth ahead. The Spanish crown declared its Caribbean colonies closed to the slave trade in the aftermath of the Anglo-Spanish Treaty of 1817, with the ban to take effect in 1820. The volume of arrivals declined sharply in the early 1820s. But the trade recovered to its former peak briefly in 1827, surpassed previous levels again in the late 1830s, and reached its all-time annual high in 1859, when Spanish vessels left Africa with an estimated 28,400 captives. Spanish ships (some of them steam-powered) brought in a total 563,100 Africans in the last forty-six years of the traffic.

The final column of Table 1 distributes these estimates across the same sixty-year intervals used for slave arrivals in the Spanish Americas. The U-shaped time profile of Spanish involvement is not drastically affected by the addition of the intra-Caribbean and Brazil–Río de la Plata trades shown in row 8. The effect is to flatten the U and make it somewhat more lopsided. Arrivals from foreign colonies in the Spanish Americas did not make up for the decline in traffic direct from Africa between 1640 and 1790. And while flag and ownership data for the intra-American traffic are scarce, it is unlikely that the Spanish vessels carried as many as half the slaves brought in from those foreign ports. The time profile of Spanish involvement in the slave trade (transatlantic and intra-American combined) thus formed a deeper U than the one that tracks total slave arrivals (again from all sources) into the Spanish Americas. These patterns help account for the lack of awareness in the Spanish American literature of Spain's role in the transatlantic slave trade. The sixteenth- and early-

⁶⁶ The 1820 Act was improbably titled “An Act to continue in force ‘An act to protect the commerce of the United States, and to punish the crime of piracy,’ and also to make further provisions for punishing the crime of piracy.” <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1809&yearTo=1820&disembarkation=701.703.705.702.704>. For U.S. ownership in the Cuban traffic, see Marques, *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas*, chap. 2.

⁶⁷ This was especially true for the U.S. decision. U.S. vessels were responsible for half of transatlantic arrivals in Spanish territories in foreign bottoms between 1804 and 1807.

seventeenth-century slave trade to the Spanish colonies is often viewed as something carried on exclusively by the Portuguese.⁶⁸ When the transatlantic slave trade was at its peak in the eighteenth century, Spanish involvement was negligible, and when this changed in the nineteenth century, the slave trade could be seen as something that Cubans did, even though the leading slave traders based in Havana after 1820—Pedro Martínez, Pedro Blanco, and Julián Zulueta—were Spanish by birth and conducted business in both Cuba and Spain.⁶⁹

Spanish transatlantic slavers disembarked over one million captives in the Americas. Two-thirds of those captives embarked in the nineteenth century, more than half of them after 1820, or in other words in contravention of Spanish efforts to stop the slave trade. The Spanish ships carried four times more Africans than did their U.S. counterparts. When the aggregate total is compared with the transatlantic slave trades of other empires, we can see that Spain ranks as the fourth-largest slave-trading power overall, not far, in fact, from the third-place French. We do not have precise figures for the Spanish share of the intra-American trade, but if we did, they would likely show the Spanish exceeding the contribution of the French—given the relatively minor role of the latter in carrying captives between ports in the Americas. For the first few decades and the last sixteen years of the transatlantic slave trade, Spain was, indeed, the only transatlantic slave-trading empire. Unlike all of their imperial competitors, the Spanish almost never delivered slaves to foreign territories. By contrast, the British, and the Dutch before them, sold slaves everywhere in the Americas (with the exception of Brazil in the English case); the French had only a small slave trade to Cuba in the nineteenth century; Portuguese slave traders were everywhere outside the British and French Americas. An even more striking feature of the Spanish trade is that while the Spanish were the most compulsive producers of official documentation, they were also the most dependent on contraband; thus, theirs was the only trade that delivered the majority of its captives outside the limits of the law and official policy as these then stood. Not only was the size of the net inflow of Africans into Spanish colonies larger than the influx into the British Caribbean, but two-thirds of transatlantic arrivals in the Spanish Empire arrived under the control of Spanish merchants. Scholars have yet to recognize the scale of Spanish involvement.

SO WHAT WERE ALL THESE CAPTIVES of African descent doing in the Spanish colonies if they were not generating export revenues? Some, of course, *did* work producing agricultural, mining, and fishery exports. Production of cacao and pearls in Venezuela as well as hides in Cuba and the Río de la Plata depended heavily on slave labor. Half of all the gold exported from colonial Spanish America to the metropolis came from New Granada (Colombia), given that early deposits in Hispaniola, Honduras, and Venezuela were soon exhausted—Africans and their descendants mined all

⁶⁸ On the early Spanish slave trade as “only Portuguese,” see Fradera and Schmidt-Nowara, “Introduction,” 2. See also Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos*; Maria da Graça Ventura, *Negreiros portugueses na rota das Índias de Castela, 1541–1556* (Lisbon, 1999).

⁶⁹ Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 148–150.

these sites.⁷⁰ While most of the silver was mined by Amerindians, slaves performed multiple tasks in mining camps from Zacatecas to Potosí.⁷¹ But the majority of blacks in Spanish colonies worked in many occupations outside the export sector. Spanish America had by far the largest urban centers in the Americas. Mexico City, Guanajuato, Querétaro, Lima, Buenos Aires, and Havana were larger than New York, Boston, and Philadelphia by the turn of the eighteenth century, with the first two dwarfing all other urban centers throughout the colonial period and beyond.⁷² Enslaved and free black communities typically performed tasks that provided food, clothing, shelter, and other services to urban environments.⁷³

More importantly, slaves produced goods that were traded between Spanish colonies. They made textiles in the *obrajes* of New Spain and Ecuador (some of which were sold in Manila), and they produced sugar near Veracruz and cacao, flour, tobacco, and hides in Venezuela, all for colonial markets.⁷⁴ Slaves in coastal Peru produced wine, wheat, and sugar—essential to Spanish consumers and Spanish culture in the Andes. In Cartagena Province, slaves produced maize, pork, and manatee lard that were exported to the rest of the Caribbean.⁷⁵ The Jesuits, perhaps the largest corporate owner of slaves in the Americas (after the Catholic Church itself), used almost exclusively African slaves to work farms, cane lands, mines, vineyards, and textile mills, as well as ranches for cattle, sheep, and mules. The largest Jesuit estates were in coastal Ecuador, Peru, and Córdoba in modern Argentina, most of which supplied urban centers from Guayaquil to Potosí.⁷⁶ Slaves were concentrated near the coast, partly because that was where the decline of the indigenous population had been most severe, and partly because of the greater availability of arable land.⁷⁷ How did the large cities—located in the highlands and to a lesser extent in the lowlands—pay for this produce? Silver was a large part of the answer, and here, too, Africans were involved, given that slaves minted the coins of Potosí that facilitated intercolonial trade across South America.

Paradoxically, one analogy that helps us see the regional interdependence and

⁷⁰ TePaske, *A New World of Gold and Silver*, 30; William Frederick Sharp, *Slavery on the Spanish Frontier: The Colombian Chocó, 1680–1810* (Norman, Okla., 1976).

⁷¹ Kris Lane, “Africans and Natives in the Mines of Spanish America,” in Matthew Restall, *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque, 2005), 159–184; Lane, *Colour of Paradise: The Emerald in the Age of Gunpowder Empires* (New Haven, Conn., 2010), 67–69. For African and Andean interactions in coastal Peru, see Rachel Sarah O’Toole, *Bound Lives: Africans, Indians, and the Making of Race in Colonial Peru* (Pittsburgh, 2012).

⁷² Alan Knight, *Mexico*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2002), 2: 209.

⁷³ James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532–1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison, Wis., 1968), chap. 10; Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570–1640* (Bloomington, Ind., 2003), chap. 1.

⁷⁴ Frank T. Proctor III, “Afro-Mexican Slave Labor in the *Obrajes* de Paños of New Spain, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” *The Americas* 60, no. 1 (2003): 33–58.

⁷⁵ María del Carmen Borrego Plá, *Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVI* (Seville, 1983), 42–43, 63–66; Antonino Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias y la región histórica del Caribe, 1580–1640* (Seville, 2002), 171, 179–180.

⁷⁶ Nicholas P. Cushner, *Farm and Factory: The Jesuits and the Development of Agrarian Capitalism in Colonial Quito, 1600–1767* (Albany, N.Y., 1982), 135–138; Cushner, *Lords of the Land: Sugar, Wine, and Jesuit Estates of Coastal Peru, 1600–1767* (Albany, N.Y., 1980); Cushner, *Jesuit Ranches and the Agrarian Development of Colonial Argentina, 1650–1767* (Albany, N.Y., 1983). For patterns of consumption and slaves in Potosí, see Jane Mangan, *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosí* (Durham, N.C., 2005).

⁷⁷ Not all concentrations of modern black populations are easily explained. The Pacific Costa Chica has the most visible part of today’s Afro-Mexican population, for reasons that remain unclear.

application of slave labor in the Spanish Empire is provided by the British Americas—the Caribbean plus the thirteen mainland colonies.⁷⁸ Caribbean sugar was the heart of the British system. Before 1800, the mainland produced only tobacco, rice, some indigo, and furs that could be sold in Europe, items that never approached one-quarter of the value of sugar. Yet the British mainland colonies purchased large quantities of goods from Europe as their populations expanded, and were able to do so because they sold produce and shipping services to the Caribbean. In the Spanish case, bullion was sugar; the highlands (as the source of a valuable transatlantic commodity) constituted the counterpart of the Caribbean; an indigenous labor force filled the role of imported slaves; and the lowlands (Cartagena, Veracruz, coastal Peru and Ecuador, Venezuela, and the Río de la Plata, among other regions) were the equivalent of the British American mainland, in that they traded heavily with the export heartland. Both the British mainland and the Spanish lowland could export to Britain (tobacco, rice, and indigo) and to Spain (hides, gold, cacao, and pearls), respectively. But all these items combined could not come close to matching the value of sugar from the British Caribbean and silver from the Spanish highlands. This did not matter. Lowland territories in Spanish America were as important to the highlands as the British American mainland was to the British Caribbean. Indeed, some Spanish lowland jurisdictions exerted direct administrative authority over highland regions (Lima and later Buenos Aires). Perhaps much of both the Spanish lowlands and the British mainland north of Virginia would have had little beyond subsistence agriculture without their connections to the silver and sugar sectors. The ability of both the Spanish lowlands and the British North American mainland to import transatlantic commodities (including slaves) hinged on the ability of these two areas to sell their produce to the rest of their respective imperial systems. Yet Spanish intercolonial exchange and relations have attracted much less scholarly attention than has trade between British colonies, and the central role of the Spanish colonies in Atlantic history after 1640 is still largely ignored.⁷⁹

All parts of the Americas (except, briefly, for Georgia) were prepared to buy African slaves prior to the early nineteenth century—if they could afford them.⁸⁰ Slaves were cheapest in Brazil and in the Caribbean (both islands and littoral), more expensive on the North American mainland, and more expensive again in Potosí—the source of silver that tied together markets in Buenos Aires, Lima, and Cartagena, and formed the key axis (in terms of value) of the early modern Atlantic economy. Transfers of funds from the Royal Treasury of Mexico to the colonial administration

⁷⁸ We extend John Elliott's comparison here of relations between both Spanish and British colonies and their respective imperial governments. J. H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven, Conn., 2006).

⁷⁹ Historians in Latin America have demonstrated greater awareness of the importance of internal markets than have their U.S. counterparts. See, for example, Eduardo Arcila Farías, *Comercio entre Venezuela y México en los siglos XVI y XVII* (México, D.F., 1950); Enrique Tandeter, *Coercion and Markets: Silver Mining in Colonial Potosí, 1692–1826* (Albuquerque, 1993); Moutoukias, *Contrabando y control colonial en el siglo XVII*; Jorge Gelman, *De mercachifles a gran comerciante: Los caminos del ascenso en el Río de la Plata colonial* (La Rábida, 1996); João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso, *Homens de grossa aventura: Acumulação e hierarquia na praça mercantil do Rio de Janeiro, 1790–1830* (Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

⁸⁰ Thus the Quebec intendant negotiated for a cargo direct from Africa in 1716, but upon finding out the price, he decided to continue to make do with the thousands of *panis* (the Quebecois term for aboriginal slaves) in the colony instead. Robin Winks, *Blacks in Canada: A History*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, Conn., 1997), 7–9.

in Cuba and Venezuela, as well as from Peru to Buenos Aires, made it easier to purchase slaves in the recipient areas during the eighteenth century.⁸¹ On the British mainland, the natural growth of black populations had begun by 1730, and by the early nineteenth century, Africa seemed less important as a source of labor than it had once been. For the Spanish American highlands, the equivalent was the reappearance of a positive rate of growth among indigenous peoples and *mestizaje* in the late seventeenth century after nearly two centuries of sharp decline. As a consequence, by the mid-eighteenth century, coerced Indian labor had declined even in Potosí, and mining operations were conducted mostly on the basis of waged labor. Black slaves could be found in most Spanish American colonies. Where they were fewer in number, for example in Central America, mid-eighteenth-century Appalachia, and rural New England (outside Rhode Island), it was usually an indication of relative poverty and lower levels of intercolonial commerce.⁸²

Africans were among the very first arrivals to disembark from the Old World, but at the point of contact no one could have anticipated a transatlantic slave trade from Africa. In the early years of Spanish colonization, the Spanish may have carried more Amerindian slaves east than African slaves west, and the latter left not from Africa itself but rather from Spain (the first known slave voyage direct from Africa did not disembark until 1525). Furthermore, within the colonial Spanish Americas, each of the three major founder populations—Amerindians, sub-Saharan Africans, and Iberians—came to be associated with different terms of labor. Beyond the circum-Caribbean and the Río de la Plata, forced indigenous labor extracted via the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* (or *mita*) systems sustained both private *obrajes* and public works into the eighteenth century. Indigenous population densities combined with Spanish takeover of preexisting Amerindian imperial structures facilitated this process. Intermittent forced labor was not, however, enslavement. Slavery, a second labor regime, was, after the early decades, mostly reserved for Africans—the largest transoceanic immigrant group. Not much is known about the terms of either migration or labor of the third group—Europeans. They were to be found among galley slaves in sixteenth-century Havana, Santo Domingo, and Cartagena, but the Spanish shared the general European aversion to enslaving other Europeans (unless they were Moriscos or Muslims).⁸³ No evidence of indentured servants among the half-million arrivals from Spain before 1660 has surfaced, but to describe Spanish immigrants as “free labor” is hardly correct. Most were dependents or retainers, rather than soldiers, bureaucrats, or merchants with obligations extending beyond the provision of labor. If less challenging than enslaved Africans’ struggles to gain their freedom, the ultimate goals of Spanish migrants were similar in that they, too, hoped

⁸¹ On this topic, see the exchange in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* sparked by Alejandra Irigoin and Regina Grafe, “Bargaining for Absolutism: A Spanish Path to Nation-State and Empire Building,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 88, no. 2 (2008): 173–209.

⁸² For references to slave-trading in colonial Central America, see Lowell Gudmundson and Justin Wolfe, eds., *Blacks and Blackness in Central America: Between Race and Place* (Durham, N.C., 2010), 29, 35, 70, 132–133.

⁸³ David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation* (New York, 2014), 28, 349–350 n. 36; David Wheat, “Mediterranean Slavery, New World Transformations: Galley Slaves in the Spanish Caribbean, 1578–1635,” *Slavery & Abolition* 31, no. 3 (2010): 327–344.

to establish their independence in the Americas and re-create as much of what was familiar from the Old World as possible.⁸⁴

From an African perspective, for a century from around 1550, several of Spain's circum-Caribbean colonies would have been predominantly black long before the development of the export sugar complex. More Africans than Europeans arrived in this broad region, as well as along the Pacific coast from Panama to Lima, before 1600. The influence of various Upper Guinea and West-Central African cultures on the circum-Caribbean between the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century can now only be imagined. After the mid-seventeenth century, however, Africans arriving in any Spanish colony were likely to find themselves in a minority, with the larger society usually comprising Amerindians, Peninsular and *criollo* Spaniards, their *mestizo* progeny, and a growing native (creole) population of full and mixed African ancestry. There were significant black populations in Mexico City and on the Mexican coasts, on the Pacific and Caribbean shores of Colombia, in coastal Ecuador and Peru, and in Caribbean Venezuela—regions where the Amerindian population had largely been decimated after contact. Nevertheless, the dispersal of captives over an immense geographic area, and the fact that their arrival occurred over a much longer time span than in any other major polity in the Americas, may have inhibited the emergence of both large and permanent regions of black demographic and cultural dominance during the three centuries of Spanish colonialism.

Our research also suggests certain implications for the histories of those born to African parents in the Spanish Americas. A positive rate of intrinsic natural growth for people of full and mixed African ancestry probably emerged in Mexico before the United States—perhaps as early as 1650. Intrinsic natural growth rates were also positive for blacks even at the height of the later Cuban sugar boom.⁸⁵ Diminishing slave arrivals were one of the factors behind Mexican *mestizaje*. People of mixed origins became more common than those of full African ancestry after 1700, just as free people of color outnumbered slaves as early as 1680 in some regions. When the mainland colonies began to loosen ties with Spain, two opposite but related processes had already been unfolding: first, the formation of African-descended populations in Mexico and elsewhere that hardly fit modern U.S. understandings of “blackness” and “whiteness,” and second, the rise of slave arrivals in Cuba, Venezuela, and the Río de la Plata, renewing direct links with Africa. Coastal Peru, particularly Lima, saw a combination of the two patterns as Peru underwent centuries of *mestizaje* yet received new slave arrivals through the Río de la Plata in the late colonial era. As with Mexico, the large majority of Peru's population was of full and mixed Amerindian ancestry. Venezuela received a very significant flow of slave arrivals during

⁸⁴ Peter Boyd-Bowman, “Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies until 1600,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 56, no. 4 (1976): 580–604; Magnus Mörner, with the collaboration of Harold Sims, *Adventurers and Proletarians: The Story of Migrants in Latin America* (Pittsburgh, 1985); James Lockhart and Enrique Otte, eds., *Letters and People of the Spanish Indies: Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1980).

⁸⁵ Frank T. Proctor III, “*Damned Notions of Liberty*”: *Slavery, Culture, and Power in Colonial Mexico, 1640–1769* (Albuquerque, 2010), 22–25. This Afro-Mexican population was increasingly free, rather than enslaved, by the eighteenth century. See Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*, 22–27. Jack Eblen defines intrinsic natural rates of change as “reflecting the characteristics of a closed population with a stable age structure”; Eblen, “On the Natural Increase of Slave Populations: The Example of the Cuban Slave Population, 1775–1900,” in Stanley L. Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies* (Princeton, N.J., 1975), 211–247, 214, 245.

its last thirty years as a colony. Yet, free *pardos*—people of mixed African, European, and Amerindian origin—formed the majority of the Venezuelan population by 1810. Growing majorities of people of mixed ancestry emerged before the Africanization process triggered by these revived African inflows. The long view suggests that population growth due to *mestizaje* plus recovery from the virgin soil epidemics of the early period enabled Spanish America to remain the most populous imperial domain until late in the colonial era.

Demographics provide no more than an outline of the African presence, however. In late-eighteenth-century Cuba and the Río de la Plata, a surge of African arrivals interacted with a growing free African and African-descended population living in Havana, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo. This encounter led to the expansion (and reshaping) of African-based associations and black urban culture.⁸⁶ Africans and their descendants formed black confraternities in cities from Mexico to Lima, under the umbrella of the Catholic Church, from the earliest times through to the eighteenth century. Better documentation from the late eighteenth century enables us to see the emergence of *cabildos de nación* and “African nations” in Cuba and the Río de la Plata, respectively, that were not as directly controlled by the Church. Their functions were very similar to those of the old black confraternities and included the rituals of life (particularly funerals), socialization, and mutual support. In Cuba, adherents of Oyo-centric socio-religious groupings such as Sango emerged, and the tensions between the founding members of the organization and the large numbers of new arrivals from Africa after 1817 can now be laid out in some detail. The influences of African origins and the Catholic Church on these new associations are obvious, but so are many syncretic practices, the meaning of which is a matter of scholarly debate. Black socialization and distinctive African-based cultural practices are at least very clear. Free and enslaved populations of African ancestry mingled in these associations, though the leaders were usually free blacks. Free people of color were essential, since they could own real estate (for example, the house of the association), they had more time to devote to group activities, and in Spanish America they could represent black associations and defend them against colonial authorities. There is much less evidence of black organizations, and indeed public celebrations such as the Day of Kings, in the British, Dutch, and French Americas, probably because urban environments were of less relative importance there. The activities of such groups in other traditionally black cities of the Spanish Atlantic, such as Cartagena and Caracas, await historians’ attention.

The breadth, diversity, and chronological expanse of the Spanish colonies make the slave trade to Spanish America very difficult to address. The subdivision of this field into national Spanish American historiographies makes the subject even more complex. Additionally, an immersion in the literature of the British, Luso-Brazilian, Dutch, and French slave trades is essential if we are to understand the Spanish traffic. In recent years, the historiographies of the transatlantic slave trade, on the one hand, and colonial Spanish America, on the other, have not seriously engaged with each

⁸⁶ This paragraph is based on Henry B. Lovejoy, “Old Oyo Influences on the Transformation of Lucumí Identity in Colonial Cuba” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2012), and Alex Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers: Emerging Black Identities in the Río de la Plata* (University of New Mexico Press, forthcoming in 2015).

other. Scholarship on the slave trade is mostly Anglophone and Francophone and tends to foreground Northwestern Europe, the North Atlantic, and the United States, including the non-Hispanic Caribbean. More recently, scholars have moved the Lusophone world to center stage.⁸⁷ While many new studies of slavery and the peoples of African ancestry in Spanish America have appeared, this new scholarship does not yet embrace the methods and perspectives now used by scholars of the transatlantic slave trade. Contributions to the history of people of African ancestry in colonial Spanish America still do not explain how the founder populations got there.⁸⁸ Not a single monograph or even article on the slave trade to Mexico has appeared since the partial treatment in Colin Palmer's work.⁸⁹ For countries such as Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador, scholars have yet to fully exploit the abundant documentary sources on the connections with Africa. And very little is known of the Africans shipped to Iberia, the Canary Islands, and the Philippines during and after the Iberian Union.⁹⁰ We hope that our research will be the beginning of a coordinated effort to recover the stories of what is the least-known large branch of the African diaspora.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Out of a total of thirty-seven essays, Gad Heuman and James Walvin, eds., *The Slavery Reader* (London, 2003), contains only two on Brazil and none on Spanish colonies. A second recent compendium ignores black experiences in mainland Spanish America, but includes two essays on Cuba and one on Brazil; Laurent Dubois and Julius S. Scott, eds., *Origins of the Black Atlantic* (New York, 2010).

⁸⁸ The second edition of Herbert S. Klein and Ben Vinson III, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York, 2007), has raised the profile of slavery in Latin America, but ignores the slave trade to Spanish colonies. Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson, eds., *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque, 2006), includes chapters on factors influencing slave production in Africa, but also passes over the topic. In "Shape of a Diaspora: The Movement of Afro-Iberians to Colonial Spanish America," in Sherwin K. Bryant, Rachel Sarah O'Toole, and Ben Vinson III, eds., *Africans to Spanish America: Expanding the Diaspora* (Urbana, Ill., 2012), 27–49, Leo Garofalo examines the arrival of people of African descent from the Iberian Peninsula, but the volume ignores the slave trade from Africa.

⁸⁹ See Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570–1650* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), chap. 1; Palmer, *Human Cargoes: The British Slave Trade to Spanish America, 1700–1739* (Urbana, Ill., 1981), 108. Thus far the lone attempt to reconstruct slave-trade networks linking early-seventeenth-century Veracruz with both Angola and the Caribbean is David Wheat, "García Mendes Castelo Branco, *fidalgos* de Angola y mercaderes de esclavos en Veracruz y el Caribe a principios del siglo XVII," in María Elisa Velázquez, coord., *Debates históricos contemporáneos: Africanos y afrodescendientes en México y Centroamérica* (México, D.F., 2011), 85–107. See also Nicolás Ngou-Mve, *El África bantú en la colonización de México, 1595–1640* (Madrid, 1994).

⁹⁰ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, "The Slave Trade in Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 24, no. 3 (1944): 419–421. On the slave trade to the Philippines, see Tatiana Seijas, "The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish Manila, 1580–1640," *Itinerario* 32, no. 1 (2008): 19–38; Pascale Girard, "Les Africains aux Philippines aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles," in Berta Ares Queija and Alessandro Stella, eds., *Negros, mulatos, zambaigos: Derroteros africanos en los mundos ibéricos* (Seville, 2000), 67–74.

⁹¹ In this essay we have of necessity focused on ports and broad regions from which slaves were embarked and disembarked. Sources from the Catholic Church, notarial records, censuses, court cases, and other colonial documents offer keys to understand the many meanings of African "nations" for Africans as well as for the bureaucrats and priests who created the files. Future scholarship will integrate the numerous local studies based on these sources with our new data to refine the debate on African origins and black identities. The locally based but Atlantic-focused scholarship on Africans and their descendants in colonial Spanish America is expanding rapidly. For a survey, see Rachel Sarah O'Toole, "As Historical Subjects: The African Diaspora in Colonial Latin American History," *History Compass* 11, no. 12 (2013): 1094–1110.

Alex Borucki is Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Irvine. He is the author of *From Shipmates to Soldiers: Emerging Black Identities in the Río de la Plata* (University of New Mexico Press, forthcoming in 2015) and *Abolicionismo y tráfico de esclavos en Montevideo tras la fundación republicana* (Biblioteca Nacional, 2009), and co-author, with Karla Chagas and Natalia Stalla, of *Esclavitud y trabajo: Un estudio sobre los afrodescendientes en la frontera uruguaya* (Pulmón Ediciones, 2004). He has published articles in the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, the *Colonial Latin American Review*, *Itinerario*, and *Slavery and Abolition*.

David Eltis is Emeritus faculty at Emory University and Research Associate at the University of British Columbia. Among many publications, he is the author of *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford University Press, 1987) and *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), and co-author, with David Richardson, of the *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Yale University Press, 2010). Along with Paul Lachance and Martin Halbert, he is the co-creator of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, an open-access website containing an interactive database of more than 35,000 slave voyages that has led to major advancements in the understanding of this traffic.

David Wheat is Assistant Professor of History at Michigan State University. He is the author of *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570–1640* (to be published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming in 2015). His articles have appeared in the *Journal of African History*, *Slavery and Abolition*, and the *Journal of Early Modern History*, and in various edited volumes published in both English and Spanish.