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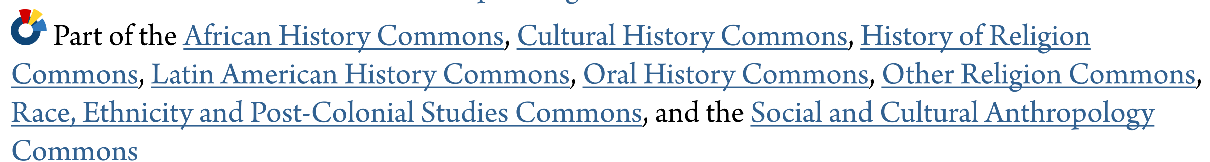
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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

LUCUMÍ (YORUBA) CULTURE IN CUBA:
A REEVALUATION (1830s -1940s)

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

HISTORY

by

Miguel Ramos

2013

To: Dean Kenneth G. Furton
College of Arts and Sciences

This dissertation, written by Miguel Ramos, and entitled Lucumí (Yoruba) Culture in Cuba: A Reevaluation (1830s – 1940s), having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

____
Noble David Cook

____
María del Mar Logroño

____
Leslie Northup

____
Sherry Johnson, Major Professor

Date of Defense: November 1, 2013

The dissertation of Miguel Ramos is approved.

____
Dean Kenneth G. Furton
College of Arts and Sciences

____
Dean Lakshmi N. Reddi
University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2013

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DEDICATION

A mí adorada madre.

Este logro es tan mío como tuyo.

(To my beloved mother. This accomplishment is as much mine as it is yours.)

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“repositories” who directly or indirectly provided the oral testimonies that honor this endeavor.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

LUCUMÍ (YORUBA) CULTURE IN CUBA:

A REEVALUATION (1830s – 1940s)

by

Miguel Ramos

Florida International University, 2013

Miami, Florida

Professor Sherry Johnson, Major Professor

The status, roles, and interactions of three dominant African ethnic groups and their descendants in Cuba significantly influenced the island's *cubanidad* (national identity): the Lucumís (Yoruba), the Congos (Bantú speakers from Central West Africa), and the Carabalís (from the region of Calabar). These three groups, enslaved on the island, coexisted, each group confronting obstacles that threatened their way of life and cultural identities. Through covert resistance, cultural appropriation, and accommodation, all three, but especially the Lucumís, laid deep roots in the nineteenth century that came to fruition in the twentieth.

During the early 1900s, Cuba confronted numerous pressures, internal and external. Under the pretense of a quest for national identity and modernity, Afro-Cubans and African cultures and religion came under political, social, and intellectual attack. Race was an undeniable element in these conflicts. While all three groups were oppressed equally, only the Lucumís fought back, contesting accusations of backwardness, human sacrifice, cannibalism, and *brujería* (witchcraft), exaggerated by the sensationalistic media, often with the police's and legal system's complicity. Unlike the covert character

of earlier epochs' responses to oppression, in the twentieth century Lucumí resistance was overt and outspoken, publically refuting the accusations levied against African religions.

Although these struggles had unintended consequences for the Lucumís, they gave birth to *cubanidad'*s African component. With the help of Fernando Ortiz, the Lucumí were situated at the pinnacle of a hierarchical pyramid, stratifying African religious complexes based on civilizational advancement, but at a costly price. Social ascent denigrated Lucumí religion to the status of folklore, depriving it of its status as a bona fide religious complex. To the present, Lucumí religious descendants, in Cuba and, after 1959, in many other areas of the world, are still contesting this contradiction in terms: an elevated downgrade.

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ARCHIVES CONSULTED

Spain

AHT	Archivo Histórico de Toledo
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional
AGI	Archivo de Indias
BN	Biblioteca Nacional

Cuba

AAH	Archivo del Arzobispado Habana
AHC	Archivo Histórico Nacional de Cuba
HCH	Archivo Histórico de la Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de La Habana
BNJM	Biblioteca Nacional José Martí
ILL	Instituto de Literatura y Lingüística de Cuba, Fernando Ortiz Collection
AMR	Archivo del Museo de Regla
AMG	Archivo del Museo de Guanabacoa
CR	Cementerio de Regla
BCA	Biblioteca de Casa de África
AHPM	Archivo Histórico Provincial de Matanzas
CSC	Catedral San Carlos
CCM	Cementerio San Carlos

United States

CHC	Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami
ESSSS	Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies, Online database, Vanderbilt University, http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/esss.pl
HPNW	Northwestern University Archives, Melville J. Herskovits Papers
LC	United States Library of Congress
LCP	Lydia Cabrera Papers, University of Miami
LMP	Levi Marrero Papers, Florida International University, Special Collections
NAUS	National Archives of the United States
SCFIU	Special Collections, Florida International University
TASTD	Voyages: The Trans—Atlantic Slave Trade Database http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces
WBP	William Bascom Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley

Chapter I: Introduction

It was one of those hot and humid summer days in Cuba. In the port town of Regla, on the outskirts of Havana, on the morning of Saturday, July 9, 1864, the church's massive bell, darkened by time, humidity, and the salty air born from the bay, proclaimed the baptism of new Christians and echoed through the town, as did the prayers of those Africans inside the church, who continuously beseeched the heavens for liberation from the toil of slavery. Forced to hide under a veil of apparent acquiescence and acceptance, Africans, like all peoples suffering such injustice, implored God's mercy. One can only wonder what could have possibly been going through the mind of Adeshina, a manumitted African who just a few years before had been taken captive by slave raiders and sent off to a distant land to be held in servitude, as he walked down the aisle of a Catholic church in Cuba with a newborn child in his arms.

Almost certainly, that morning the Lucumí native was reliving that fateful day on which he had been subjected to this rite and renamed Remigio lucumí. He wondered what the future had reserved for the small child, rescued from "original sin" by a Christian baptism in this dreadful land where blacks were endlessly disdained and rejected. Still, in Adeshina's eyes, Marina Laureana García was special. She was not just any *omó kekeré* (small child): she was the daughter of Atandá, his Lucumí "brother" in a foreign land, whose own Christian name was Filomeno García. Marina was the second child born to Atandá, and María de Jesús Hernández, a creole, daughter of Lucumís.

These anxieties had definitely afflicted him a year earlier, when he brought his own daughter, Josefa Herrera Buzlet, to be baptized, as they surely did when christening

his son Marcelino in 1876 and on several occasions while baptizing the children of other Lucumís, as he often did until his demise in 1905. Maybe Maria's baptism reminded Adeshina of his arrival to this new land; his forced march under the threat of a whip, tied or chained to a group of captives, possibly relatives, friends, or lovers who had also been torn away from their homes and loved ones, in the midst of violent raids or the chaos of civil war. Perhaps the "holy" water that was poured over the child's head, warmed by the intense heat of the Cuban summer, reminded him of that stale water that slithered down his throat as he marched to the West African coast to board a slave ship.

His own christening could not have been even remotely similar to this one. Like many enslaved Africans brought to Cuba, he was probably baptized on the deck of a boat somewhere on the African coast, surrounded by torment and confusion and without the slightest idea of why an *oyinbo*—the Yoruba-Lucumí word for "white man"—was dripping water over his head. He may have been christened twice: first the mass baptism on the boat and then a second one, sometime after arriving at his destination, when his new owner took him to a church and subjected him to a more orthodox version of the Catholic baptism rite.[1]

The ritual, its significance, and his role in it probably had no meaning whatsoever. Indeed, he may have stood before the altar, emotionally scarred by the memory of the Middle Passage's waves, trembling with anxiety and awe, as his godfather, possibly Lucumí like himself or maybe Congo or Mandinga, indicated him to be silent, that he would explain later. An *oyinbo* dressed in a long robe anointed his forehead with some *adí* (oil), sprinkled *omí* (water) over his head, and gave him *iyó* (salt) to taste, all the while pronouncing words in a language he did not yet understand. The symbols, however,

were not necessarily foreign. He was familiar with some of these from his homeland, where his people use similar items in the naming ceremony of a child.[2]

The priest, whom by now Adeshina probably understood to be a ritual specialist of some sort, would later inscribe his new Christian name, Remigio, in a ledger titled *Bautismos de pardos y morenos*—Baptism of mulattoes and blacks—and store it in a cedar or mahogany cabinet in the church's office. Surely, everyone but he rejoiced when the priest said "*Me lo entregaste judío y lo devuelvo Cristiano*"—You brought me a Jew and I return him a Christian.

No doubt, on this day Adeshina and his *compadre* Atandá remembered their own sojourn through the path that providence had carved out for them. Memories like these had surely tormented them before. Indeed, maybe they looked back to the uncertainty, despondency, and fear that invaded their bodies as they walked to the coast or boarded the slave ship. So many memories—the nausea they felt while crossing the turbulent seas; the filthy, disease-ridden ship; the infamous Middle Passage; and the disorientating sense of not knowing what to expect or what would happen to them in the hands of the "white cannibals."[3] In June 1855 when Adeshina baptized his compatriot, Sabino lucumí, *emancipado número* 13, his godchild did not yet know how fortunate he had been. Unlike many Africans in Cuba, as an *emancipado*, Sabino had been spared—somewhat, anyway—from the drudgery that so many others before him, including Adeshina, were forced to withstand.

By the 1860s, mellowing with the advancing years, Adeshina had probably accepted his destiny and dispelled much of this anguish from his mind. He had other plans then, greater deeds to accomplish before his death, which were more important than

worrying about a past he could not change. If there was one thing Adeshina was sure of, it was his belief that these children whom he accompanied to the altar were the vehicles for the future. The oracles, which he trusted wholeheartedly, had predicted it. But what he could not know; what he surely wondered about incessantly, despite his strong religious convictions, was what the future would entail. Providence's plan for the future of the new generations of Cuban Lucumís could only be left to time, but he had a plan of his own.

The present study will assess the Lucumí impact on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Cuba by analyzing their social status, demographic significance, and cultural prominence. The present investigation will contribute to the growing body of literature about an African ethnic group and its significance in the struggle against racism and deculturation in Cuba during the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century. In so doing, the investigation observes African history as it unfolded on the other side of the Atlantic—in the Diaspora—and the ardent debates over culture, religion, and race that arose in the nineteenth century when it became clear that slavery was doomed and in the twentieth century after the island's independence from Spain. Scholars who have studied these eras have often discussed the idea that in the Americas, post-abolition societies focused on modernity as the primary catalyst for promoting detachment from Africa and Africanity and the development of identity, in this case *cubanidad*—a uniquely Cuban identity. The primary and secondary documentation reviewed for the study, as well as interviews and conversations with Afro-Cubans whose ancestors were directly involved in these processes, suggest that various other forces were active during this era. These issues need further consideration.

The present investigation will employ a multi-disciplinary approach to study the contributions of three specific African ethnies to Cuban culture: the Congos, Carabalís, and Lucumís. Besides the traditional historical, sociological, and anthropological methodologies, which include archival research, interviews, and fieldwork, the present study follows what anthropology calls an *emic approach*.[4] Anthropologist Kenneth Pike first coined this term in the 1950s.[5] He differentiated between the emic and the etic perspective: the former is the point of view of the participant or member of the culture, while the latter refers to the perceptions of the outsider, the removed foreigner. Each methodology often observes the subject of study from oppositional perspectives, even when arriving at similar conclusions. Although some of the historical phenomena considered by the present study have been reviewed by numerous scholars, most of them were foreign to the cultural and religious traditions they studied (or at least not avowed practitioners); hopefully the methodological approach will provide a novel appraisal by incorporating the point of view of the members of the cultures under scrutiny.

Some social scientists question the emic approach, distrusting the objectivity of those who analyze and describe their own cultures. Just as challenging, however, are the perceptive abilities of the academic who is not a member of the culture under study. Their view is incapable of fully grasping the object of study in the same light as the member of that culture. Thus, while the emic approach runs the risk of being subjective, the etic perspective is doubly lacking owing to inaccurate evaluations born of detachment. It is interesting that Fernando Ortiz, one of the principal actors connected with the present study, was taken to task precisely because of his use of the etic approach. Miguel Arnedo's examination of Ortiz and his ideas about Cuban national culture and identity

faults Ortiz for not considering Afro-Cuban perceptions of their own cultural products and instead relying on his own "supposedly objective criteria."[6]

An undeniably African element is present in Cuban culture and has endured years of acculturation and social rejection by the dominant culture. While modernity and integration were significant in the de-Africanization crusades that sought to establish a Cuban identity, disguised forms of resistance and gradual accommodation through the ingenious modification, Africanization, and appropriation of elements of European culture and their insertion in an African framework were also dominant forces. Africans and Europeans both acclimatized to each other's cultural dictates and norms, and in the process, Africans "Africanized" the Spanish colony. In this process, the evidence strongly suggests that the Lucumí people were key agents in promoting these socio-cultural interchanges.

The Lucumí Presence in Cuba

In the past 100 years, so much has been published on the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria and their descendants in the New World that a major introduction to what is already a well-known ethnic group in the scholarship is not truly necessary. In terms of the Diaspora, bookshelves swarm with excellent—and problematic—research and ethnographies, mostly concentrating on their major contribution to the Americas, the Orisha religion.[7] Different manifestations of Yoruba Orisha Religion have expanded across the globe. Today, devotees pay homage to the orishas in Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Diasporic traditions have led the way in this global

penetration and growth of Orisha adherents. A leading factor was the Cuban Revolution, which led to the migration of Orisha worship to countries across the globe. Additionally, the flexibility, portability, and personal nature of Lucumí religion facilitated the development and growth of Orisha traditions in new communities.

Since 1959, Orisha Religion has gone through a period of unprecedented expansion and global recognition. In recent years, representatives of Yoruba religion have joined other religious leaders from around the globe at Vatican-sponsored conferences. In 2011, despite strong criticism from conservative Catholics, Pope Benedict invited over 300 representatives of the world's religions to join him in a gathering in Assisi, Italy, to pray for world peace. A Yoruba priest was among the invitees.[8] As the Orisha Religion continues to make inroads in diverse communities across the globe, its impact is being felt across social and political landscapes. Scholars are beginning to identify Orisha worship as a world religion.[9]

Though often stigmatized and disparaged because of several reasons, including the negative impact of slavery and concerns linked to race and ethnocentrism, the religion's influence on music, art, and even New World politics are incontestable. Several Cuban politicians, dictators, and presidents have undergone initiations in Lucumí religion or have established political and propagandistic connections with its priests.[10] The renowned anthropologist William Bascom, one of the pioneer anthropologists to study the Yoruba people, phrased it best: "No African group has had greater influence on New World culture than the Yoruba."[11]

Slave traders documented the Yorubas that were brought to Cuba as Lucumís (Lukumís).[12] The *Yoruba* designation was practically unknown in Cuba (and Brazil) until

the early twentieth century. It came into general knowledge following publications by Fernando Ortiz and Rómulo Lachatañeré in Cuba; and by Raimundo Nina Rodrígues and Edison Carneiro in Brazil, but it was not used frequently by the Orisha practitioners until the second half of the twentieth century.[13] Most certainly, those to whom the label would have applied seldom, if at all, used it to refer to themselves. Cubans continue to use the term *Lucumí*, and in the Cuban Diaspora, with the growth of other Yoruba-derived religious practices, *Lukumí*, the spelling closest to the African original, has become the identifier for the Cuban Orisha religion. In Brazil, they were known as *Nagô*, derived from Anagó, the name of a southern Yoruba subgroup, which was the general term applied to all the Yoruba by their western neighbors.[14] *Anagó* is also known in Cuba, though like Yoruba, its use is not widespread. The term was used for the title of a Lucumí dictionary written by Cabrera in the 1980s. The book's title reflects some aspects of this nomenclature dilemma: *Anagó—Vocabulario lucumí (El yoruba que se habla en Cuba)*:—Anagó—Lucumí Vocabulary (The Yoruba that is Spoken in Cuba).[15]

In Africa, the Lucumís were primarily an urban people.[16] Bascom wrote that their tradition of urban life gave them a unique place not only among African societies but also among non-literate people the world over.[17] The group's urban proclivities are clearly visible in Cuba. Cuban cities such as Havana and Matanzas were fertile terrains for planting Lucumí culture and identity, fueling their refusal to be culturally obliterated. Perceptions of their general demeanor and capabilities also attracted notice to this group. A nineteenth-century deposition of ex-slaves returning to Africa from Cuba, recorded in England, noted that the Yorubas/Lucumís were "among the most docile and industrious of all the Negroes that are imported."[18] Swedish abolitionist Fredrika Bremmer's

accounts of her travels through nineteenth century Cuba embraced this view as well: "Luccomees . . .appear to be among the noblest tribes of Africa."[19] The allegedly submissive character of the Lucumís may have been influential in providing them access to the greater opportunities that were available in the cities for people of color, such as domestic work.[20]

But not all of Cuba's Lucumís were passive. Many of those who were brought to the Americas were direct or unintended victims of military actions and a Muslim jihad that decimated the Oyo Kingdom in the 1830s.[21] There seems to be a correlation between the arrival of the Lucumís in Cuba and the increase in the number of slave insurrections on the island that cannot be ignored.[22] In the nineteenth century, Lucumís were among the seven most-mentioned ethnicities in reports about marooning, rebellions, and escapes on the island.[23] "[T]hey were fearsome, just one was capable of subverting the rest."[24]

Resistance, Acculturation, Appropriation, and Accommodation

Violent upheavals were not the only devices employed by the Lucumís in their struggles. Disguised forms of resistance were also crucial. They were pivotal in helping the Lucumís—and other Africans as well—to oppose slavery and, at the same time, remain steadfast to their identity. This type of resistance was critical in producing cultural change and adaptation for all who came in proximity with these forces. Not only did Africans present opposition against enslavement and slavery, they also resisted acculturation. In the process, even when adapting and adopting elements of European ways and behaviors, African culture began to permeate its immediate environs as well. Archaeologist Catherine M. Cameron espoused the idea that captives are the primary vehicles for

change in most societies throughout the world. Failure to recognize the potential contributions of captives, Cameron wrote, would lead to incomplete or incorrect assessments of culture change.[25]

Brazilianist James Sweet made an excellent case for these less-recognized forms of resistance that slaves—and free people of color—used to challenge slavery and acculturation.[26] These efforts were not just modest attempts to resist the forces of slavery. Africans also proved triumphant against total obliteration of their identity by resisting—and often transforming—those elements that tried to attack and erase the specific cultural fundamentals of who they were. Beyond doubt, their labors were as much a form of resistance as were the more conventional defiant acts, even if the intentions motivating them were not necessarily explicitly revealed. Attempting to analyze and understand human behavior, and especially the reactions of subaltern people to oppression, are far from "divination," though.[27]

Sweet's and Cameron's observations are applicable to the Lucumís in Cuba. Despite the popular ideas about their "noble" character and their "passive" nature, Lucumís in Cuba were rebellious. Because of its very nature, Lucumí resistance took on many forms, both violent and otherwise, from outright challenges to slavery, such as maroonage, plots, insurrections, suicide, and infanticide to other, more subtle approaches, whether consciously employed or not.[28] These resistance tactics were manifested through women who nurtured, raised, and socialized white children; sexual liaisons between white men and black or mulatto women; herblore and folk medicine; and all the forms of cultural and religious diffusion that resulted from the constant exchanges between Lucumís and other Africans and the dominant society. These were just as insurrectionary

as were machete- and torch-led attacks and revolts on the plantations, because they were covert forms of reverse acculturation.[29] While slaves initiated several of these efforts, the free people of color resisted as well, using methods that went mostly unperceived. Their endeavors were not only oppositional to the tyranny of slavery but also to European acculturation.

African sapience and religious complexes were vital foundations for resisting acculturation and reversing its de-Africanizing progression. While sociologists and anthropologists have documented the importance of these complexes from the perspective of their own disciplines, the role of these less perceivable forms of resistance needs greater scrutiny in the historical scholarship.[30] Sociologist Roger Bastide argued that enslaved Africans used culture as a form of resistance, "as an endeavor not to let vital values inherited from [their] ancestors perish but to reestablish them."[31] African religions in Cuba are a testament to the effectiveness of cultural resistance, as they surely are in Brazil, Haiti, Trinidad, and other areas of the Americas; however, there have been some debates over the applicability of Bastide's model. Sydney Mintz, one of the most respected scholars of slavery, was one of those who warned about the dangers of overextending the dialogue on resistance to avoid making it an "unworkable" concept.[32]

Nevertheless, the mere fact that African religions continued at all in the Americas, despite the many impediments they encountered, is a testament to their ability to resist, adapt, and thus endure. Religion was part of the day-to-day resistance, because for most Africans, religion is not detached from daily living. The Lucumís had no separate word for the concept, so religion was and continues to be a way of life. Thus, when analyzing religion's role in resistance, scholars are not considering a single, solitary act: instead, the

focus is on the persistent and unremitting daily character of resistance and its long-term effects.[33]

Ideas associated with religion and *brujería* (literally "witchcraft") are fundamental to some aspects of the present examination. Following the theories espoused by anthropologist Clifford Geertz, the present study will define religion as a system of rites and symbols that act to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting relationships, attitudes, and inspirations about the nature of human life and its correlations with supernatural beings by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence.[34] The term *brujería*, as used in Cuba, is closer in meaning to the anthropological concept of sorcery. Many anthropologists still refer to E. E. Evans-Pritchard's definitions of witchcraft and sorcery that developed from his research among the Azandi in Africa. Both systems are linked to the idea of provoking evil or harm, but the difference lies in intention and approach. Witchcraft is an innate and unconscious skill, whereas sorcery is conscious and learned. While witchcraft relies more on the psychic and intangible, sorcery is an intentional attempt to inflict harm using spells, formulas, and objects.[35]

African notions of ritual magic vary considerably from those of the Europeans. Ritual magic, the application of *brujería*, similarly varies according to its user's intentions. While negative magic is recognized and used by some groups, most African ritual magic is positive. Even when connotations about sorcerers and witches are generally negative, healing can often be an important and positive element in the application of ritual magic. In addition, as some studies assert, the belief in *brujería* can have therapeutic effects, allowing communities to heal in times of crises by providing scapegoats to blame for social ills, and often physical and psychological ones as well.[36]

In nineteenth-century Cuba, sorcery may have been used numerous times to appease an angry master or overseer, to harm an adversary or reverse his intentions, or to retaliate against whites for the injuries that they inflicted on slaves and people of color. Some of the twentieth-century cases that were associated with *brujería* may have been healing and not sorcery. Like sorcerers, healers used plants, roots, and vegetable materials to assist with their cures. These were generally or conveniently misjudged by whites. To some degree, *brujería* was another element in the attempt to resist European acculturation. By the same token, *brujería* as healing was significant in the reverse acculturation of Europeans who were thus introduced to African magic, healing, and religion.

The rituals of African religions, even those associated with *brujería*, motivated the development of *communitas*, a concept first discussed by sociologist Victor Turner.[37] When *communitas* is experienced by a group that is united in belief, it creates strong personal bonds among the participants or the community, fostering interpersonal loyalty among its members.[38] The European witchcraft craze, which dates back to the political and religious turmoil of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, produced vast misunderstanding about African ritual magic and its intentions. These, in turn, provoked considerable hostility and hysteria in Cuba during the 1800s and well beyond the first half of the twentieth century.

Undeniably, the refusal to discontinue their ritual practices, abandon their beliefs, forsake their ancestors, and ignore their deities was vital for the Lucumís and other Africans in Cuba. The Lucumís' determination to preserve their culture helped to develop *communitas* by establishing bonds that were united by the idea of resistance. Even if

because of the numerous parallelisms that Africans established with Christianity, and particularly Catholicism, cultural resistance may appear to be "a form of accommodation," in reality the "accommodation" was not African religion submitting to the society's Catholic imposition but the other way around.[39] The connections between Lucumí and Catholic religiosity marked an encounter between devotees of two faiths, through which Africans acquiesced to the society's expectations only in appearance, as they resourcefully worked around acculturative pressures, finding a solution that was amenable to their own tenets.

In Cuba, the Lucumís—and in some cases, the Congos and Carabalís as well—took carvings or images of Catholic saints and transformed them by imbuing them with the energy of the African orishas, consecrating them through ceremonial processes that were fairly similar to the ordination rites. These included blood sacrifice. Through these rites, the orisha's energy was deposited in the image, and the saint's iconography was appropriated as public imagery, allowing the orisha to gain wider acceptance by "dressing" him or her in the garbs of the Catholic "deities." To some extent, these images went through a minor ordination and were "crowned" as if they were living Lucumí priests and priestesses.[40]

Those images of the saints that are popularly paralleled with the Lucumí orishas were thus transformed into ordained members of the Orisha religion. As such, for the Lucumís, the saints became part of the Orisha community. While whites thought they were seeing customary Catholic images, Africans knew that these were ritually charged vessels of the *orishas*. While Africans were worshipping the Lucumí *orishas*, whites were making the sign of the cross, genuflecting, and praying before the image of the Catholic

saint—and all the while, their acts of veneration were being addressed to the same visual representation.

The universality of specific beliefs—those tenets that all religions share—certainly contributed to this process as well. Lucumí religion and Catholicism—and especially popular Catholicism, the vernacular practices of *el pueblo* (the folk)—have many theological concepts in common. Both systems appeal to a Supreme Being, directly and through the intercession of divine intermediaries that are more accessible or closer to human beings: saints and *orishas*. Many of these African or Christian "deities" either originated in the celestial realm with the Creator or ascended to their status as the result of post-mortem deification or canonization. In both traditions, these entities are associated with natural phenomena, specific ailments, and the affairs of the human condition and daily existence. These commonalities also facilitated Lucumí appropriation of Spanish religious symbols, which were literally robed in garments sewn in the Diaspora with thread made from cotton collected and woven by African hands. Though this thread was Diasporic, the cultural traditions that fashioned the garment as well as its eventual wearer were African or Africanized.

The Lucumí religion—and possibly all Afro-Diasporan religions—did not merge with European religion, as implied by those who espouse the theories of syncretism to reason that actual fusion occurred.[41] Instead, the Lucumís resisted deculturation and cultural annihilation by cleverly assimilating and Africanizing those elements of Catholicism that ensured their own cultural survival, including the saints that they paralleled with the *orishas*.[42] There was no fusion between, for example, Oshún and Our Lady of Charity: the island's patron saint became an ordained "priestess" of Oshún and

thus became Lucumí through ritual and incorporation into the religious community. Ingeniously, the Lucumís ascertained that their religious ideologies would continue for the descendants of the African continent now living in the Americas.

Beyond securing survival, the Lucumís developed a process that fostered understanding of their religious tradition by other Africans and people of non-African derivation who eventually joined the faith. The ingenious adaptation of Catholic paraphernalia ensured that those future adherents who were alien to Lucumí culture, and especially Catholics, would recognize the elements that each other's beliefs held in common. While Lucumí resistance ensured that their religion would not fall prey to acculturation, it also guaranteed the creed's subsequent success by recognizing the presence of the divine in other spiritual manifestations and allowing space for different ideologies within its own religious spheres.

No doubt, religion and belief were vital, but so, too, were fear and intimidation. All were significant tools for resisting European acculturation. Indeed, they were, in Sweet's terms, "the great leaveners of power."[43] Intimidation, through the anxiety prompted by the possible use of ritual magic, or *brujería*, was also an effective form of resistance.[44] Despite the common mockery of "African superstitions" found throughout the Americas and the purported disbelief of many whites, many did not fail to recognize *brujería's* potential for creating friction and instilling rebelliousness.[45] When Africans' familiarity with popular Catholicism began to grow, elements from European common religiosity, particularly crucifixes and prayers, were "Africanized" through ritual consecrations and incorporated as well. Europeans were not unfamiliar with the practices of folk Catholicism and their presence in Afro-Cuban magic added another layer to the

fear that they transported from Europe. Whether meant to instill confidence in the believer or terror in the hearts of their oppressors, magic, charms, amulets, and the ritual specialists that manufactured and supplied them were shared Diasporic realities.[46]

During the 1844 Escalera conspiracy trials, special investigators assigned by the colonial authorities persistently asked the witnesses about the use of *brujería*. Despite their avowed contempt for African magic, it seems that these inquisitors were as fixated on *brujería* in Cuba as Tomás de Torquemada and others had been in fifteenth-century Spain. The vast majority of the deponents declared to have seen or known about *brujos* and *brujería* among their fellow slaves on the *cafetales* and *ingenios* (coffee estates and sugar plantations).[47] The fear never subsided, as in the twentieth century, Cuba confronted the African *brujo* and *brujería* once again in the process of establishing an identity.

Women were crucial to the numerous forms of resistance, but issues associated with gender in colonial Cuba still require greater attention from scholars.[48] One of the ways in which women boycotted the institution of slavery was by controlling their reproductive capabilities.[49] Many African women used their knowledge of herbs to develop numerous contraceptive techniques that they applied frequently.[50] Infanticide was another harsh reality of slave life and resistance.[51] Historically, women have been very effective agents in diffusing culture and generating change.[52] Many women played significant roles countering acculturation by helping to retain traditions from the African homeland.[53] Cuba was not an exception, as the present study will demonstrate. Arguably, in Cuba, Lucumí women were significant agents of resistance and transformation, both among their own ethnic groups as well as amongst their allies from other groups that they

aligned with through time. The available evidence corroborates that women were an important—if not the primary—catalyst for the defense and dissemination of Lucumí religion in the island. Furthermore, of the three dominant African traditions in Cuba, only in Lucumí religion did women yield major authority, which they often flaunted in the process, creating the perception that their ethnic group was authoritative and intimidating.

There are still too many unanswered questions about African peoples in the Americas, but a greater understanding is gradually arising from new methodologies that are making strong headway in academic research thanks to the progress made by modern technologies. As Sydney Mintz wrote, there are periodic advances in understanding that build upon the efforts of all those that heeded the historical call in the past. Hopefully, the current direction will continue to expand our understanding of a past and an institution that impacted—and continues to affect—the lives of so many. Cuba, Brazil, Trinidad, and Haiti, among other regions, are vigorous repositories of the Yoruba-Lucumí-Nagô legacy to the Americas and the greatest extension of this ethnic group's cultural influence. The religions practiced in these countries serve as living archives, and the devotees of these religions are indispensable primary sources. The legacy of the oral archive has yet to receive major attention from historians who could thereby gain greater understanding of those defining processes of the past and document histories that would otherwise remain unknown.

The history of the Lucumís in Cuba, and including their relationship with other Africans, is significant given that their presence on the island has expanded beyond those issues associated with studies of overt defiance and covert resistance to the era of slavery and European acculturation. The Lucumís continued to make substantial waves in

twentieth-century Cuba, and these influences were extended to the Lucumí religious diaspora that grew with the migration of thousands of Cubans from the island after 1959. In the United States, Lucumí religion made history in 1993, when the Supreme Court agreed to hear a case brought by Ernesto Pichardo, Obá Irawo, on the issue of animal sacrifices. Not only did the court find in favor of the petitioner, but in the process, it also gave the religion official recognition, for the first time in its history—African and Diasporan.[54] Lucumí religion's trajectory in the twentieth century is another area of interest for this study. Even beyond the era of slavery and the Cuban plantation, Lucumí religion had to contend with other powerful foes to resist racism and concerted attempts to annihilate it, in the process becoming a major contributor to the development of Afro-Cuban identity and, by extension, *cubanidad*.

An African Cultural Pyramid Erected in Twentieth-Century Havana

Since at least the early 1900s, a concerted and artful crusade spearheaded by various interests gradually situated African culture and religion in Cuba on an evolutionary scale. A cultural hierarchization eventually emerged that seems to have a direct correlation with Herbert Spencer's and Edward B. Tylor's theories about society's stages of evolution.[55] The promoters of this hierarchization crusade originated on several flanks of a heavily contested *habitus*, the arena, as suggested by Pierre Bourdieu, in which a set of historical relations and actors were molding desired goals and achievements through intended actions.[56] Resistance was once again at the fore of this new controversy. One faction pursued respect and recognition, while the other sought to integrate disparate elements of Cuban society and create a modern, national culture.

The campaign molded the islanders' perceptions about the three dominant Afro-Cuban religious complexes, Lucumí and Congo religion and the Carabalí-derived Abakuá Secret Society. As a result of this de-Africanization crusade, the culture of one group, the Lucumís, was projected to the pinnacle of the African social pyramid, while the Carabalí and Congo complexes were relegated to second and third place, respectively. To the day, Cubans hold steadfast to the idea that Lucumí religion is the superior of the three major traditions. When comparing African religions on the island, many view Lucumí religion in the most favorable light, while the Carabalí and Congo practices are discretely relegated to the background and generally associated with criminality and sorcery. José Antonio Saco's hyperbole about African "Obia" (Obeah) may still resonate with those that remember his nineteenth-century anti-slavery discourse and his pronouncements about the damaging effects of African witchcraft.[57]

Carabalís and the Abakuá society had been the object of repression since the nineteenth century. Police and judicial records referring to Abakuá activities date to before the 1812 Aponte conspiracy and gradually increase, especially after the 1836 founding of their first official lodge in Regla.[58] In time, Ñañigos, as the Abakuá were disparagingly called, were persistently censured and connected to treason, sedition, and all forms of illegal activities.[59] Guilty or not, many of them were linked to the late nineteenth-century independence movements and deported to Fernando Poo and Ceuta, off the African coast.[60] One of their most ardent attackers was Israel Castellanos, who worked closely with Fernando Ortiz in the early twentieth century, when Cuban society was afflicted by a paralyzing syndrome, the *brujería* scares. In Castellanos's view, "*brujería* was characterized by religiosity," but Ñañigos were criminals because for

Abakuás "religion was secondary." Castellanos compared the Abakuá fraternity to a sort of mafia, calling them organized criminals.[61] This stigma pursued the group throughout the remainder of the century, and in many ways still does. Shortly after the 1980 Mariel boatlift, the office of Miami's medical examiner conducted a survey to assess the widespread use of tattoos by incarcerated Cubans. The article that evolved from the study, which depicted Afro-Cuban religions as "violent" sects, related the tattoos to gangs, criminality, and cults, especially to the practice of Abakuá traditions, "a protective clique of generally hardened criminals."[62]

Even when the early twentieth-century obsession stigmatized all African traditions, the Congos received the greatest scorn, possibly because of their association with ritual magic.[63] The possibility of a connection to the "black arts," in a society whose European ancestors had been exposed to the turmoil provoked by the Iberian Inquisition, troubled a great many who were horrified by the idea that witchcraft once again loomed in their midst. Blacks and Afro-Cuban religions were scapegoated as *brujos* and *brujería*.[64] To make matters worse, the alleged murder of a young white girl named Zoila in November 1904 added to the frenzy, especially after "witchcraft" became the primary culprit and seven people, primarily African-born Congos and people of Congo descent, were accused of committing what was purported to have been a "ritual" murder.

The media quickly went on the offensive. During the investigation's initial stages, one newspaper report stated that "rumors" were already circulating in Havana associating the child's death with witchcraft.[65] The entire island was on edge, and alarmist newspaper reports intensified the peoples' anxiety. These angsts soon changed into mass hysteria. As the headlines continued with their crusade against African witchcraft and its practitioners,

many Cuban news reporters soared to fame and notoriety.[66] On November 27, 1904, the discovery of Zoila's body heightened the island's shock by seemingly confirming what many already suspected. The headline in *La Lucha* read "La Obra de los Brujos"—The Work of the Sorcerers.[67]

What made this specific situation most intriguing was the fact that the object of this "inquisition" was not the elimination of satanic influence, but the modernization of a society.[68] The attempt to transform and modernize the island, recently emerging from the shadows of slavery, ostensibly scapegoated Congos and, in so doing, had unintended repercussions that benefited the Lucumís. Gradually, the latter group was elevated to the top of the social pyramid and became the major African root of *cubanidad*. Surely, the Lucumís were stigmatized as well. Like the other groups, they were also accused of practicing witchcraft and ritual cannibalism. They were the most prominent group in Fernando Ortiz's 1906 controversial publication *Hampa Afrocubana—Los negros brujos* (Afro-Cuban Underworld: The Black Sorcerers). Many Lucumí rituals and celebrations were interrupted by the authorities during this period's fanatical crusades, with reports appearing in the island's newspapers.[69]

As suggested by the available historical evidence, of the three dominant African groups in Cuba, the Lucumís were the least numerically significant. Why, then, were they such an impactful group in Cuba if, when compared to the other ethnies, their numbers were so small? Historians have frequently examined the enigmatic ascent of the Lucumís and their demographically disproportionate influence in the Americas.[70] Even when their presence in the slave trade grew during the nineteenth century, especially between 1826 and 1850, following the downfall of the Oyo Empire, the cultural impact that the Oyos

had, especially in Cuba and Brazil, is extraordinary.[71] The parish records that were analyzed for this study made it clear that these peoples were not substantial in Cuba, nor did their presence exceed that of several African groups that were on the island in far more substantial numbers, such as the Congos, Carabalís, and Gangás.

Their cultural significance probably prompted some scholars to suggest that they were a dominant group. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall avowed that the Lucumís were sent to Cuba in "exaggerated numbers."[72] The cherished Lydia Cabrera made such a sweeping statement as well, though in all fairness, she wrote that the Lucumís *and* the Congos were the "predominant" groups in Cuba. Others followed suit.[73] Clearly, when compared with the figures for other African ethnies in Cuba, the Lucumís were not as numerous as their impact makes them seem.

Carabalís had been in Cuba since at least the sixteenth century (At the time, the ethnonym was spelled *calabarí*, more in line with the name of the geographical location where they originated.)[74] Their presence was abundant in many areas of the New World, not just in Spanish America.[75] They were the major African group imported to Cuba between 1764 and 1800.[76] Arguably, they were there earlier, and although classified under different ethnonyms—Ibo (Igbo), Bibí, Briche, Isuama, Apapa, and others—all originated in the same cultural zone.[77] Between 1.4 and 1.7 million Igbo-speaking peoples were exported from the region between 1680 and 1841.[78] Approximately 189,000 were taken to Cuba between 1738 and 1849, with the great bulk, 179,000, arriving after the opening of the Cuban slave trade in 1790. Most significant, over 129,000 arrived at the same time that the Lucumí presence in Cuba was growing, between 1826 and 1849.[79] Consequently, even when not all of the Africans originating in the Bight of Biafra could

be identified as Carabalís, the cultural zone from which they originated could have been just as influential as that of the Lucumís.

Scholars generally agree that the people called Congos (Kongos) in Cuba were the most numerically dominant African ethnie in the Americas. The evidence supports it. Historian John Thornton argued that "no other African region had such a deep engagement in European culture."[80] Congo peoples were possibly among the earliest enslaved Africans in Europe, and their descendants may have been in the northern continent as early as the fifteenth century, after the Portuguese first made contact with the Kingdom of Kongo.[81] Additionally, many enslaved Africans imported to the Iberian Peninsula from North Africa descended from sub-Saharan peoples whose ancestors were brought across the desert generations before.[82] It is possible that Congo descendants were present among these peoples as well.

West Central Africa, a huge extension of coastline that begins in present-day Gabon and extends well into Angola, provided approximately 40 to 45 percent of all the Africans who were brought to the New World. The greatest number of slaves from the Congo region unquestionably went to Brazil, especially during the nineteenth century. Between 1760 and 1851, the last recorded year in the database, the area supplied a total of 2,090,671 people to work on the plantations and mines of Brazil.[83] Irrespective of the numbers, there is no doubt that this region contributed a substantial population. Their presence in Cuba reflects this: of the roughly 778,541 Africans brought to Cuba between 1674 and 1866, around 243,537 originated in this general zone.[84] López Valdéz suggested that 130,000 Bantús entered Cuba between 1763 and 1820 and continued arriving well into the 1870s. At least 230,000 were introduced to Cuba between 1820 and

1873, the year when the last clandestine introduction of slaves is believed to have taken place.[85] Overall, the scholarship agrees.[86]

Congos were probably more frequent on the eastern side of the island, where their presence may date to the sixteenth century.[87] Olga Portuondo, one of Santiago de Cuba's most important historians, stated that in 1540, there were 40 African slaves smelting copper for Gaspar Lohmans of Flanders.[88] Given that the Portuguese were supplying slaves to Cuba during this period, these slaves may have come from Angola—at the time, the major source of slaves for Portugal's trade.[89] Royal slaves—slaves belonging to the king of Spain—had been in Cuba since at least the early 1600s. In 1608, the vast majority of the African-born slaves working on the king's mine in El Cobre, in Oriente Province, were unambiguously classified as Angola and Congo.[90] There is little doubt that the Congos were an important ethnic group in Cuba.

The forces catapulting the Lucumí ascension are intrinsically connected to a movement to modernize Cuba, which has been brilliantly discussed by Stephan Palmie, Alejandra Bronfman, Reinaldo Román, and several others. Their contributions to the study of this era in Cuba are crucial. Despite the numerous polemics that Cubans dealt with during this era, most of the scholarship supports the idea that the quest for modernity was the primary stimulus for the process of hierarchization that the present study considers.[91] Cuba's campaign for modernity was in turn affected by, and responded to, several disjunctive factions and annoying controversies that were pressuring the island at the time. While the country was finding itself and establishing a new identity, race was a major obstacle that Cubans had to contend with—the 300-pound gorilla in the room that many would have preferred to dismiss.

During this era, positivist criminology, which linked race to criminal behavior, was an influential school of thought. Under the leadership of the Italian anthropologist Cesare Lombroso, "the father of modern criminology," the positivist school's theories spread throughout Europe and the Americas.[92] The Lombrosians were very prominent in early twentieth-century Cuban academic circles. They supported Lombroso's ideas that human beings went through particular evolutionary stages. Criminals, per Lombroso, were "a step backward in phylogenetic development."[93] On the basis of their cranial dimensions, he reasoned, these people were predetermined to be criminals from birth, a "fact" that was associated with race and stages of civilization. With the help of prison directors and physicians, Lombroso set out to measure the brains of criminals, seeking to create a catalog in which to document and detail those features that revealed the inclinations of those who were more prone to atavism and degeneracy.[94] The tendency to practice *brujería*—a demeaning term for African religions—was one of several possible indicators of criminality.[95] Cuba (and Brazil, as well) was a perfect laboratory for positivist research.

The U.S. presence in Cuba was also influential in the development of the Afro-Cuban cultural hierarchization process. There was an imperative that dictated "the extirpation of savagism 'immune to Christian teachings,' [that had] been decided in Washington," pressuring Cuban legislators to "destroy that which one cannot regulate."[96] During the years that followed the Cuban war for independence, the United States exercised considerable sway over Cuba. The explosion of the USS Maine in Havana harbor in February 1898 marked the arrival of U.S. forces in Cuba, and after their immersion in the combat, the Cuban Independence War became the Spanish-American

War.[97] Once the war ended, the United States installed a temporary government under the leadership of General Leonard Wood to administer the affairs of the island, during which time Cubans wrote their first constitution and elected the island's first president, Tomás Estrada Palma. Social class and, more significant, race were principal concerns during this transition to a republic, as U.S. notions of racial separation clashed with José Martí's ideals of *con todos y para todos*—with all and for all.[98]

Social class was another major dilemma in the twentieth century, especially in a society that had abolished slavery less than two decades before. The memory of slavery was still fresh in the minds of many, black and white, and it was inseparable from racial relations and tensions, despite Martí's vision of a society that would be able to transcend such issues. Significantly, race was, and continued to be, the most unrelenting issue in twentieth-century Cuba and is still so to this day. Defining the position of Afro-Cubans was particularly relevant to the affairs of that era, and its ramifications were felt throughout Cuban society.

Given the suspicions with which all Afro-Cubans were viewed, even those occupying political positions, fed by the hysterical fear of a black takeover of the island *a la Haití*, and the practice of *brujería* or criminality, *a la Lombroso*, Martí's inclusivist ideals for inclusivity were theoretically inspiring but realistically very difficult to achieve. These processes were not new to some Lucumís and probably familiar to other Africans as well, especially the Congos. The Yoruba city of Lagos had gone through similar identity struggles after the 1851 British takeover of the region.[99] A few centuries earlier, the Kingdom of Kongo had faced a comparable situation after the arrival of the Portuguese.

The most significant actor in this quest for identity was Fernando Ortiz. Educated in Europe, where he had studied law, Ortiz was influenced by Cesare Lombroso's positivism. *Los negros brujos*, which launched Ortiz's career as a criminologist, became the earliest Lombrosian-style catalog of Afro-Cuban "criminal atavisms" that islanders read.[100] In all fairness, though, Ortiz was a product of his times and influenced by ideas that were common among his contemporaries. Still, Ortiz's book delineated his academic trajectory, as it led to new conduits that were vital for the ideological transformation that he experienced later in his career.

Despite the book's clear distortions of Afro-Cuban religions and their practitioners, Ortiz began a process that would eventually establish the social pyramid that ranked Afro-Cuban cultural and religious complexes based on the civilizational achievements of their representatives. In the process, he laid strong foundations for the subsequent edification of *cubanidad* and was gradually forced to reconcile the unavoidable African components of that identity, even if this meant countering more oppositional forces that would have preferred to discount the African presence altogether. At the same time, while the Lucumís succeeded in securing the superior post on the social period, it came at a significant cost, as Ortiz's foundations folkloricized African religions, robbing them of bona fide religious status.

Ortiz's quest was gradually and methodically influenced by those same people he had disparaged. While the followers of Abakuá and Congo traditions were typically silent, the Lucumís refused to submit to the anti-African social pressures of the 1900s. Gradually, a masterful battle of wits ensued, and several Lucumí olorishas began publicly and boldly expressing their opposition, once more exerting substantial anti-acculturative

pressure. Resistance once again took center stage; however, in the twentieth century it was not covert. During these twentieth-century contestations, though, given the eventual transformation from religion to folklore, resistance had unintended and costly consequences.

Interestingly, some of the issues linked to the Cuban experience are strikingly similar to occurrences in Yorubaland after the initial encounters between Christian missionaries and Yoruba priests, especially babalawos (literally "fathers of the mystery"; diviner-priests of the Ifá oracle).[101] In a similar vein, developments in Yorubaland during the last decades of the nineteenth century were also redefining the identity of Yoruba religion and its followers. Labeled a Yoruba renaissance by several scholars, the movement sought to stimulate interest in African history and culture. In the process, the protagonists of this campaign were clearly entrenching African, and especially Yoruba, identity, and in some respects religion was also a principal tool.[102] Like the Cuban movement spearheaded by Ortiz, the Yoruba movement may have been responsible for laying the roots of the region's folklorization of Yoruba religion under the cover term "tradition." Even when there was no apparent indication of a connection between the two movements, clearly this particular ethnic group was promoting significant debates over culture, religion, and race on both sides of the Atlantic.

Notes

[1] Vincent P. Franklin, "Alonso de Sandoval and the Jesuit Conception of the Negro," *The Journal of Negro History* 58, no. 3 (July 1973): 350-51; M.E. Beers, "Alonso De Sandoval: Seventeenth-Century Merchant of the Gospel," Kislak Foundation, accessed June, 2011, http://www.kislakfoundation.org/prize/199702.html.

[2] Aina Adewale-Somadhi Fama, *1,000+ (African) Orisa Yoruba Names* (San Bernardino, CA: Ijo Orúnmilá Communications, 1998), xxi.

[3] Elizabeth Isichei, *Voices of the Poor in Africa* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002) 36.

[4] I am a fifth-generation Lucumí *olorisha* of Shangó and a practicing *Obá Oriaté*. I was ordained over 40 years ago and have practiced and experienced Lucumí religion my entire life. In addition, my hierarchy within the religion provides me with exposure to the other African religious manifestations with which I must interact continuously. Hence, many commentaries within this examination that relate to religion and its practice will be based on an emic perspective: personal knowledge and direct experience, as well as that of those devotees who were consulted and interviewed and whose experiences honor the pages of this study.

[5] Ward Goodenough, "Describing a Culture," in *Description and Comparison in Cultural Anthropology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 104–19; Marvin Harris, "History and Significance of the Emic/Etic Distinction," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 5 (1976): 329–50; Thomas Headland, Kenneth Pike, and Marvin Harris, eds. *Emics and Etics: The Insider/Outsider Debate* (Beverley Hills: Sage Publications, Inc., 1990).

[6] Miguel Arnedo, "Arte Blanco con Motivos Negros: Fernando Ortiz's Concept of Cuban National Culture and Identity," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 20, no. 1 (2001): 96–97.

[7] As used in the text, the capitalized term *Orisha* will be used when referring to the religion, and the lowercase *orisha* will refer to the deities.

[8] Wande Abimbola, "Assessing dialogue—Embargoed against delivery," *World Council of Churches*, accessed September 16, 2013, http://archived.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/interreligious-trust-and-respect/geneva-june-2005-documents/prof-wande-abimbola-plenary-presentation-7-june-2005.html?print=1%3Fprint; Nicole Winfield "Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims join pope, urge peace," Associated Press, accessed September 16, 2013, http://news.yahoo.com/buddhists-hindus-muslims-join-pope-urge-peace-170119472.html, accessed September 16, 2013.

[9] Jacob K. Olupona and Terry Rey, "Introduction," in *Òrìṣà Devotion as World Religion—The Globalization of Yorùbá Religious Culture*, ed. Jacob K. Olupona and Terry Rey (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 3.

[10] In Cuba, two of the most controversial twentieth-century dictators, Gerardo Machado and Fulgencio Batista, were both linked to Lukumí religion. Many *olorishas* (priests) speculate that Machado was ordained to Shangó and Ifá. Interestingly, if he was, his government saw an increased repression of Afro-Cuban religions. Fulgencio Batista was ordained to Shangó. Some sources said that his *iyálorisha* was Celia "la millonaria" Godines Gónzalez, who was well-connected to other prominent political leaders before the 1959 revolution. Other Cuban politicians were confirmed followers of Lucumí religion. Carlos Prio Socarrás was a godson of Quintín Lecón and connected to Cuba's most renowned *babalawos* during the 1940s. In recent times, many have associated Fidel Castro with Lucumí and Congo-Bantú religion. This relationship is unfounded, but it has been generally espoused by the whiter and older sectors of Miami's Cuban exiles, which continue to portray African religions as *brujería*—witchcraft—and mock it openly in the media. In associating African religions with Castro, whom most members of the exile community consider evil and deplore profusely, they portray these religions with the same vile disdain they feel for Castro. In so doing, they stigmatize and propagate the prejudice and racism that they and many of their ancestors traditionally exhibited in Cuba.

[11] William R. Bascom, *The Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1984), 1.

[12] Though I personally prefer the latter spelling, I will use *Lucumí* throughout the text, in keeping with the documentary sources.

[13] Fernando Ortiz, *Hampa Afrocubana—Los Negros Brujos*, (1906; repr., Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1973); Rómulo Lachatañeré, *Oh, Mio Yemayá! Cuentos y Cantos Negros* (Manzanillo, Cuba: El Arte, 1938); Nina Rodrigues, *O Animismo Fetichista dos Negros Baianos* (1905; repr., São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1945); Edison Carneiro, *Religioes Negras, Notas de Etnografia Religiosa* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1936).

[14] Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire c. 1600—c. 1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 2nd ed. (Brookfield: Gegg Revivls, 1991), 5n14.

[15] Lydia Cabrera, *Anago—Vocabulario Lucumí (El Yoruba que se Habla en Cuba*) (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1986).

[16] Bascom, *The Yoruba*, 5; Robert F. Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 3.

[17] Bascom, *The Yoruba*, 5.

[18] John W. Blassingame, ed., *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 319-20.

[19] Fredrika Bremmer, in Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Slaves, Sugar, & Colonial Society—Travel Accounts of Cuba, 1801-1899.* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1992), 116.

[20] Rafael Duharte Jiménez, *El negro en la sociedad colonial*, (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 1988), 26.

[21] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 288.

[22] José Luciano Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte* (La Habana: Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional, 1963), 11–12; Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century—The Social and Economic History of Monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 84; Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection—Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 36–38.

[23] Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux, "Etnias africanas en las sublevaciones de los esclavos en Cuba," *Revista Cubana de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 4 (1986): 14–30.

[24] Deschamps Chapeaux, "Etnias," 19.

[25] Catherine M. Cameron, "Culture and Change—Implications for Archaeology," *Current Anthropology* 52, no. 2, (April 2011): 169–209.

[26] James Sweet, *Recreating Africa—Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hills: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 6–7.

[27] Sidney W. Mintz, "Slave Life on Caribbean Sugar Plantations," in *Slave Cultures and the Cultures of Slavery*, ed. Stephan Palmie (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 14–15.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Manuel Barcia, "Going Back Home: Slave Suicides in Colonial Cuba," paper presented at the Harriet Tubman Seminar, York University, Toronto, Canada, September 28, 2010; Teresita Pedraza, sociologist, Florida International University and Miami-Dade College. I had the pleasure of taking classes with Teresita

and working with her on numerous occasions during the 1990s. Over the years, we had several conversations about the important role played by black women in Cuba as socializing agents for white children and the ensuing transmission of African cultural values. I am indebted to her for these ideas.

[30] Mary Karasch, "Slave Women on the Brazilian Frontier in the Nineteenth Century," in *More than Chattel—Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 86; William C. van Norman Jr. "The Process of Cultural Change among Cuban Bozales during the Nineteenth Century," *The Americas* 62, no. 2 (October 2005), 192.

[31] Roger Bastide, *The African Religions of Brazil—Toward a Sociology of the Interpenetration of Civilizations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1960), 156.

[32] Mintz, "Slave Life," 17.

[33] Ibid., 13.

[34] Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in *Anthropologica Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Banton (London: Tavistock Publications, 1965), 4.

[35] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azandi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937).

[36] Arthur C. Lehmann and James E. Myers, *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion—An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural*, 4th ed. (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1997), 188–91.

[37] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process—Structure and Anti-Structure*, 7th ed. (Ithaca: Cornell Paperbacks, 1991), 96–97.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Mintz, "Slave Life," 19.

[40] Miguel Ramos, "The Empire Beats On: Oyo, Bata Drums and Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," (master's thesis, Florida International University, 2000), 149; *Babalawo* Pipo Peña, Ogbé'yonú, interview with the author, Miami, Florida, February 6, 2000.

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[42] Bastide, *African Religions*, 96.
[43] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 83.

[44] Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists—Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 181.

[45] José Antonio Saco, *La supresión del tráfico de esclavos africanos en la isla de Cuba examinada con*

relación a su agricultura y a su seguridad (Paris: Imprenta de Panckoucke, 1845), 15; Charles Ball, *Slavery in the United States: A Narrative of the life and adventures of Charles Ball, a Black man* (New York: American Library, 1969), 165; Walter Rucker, "Conjure, Magic, and Power: The Influence of Afro-Atlantic Religious Practices on Slave Resistance and Rebellion," *Journal of Black Studies* 32, no. 1 (September 2001): 85.

[46] Rucker, "Conjure, Magic, and Power," 85.

[47] Justo Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba. Apuntes para la historia política de esta isla en el presente siglo* (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1872), 2:543–51.

[48] Luis Nicolau Pares, "The 'Nagoization' Process in Brazilian Candomble," in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 192; Matt D. Childs, "The Defects of Being a Black Creole," in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives—Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 223; María del Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos: Negros en La Habana colonial* (La Habana: Ediciones Boloña, 2009), 92; María del Carmen Barcia Zequeira, *La otra familia—parientes, redes, y descendencia de los esclavos en Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009), 137; Genise Vertus, "An Even Stronger Woman: The Enslaved Black Caribbean Woman," in *Women's Resistance,* essays in the University of Miami's *Slave Resistance—A Caribbean Study* webpage, accessed July 5, 2013, http://scholar.library.miami.edu/slaves/womens_resistance/individual_essays/genise.html.

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[50] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 292, no. 1 (June 1977): 196; Barbara Bush, "Hard Labor, Women, Childbirth, And Resistance in British Caribbean Slave Societies," in *More than Chattel—Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 204; Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 113; Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Esclavitud, familia y parroquia en Cuba: Otra mirada desde la microhistoria* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2008), 133.

[51] Barcia Zequeira, *La otra familia*, 74.

[52] Cameron, "Culture and Change," 170.

[53] Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 145.

[54] Linda Greenhouse, "Court, citing religious freedom, voids a ban on animal sacrifice," *New York Times*, June 12, 1993; Also see David M. O'Brien, *Animal Sacrifice & Religious Freedom—Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004).

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[56] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72, 95.

[57] Saco, *Supresión del tráfico*, 15.

[58] Stephan Palmie, "An All Too Present Absence: Fernando Ortiz's Work on Abakuá in its Sociocultural

Context," *New West Indian Guide* 79, nos. 3–4 (2005): 221.

[59] Ramón Torres Zayas, *Relación barrio-juego Abakuá en Ciudad de La Habana* (La Habana: Fundacón Fernando Ortiz, 2006), 9–10.

[60] María del Carmen Barcia, "Desterrados de la patria. Cuba 1869-1898," *Revista Universidad de La Habana* 258, no. 2 (2003): 46; Consuelo Naranjo Orovio, "De la esclavitud a la criminalización de un grupo: la población de color en Cuba," *Op. Cit* 16 (2005): 44.

[61] Israel Castellanos, *La brujería y el ñañiguismo en Cuba desde el punto de vista médico-legal* (La Habana: Imprenta de Lloredo, 1916), 10–11; Consuelo Naranjo Orovio, "Creando imágenes, fabricando historia: Cuba en los inicios del siglo XX," *Historia Mexicana* 53, no. 2 (October–December 2003): 526; Andrés García Gómez, "El resurgir de una nueva escuela: Israel Castellanos y el atavismo del delito," *Asclepio, Revista de Historia de la Medicina y de la Ciencia*, 40, no. 2 (2009): 86.

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[64] Naranjo Orovio, "De la esclavitud," 45.

[65] José Valdés, "En el Gabriel; La desaparición de la niña Zoila; Sobre la pista; Importantes investigaciones," *La Lucha*, November 17, 1904.

[66] *El Mundo's* Eduardo Valera Zequeira's reputation and prestige as a reporter grew through his writings about Zoila and another case in 1918, the death of Luisa, a child from Matanzas.

[67] "Hallazgo del cadáver de la Niña Zoila," *La Lucha*, November 27, 1904.

[68] See Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*; David H. Brown, *Santería Enthroned—Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality—Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004; Naranjo Orovio, "De la Esclavitud," 26, 29; Reinaldo L. Román, *Governing Spirits—Religion, Miracles, and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[69] In 1905, Timotea Albear, Teresa Ariosa, Belen González, Isidoro Sandrino, and Silvestre Erice, all popular *olorishas* of the era, were arrested during the performance of a religious ceremony. "La Brujería en La Habana. Sorpresa de una ceremonia. Cuarenta y cuatro detenidos," *El Mundo*, May 30, 1905. Many other arrests occurred.

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[73] Cabrera, *El Monte* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1975), 21–22; Jesús Guanche, *Procesos etnoculturales de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Letras Cubanas, 1983), 211; Mariela A. Guitiérrez, "La trata negrera y el aporte léxico yoruba y carabalí a la Isla de Cuba," *Revista Hispano Cubana* 34 (2009): 118.

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[75] Miller, *Voice of the Leopard*, 7.

[76] Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 157; Rafael López Valdés, *Africanos de Cuba* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y El Caribe, 2004), 212.

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http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1680&yearTo=1880&embarkation=6&disembarkation=702.701 and
http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1790&yearTo=1880&embarkation=6&disembarkation=702.701; Grandio Moraguéz, "African Origins," 191.

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http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=7

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[85] López Valdés, *Africanos de Cuba*, 256–59.

[86] Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 72; Grandío Moraguéz, "African Origins," 189.

[87] Zoe Cremé Ramos, *Pesquisaje Sobre la procedencia de los esclavos en la jurisdicción de Cuba entre 1792 y 1838* (La Habana: Publicigraf, 1994), 20–23; María Elena Díaz, *The Virgin, the King, and the Royal Slaves of El Cobre—Negotiating Freedom in Colonial Cuba, 1670-1780* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 43; Olga Portuondo, *Entre Esclavos y Libres de Cuba Colonial* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2003), 44; Elsa Isabel Almaguer Andreu, "El Cabildo Congo en Santiago de Cuba," (master's thesis, Universidad de Oriente, Santiago de Cuba, 2010).

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[99] Solimar Otero, *Afro-Cuban Diasporas in the Atlantic World* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 64.

[100] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 217; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 48; Pavez Ojeda, "El retrato," 86.

[101] See J. D. Y. Peel, "The Pastor and the 'Babalawo': The Interaction of Religions in Nineteenth-Century Yorubaland," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 60, no. 3. (1990): 338–369.

[102] J. F. A. Ajayi, "Nineteenth-Century Origins of Nigerian Nationalism," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 2, no. 2 (1961): 196-210; J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 279; J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion—Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 57–58.

Chapter II: Africans in Cuba and the Diaspora

Ethnies, Cities, and *El Campo*

When Robert Francis Jameson visited Cuba in 1820, the island's enslaved African population was on the rise, but not yet as large as it would become to be in later years. In his travel journal, Jameson commented extensively on the island, especially on Havana. His references to blacks in the city are indicative of a trend that would steadily intensify as time went on. He took note of the population of free blacks who had purchased their freedom with "the extra earnings allowed them by law. These are the most valuable of their class and commonly continue in their course of industry as hawkers of market goods, and petty dealers in tobacco, etc."[1] Clearly, free people of color were already visible enough in early nineteenth-century Havana that travelers noticed them. As the century advanced, so did their presence in Havana and in other cities across the island.[2]

One of the goals of the present investigation is to gauge the significance of the Lucumí people in the cities of Havana and Matanzas and, by extension, the entire island. In addition, the study analyzes the relationships that existed between the Lucumís and two other ethnies, the Congos and the Carabalís, in the nineteenth century and beyond. The historical evidence suggests that the Lucumís were one of the most resilient African ethnic groups on the island. Using ingenious methods for resisting acculturation, they did through culture what they were unable to accomplish by force. Through their initiatives, the Lucumís accommodated elements of European culture that were Africanized, adopted on their own terms, and made to respond to specific African cultural knowhow. Of all the

African ethnic groups that have left a palpable legacy on the island, the Lucumís appear to have been the most culturally significant.

While the scholarship has already established that Africans and people of color were living in the cities in large numbers, we know little about the specific ethnic groups that migrated there. Numerous African enclaves in Havana and Matanzas housed diverse populations. Congos, Gangás, Lucumís, Mandingas, Carabalís, and others lived in these towns, and in very close proximity. Investigating the national and ethnic roots of Europeans may be an easier task than researching those of Africans because the former had legal documentation and histories that can be traced in primary documents. Africans, on the other hand, left few indicators of their ancestral roots; the records documenting the details of an enslaved population were not scrutinized with the attention to particulars that was given to those of the Europeans.

Parish records for the town of Regla in Havana and for the city of Matanzas provide important foundations for this investigation. The present study included the transcription and recording of the baptismal and death registries of Africans and the first generation of Afro-Cubans from the closing decades of the eighteenth century until the abolition of slavery in 1886. These records were indispensable, offering valuable insight into these region's African populations as well as the vast ethnic diversity that was present in the island as a result of slavery. Population statistics for Regla and Matanzas were also vital tools of comparison when analyzing the data extracted from the parish records. Censuses as historical tools can be informative and revelatory when used carefully.[3] Even when exact and reliable numbers are not available, the percentages

calculated from the census data can be compared to those from the entries in the parish ledgers during specific years because the churches' records were dated.

Other colonial records documenting the whereabouts and activities of people of color in Cuba's cities were also fundamental for my study, though the analysis of these sources also presented several challenges. Once people of color obtained their freedom and moved to the cities, they gained a greater degree of anonymity. In the vast majority of the cases, liberated ex-slaves were registered in legal documents with the surname of the owner of the estate or plantation where they had worked. The common custom of using the slave's ethnic label as an extra-official last name was basically lost in the cities, except possibly among blacks themselves. Examples of this practice abound. After obtaining his freedom, Remigio lucumí became Remigio Herrera. Timotea lucumí was an *emancipada*. Her "protector" in Havana was Colonel Francisco Albear, the architect who designed Havana's aqueduct and whose last name she used throughout the rest of her life.

Archival materials provided information about African populations in Cuba, but scarcely any of them were sufficiently specific to offer a proper appraisal of African ethnic groups' demographic trends. Neither were these records relevant to the urban zones. The scholarship seems to follow suit; secondary sources were also not detailed enough to provide relevant data. Most of the existing literature with themes related to individual ethnies deals with plantation life and rural populations. The literature's limitations are exacerbated because of the restricted, dispersed, and often unreliable nature of the available data. Scholars, travelers, and official government documents sometimes inferred or stated that certain groups were found in the cities with greater frequency, but these references are minimal, some of which may be derived from

questionable observations and others on generalized data.[4] Hence, researching the presence of specific ethnic groups living in African or black enclaves in the island's cities, towns, and neighborhoods was an arduous task.

Some of the recent scholarship was helpful even when its direct attention was not focused on the urban areas. One of the most important studies of ethnic populations in Cuba was Manuel Moreno-Fraginals's groundbreaking analysis of plantation records.[5] In his celebrated three-volume *El Ingenio*, Moreno-Fraginals considered the relationship between technology and slave labor on Cuban plantations. His primary argument was that Cuba's sugar industry was reformed after 1840 with the introduction of new mechanization that made it less dependent on slave labor. While this assertion was noteworthy, his exhaustive research in Cuban archives provided valuable quantitative data about the African ethnies on Cuban plantations that were crucial to the present investigation. A more limited undertaking initiated by two Cuban historians also reviewed ethnic identities in Cuba. Nery Gómez Abreu and Manuel Martínez Casanova worked with parochial registers from the small town of Placetas, in the central Cuban province of Santa Clara.[6] Their research, though localized, was also valuable in assessing specific ethnies and their numerical importance.

Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia produced a quantitative study that reviewed slave sales in Cuba based on ethnic origins. But as is the case with many such investigations, their work also measured rural populations but made no direct reference to the cities and their specific populations.[7] The study reviewed data from more than 23,000 commercial transactions involving Cuban slaves. In addition, during the course of their research, the three investigators analyzed some of the problems

reflected in the scholarship on Cuban slavery, including Moreno-Fraginals's earlier claims about mechanization and its contribution to the death of slavery in Cuba. Historian Rebecca Scott had already tackled Moreno-Fraginals's argument for what she perceived as its inherent flaws. Both studies pointed to various fundamental weaknesses in Moreno-Fraginals's theory and suggested that mechanization was not as influential in ending slavery in Cuba as he had proposed in *El ingenio*.[8]

Two recent studies by María de los Ángeles Meriño and Aisnara Perera Díaz of the populations of color of the towns of Quivicán and Bejucal in Havana province, are also insightful, even if they, too, reflect the realities of the countryside.[9] Because of their smaller populations, these two areas in Havana province are in some ways comparable with Regla and Simpson, the two towns whose parish records were transcribed and analyzed for this study. María del Carmen Barcia's *Los ilustres apellidos* is another valuable study. Carmen Barcia is a renowned Cuban historian who has produced several volumes of excellent research on the contributions of Africans to Cuba. In *Los ilustres apellidos*, Carmen Barcia attempted to reconstruct the lives of blacks and mulattoes in Havana, a city that she has stressed was in good part built by this population.[10] Carmen Barcia's discussion of *cabildos*, and the role of religion within these, was especially noteworthy and complements Philip Howard's earlier work on this topic.[11]

The records of the Anglo-Spanish Mixed Commission, established in Havana, have been surveyed individually by two historians, Henry B. Lovejoy and Babatunde Sofela. Both studies focused on the commission's registers, but Sofela analyzed Brazilian records in addition to the Cuban ones. Of the recent scholarship that deals with ethnicity, these studies are an oddity in that they do not deal directly with the rural populations.

Lovejoy's research questioned certain methodologies adopted by the *Voyages Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*.[12] The commission registered the *emancipados*—those Africans who were rescued from slavery by the British in the wake of the agreement between them and the Spanish banning the trade. During the twenty years that commission operated in Havana, the court heard cases of arrested slavers, and if they were found guilty, the Africans discovered on their vessels were emancipated. In addition, the court would also arbitrate on claims of illegal capture and granted indemnities to the aggrieved party.[13] In the appendix to his work, Lovejoy presented a list of the ethnic designations registered by the commission as provided through translators by those who were rescued. Sofela also provided a list of the ethnicities of those Africans whom the commission processed in Cuba. The records provide an idea of the size of each of the ethnic groups. Both studies suggested the numerical dominance of the Lucumís during the timespan they covered, and especially the Oyo. Sofela found that over 700 of the more than 1,200 Lucumís he documented were Oyos, while Lovejoy's first study found 1,235 Oyos in a total population of 2,728 Lucumís.[14]

There appears to be an inseparable connection between cities and the expansion of African culture. Understandably, *el campo*—the countryside—was a place that most ex-slaves would have wanted to abandon as soon as possible because of the pain and suffering that it surely represented. The cities had much more to offer. The three ethnic groups at the focus of this investigation—the Lucumís, Congos, and Carabalís—all had important presences in Havana and Matanzas. Scholars have emphasized the significance of celebrations and other cultural activities that occurred on the plantations as a stimulus for cultural resistance.[15] Nonetheless, the cities were more favorable for ethnic exchanges

and the propagation of African cultural elements simply because they made it easier to cloak the nature of these acts. Many scholars agree that most emancipated Africans migrated to the island's cities in search of better opportunities.[16] In the cities, people of color found greater freedom of movement and more chances to interact with other residents, black and white.[17]

In Cuba's urban areas, the large populations of people of color, and especially free blacks and mulattoes, became repositories and reproducers of African culture in nineteenth-century Cuba. Despite social social dictates that officially dismissed their civilizations, diverse manifestations of African sapience and cultural knowhow permeated the environment and affected the lives of all Cubans. Religions, African and European, cohabited like the white men and the black women who came together in consensual yet unsanctioned unions because marriage for them was proscribed. The faithful, black and white, began the process of interchange that eventually allowed the mulatto offspring of black and white society to perceive their progenitors' religious beliefs as two faces of a single coin. Undoubtedly, Cuban cities facilitated constant contact among people of distinct racial, ethnic, and national backgrounds stimulated cultural interchange.

The Cabildos and African Religions

Cabildos, possibly the primary repositories of African cultures, were also dominant in the urban areas.[18] These organizations were fundamental to the interchanges that were taking place. Colonial authorities and Spanish legislation initially favored the establishment of *cabildos* for the amusement of the island's slave population.[19] They were allowed to

flourish as a means of social control, a pressure-releasing valve that helped alleviate the tensions between masters and slaves. Despite their official classification as social organizations, though, their functions were mostly linked with religion. As other scholars have emphasized, Africans do not distinguish the affairs of daily living and their religious devotion as two separate phenomena.[20] Belief in the beyond and its worship, for most Africans peoples, is a way of life; thus, every single action and behavior has religious significance. John Mbiti probably expressed this idea best when he wrote, "Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it." The study of African religious systems, Mbiti contended, is a study of the people themselves.[21]

Fernando Ortiz generally underscored the relationships between the African presence in the cities and the practice of African religions in Cuba.[22] *Cabildos* were essential in this regard. Africans transformed the *cabildos* into places of worship, and in many ways, these became cradles of covert resistance to European acculturation. *Cabildos* were temples in disguise when the only religion Africans were officially permitted to follow was Catholicism. Lucumí and Congo oral histories have routinely stressed this idea, which several scholars have repeated as well.[23] The *cabildos* were the African "churches," where the act of drumming *al uso de África* (per African customs) was not a social affair for dancing to popular music, even when the authorities recorded it as such in the official documents. Colonial officials were not naïve. On several occasions, prohibitions of specific acts by legislative decree demonstrated the authorities' awareness of these organizations' religious nature. The 1842 *Bando de gobernación y policía* contained a number of provisions that make it clear the colonial authorities knew that

something other than dancing was taking place in the *cabildos*.[24] Basically, they looked the other way. The *tangos* that these officials often documented were *toques* (literally "playings" [of drums]), *wemileres*, or *bembés— drumming* celebrations in which humans and the divine encountered each other.[25]

Philip Howard's examination of these organizations stressed that the *cabildos* were crucial to Africans as a means to retain their humanity and overcome social injustices.[26] More important, though, as fronts for resisting acculturation, *cabildos* contributed to the preservation of ethnic identity. Religion, by all accounts, is an intrinsic component of human culture. As Roger Bastide wrote, African religions became fertile ground for counteracculturation. As religious centers, the role of the Cuban *cabildos* as counter-acculturative institutions that promoted resistance was crucial.[27] In part, they also contributed to the development of *cubanidad* by helping Congos, Lucumís, and Carabalís retain their distinct identities.[28]

The countryside was not as likely to foster religiosity because rural conditions were totally different from those in the cities. Plantation life was more exacting, and the slave had fewer liberties while attached to the plantation than their urban counterparts. In addition, the daily work regimes, especially during harvest, took a great toll on slaves. On average, life expectancy of slaves on plantations was seven years post-acquisition. The Swiss traveler Fredrika Bremer wrote that on some plantations, slaves worked up to twenty-one hours a day. She described "plantations where there are only men who are driven like oxen to work, but with less mercy than oxen."[29] William Henry Hulbert, another visitor who traveled during the same years that Bremer toured Cuba, confirmed her findings, also commenting on the harsh regime of the plantations.[30]

An average workday on a sugar plantation during *tiempo muerto*—the slow season—could last anywhere from fourteen to sixteen hours a day, six days a week. Harvest increased the pace because the cane had to be cut and processed with greater speed to keep it from spoiling; then the average workday was sixteen to twenty hours, seven days a week.[31] What little time slaves had for themselves was spent taking care of their *conucos*—small patches of land on which they cultivated tubers and vegetables and raised some livestock, primarily fowl and pigs. Surely, there was very little free time available on the plantation to devote to African rituals, which tend to be complex and time-consuming.

Holiday celebrations did take place however, although slaves on plantations were allowed to dance to the beat of African drums, this freedom was always accompanied by some apprehension and a greater degree of supervision and control on the part of their masters and overseers. Possession and those agitated battles between consciousness and loss of consciousness; the numerous contortions and often incredible feats and behaviors exhibited by a devotee who is mounted by an orisha or an *nkisí* (Congo spirit) would not have gone unnoticed. The potential for these affairs to become avenues for insurrection was always present.[32]

One of Lydia Cabrera's informants discussed being on the grounds of the Ingenio Intrépido and seeing Lucumí shrines and ceremonies that were quite open and visible, but these were surely taking place in the twentieth century.[33] Those expressions of African religious practice that did occur in the countryside during the nineteenth century had to be more covert than the activities that took place in the urban *cabildos*. Lucumí, Congo, and Carabalí rituals are noisy; ordinations, chanting, sacrifices, drumming, and other African

rites are not quiet activities. In addition, for the most part, they require the participation of numerous devotees. Given their nature, such activities could not have been easily disguised or carried out in the limited environment of the plantations and estates. Those ceremonies that did take place in these settings were likely to be more personal or individual, generally more magical in nature than religious in the strictest sense. Indeed, it is very likely that some slaves used ritual magic to attempt to control their overseers and contain their abuses. Some of this was suggested by Miguel Barnet's *Cimarrón*.[34] Religiously inspired healing was also practiced on plantations and in the rural zone. There was abundant tropical flora in the surrounding areas, much of which was familiar to Africans who were familiar with their medicinal properties and therapeutic applications.

The more public religious acts on plantations, if any did take place, had to have occurred covertly and in shrines that were hidden or in temporary installations that could be easily and quickly dismantled to avoid discovery and confiscation. Lydia Cabrera described a type of Congo *ngangá*—the vessel that contains numerous natural elements that make up a sort of shrine for the *nkisí* or spirit energies worshiped by the *tata nganga* (Congo priest). These *ngangas* were called *macutos* (from the Congo word for bag or sack) or *Boumbas*. They were wrapped in burlap or some other cloth and hung from the rafters that held up the *barbacoas* (loft) in the *barracón*, areas that were not easily visible. Whenever necessary, the *ngangá* was brought down, ensemble, and once the rites finished, it was returned to its place.[35]

During the investigations following the alleged 1844 Escalera conspiracy, the authorities confiscated religious artifacts, possibly *ngangas*, but they found even more

small objects that the authorities linked with the practice of ritual magic. The frenzy that ensued during this era certainly terrified colonial authorities and the planter class, many of whom were no strangers to the practice of ritual magic in Spain. Perhaps their fears were exacerbated by the suspected presence of African *brujería* (witchcraft), which many probably and quietly deemed more powerful because it was less familiar to them. Clear signs of its practice were constantly discovered.[36]

An analysis of the descriptions in the Escalera records suggests that most of the items that were found were apparently Congo or Bantú in origin. Few, if any, of these items as described in the records had the typical markers that would identify them as Lucumí, despite what appears to have been the group's seemingly strong presence in the Cuban countryside after the 1830s as well as among the alleged conspirators.[37] Ritual magic was the most common form of African religiosity expressed in the Cuban countryside. Surely, the slaves tried to control their masters, overseers, and other potential foes. All groups resorted to it at one time or another and certain groups, especially the Congos, developed a reputation for being powerful *brujos* (sorcerers).

Plantations and Ethnies

Earlier studies of ethnic groups in the rural areas concur regarding which African groups were most represented in nineteenth-century Cuban plantations. The study that is most often cited is part of Moreno-Fraginals's *El ingenio*, later reviewed and published in another book edited by anthropologists Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden. On the basis of his exploration of Cuban plantation documents from the late eighteenth century until the

1860s, Moreno-Fraginals provided an overview of the numerical presence of the dominant African ethnies in Cuba's countryside (Table 1).

Moreno-Fraginals's data suggested that during this timespan, the Lucumí presence was growing at a substantial rate, while that of the Congos and Carabalís appeared to have been on the decline, or at least not as numerically prominent. Regrettably, the key period for the greater influx of Lucumí slaves, 1821 to 1849, is missing from the data. These years may also have been significant for a greater appraisal of the Congo's numbers because their importation declined then.[38] The reasons for the gap are unclear, but inclusion would have been valuable. The missing years marked the period during which the downfall of the Oyo Empire led to a great number of people from within the empire being sold into slavery. It was in the wake of this upset in West Africa that the Lucumís began arriving to Cuba in large numbers.[39] The absence of this data is a major and unfortunate void.

Furthermore, the period missing from Moreno-Fraginals's study also encompassed Cuba's alleged Escalera conspiracy of 1844. Lucumís made up a significant proportion of those who were accused of participating in the plot to overthrow the whites and establish a free black republic, akin to the one that arose in Haiti. Of the 185 cases in which an African's ethnie was documented in the proceedings, 67 (36 percent) were identified as Lucumís.[40] Many others' involvement was never discovered, as was the case of the Lucumí babalawo (diviner-priest) Remigio Herrera, Adeshina, who oral traditions suggests was implicated.[41]

The population of Africans and free people of color on the island dropped considerably in the years that followed *la Escalera*. Two factors were responsible.

Around 54,000 slaves were imported between 1840 and 1844, whereas only 17,500 were brought to Cuba between 1845 and 1850. The number of imports rose once again after 1858 and descended gradually thereafter.[42] Adding to the chaos provoked by *la Escalera*, three hurricanes struck the island during the 1840s, greatly reducing the slave population. The price of slaves increased as a result of this overall shortage.[43] Louis Pérez Jr. wrote that census data had reported significant declines in the slave population, especially in the western half of the island where between 1841 and 1846 the number of slaves dropped from 321,274 to 227,813, almost 30 percent (Chart 1).[44]

Table 1 Origin of Slaves on Sugar and Coffee Plantations in Cuba, 1760–1769, 1800–1820, and 1850–1870, based on Data Collected by Manuel Moreno-Fraginals[1]

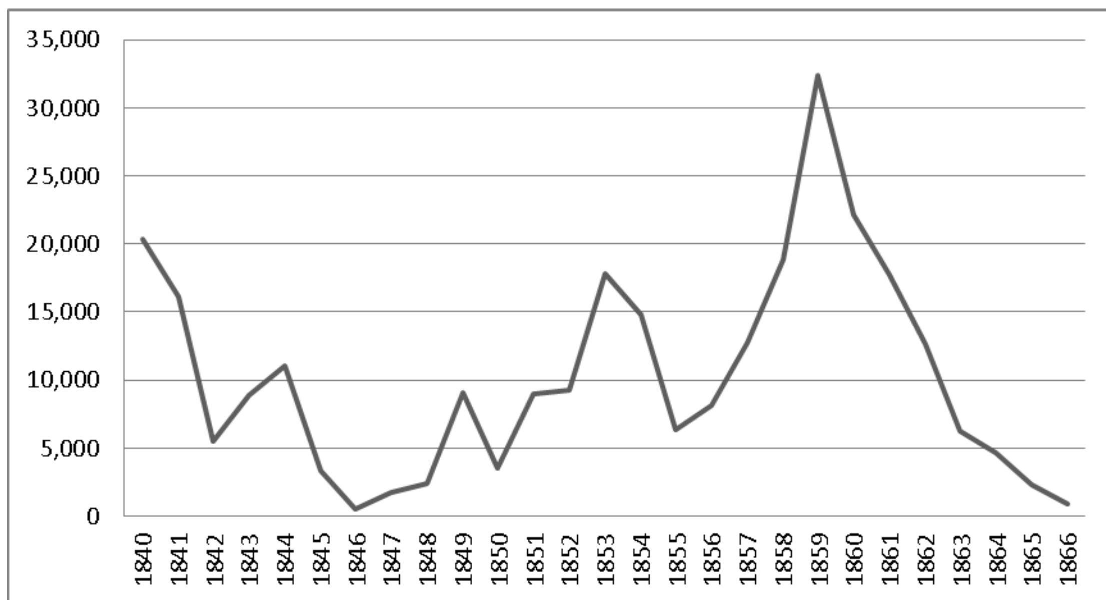
Ethnic Group	1760-1769	%	1800-1820	%[2]	1850-1870	%	Totals	%
Arará	168	3.9	0	0	0	0	168	0.89
Bibí	0	0	0	0	268	2.94	268	1.43
Brícamo (Carabalí)	0	0	199	3.79	0	0	199	1.06
Carabalí	1,090	25.31	1,380	26.31	1,589	17.37	4,059	21.67
Congo	1,305	30.30	1,201	22.90	1,532	16.71	4,038	21.56
Gangá	151	3.5	409	7.80	1,053	11.45	1,613	8.61
Lucumí	354	8.22	453	8.64	3,161	34.52	3,968	21.18
Macuba	134	3.11	0	0	0	0	134	.71
Mandinga	560	13.00	1,037	19.77	0	0	1,597	8.52
Marabi	0	0	0	0	269	2.95	269	1.43
Mina	248	5.76	365	6.96	363	3.93	976	5.21
Mondongo (Congo)			201	3.83	0	0	201	1.07
Mozambique	117	2.72	0	0	0	0	117	.62
Others	180	4.18			942	10.13	1,158	6.18
Totals	**4,307**	**100**	**5,245**	**100**	**9,177**	**100**	**18,729**	**100.14**

[1] Moreno-Fraginals, *El ingenio*, 2: 9; Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba," 190-91.

[2] There was an error in Moreno-Fraginals' initial calculations. The figures as shown in the table were recalculated to indicate the correct percentages.

Historians agree that the Lucumís were not a numerically significant group in Cuba. The present investigation's reviews of archival materials and parish records support this claim as well. Data from Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia's analysis of African ethnic composition in Cuba suggested that between 1790 and 1880 the Lucumí represented about nine percent of the imported slaves (Chart 2). At the time, Congos and Carabalís were the dominant groups, accounting for 28 and 27 percent of the population, respectively. The studies by Moreno-Fraginals as well as Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia observed disparate phenomena and relied on diverse sources, but all surely reflect the reality of the population at that time (Table 2).

Chart 1 Slave Imports 1840—1866[3]



[3] Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (henceforth TASTD), http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1840&yearTo=1866&flag=1.2&disembarkation=701.

Chart 2 National Origins of African Slaves Sold in Cuba, 1790–1880[4]

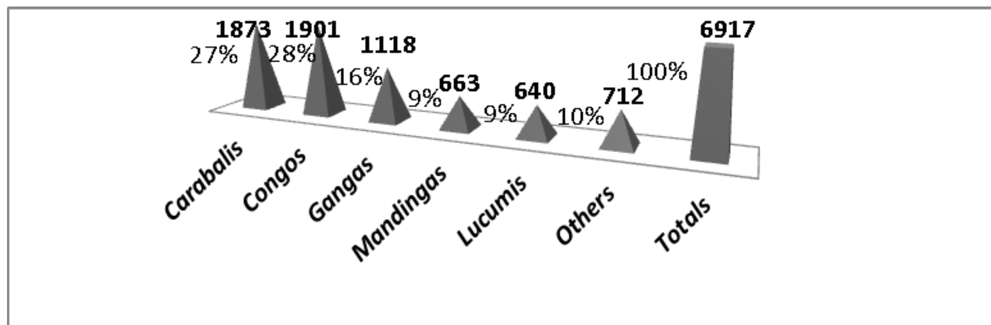


Table 2 Comparison of Moreno-Fraginals's and Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia's Data

Ethnic Group	Moreno-Fraginals	%	Bergad et al's	%
Arará	168	0.8	0	0
Bibí	268	1.4	0	0
Brícamo (Carabalí)	199	1	0	0
Carabalí	4,059	21.6	1,873	27
Congo	4,038	21.5	1,901	28
Gangá	1,613	8.6	1,118	16
Lucumí	3,968	21.1	640	9
Macuba	134	.7	0	0
Mandinga	1,597	8.5	663	9
Marabi	269	1.4	0	0
Mina	976	5.2	0	0
Mondongo (Congo)	201	1.1	0	0
Mozambique	117	.6	0	0
Others	1,158	6.2	712	10
Totals	**18,765**	**99.7**	**6,917**	**100**

Parish and Archival Records and Prior Research

Scholars have often lamented about the vacuum that exists in the historical record about African ethnies and their impacts. Parish documents, if scrutinized properly and carefully, can do much to fill that void.[45] Some studies have already attempted to gauge population

[4] Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market*, 72.

statistics using Cuban parish records; however, much fertile ground remains to be covered.

In 1986, Gómez Abreu and Martínez Casanova worked with parochial registers from Placetas, a small town in Santa Clara (today known as Villa Clara), in central Cuba. Between 1817 and 1886, over 490 Africans were baptized in the town's church. The data were not problem free, however. As was the case with those registers studied for the present inquiry, the Placetas clerics did not identify all ethnicities in their ledgers. In addition, many ethnies registered in the ledgers had a minimal representation: Gómez Abreu and Martínez Casanova classified them as "others." Of the groups for which an ethnie was noted, the most frequently found were Congo (160), Gangá (53), Mandinga (34), Lucumí (19), Ibo (17), Guinea (15), Carabalí (12) and Mina (7). The Lucumís were less than 4 percent of Placetas's African population.[46] It is plausible that their population in the eastern half of the island was lower than in the western half, while that of the Congos was just as dominant there as it was in other areas. Interviews with Lucumí *olorishas* (literally "owners of an orisha"; priests/priestesses) confirmed that the first ordination to Lucumí religion in Santiago de Cuba took place in 1941 with the rites of Amada Sánchez, Alabí. Three others preceded her. Rosa Balbuena, Oyé'yeí, Rosa Torres, Shangó Bunmí, and Reinerio Pérez, Abikola, were ordained sometime in the 1920s, but their ceremonies took place in Havana. Placetas itself was virgin territory for Lucumí religion when the *havanero* Eladio Gutiérrez, Eshú'bí, began visiting the region for ritual functions in the 1940s.[47] Before that time, Palo, as Congo religion is more commonly known, was the dominant form of African religion in the eastern region.[48]

In his study of the African ethnic groups in Cuba, Rafael López Valdés reported that of those slaves who were baptized in Havana between 1839 and 1877, 24.84 percent were Lucumís and 19.25 percent were Carabalís.[49] Given that many Lucumís were brought to the island between the 1820s and 1850s, the numbers are consistent with other calculations in the scholarship.

In 1844, Quivicán, a small town in Havana Province, had thirty-eight estates dedicated to the cultivation of coffee.[50] Cuban historians María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes and Aisnara Perera Díaz examined notarial and parish records to estimate the ethnic makeup of the slaves who worked on Quivicán's coffee plantations. Comparing these records to the parish ledgers from the Havana town of Regla, though there was no agricultural production in that town, Quivicán's population of color during the nineteenth century was comparable to that of Regla—though the latter did not have plantations—because both were small towns with moderate populations; thus, comparing their records is instructive. The figures for Quivicán's inhabitants varied over the years, but between the 1841 and 1846 censuses, these historians compared the town's population. Quivicán's census reported over 5,000 people in the town.[51] Its slave population dropped after 1841, from 4,416 to 1,640 in 1856, but so, too, did the number of whites. In 1844, a total of 786 Africans were working on the town's coffee plantations. The researchers collected information for 89 percent of the population that included approximately 700 people. The absence of some data presented hurdles for analysis, but these figures provided a useful indicator of the African population of these two small rural towns. The totals calculated in Table 3 are taken from Meriño Fuentes and Perera Díaz's work.

These same researchers examined parish records for the neighboring town of Bejucal, covering the years 1815 through 1842. Between 1815 and 1840, of the 874 deaths inscribed in the church's *Libro de defunciones de pardos y morenos* (death registries for mulattoes and blacks), 37.8 percent were Congos, 31.4 percent were Carabalís, and the remaining 30.8 percent were Mandingas, Lucumís, Gangás, Minas, Ararás, Fulas, and creoles. Baptism records also revealed similar trends. In the 225 baptisms logged in the register between 1837 and 1842, once again the Congos and Carabalís were the most widely represented groups.[52]

Table 3 Ethno-Linguistic Denominations of Africans on Quivicán's Coffee Plantations in 1844 and Manumissions from Bejucal in 1800–1881[5]

Ethnie	Population 1844	%	Manumissions 1800-1881	%
Carabalí	156	22.30	103	30
Gangá	149	21.30	41	12
Congo	143	20.45	96	28
Lucumí	131	18.75	55	16
Macuá	31	4.40	0	0
Mina	30	4.25	20	6
Mandinga	29	4.11	27	8
Arará	23	3.31	0	0
Viví (Bibí)	8	1.13	0	0
Totals	**700**	**100**	**342**	**100**

In addition to deaths and baptisms, Perera Díaz and Meriño Fuentes also assessed manumission records. Between 1800 and 1881, a total of 1,269 people obtained their legal freedom. Approximately 342 (27 percent) of these were Africans whose ethnies were identified in the register. On the basis of the percentages provided in the study, the

[5] Taken from Meriño and Perera Díaz, *Un café*, 82.

ethnic composition of the populations of *libertos* (freed or manumitted) was 103 Carabalís (30 percent), 96 Congos (28 percent), 55 Lucumís (16 percent), 41 Gangás (12 percent), 27 Mandingas (eight percent), and 20 Minas (six percent).

After the 1817 Anglo-Spanish treaty was signed prohibiting the slave trade, the Anglo-Spanish Mixed Commission court was established in Havana to monitor the agreements set forth in the accord. One of the court's most important functions was to keep a register of the *emancipados* (Africans liberated under the terms of the treaty) who came under its jurisdiction. These records contain significant details, such as the port and date of embarkation; the person's African name and the new Christian name given them in Cuba; sex; age; nation of origin; height; and other physical descriptions. The records also noted the Christian name, ethnie, and the name of the owner of the African-born translators who assisted with the documentation process.

Table 4 Africans Emancipated by Havana's Mixed Commission Court, 1824–1835[6]

Ethnie	Totals
Arará	193
Carabalí	2,197
Congo	1,557
Gangá	574
Lucumí	2,077
Mandinga	369
Mina	648
Total	**7,615**

[6] Sofela, *Emancipados*, 114.

Babatunde Sofela and Henry B. Lovejoy separately worked with these records, which span the years 1824 to 1841. Sofela analyzed the ethnic composition of the Africans who were emancipated by the court between 1824 and 1835 (Table 4).

Concurring with previous scholars, Sofela counted seven principal groups in Cuba—Lucumí, Mina, Congo, Carabalí, Mandinga, Arará, and Gangá.[53] His study established the Carabalí (2,197) as the most populous group emancipated by the court during the eleven years his sample covered. The Lucumís (2,077) and Congos (1,557) followed. Lovejoy's sample consisted of 10,391 Africans, all emancipated in Cuba between 1824 and 1841 (Table 5). His figures were similar to Sofela's but covered an additional six years, during which time the Lucumí population grew to become the numerically greatest of the three major ethnicities.

Table 5 Ethnies documented in the Mixed Commission's Register[7]

Ethnie	Totals
Arará	349
Carabalí	2,412
Congo	2,317
Gangá	863
Lucumí	2,728
Mandinga	885
Mina	686
Other	151

At first glance, Lovejoy's and Sofela's work may give the impression of a greater Lucumí presence in the nineteenth century than actually existed. While Sofela's data shows that the Lucumís were a strong presence, Lovejoy's data give the impression that

[7] Lovejoy, "The Registers," 107-35.

they were the majority. It should be noted, however, that these records cover the years during which the Oyo Empire was entangled in internal strife, which eventually led to its downfall.

Sofela found evidence to suggest that some twenty-four different African ethnic groups were represented in the overall population during the years covered by his survey; most of them originated from the Bight of Biafra. Yoruba-speaking peoples, he wrote, were the vast majority, but he failed to discern some of the ethnic labels used by the court. He was unsure of the origin of the groups labeled "Ello," (pronounced "eyo" in Spanish) and suspected that they and one other, the "Ecomacho," were the Eko, an older name for the city of Lagos. Had he correctly identified the Ello, and added that figure to the group identified by the court as Oyo, he would have recognized the Oyo dominance among the Lucumís.

Table 6 Sofela's Oyo and Lucumí Population[8]

Ethnie	Totals
Eyo/Oyo	419
Ello	291
Lucumí	482
Lucumí (various)[9]	72
Totals	**1,264**

His inability to correctly identify the Ello ethnic label was compounded by another miscalculation. Sofela counted 2,077 Lucumís among the *emancipados*, but some

[8] Sofela, *Emancipados*, 107.

[9] These include Ota (21), Ijebu (29), Egba (14), Igana (2), Ijesha (3), Owu (1), Sabe (1), and Wari (1), all of which are recognizable Lucumí/Yoruba subgroups.

of those that the commission identified as Lucumí may not have been truly so. Although the Arara, Tapa, Hausa, Chamba, Apapa, Sabe, and others included in the records may have been Yoruba/Lucumí speakers, they were probably not members of this ethnic group in the strictest sense. If we eliminate these groups of uncertain origin, Sofela's sample would consist of some 1,264 Lucumís, with a categorical Oyo supremacy. Of these, 710 were definitely Oyo, and possibly a good number of those classified as Lucumí without any additional subethnic association were also Oyo (Table 6).

The fact that a vast majority of Sofela's Lucumís (at least 710) as well the greater number of those Lucumís in Lovejoy's sample were identified as Oyo—1,235 of 2,728 individuals—is a clear indicator that this population came to Cuba as a consequence of the mayhem that ensued during and after the Oyo Empire's fall. In the commission's records, Lovejoy found 598 *emancipados* who declared themselves to be simply Lucumí, without stating any other sub-classification. As was noted in the case of Sofela's study, it is plausible that many of these were Oyo as well.

Lovejoy's journal article was written while he was conducting his doctoral research; his dissertation, defended after the article's publication, provided a deeper analysis of these issues.[54] In the dissertation, Lovejoy convincingly argued for the significance of the Oyo in the development of Lucumí culture in Cuba, a theme that has been examined by several scholars, including the current author. What makes Lovejoy's study so unique is his resourceful use of the Mixed Commission's data, which clearly demonstrate that the greatest Oyo influence arrived in Cuba during the era of instability that engulfed and destroyed the Oyo Empire, as well as its aftermath.[55] He used a list of some 4,000 names of Africans originating in the Bight of Benin, brought to Cuba

between 1826 and 1840 and rescued by British patrols, to support his position. Lovejoy's analysis of the names also revealed an overwhelming Oyo majority among the *emancipados*. In so doing, his doctoral research, as had Sofela's study before him, confirmed the importance of this ethnie's presence in Cuba and its influence in the transformation and development of Lucumí religious practices that are observed to this day.[56]

Historians have often noted the upsurge in the number of slave conspiracies and rebellions in the early nineteenth century, and have generally associated them with the arrival of the Oyo Lucumí. Most recently, Manuel Barcia's contribution, *Seeds of Insurrection*, elaborated on this association between the arrival of the Oyos and an increase in slave uprisings on Cuban plantations.[57] Lovejoy analyzed this topic with an additional dimension, stressing the presence of Lucumís as active officers in the Batallones de Pardos y Morenos as early as the eighteenth century. He suggested that the Oyo presence existed and exerted influence even then, though less significantly than it would in the nineteenth century. In addition, Lovejoy pointed to the early presence of non-Oyo Lucumí groups in Cuba, which supports arguments made in the present (and prior research) by this author about the Egbado.[58] Lovejoy also examined the role of the *cabildos* in this process, with special emphasis on the Cabildo de Santa Bárbara, which he argued may well be the legendary Cabildo Changó Tedún that Ortiz's and Cabrera's research have often discussed.[59]

In Lovejoy's dissertation, he stated that the data from the commission's records revealed that at least 2,067 (68.6 percent) of the sample that were classified as Lucumí had identifiable Yoruba ethnicities. In addition, 55 (8.0) percent of a total of 689

classified as Mina also had Lucumí/Yoruba names, and 116 (41.2 percent) of the 281 Ararás, as well as 434 others he classified as "multi-ethnic," had possibly or definitely Yoruba names. Lovejoy estimated that during the years in question, three out of four Africans classified as Lucumí among the *emancipados* were Yoruba-speakers.[60] These figures are significant because they suggest the greater influx of Lucumís to the island during a specific time frame and thus the expansion of the Oyo-Lucumí religious traditions.

The Mixed Commission's data may fill the void in Moreno-Fraginals's analysis for they cover some of the years that were missing in his review of plantation records. The combination of both data sets provides a totally different appreciation of the Lucumí presence (Table 7). While speculation is tempting, the possibility of overlapping data and counting people in the samples more than once is worrisome. Nonetheless, these data clearly attest to the significance of the Lucumí during these years.

Table 7 Combined Data: Moreno Fraginal's Plantation Record (1760–1870) and Lovejoy's Commission Registers (1824–40)

Ethnie	Moreno Fraginals's Totals	Lovejoy's Totals
Arará	168	349
Carabalí **Bibí** **Brícamo**	4,059 268 199	2,412
Congo **Mondongo**	4,038 201	2,317
Gangá	1,613	863
Lucumí	3,968	2,728
Mandinga	1,597	885
Mina	976	686

The figures gathered by Moreno-Fraginals; Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia; Gómez Abreu and Martínez Casanova; López Valdéz; Perera Díaz and Meriño Fuentes; Sofela; and Lovejoy all provided a valuable indicator of the relative percentages of Africans in nineteenth-century Cuba. For the most part, all these studies concur in their appreciation of the prevalent African ethnicities in Cuba. Most important, they support the idea that although the Lucumís were an important presence, they were not the most well represented group in Cuba in terms of sheer numbers. Still, with the exception of Sofela's and Lovejoy's studies, all of these inquiries focus on the rural areas and not on the cities.

The Commission's data, while suggestive, do not seem pertinent to the present study because, though the *emancipados* were registered in Havana and possibly some remained there, their actual destination was not considered in Lovejoy's study. During the initial years, some *emancipados* were sent to British territories in the Caribbean.[61] Further review of these documents, which hopefully Lovejoy will continue to do, may provide greater insight. For the meantime, though, all we have are the data provided by Lovejoy. Quite probably, many of those *emancipados* that remained in Cuba ended in the rural zones surrounding both Havana and Matanzas, where they could have been placed to work in the fields alongside the slaves. The religious practices of Havana, however, do suggest that some of these Oyo-Lucumís remained in the city. Several of those who were rescued from vessels and recorded in the court's ledgers appeared in the Regla and Matanzas parish records. Furthermore, several of Havana's most respected priestesses, Timotea Albear, Ajayí Latuán, and Rosalía Abreu, Efunshé Warikondó, are believed either to have been *emancipadas* or to have arrived as free women.[62] These women began

ascending as powerful Lucumí religious figures in the 1850s and 1860s, a period that fits quite well with Lovejoy's data. In this sense, Lovejoy's research supports claims here about the cultural and ritual significance of Oyo and the overwhelmingly Oyo-centric nature of Lucumí religion in Cuba, and especially in Havana. As such, though the exact numbers are not known, this population of rescued Africans may be directly responsible for the growth of Lucumí religion in Havana.

Cubanidad—Resistance, Accommodation, and Identity

That Africans influenced Cuban culture and identity is beyond doubt. Scholars have reiterated this idea for years. But gaining a better understanding of how these people perceived their world and their efforts—and examining it all from new perspectives—is sorely needed. Analyzing these impacts from the vantage point of those who were subjected to this era's pressures and struggles, and of their descendants, would complement the scholarship, which is too often focused on viewing the subaltern through privileged eyes. Horace Miner highlighted this in *Body Ritual among the Nacirema*, a very significant (though satiric) academic commentary that has as much relevance today as it did in 1956 when he originally published it.[63] Expanding academic inquiry in this area may prove valuable, and the probability of encountering novel research themes or clarification of old ones is engaging. Most important, however, is promoting a greater understanding of the contributions of subaltern peoples to the development of national culture, but as perceived through their eyes and not those of the dominant classes' elites and intellectuals.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, José Martí's thoughts about race and national identity were central to the development of the idea of *cubanidad*—Cubanness. Martí's views played a key role in the independence movements of the late nineteenth century, promoting the idea that it was possible to create a raceless society. Martí stressed that Cubans were "more than white, black or mulatto," and he considered that classifying them in those terms was "sinning against humanity." For the most eminent of the island's thinkers, elevated to the status of a demigod by most Cubans who still continue to refer to him as *el apostol* (the apostle), race was a nonissue.[64]

Martí's ideas were influential in the development of later initiatives that sought to recognize the cultural contributions of Africans to the island's identity. In some measure, they also fostered the *Afrocubanismo* movement of the twentieth century, which endeavored to promote racial harmony, albeit through questionable approaches, by focusing on the significance of African elements in Cuban culture. One of this movement's major flaws was its highly generalized perception of "Africa," using the term as a cover-all that implied a mono-culture, failing to reflect the great diversity that existed on the continent. As Manuel Moreno-Fraginals stated, "There was not a single black society in Cuba, but diverse coexisting societies."[65] Some of these issues are still prevalent in many modern Afrocentric movements.

Africa, like any other continent save Antartica, is most definitely composed of many and varying peoples who created a myriad of societies. In merging all African cultural contributions to Cuba under a single label, individuality was sacrificed. Congos, Lucumís, Ararás, Mandingas, Gangás, Carabalís, and others were lumped together as Africans, and their ethnies' distinctive contributions to Cuban music, cuisine, aesthetics,

and other areas were subsumed under an inauthentic category. The uniqueness of each cultural group's influence was retained only in their religious systems and the cultural practices that have evolved from these. Had it not been for these, individual ethnic identity would have been minimized, possibly beyond recognition, or simply forgotten.

Despite the significant presence of Afro-Cubans in the island's independence movements, in the twentieth century Martí's ideology met with resistance from specific sectors of the dominant society, sparking a debate that plagued Cuba well into this century's third decade, and in many ways continues to haunt the island and its diaspora to this day.[66] Creating a national identity in the twentieth century was ultimately just as complicated and challenging as the arguments surrounding the abolition of slavery in the prior century. As a concept, *cubanidad* is still evolving. Every new generation of Cubans reinterprets these ideas in light of the confines of their own struggles. Nowhere is this dialectic more evident than in modern Miami, where the inter-generational clashes that exist between the different waves of Cuban migrats to the city are clearly visible. Each new generation that arrives from the island perceives the other as foreign—*pero esta gente no es como nosotros* (but these people are not like us), and especially if there are color differences—whether or not each group recognizes the common history that they share and the one foe they relentlessly blame for what ails them. *Cubanidad* is still in the process of definition, and the color line continues to be a significant component of that process.

The scholarship on *cubanidad* has advanced considerably since the 1960s. Examination of the role of Africans and Afro-Cubans in the development of *cubanidad* has also increased. Among the more important studies on this topic in the United States

are Ada Ferrer's *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898*, Aline Helg's *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912*, Robin Moore's *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940*, Alejandro de la Fuente's masterful *A Nation for All—Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba*, and Lillian Guerra's *The Myth of José Martí—Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba*.[67] These studies reflect on what has come to be known in the literature as the "myth of racial equality."

In *Our Rightful Share*, Aline Helg reviewed the historical importance of Afro-Cubans and examined them as agents of social change after independence from Spain and the creation of the Cuban nation-state in the early 1900s. She discussed the strategies used by people of color in Cuba to achieve recognition as equals. Despite their struggle and contributions, Helg argued, blacks continued to be marginalized. This was partly fueled by the combination of the "myth of racial equality" and racist ideologies, distorted by white Cubans and "foreign powers," to exclude, subordinate, and repress Afro-Cubans because of their supposed backwardness.[68]

When Afro-Cubans attempted to level the playing field by creating the Partido Independiente de Color, a black political party, white Cubans responded aggressively, eventually banning the political party altogether. They argued that the party's exclusion of whites was against Martí's ideas of inclusivity and, ultimately, the interests of the nation as well. In 1912, a protest against the ban that took place in Oriente Province resulted in the slaughter of thousands of Afro-Cubans and the party's obliteration.[69] 1912 was a defining moment for Afro-Cubans, but though it transformed the rules of engagement, the struggle was not over. Religion was indirectly affected by these

controversies, too. Until the 1920s, Helg stressed, though some blacks reasserted the value of ancient Africa, for obvious reasons very "few dared to publicly defend the popular practice of syncretic religions of African origin, much less praise the contribution of blacks to the Cuban nation."[70] Still, these first decades of the twentieth century and its upheavals were fundamental in laying the foundations for the African components of *Cubanidad*. Despite the setbacks—opposition from some members of the dominant sectors, persecution of religious communities, and libelous accusations—blacks were making important inroads, and some Afro-Cubans persistently refused to acquiesce.

Our Rightful Share also considered what Helg deemed were the three most pressing factors in the era's unsteadiness. Fears surrounding *brujería*, including worries that it would spread throughout the island, were exceeded only by fear of a Haitian-style revolution that had gripped Cuba since the nineteenth century. African *brujos*, including the Ñáñigos who had been continuously harassed for decades, were associated with black barbarism, lack of civilizational advancement, and criminal proclivities. Further exasperating the population was the idea that *brujos* were also a threat to small children. The third fear was that black "beasts" would rape white women and mulatto seductresses would lure white men into their lustful world, becoming victims of Afro-Cuban sexual excesses. Helg argued that whites were continuously worried about the "black threat," and they expressed their insecurity through campaigns to eradicate African culture.[71]

Robin Moore's research also reflects on some of the contradictions over identity that existed in the early twentieth century. He focused on Afro-Cuban music to analyze the intricate webs that guided the debates over race and national identity in twentieth-century Cuba. Moore concentrated on the incongruities expressed by sectors of the

dominant society over the place of Africa in Cuban identity. At the same time that the elites and intellectuals demonstrated a clear disdain for African culture and blacks in general, Afro-Cuban music quickly rose to prominence as a valuable component of Cuban national identity. Moore argued that before granting membership to Afro-Cuban music as part of *cubanidad*, it had to be "whitened": *depurada* (purified), *sofisticada* (sophisticated) and *revestida con elegancia* (elegantly redressed).[72] These ideas of advancement through whitening the skin have prevailed in the Americas since the first sexual encounters between white men and black women. They echoed the Spanish notions of purity of blood and that miscegenation and lighter skin were necessary to *adelantar* (advance). To gain acceptance as a component of Cuban national identity, African music had to become Europeanized first.

Ada Ferrer analyzed the effects of the nineteenth-century independence movements on Cuban ideas of race and nationality. Like Helg, Ferrer also reviewed the concepts of racial equality espoused by Martí. Despite his claim that there were no whites or blacks, but "only Cubans," race and racism were inseparable from the century's conflicts, and each faction manipulated these to meet its own long-term interests.[73] Ferrer stressed that as white and black Cubans on the island negotiated these issues during their struggles for independence, the United States was experiencing its own racial turmoil during Reconstruction and its aftermath: Jim Crow laws and escalating segregation. At the close of the century, insurgents and Cuban intellectuals, white and black, attempted to use the experiences gained from the wars to define the nation and its identity. They envisioned a raceless society; however, the participation of the United States in the

independence war and its succeeding involvement in the island's administrations of the island threatened to hamper this process by imposing U.S. racial models.[74]

Race, Cuban identity, and politics in early twentieth-century Cuba were also researched by Alejandro de la Fuente. In his view, race was an indispensable part of Cuban nation- building, regardless of the struggles that often arose because of it.[75] Like Ferrer, de la Fuente considered the effects of U.S. intervention in Cuba during the early years of the republic, but he did not believe this to be the only factor hampering race relations. He looked at the role of politics as well as the "economic, social, and ideological constraints under which social classes and racial groups interacted."[76] In so doing, de la Fuente's research expanded the field of study by focusing on multiple factors with great attention, providing a myriad of lenses through which these concerns must necessarily be analyzed.

In a superbly detailed study of José Martí and race in Cuba, Lillian Guerra investigated the different ways in which Cubans interpreted Martí's philosophies in the early twentieth century to create the new Cuban state. She argued that the many analyses of José Martí's writings represented "different, conflicting interpretations of nation." The dominant sectors of Cuban society examined Martí's writings to arrive at an approximation of how he would have proceeded to establish the new nation. (Helg's greater claim, by contrast, was that the 1895 revolutionary leadership "presided over the demise of Martí's elusive promise" of a nation for all "over the stillbirth rather than the birth of a republic."[77]) With Martí's legacy determining the shape and direction of the nation and its discourse, his deification as national hero was a strategic necessity. The new r supported the ideals and views of the nation that emerged during the war of 1895,

one that was totally different from the ideas that Martí had proposed. Contestations over Cuba's nationhood and identity, however, had predated Martí's "myth," and his ideologies were used to support independent and often conflicting visions of nation.[78]

Guerra claimed that while past analyses of class and race are practical variables for studying the factors associated with the idea of the Cuban nation, these variables were born in the process of "imagining the nation" and are intrinsically connected with the "angle of nation and nationalism" and the struggles that ensued. She highlighted that only by examining the history through these lenses can historians come to grip with a clearer perception of the resulting forms of government that arose by the 1920s.[79]

The place of Afro-Cubans in society was intrinsically linked to the era's problems, especially after Martí's avowal that the new Cuba would be neither black nor white. Given the popularity of Darwinian positivism among members of the dominant intellectual circles, the integration of blacks into the new society was unclear. As far as this sector was concerned, blacks were inferior to whites, biologically, culturally, and intellectually. Racial inferiority would become a major obstacle. Despite these struggles, however, many African cultural elements, primarily Congo, Carabalí, and Lucumí, have profoundly permeated Cuban culture. In addition, this era in many ways set the stage for what would become a careful process of study and identification of cultural values and civilizational accomplishments as determined by an intellectual movement spearheaded by Fernando Ortiz.[80] Ortiz's crusade ultimately reinforced structures initiated by those Africans who during the nineteenth century began their own covert but potent campaigns to resist acculturation. The Lucumís were especially vociferous during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, and they refused to acquiesce. They countered the

society's oppositional force with their own defiant drive against what they perceived as the violation of their rights as promised by the Cuban constitution.[81]

Laying the Foundation for a Hierarchical Pyramid

The political and academic debates over identity in twentieth-century Cuba arose in the cities, primarily Havana. Recent studies have commented on these phenomena, but more attention needs to be given to the different strata that composed the developments of this significant era for the entrenchment of African religions in Cuba. Current methodologies need reconsideration, as suggested by Stephan Palmie, because there are phenomena that extend beyond the archival and literary sources.[82] Studying these social and historical processes requires approaches that recognize the limits of the customary use of primary and secondary sources and that are flexible enough to incorporate methodologies that extend beyond the traditional. The study of African religions in Cuba—and the African Diaspora—requires two very distinct approaches.

Borrowing anthropological concepts to apply to historical discussion, a balanced analysis of these particular phenomena requires two perspectives: the etic and the emic. Anthropologist Kenneth Pike first coined these two terms in the 1950s.[83] The etic is the perspective of the outsider, the detached foreigner, while the emic is the point of view of the participant or member of the culture. Clearly, each methodology will observe the subject of study from often oppositional perspectives, even when arriving at similar conclusions. Some social scientists question the emic approach distrusting the objectivity of those who analyze and describe their own cultures. Just as problematic, however, are

the perceptive abilities of the scholar who is not a member of the culture under study. The etic interpretation is incapable of fully comprehending the object of study in the same light as the members of the culture themselves perceive it. Thus, while the emic perspective runs the risk of being subjective, the etic perspective is doubly lacking owing to inaccurate appraisal born of detachment.

A case in point is Henry B. Lovejoy's recent and praiseworthy dissertation that contains numerous valid arguments. Though Lovejoy claimed to have undergone "some initiations" to Lucumí and Congo religions, he did not specify if he were an ordained *olorisha* or a *tata nganga*.[84] His subsequent writings indicate that he either has not been ordained or has been ordained only recently and is gaining experience as a priest; thus, his analyzes of issues that require an insider's perspective greatly depend on his informants. Jan Vansina's discussion of the weight of selectivity and how oral historians (and informants) choose the details they remember or explain is very instructive here.[85] Looking at the information provided by his informants, this was a serious hurdle for Lovejoy because these practitioners, despite their status, misled him in several ways. If the researcher is not a member of the culture, he or she may not necessarily ask all the right questions, push all the possible buttons, or discern when an informant is simply being creative to avoid the embarrassment of saying "I don't know."

Lovejoy analyzed the trial of Juan Nepomuceno Prieto, a Lucumí *cabildo* leader and retired officer from Havana's Batallones *de* Pardos *y* Morenos.[86] In 1835, Prieto was implicated in a revolt that apparently involved a number of Lucumís. His fraternity, a Lucumí Oyó *cabildo*, was said to have been the origin of the uprising. Apparently, Prieto's reputation as a priest and healer was no secret, as he himself admitted. He openly

spoke of his "godchildren," probably using the term in the Lucumí and Congo sense in which an individual is considered a godchild of his or her religious mentor. He clearly stated that his house was frequented by whites, mulattoes, and blacks, who consulted him when afflicted by disease. Evidently, Prieto's priestly career was no secret, even if disguised under the veil of healing. To this day, *olorishas* will stress that they sought the religion and ordination *por mi salud*—for my health.

The more significant aspect of Prieto's case was the confiscation of numerous items from his home and shrines. Among these were two carvings: a large one, claimed by Prieto to be "Changó," and a smaller one, that was found in a "machine" with a mirror on its stomach and a serving of red beans. The second carving, Prieto testified, was "the son of the larger carving, with which the children play and dance." Lovejoy, attempting to analyze the items found in Prieto's house, questioned his sources; most of them gave him a variety of possibilities—including a possible Congo link—except one. Ernesto Valdés Jané related the carving with the Ibejí, an orisha associated with the birth of twins; however, it is not clear if Valdés Jané gave him any further details. While the possible link to Congo religion was an accurate observation, the Ibejí association was more precise. Lovejoy dismissed this possibility, writing that it did not make sense because "twins come in pairs."[87]

In reality, a single carving for Ibejí is not at all odd. In Yorubaland, these figures are commissioned upon the death of a twin, a common occurrence among the Yoruba.[88] Twins are believed to share a single soul, a belief that is relatively well known among Lucumí practitioners. If one dies, the survivor will pay homage to his or her sibling through this image, which is consecrated through a series of rituals and given blood and

food offerings.[89] Red beans are deemed pleasing to Shangó, Oyá, and Ibejí. In fact, a common *adimú*, or offering, for the Ibejí is a plate of *arroz con pollo* (rice with chicken), *akará* (black-eyed pea fritters), and stewed red beans. Furthermore, in the Lucumí practices observed in the twentieth century, twins are intrinsically connected to Shangó and Yemojá.[90] The Oyo and other Yoruba ethnic groups believe that twins receive their special power from Shangó, a belief that exists to this day among the Lucumís, and has crossed over into Congo beliefs as well.[91] Most *olorishas* accept that the firstborn, considered the younger of the two, is an *omó* (child) of Shangó; the second born is the older and thus a child of Yemojá, who in some myths is depicted as Shangó's mother. If the twins were later ordained, those would be their tutelary orishas.

Consequently, the alternative possibility for analyzing the carving found in Prieto's house seems most likely when these particular elements are considered. Prieto's priesthood, his relationship with Shangó, and the strength of Oyo culture in Cuba, were in fact supported by the carving and its possible association with Ibejí. To be clear, this observation is not an assault on Lovejoy and his research, which is exceptional, but the critique is significant because it illustrates the value of the emic perspective. One excellent example of this in practice is Brown's *Santería Enthroned*. Brown, who is both a scholar and an *olorisha*, successfully demonstrated the richness that awareness of the two "disciplines" can provide; this cannot be said of all scholars who are ordained, including some of those cited by Lovejoy. Beyond doubt, Brown's study is exemplary.

Examples of inaccurate etic descriptions about African religions in Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, and other areas of the Diaspora abound in the scholarship. Correcting flawed interpretations to provide a more solid knowledge base is an endeavor that scholars need

to support and defend. Given the complexities and diversity that surround the roles of individual African ethnicities and their contributions to the development of identity in the Americas, this field of inquiry needs methodological approaches that reflect the numerous layers that compose the subject. Such a methodology could contribute to a greater appreciation of vastly unexplored and often difficult historical topics such as the one under review. The present study follows an emic approach, hopefully providing a novel assessment of a historical phenomenon that has been reviewed by numerous scholars, apparently none of whom were never studied by any members of the cultures under scrutiny (at least not avowed ones).

African Cultures and Cuban Identity—The Foundations of a Struggle

No one can debate the invaluable contributions of Brazil's Nina Rodrigues and Cuba's Fernando Ortiz. In the twentieth century, these two men established important foundations for future scholarship. One a physician and the other a lawyer, they consulted documents and scant publications from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, and combined their findings with anthropological fieldwork, though neither was an anthropologist. Their work is valuable even if their methodological and ideological approaches produced many distortions. Regardless of their personal biases and socially derived flaws the merit of Rodrigues's and Ortiz's work on the African Diaspora and its impact upon modern academia cannot be devalued or easily dismissed.

The major impetus for the identity debate about Afro-Cubans and their culture must be credited to Fernando Ortiz and his controversial *Los negros brujos*. Following a trend that was born in Brazil with Rodrigues, Ortiz officially placed *brujería* on academic

display by producing the first scholarly, albeit objectionable, publication on the subject of African religions in Cuba. In the book, he expressed his firm conviction at the time that Afro-Cubans were "backward" because they originated in areas that had not yet reached the level of civilizational advancement attained by other societies. Witchcraft and African fetishism were cultural practices that would dissipate in time, once blacks had reaped the benefits afforded them by the New World societies in which they now found themselves. The book's prejudices merely reflect that Ortiz was a product of his time. As a scholar, he should not be faulted for echoing ideas that had already been circulating in Cuba and the Americas since the prior century. Ortiz's ideology during those early years was tainted by the intransigence of Darwinian positivism and Cesare Lombroso's school of thought; however, these notions that vilified Africans were as old as slavery itself. In that regard, he was no different, and no less Cuban, than any of his contemporaries.[92]

The Carabalí Abakuá society was probably the first Afro-Cuban religious complex to have its rites and beliefs documented and published, primarily because it came under attack from Spanish authorities. One of the earliest discussions was in the text written by Enrique Fernández Carrillo that accompanied Victor Patricio de Landaluze's painting, *El Ñáñigo*. Fernández Carrillo was an official from the office of Havana's second chief of police, José Trujillo y Monagas. Probably influenced by his commanding officer's anti-Ñáñigo fervor as well as the general sentiments of the era, Fernández Carrillo heavily criticized Landaluze's artistic depiction of the *íreme*, an Abakuá masquerader dressed in ritual garments. By this time, this figure represented what his department vilified as a criminal association.[93] Months later, a colonial investigation produced an account of the beliefs and practices, religious and "criminal,"

of the Ñáñigos. Alejandro Rodríguez Arias, at the time the Spanish governor of the island, filed the initial version of this report.[94]

Shortly thereafter, the colonial report, now titled *Los Ñañigos. Su historia, sus prácticas, su lenguaje*, was published anonymously, though in all probability Trujillo y Monagas was its unnamed author.[95] Some sources stressed that the author had infiltrated an Abakuá lodge and had been initiated into the fraternity.[96] In the book's first paragraph, the author made no secret of his viewpoint. He wrote that more importance had been given to this organization's rituals than they truly deserved, and described the Abakuá society as "a vulgar mix of superstition that proves a very rudimentary and backward state in the scale of civilization."[97] For him, the Abakuá institution was typical of the "various aberrations that are common to the behavior and tendencies of the people of color" because it kept its members in the primitive mind-set of the African villages—this despite the fact that many of its members, black, mulatto, and by then also Chinese and white, had been "born and educated in the bosom of the cult society in which they live."[98]

Similar to Freemasonry and other secret orders that require oath-taking by their members, Abakuás pledge allegiance to their fraternity and society in general. When describing the initiation rites that he presumably witnessed, the author referred to this oath, distorting its intentions to suit his agenda. The fraternity's detractors have continuously taken this oath out of context. All Abakuás must pledge to believe in God and to respect the sacred mysteries of the rite. Among the oaths they take, Abakuás swear to respect their fraternity elders, to respect women, and to be good men. The last oath, according to a high-ranking member of a *potencia* (lodge) in Regla, means that all members of the society must be good sons, fathers, brothers, and human beings—

respectable in every sense.[99] Abakuás must defend the brotherhood and their cohorts as if they were blood kin. In addition, they must aid any member of the *potencia* who suffers economic hardship or the loss of a family member, and they must assist in any way possible when a brother dies. The more touchy part of the oath is the promise to defend a brother if anyone acts against him. When one brother is "offended," all members of the lodge are insulted as well. As brethren, Abakuás pledge to assist in whatever way they can.[100] Readers interpreted the oath variously.

Los ñáñigos' author, like others who followed, twisted the implications of this last part of the oath and in so doing propagated a stereotype that many opponents of the Abakuá culture found valuable for their oppressive rhetoric. If a brother was hurt or killed, he wrote, Ñañigos were

> *obligated to avenge the wrong…as the obligation to defend [a brother] is only applicable to those from their own lodge…He who sheds the blood of a brother, will be expelled…and knowledge of the disbarment distributed to other lodges…This explains why even when they are all Ñañigos, they commit murder amongst themselves and stab each other, because the benefits of brotherhood are only extended to those of their own lodge.*[101]

Although by this time there were several white lodges as well, the book's author supported the idea that all Abakuás were potential criminals, a stigma that was probably extended to all Afro-Cubans and continues to haunt the Abakuá brotherhoods to this day.[102] Conceivably, the anonymous publication incensed what was already an unstable relationship with the Abakuás since the early part of the century; one that may have

begun as early as 1812 with the Aponte conspiracy. According to José Luciano Franco, Abakuá ritual engravings were found in the home of one of Aponte's co-conspirators, fueling the idea that there was a link connecting the Abakuás, Haiti, and revolution in Cuba.[103] In 1876, shortly before the release of *Los Ñáñigos*, colonial authorities outlawed the Abakuá societies for being seditious and criminal associations. Many of the fraternity's members were accused of treason and sentenced to serve prison terms on the islands of Fernando Poo and Ceuta, off the African coast.[104]

Later in 1882, Trujillo y Monagas himself published *Los criminales de Cuba*, a book detailing what the author called "the exact narration" of criminal actions and the investigations and arrests that followed.[105] The book recounted the specifics of numerous cases and idolized the police for the "importance of the services" they rendered to Havana. Likewise, it vilified the alleged criminals who had been apprehended, many of whom were probably revolutionaries opposing Spanish rule.[106] It became clear from this particular publication that Trujillo y Monagas had been the infiltrator who provided the information that appeared in the colonial report and the anonymous book. "*Los Ñañigos. Su historia, sus prácticas, su lenguaje*," one of the book's sections, was an exact replica of the earlier writings, including its title.[107] Clearly, as David H. Brown stressed, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century Havana had heard or read enough, factual or not, to develop a perception of the Abakuá and *ñañiguismo* as well as the potential danger that these "uncivilized" practices could pose for Cuban society. What was even more repulsive was the idea that whites were also joining their ranks.[108]

In 1901, Rafael Salillas published an account of his research among the Ñañigos who had been imprisoned in Ceuta. Salillas criticized earlier descriptions of the Abakuá,

calling them “false information of authorities and correspondents, in whose falsehoods we find nothing other than ignorance of what Ñañiguismo [Ñañigo practices] represent.” His own publication, Salillas added, would be free of the “darkening preoccupations that influenced others [writers].”[109] In all probability, those authorities he mentioned were the producers of the report that was the basis for the anonymous book. While Salillas’s portrayal of the Abakuás was generally favorable, it apparently had little effect on Cuban society.

Rafael Roche y Monteagudo’s *La policía y sus misterios en Cuba* was no different from the work of his predecessors in its characterization of the Abakuás. If anything, it was more alarmist. Other than showcasing the author’s high praise of Havana’s police department and legal system, for which he worked as a special agent, he also included details about numerous crimes that allegedly involved blacks, including the Tin Tan and the Zoila affairs. His review of the literature on West Africa offered the gross misrepresentations, gratis Christian missionaries, about African religion in general, and Yoruba religion in particular. These sources painted a very macabre view of Africa and her people, all of whom were savages and white men and Christianity had come to their rescue. Writing as if he were well aware of their popularity in Cuba, Roche y Monteagudo referenced key Lucumí orishas, which he surely read about in Ortiz’s book. References to Olorún (the Supreme Being), Obatalá (orisha of creation and purity), Ogún (orisha of iron and war), and “Changó, Santa Bárbara en Cuba” unquestionably resonated with those who had read Ortiz’s *Los negros brujos*. “When Ogún is hungry,” he wrote, “it is necessary to feed him human flesh.” War is declared to provide prisoners who will

serve as human sacrifices for the god.[110] But Saint Barbara fared no better, continuously assaulted in the literature and the media as benefactor of the *brujos*.[111]

Further striking fear into his readers, he stressed that most of these rites took place in the evening and that the "sound of drums and the chants of the participants indicated that it was time to think of the gods."[112] Drums and African chanting echoed all over certain sections of Havana, and for numerous reasons, including persecution, most Abakuá (and Congo) drumming celebrations took place (and still do) at night. Some of those who read Roche y Monteagudo's book might probably shudder the next time they heard the sound of a drum. The Zoila case, which occurred in Cuba in 1904, was creatively linked to an alleged occurrence in Africa cited in a book by Fernando Nicolay.[113] According to Roche y Monteagudo, Cuban *brujos* extracted Zoila's heart. The *brujos* involved in the African incident to which he referred had consulted the Ifá oracle for a woman and recommended that she "pound a live baby in a mortar" to make a talisman that would ensure victory in a war against Porto Novo's army that her son, the king, was apparently losing.[114]

The section on the Ñáñigos repeated most of what had already been published; however, the author maintained that his account was "closer to the truth" because earlier publications were full of distortions obtained from untrustworthy informants. *La policía y sus misterios*, by contrast, was presenting "truth without exaggerations or mystifications."[115] Flattering the legal system of which he was an intrinsic component, Roche y Monteagudo praised Havana's law enforcement agency, its judges, and its courts as "models of penetration, common sense, and intelligence." David Brown wrote that this book focused on the "wonder of heroic police work in a pitted struggle between law and

chaos."[116] More accurately, in the tradition of great authors, Roche y Monteagudo had presented his rendition of a Cuban "struggle" between good and evil. The racial implications need not be stressed.

During the early 1900s, when the island began its controversial quest for national identity, newspapers in Havana abounded with reports about police incursions into ritual gatherings and especially arrests for *ñañiguismo*, whether or not an Abakuá ritual was actually taking place. The image of the Abakuá had been molded by years of continuous bad press. Soon to be accused of murdering children and using their body parts for witchcraft, the Congos' reputation was in the process of being tarnished. Meanwhile the Lucumí began to take note of the witchcraft campaign's possible implications for them, for like their brethren, they, too, were being harassed. While the new constitution guaranteed freedom of religion, all three groups were hounded for their beliefs and practices, and persecuted by the same accusation: *brujería*.[117]

Rómulo Lachatañeré, Ortiz's cherished protégé whose life was cut short before he could reach his maximum potential, was probably the first of the Cuban investigators to openly oppose the usage of the term *brujería*. He candidly criticized Ortiz for his "speculations in the field where…[anthropology]…studies criminology, failing in the selection of appropriate methods to discuss other aspects of the life of the Afro-Cuban."[118] He wrote that some of the blame belonged to those fearful informants who withheld information. The rest was occasioned by those with bad intentions who sought to distort the true nature of the problem that Cuba was confronting at the time.[119] Lachatañeré added one more interesting element: his discussion of the term *brujería* as used by "persons that are detached from the particulars of the Afro-Cuban problem [and]

use the term in its Western sense, nourished by religious biases, so much so that everything that is not under the pompous magic of Catholic liturgy will be considered heretical."[120] There can be many interpretations of Lachatañeré's commentary, including the possibility that the silent hand of the Church may have been at work in some of the battles over *brujería*. To date, Lachatañeré is the only scholar who has brought this question to the fore, but no other scholar has pursued this possibility. Undoubtedly, the anti-*brujería* campaign of the twentieth century has numerous layers of complexity, some of which still need to be explored.

The plight of the Abakuás continued well into the revolutionary years. In 1969, Lydia Cabrera extolled the values of Cuba's African legacy and its sturdiness when she courageously spoke out about the extreme racist "mental weaknesses" suffered by "negro-phobic" Cubans before her time.[121] Unfortunately, her prose often left the writer to wonder what her own position really was. Although Cabrera may not have been prejudiced against those of African descent, some of her writing reflects strong cynicism. The title of one of her last publications seems to indicate that she, too, had her own biases: *Cuentos para adultos, niños, y retrasados mentales* (Stories for adults, children and the mentally retarded).[122] While she defended the Abakuás in some sections of her book, in others she referred to their "abominable confraternity."[123] In 1906 Fernando Ortiz promised to publish a monograph on Abakuá societies before his death: the study never materialized. Complying with the promise made by her brother-in-law, Cabrera did make a valuable contribution to the scholarship, and in the process, she exposed the need for further research on the Abakuá.

Enrique Sosa Rodríguez's *Los Ñañigos* presented the Abakuá in a relatively objective light, though the author's initial claim was somewhat conflicted because of his Marxist inclinations.[124] Nevertheless, Sosa Rodríguez's work seemed to follow Ortiz's initial argument in *Los negros brujos*. He predicted that the Ñáñigo fraternities would eventually dissolve and disappear, especially after the onset of the island's new regime, because socialism promoted "social development." He expressed a degree of urgency to document the history of one of the island's "anachronistic secret societies" that was doomed to die because of the advances brought by communism.[125] In some ways, Sosa Rodríguez's publication filled the void left by Fernando Ortiz. Sosa Rodríguez's treatment of Carabalí history and their introduction to Cuba as slaves was very valuable. Although there had been earlier studies on this ethnic group, Sosa Rodríguez's study was possibly the most complete to date. Unfortunately, despite Lachatañeré's and Cabrera's efforts, Sosa Rodríguez once again projected the idea of African anachronisms and backwardness.

Possibly, Jesús Guanche's ethnohistorical account of the island's diverse cultural contributors may have been more objective in its treatment of African cultures and religions. Guanche stressed that Cubans were the product of *mestizaje biológico y de transculturación*—biological mixture and transculturation. Like Sosa Rodríguez, Guanche also wrote from a Marxist perspective, but may not have been as pessimistic about African "anachronisms" as the former. Despite its deficiencies, his use of the term *curanderismo* (traditional healing) as opposed to *brujería*, as well as the concept of "Cuban ethnogenisis" that he espoused, indicated a different, less subjective perspective.[126] Interestingly, Guanche's book supported the revolution's attempt to create

a new *cubanidad*: “a conception of the Cuban people that transcends the social, regional, and racial divisions that existed before January 1959.”[127]

Stephan Palmie’s *Wizards and Scientists* is probably the most influential study to come along in recent years.[128] The book was significant on many levels, and the questions its author raised suggested meaningful guidelines for future scholarship. His treatment of the ideas surrounding the concept of modernity is substantial. Palmie referred to three case studies from Afro-Cuban history as the basis for his argument that what was generally understood by the terms “Western modernity and Afro-Cuban tradition represent[s] mere facets or perspectival refractions of a single encompassing historical formation of transcontinental scope.” He chose to call this formation “Atlantic modernity,” defining it as “a set of structural linkages that, since the early sixteenth century, transformed the Atlantic Ocean into an integrated geohistorical unit.”[129] These connections, Palmie duly argued, implicated actors on three continents, Africa and the Americas—and surely the Caribbean as well—in each other’s histories. In addition, Palmie stated that Atlantic modernity also included the discourses and practices that take place on a local level in the different settings that can engage, shape, and transform what he called “this basic structural constellation.”[130] Palmie’s study is certainly remarkable, though given his discursive treatment of the subject matter in the name of clarity, the book is often overwhelming as well.

Palmie wrote that instead of offering solutions for theories that attempt to respond to historical questions, his study would raise questions that he thought would serve a greater purpose in the long term.[131] To that end he examined three separate but connected historical events that illustrated some of the questions he was presenting to academicians.

The first of these case studies reviewed the foiled Aponte Conspiracy of 1812. The second involved the relationship between Lucumí and Congo religion. His last study was the hysteria over *brujería* that disturbed Cuba in the early twentieth century, stemming from the death of *la niña Zoila*, the young white girl who was murdered in 1904 and whose death was blamed on African "witchcraft."

The second of the three case studies, which along with the third is particularly relevant to this investigation, set the backdrop for an argument that has plagued Lucumí *olorishas* and Congo *tata ngangas* (priests) since the beginning of the century: the dichotomy that envisions Lucumí religion as the representation of the good and Congo as a representation of evil. For Palmie, the dichotomy was linked to debates of slavery that began in the nineteenth century. In his conception, these narratives between followers of the two religious traditions, which polarized them in the process, were "distinct but practically intertwined ritual idioms." Lucumí religion reflected the traditional reciprocity that exists between the divine and the deities with humankind, while Congo religion reflected the harsher realities of life in Cuba; an idiom that spoke of labor, slavery and freedom, dominance, and rebellion.[132] In Cuba, the two systems became intertwined because of these two ethnies' shared experiences: enslavement, abuse, and depersonalization. As time progressed, both traditions underwent parallel changes, including "moral recalibration," transforming the Congo religious system into "media for mystical aggression."[133]

In the early twentieth century, not only did these debates continue, but they now also encompassed the dominant discourse about Cuban national identity. In light of Palmie's discussion, it seems that the dialogue about the nature of these two religions and

the debate over *cubanidad* were both underscored by the search for "modernity." Palmie wrote that both religions arrived at their current form around the turn of the twentieth century, the same time during which the dialogue about Cuban identity took shape.[134] Both processes were essentially modern and addressed similar problems from differing perspectives.

Although all three of Palmie's case studies resonate with the current research, the second and third, as previously mentioned, have a greater bearing on some of the issues discussed in this investigation because of their relation to the Lucumí and Congo religions. In his chapter on the Zoila case, Palmie discussed the deliberations between Cuban elites and intellectuals and Lucumí *olorishas* that came to light in the early 1900s and that in many ways continue to define the manner in which the religion is perceived.[135]

As in the current investigation, *Wizards and Scientists's* author stressed that academics, and especially historians, need to be more receptive to forms of evidence that lie outside the bounds of traditional historical inquiry. Some historical actors, he argued, remain "beyond historiographic recovery because [of] the nature of the evidence we [scholars] deem admissible." Introducing their historical contributions to the scholarly records requires other less traditional sources that historians often frown upon.

Brown differentiated between two different genres of what he called *Stories of Diaspora*. One recounts "linear continuity," while the other relates narratives of "agency, struggle, discontinuity, and heroic achievement."[136] Both are significant in that they reveal recurrent themes that can cast additional light on the historical investigation, if applied appropriately and even more so if archival documents can support some of the

narratives' contents. Referring specifically to the value of accounts derived from oral sources, Jan Vansina, a staunch defender of oral history, argued that applying some of these techniques require great scrutiny and support from archival sources to have greater validity.[137] When used correctly, oral traditions can reveal significant details about the past that are also in the present because they are memories, "faithful repositories which contain the sum total of past human experience and explain the how and why of present day conditions."[138]

Scholars that study slavery (and Africa in general), have come to accept that most historical documents do not accurately record the insights and understanding of the target population, as these perceptions usually did not interest the people who produced those documents. Historians can make creative and valuable use of this material if they proceed properly and objectively. Such documents "testify sometimes to events and always to situations existing at a given time."[139] Cuban historian Gloria García Rodríguez has persuasively argued that the information contained in many Cuban documents reflects a world in which people of color, aware of their subordinate status, steadily used the elements at their disposal to "maintain and expand their human dimension."[140] The manipulation of those elements, however, is not necessarily always discernible in documents because they do not include the thoughts and feelings that motivated the people; actions can be conveyed only through the use of spoken language and narratives, and, in the case of African religions, very often through ritual processes as well.

Thus, we find María del Carmen Barcia pondering over the meaning of specific legal documents, wondering what deity Africans had in mind when they swore to God as they took oaths before notaries or judges.[141] Historian James Sweet devoted considerable

time assessing African interpretations of European marriage ceremonies and monogamy and the different perceptions of homosexuality among both groups.[142] Recently, two Cuban historians have reviewed how slaves and free people of color perceived manumissions and the importance of family life as well as the different approaches that slaves, and especially women, employed to acquire the liberty of the people they loved.[143] The comparison of archival materials with cultural evidence and oral testimonies not only provided these historians with cold, hard facts, but also divulged other nuances that presented a more holistic understanding of the people they studied. In many cases, the official, printed archives and the unofficial oral narratives complemented each other, establishing that significant "link between the record and the observation" that Vansina stressed was required for any source to be considered historical evidence.[144]

Palmie's argument justly reminds academics that some oral "truths" must be taken at face value because they lack the documentation that would validate or invalidate the oral history. David Brown also relied on oral history, but suggested that the historian must employ these with caution.[145] Nonetheless, oral sources are still held is suspicion by some historians, even if partial admissions of their value are made.[146] Edouard Glissant, whom Palmie cited, reminded historians that it is necessary to recognize that "'history has its dimensions of the unexplorable.'"[147] Underestimating the worthiness of oral testimonies is a grave error. Clearly, the evidence must be carefully assessed, as sometimes evidence can be diluted or embellished, but this does not diminish their worth; in fact, it provides greater terrain for analysis. The fieldwork and oral evidence collected for the current study, as well as earlier research, many of which echo Brown's emphasis on *Stories of Diaspora*, wholly supports this assertion.

Art historian David H. Brown considered the effects that the first two decades of the twentieth century had on the evolution of Lucumí religion.[148] In *Santería Enthroned*, Brown wrote that the state-sponsored witchcraft hunts that began in the early 1900s, supported and often incited by the era's yellow journalism, made the personae of the Ñáñigo and the *brujo* into "icons of fear."[149] As Helg had argued some years before, Brown also supported the idea that the harassment of Afro-Cuban religions by the state discredited the important role blacks had played in the independence wars.[150] The persecution and criminalization of Afro-Cubans for their religious practices under the guise of stamping out *brujería*, Brown stressed, depicted the viciousness with which "racist politics and white social hysteria" operated during those years.[151]

In *The Light Inside*, Brown examined Abakuá society: its historical trajectory, its encounter with the colonial legal apparatus in the nineteenth century, and its transformation in post-1920s Cuba. Brown's interaction with Jesús Nasakó, one of his principal informants, was vital for developing his understanding of Abakuá artistic representations, which, as he argued, were elemental for this era's "avant-garde" crusade to "effect a transvaluation and modernization of Cuban aesthetics, culture, and society."[152] His investigation also reviewed the persecution and harassment of the Abakuá and their encounters with the island's racist political machinery.[153] In addition, it pondered the effects of the initial folklorization strategies adopted by Ortiz, Cabrera, and others as well as its counterpart in post-1959 Cuba, when African cultural items were collected and catalogued as "important documents of Cuba's 'Afrophilic profile'," in keeping with the dictates of the revolution.[154]

The Light Inside reflects on the development of syncretism and the introduction of Catholic and Western ritual objects that were adopted by the society in the second half of the nineteenth century as a response to "formidable sociopolitical stress."[155] Clearly familiar with the numerous debates on this issue, Brown's position is fundamental because it reflects the perspective a member of the culture under study. Brown was extremely effective in conveying Jesús Nasakó's interpretations of the presence of foreign religious objects from the Abakuá's viewpoint. In addition, his reflection on syncretism gives significant agency to those transculturative processes that were born with the first offspring of an African woman and a European man, a child who was easily able to comprehend both his mother's and his father's worldviews and incorporate them.[156] These notions were stressed by Brown when he asserted that the historical debates among scholars (and some practitioners) floated "within mythopoetic or superorganic cultural fields, high above practices on the ground." The meanings of Catholic and other foreign objects found on Abakuá altars (and, by extension, on those of the other Afro-Cuban religions), he wrote, were possibly more "particular, subtle, personal, and idiosyncratic," registering "very specific 'social meanings,' as opposed to 'iconographic' and 'iconological' meanings.[157]

Ivor Miller's study of the Abakuá also reflects on some of these ideas.[158] Like others before him, he reviewed the complex history of Abakuá and the island's hate-love relationship with the society. Like Palmie and Brown, Miller supported the importance of alternative sources, especially the "oral texts" as he called them, which were not stored in archives or libraries. Instead, they were "maintained within the minds and manuscripts of those leaders of these traditions."[159] Miller's treatment of Ortiz's work was not as critical

as that of past scholars, but his sources expressed their reserves about the scholarship in general.[160]

Among Miller's most important contributions, however, was his treatment of the state of affairs surrounding the persecution of the Abakuá in the nineteenth century and the resourceful scheme they devised to deceive colonial authorities.[161] Because Spain was losing its grip over its last remaining colony, he argued, it began a new campaign against African culture as a means to unite the island's dominant class, hoping to encourage greater loyalty among the population. The ensuing legislation banned the creation of new cabildos and compelled the existing ones to reform their statutes and mutate into associations.[162] Miller's claim countered Rebecca Scott's 1985 comment that Madrid was not supportive of this repressive move.[163] The assault on the Abakuá was another matter, though. Miller wrote that this was an "intentional farce," and cited Ortiz's and Cabrera's work to support his stance. They had written that Havana's civil governor, Don Carlos Rodríguez Batista, was himself an Abakuá.[164] When Abakuá fraternities were banned and forced by law to donate their society's *fundamentos* to the police, they surrendered mere replicas and kept the legitimate items. Batista, according to Miller, was probably aware of the Abakuás' subterfuge.[165]

Alejandra Bronfman's *Measures of Equality* is another extraordinary study that dealt with numerous questions regarding race and the social status of Afro-Cubans in nineteenth-century Cuba.[166] Resuming some of Palmie's discussion, Bronfman examined the era's discourse on race and the interchanges among intellectuals, white and black political figures, and a select sector of the Afro-Cuban community, of which the Lucumís seemed to have been the most vociferous. Her analysis of the evolution of the island's

social sciences in the first twenty years of the republic, and especially the school of anthropology at the University of Havana, was an important component of her examination.[167] Many of those intellectuals who were participating in the debate, including Ortiz and his student Israel Castellanos, were linked to the university. In time, Castellanos' romance with Darwinian-Lombrosian criminology and its supposed regenerative principles proved more resilient than Ortiz's, as Castellanos continued to apply this unfounded model to his persistent "study" of Cuban criminality and its relationship with *ñañiguismo* and *brujería*.[168]

Reasoning that "the elaboration of new ideologies of inequality to replace those that have fallen victim to historical circumstance" has interested scholars for years, Bronfman argued that relative attempts to include Afro-Cubans in the budding Cuban republic reinforced long-existing views about their inferiority, provoking debates on numerous fronts. Nonetheless, within this context, Cubans of color took advantage of the opportunities offered by these disputes to publicly challenge the dominant bigoted views. These confrontations were pivotal in transforming the emergent ideas about political identity and citizenship.[169]

The fact that many black Cubans were still practicing African religions and *brujería* aggravated matters, providing fertile ground for questions concerning the preparedness of blacks for inclusion in the republic and the exercise of the rights guaranteed to all Cubans by the 1902 constitution. Not only was race an issue, but so, too, was African culture and especially African religion because these represented atavisms from an uncivilized past that modernity hoped to eradicate.[170] Afro-Cubans were not yet seen as sufficiently civilized. Relying on the Zoila case to defend their argument,

opponents of Afro-Cubans' full inclusion stressed that they were not only uncivilized but also dangerous. Racist and inflammatory as it was, the exclusionist philosophy enraged Afro-Cuban elites and politicians who retorted in the media, contesting the accusations but ironically excoriating African religions at the same time. Like their white counterparts, they also projected a negative image of Afro-Cuban cultures and religions but detached themselves by drawing a line of demarcation that separated "them from us."[171]

The death of children was not uncommon in twentieth-century Cuba. Newspapers abounded with reports of children who had been murdered or found dead under mysterious circumstances, but never were any of these deaths associated with *brujería*. The Zoila case came right on the heels of another child murder that had incensed Havana, the case of Sebastián Fernández, immortalized by the media by his nickname, Tin Tan. He was an Afro-Cuban who was accused in the alleged attempted rape and death of a ten-year-old Spanish girl, Celia Ochoa, in Havana's El Vedado neighborhood.[172] Two days later, Tin Tan was in custody.[173] Though there were no connections between the particulars of this case and African religions, the death of the young girl was followed by a media frenzy that played on the theme of African backwardness. When Zoila disappeared a few months later, media hyperbole about these two occurrences contributed to the growing antipathy that was building in the society against people of color.

The author of the article that appeared in *La Discusión* on July 18, 1904, stressed that Tin Tan's appearance was "vulgar" and that his features denoted a "special seal that predisposes [one] against him," adding that "in his eyes can be seen something strange." The writer's description of Tin Tan sounded almost like an entry in one of Cesare

Lombroso's catalogues of criminals.[174] These efforts, as argued by Jorge Pavez Ojeda, were meant to transform the aesthetic appeal of those who were thus depicted, turning them into stereotypical markers to control the mimetic effects generalized by these images.[175] There was a clear connection between these attempts and the greater dialogue that was taking place over the position of Afro-Cubans in the new nation. Whereas before Tin Tan and Zoila, *brujos* "*se dedicaban a las sanas prácticas de la brujería*" (were dedicated to the simple practices of witchcraft), Zoila's death marked the moment in which *brujos* were depicted as sinister cannibals who sacrificed white children for witchcraft.[176]

The early years of the twentieth century were defining moments for Cuba and Afro-Cuban religions, but the attempts to denigrate and eliminate all African forms of worship were not new. Legends linking African religions with the murder and cannibalism of white children had appeared earlier, during the nineteenth century, following the establishment of the Haitian republic. Macabre stories almost identical to that of Zoila's murder circulated in the U.S. press. Reports and briefs about Voodoo in Haiti, Louisiana, and the U.S. south, and other Afro-American enclaves had been common in U.S. newspapers since at least the 1870s. According to the media, dark, menacing, and uncivilized Voodoo practitioners sacrificed many blue-eyed, blonde babies in the southern United States. The patterns that fueled the Cuban adoption of these distorted media smears were clear: articles in the Cuban media often coincided to the point of replicating the alleged cases that were appearing in the U.S. press. Biased press coverage of Voodoo and *brujería* circulated in the Cuban and U.S. press well into the 1930s.[177] The U.S. connection is difficult to dismiss.[178]

Bronfman's study is another important base precisely because it referred to the epoch that this study considers the Lucumí religion's moment of definition. The historical period covered in her book saw the resistance and accommodation of the prior century come to the fore, showing that the efforts of the earlier generations had not been in vain. In some ways, Palmie also shared this view when he reasoned that Afro-Cuba religions and modernity were scions of the same twentieth-century process defining the nation. Whereas he considered that this era witnessed the dawning of all Afro-Cuban traditions, the present study suggests that this was not their birth but rather the historical moment when each system demarcated its individual identity or had it delineated by foreign, though interested, actors.[179] Most important for the Lucumís, this period marked the religion's entrance into the public sphere and the start of discourse about its place within the burgeoning nation. In addition, in the development of this discourse, the Lucumís, with help from Ortiz, established their hegemony and their status at the pinnacle of the emergent Afro-Cuban social pyramid.

Measures of Equality was also significant in discussing the issue of race and its position in these debates. Bronfman contended that contemporary theories of racial difference were crucial in the developments and exchanges regarding politics, society, and race. Each, according to her argument, influenced the other and in the process changed the very meaning of race itself.[180] In *Governing Spirits*, another important study that examined some of the issues associated with the current investigation, Reinaldo Román reviewed the relationship that ensued between government and subaltern groups.[181] In some ways, Román seemed to supplement Bronfman's position on race by

adding that there were many layers to these processes, including, but not limited to "race-making practices, nation-building ideologies, and the prospects for 'progress'."[182]

Román also examined the clashes that arose when Cuba's and Puerto Rico's authorities became concerned with the influence of foreign religions in the modern state, fueling the creation of "zones of contest between religion and the state and the dominant and subaltern visions."[183] During an era of intense social and political transformations, these practices were potentially disruptive to the social order. The search for "progress…a commodious term" defined these practices as "morally corrupt." The opposing factions presented *brujos*, healers, spiritual visionaries, and saints as hindrances to modern ideas of politics and governance that were arising in the early twentieth century, after years of Spanish colonial rule. Román held that the "suspicion that 'superstitious' men and women could embrace misguided agendas gave rise to anxieties about the governments' capacity to keep moral and political order."[184]

Suggesting the adoption of a multidimensional approach, *Governing Spirits* maintained that the focus on racism and European intransigence limited the historical analysis' scope. Broader explorations of the era's dominant issues were seen as indispensable for reaching greater understanding. While Román's call for a more ample focus is totally valid, it is difficult to ignore the role of race in the conversations about identity that were an intrinsic part of these processes. That race was not the *only* factor is uncontestable, but it most definitely was a prominent one and a principal motivator for the disputes that ensued. The role of race is made even more evident when considering the hyperbole that the media created over *brujería*, Zoila, and an added dimension that Román highlighted, spiritualism. The "race card" was an intrinsic component of the

discourse. Cultural and religious practices that were inseparable from race because they were observed by people of color clashed with modernity and the expanding notions of class. Furthermore, these traditions conflicted with the drive to create a national identity as well as the nation's rising political direction. They were considered backward and uncivilized; thus, modernity, class consciousness, national identity, and nation building were all frustrated by the practices of a race. Obviously there is more to these contestations than race, but it was a fundamental factor in the conflict.

Román highlighted his argument about culture, religion, and modernity by comparing two Cuban spiritists: Hilario Mustelier Garzón and Juan Manso. Both men and their doctrines encountered considerable resistance, but while Manso was allowed a greater degree of liberty, Hilarión was jailed and mocked. Needless to say, Hilarión was black. Ironically, he had mentored Manso. Roman reiterated the point: Manso's race "shielded him from the suspicions that fell on blacks and their religious practices."[185] Clearly there was "more to their stories."[186] Román appropriately argued that these two cases were a reflection of the debates that were engulfing Cuba in the first decades of the twentieth century: the battles over modernity, order, and civilization. He recognized that attributing all blame to race was to ignore the greater catalysts that were propelling the era's drive, but it is also necessary to stress that race played a considerable role and was probably the principal factor, a fact that cannot be denied. Undoubtedly, race also contributed to the stereotypes that survive among Cubans to the day, a legacy of two centuries of contestations between whites and blacks.

The dawn of the twentieth century was a crucial epoch for the Lucumí because it was the precise moment in time that demarcated the place of the Afro-Cuban religions in

the discourse on Cuban identity as well as their future position in the Cuban nation. Of the three major Afro-Cuban traditions, Lucumí religion was the one faith that made what appears to have been the best appeal, using the media and all legal means at its disposal to defend its right to exist. In so doing, the *olorishas* that came to her defense refused to go away without a fight. Like a domino effect, this public manifestation of an African religion in a society that was attempting to become modern, of priests of Afro-Cuban religions willing to express their religiosity and claim that the new constitution's principles applied to them as well, provoked a counter-response.

While Afro-Cubans pursued their religious liberties guaranteed in the constitution, Ortiz and the Cuban intelligentsia countered with an ingenious campaign that made Afro-Cuban culture, religion included, more acceptable by folkloricizing it. The new movement eventually proved useful, belittling African religions by classifying them as folklore and not bonafide faiths. Román suggested that the study of these traditions, which local and foreign governments considered "suspect religious forms," provided a greater degree of control over their affairs. These investigations produced valuable "classification schemes" that officials could employ to distinguish between religion and hazardous superstitious practices."[187] Unfortunately, the effects of the folkloric reductionism continue to affect the perception most Cubans—white and black—have about blacks and African religions: *cosas de negros incultos e incivilizados* ([those] things of uncultured and uncivilized blacks).[188]

The adamant defense of Lucumí religion by its followers ignited Ortiz's curiosity, and eventually the young lawyer began conducting fieldwork—in fact, in some cases at devotees' behest. One can only speculate as to the exact details of Ortiz's personal

interchanges with members of the Lucumí community and especially with the organization directed by Fernando Guerra. What is clear, though, is that in the midst of this process, Ortiz began to undergo a transition that would eventually lead him to reverse the Lombrosian tenets he had championed in *Los negros brujos*. It is possible that Ortiz's apparent qualms about the effects of U.S. influence in Cuba fueled a new crusade that would reverse the growing fascination with all things North American. Modernity and the eradication of *brujería* lost its significance in the light of what he and his contemporaries considered a more imminent threat: the United States.[189]

Notes

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[4] Robert Richard Madden, *Observaciones sobre la esclavitud y comercio de esclavos: Informe del Dr. Madden sobre la esclavitud en la isla de Cuba*, ed. P.J.C. Alexander (Barcelona: Imprenta de A. Bergnes y Ca., 1841), 51; Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 199; "La Habana en 1800," *Revista Cubana* 1 (La Habana: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Soler, Álvarez y Comp., 1885), 457.

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[10] María del Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos: Negros en La Habana colonial* (La Habana: Ediciones Boloña, 2009), 18.

[11] Philip A. Howard, *Changing History. Afro-Cuban cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1998).

[12] Henry B. Lovejoy, "The Register of Liberated Africans of the Havana Slave Trade Commission: Transcription Methodology and Statistical Analysis," *African Economic History* 38, (2010): 107–135; Babatunde Sofela, *Emancipados—Slave Societies in Brazil and Cuba* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011).

[13] David Murray, *Odious Commerce—Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 75-77; Sofela, *Emancipados*, 98.

[14] Sofela, *Emancipados*, 107; Lovejoy, "The Register," 128-19.

[15] William C. van Norman Jr., "The Process of Cultural Change among Cuban Bozales during the Nineteenth Century," *The Americas* 62, no. 2 (October, 2005), 203-4.

[16] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 191; Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 82; Franklin W. Knight, "The Free Colored Population in Cuba during the Nineteenth Century," in *Slavery Without Sugar—Diversity in Caribbean Economy and Society Since the 17th Century*, ed. Verene A. Shepherd (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 230, 242; Naranjo Orovio, Consuelo Naranjo Orovio, "De la esclavitud a la criminalización de un grupo: la población de color en Cuba," *Op. Cit* 16 (2005), 24; Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Para librarse de lazos, antes buena familia que buenos brazos—Apunte sobre la manumisión en Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009), 94; García Rodríguez, *Voices of the Enslaved*, 14.

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[25] AHPM, *Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía*, exp. 2082, leg. 21, F. 13, "Carta al Gobernador de Felipe de la Cruz, capataz del cabildo."

[26] Howard, *Changing History*, xvii.

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[31] Jesús Guanche, *Procesos etnoculturales de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Letras Cubanas, 1983), 225; Paquette, *Sugar*, 53.

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[33] Lydia Cabrera, *El monte* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1975), 126.

[34] Miguel Barnet, *Biografía de un cimarrón* (La Habana: Editorial Academia, 1996), 27, 31.

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[36] Justo Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba. Apuntes para la historia política de esta isla en el presente siglo* (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1872), 2: 543-51.

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[39] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 191.

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[41] Esther Piedra (wife of Rolando Cartaya, Adeshina's grandson), interview with the author, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000.

[42] Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (henceforth TASTD), http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1840&yearTo=1844&flag=1.2&disembarkation=701; http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1845&yearTo=1866&flag=1.2&disembarkation=701.

[43] Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change—Hurricanes & the Transformation of Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 102-03.

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[45] Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Bracia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 36; Jane G. Landers, "Cimarrón and Citizen: African Ethnicity, Corporate Identity, and the Evolution of Free Black Towns in the Spanish Circum-Caribbean," in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives—Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 113-14; Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Esclavitud, familia y parroquia en Cuba: Otra mirada desde la microhistoria* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2008), 13.

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[47] Eladio Gutiérrez, Eshú'bí, personal conversation with the author, Parrágas, Havana, Cuba, May 2, 1984.

[48] Lula Pérez Tejeda, Obá Ikomeyé, interview with the author, Santiago de Cuba, June 21, 2010; Ester Sánchez García, Olufándeí (daughter of Amada Sánchez), interview with the author, Santiago de Cuba, June 22, 2010; historian Abelardo Larduet, interview with the author, Santiago de Cuba, June 25, 2010; Carlos Lloga, interview with the author, Santiago de Cuba, June 25, 2010.

[49] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 191; 216.

[50] Meriño and Perera Díaz, *Un café*, xiii.

[51] The researchers did not provide population statistics based on the censuses of 1841 and 1846. Unfortunately, these statistics did not provide the figures for the white and enslaved populations in 1846.

[52] Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Para librarse de lazos*, 163-64.

[53] Sofela, *Emancipados*, 105.

[54] Henry B. Lovejoy, *Old Oyo Influences on the Transformation of Lucumí Identity in Colonial Cuba* (PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2012).

[55] Ibid., 27-28.

[56] Ibid., 34, 52.

[57] José Luciano Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte* (La Habana: Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional, 1963), 11-12; Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux, "Etnias africanas en las sublevaciones de los esclavos en Cuba," *Revista Cubana de Ciencias Sociales* 4 (1986), 14-30; Miguel Ramos, *The Empire Beats on: Oyó, Batá Drums, and Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (master's thesis, Florida International University,

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[58] Ramos, *Empire*, 145-46.

[59] Lovejoy, *Old Oyo*, 163-72.

[60] Ibid., 95-96.

[61] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 120-21; Rosanne Marion Adderley, *"New Negroes from Africa"—Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 46-48.

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[66] de la Fuente, *A Nation for all*, 10, 16-17.

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[68] Helg, *Our Rightful Share*, 2-3.

[69] Ibid., 3.

[70] Ibid., 7.

[71] Ibid., 17-18.

[72] Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 135.

[73] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 3.

[74] Ibid., 4-5.

[75] De la Fuente, *A Nation for all*, 5.

[76] Ibid., 10.

[77] Ibid., 3.

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[79] Ibid., 20.

[80] Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality—Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 112-13.

[81] Ibid., 93.

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[115] Ibid., 31.

[116] Brown, *Light Inside*, 138.

[117] ILL, Fernando Ortiz Collection, caja 2, no. 9.35, "En la Audiencia: Los ñáñigos," *La Discusión*, June 13, 1902, p. 6; "Brujería y sortilegios-45 detenidos," *La Discusión*, July 6, 1903, p. 4; "El ñañiguismo y la brujería en La Habana," *Cuba*, January 25, 1911.

[118] Rómulo Lachatañeré, "La creencias religiosas de los afrocubanos y la falsa aplicación del término 'brujería'," in *El sistema religioso de los afrocubanos*, (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1992), 197.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid., 200.

[121] Lydia Cabrera, *La sociedad secreta Abakuá narrada por viejos adeptos* (Miami: Ediciones CR, 1969), 9.

[122] Lydia Cabrera, *Cuentos para adultos, niños, y retrasados mentales* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1999).

[123] Cabrera, *La Sociedad secreta*, 9-12.

[124] Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos*, 10.

[125] Ibid., 15.

[126] Guanche, *Procesos etnoculturales*, 232.

[127] Ibid., 21.

[128] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*.

[129] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 15.

[130] Ibid.

[131] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 13-14.

[132] Ibid., 25.

[133] Ibid., 25-26.

[134] Ibid., 29.

[135] Ibid., 190-91.

[136] David H. Brown, *Santería Enthroned—Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 77.

[137] Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, 4-5.

[138] Ibid., xi.

[139] Ibid., *Oral Tradition*, 8.

[140] García Rodríguez, *Voices of the Enslaved*, 3.

[141] Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 170.

[142] James Sweet, *Recreating Africa—Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hills: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 37, 53-57.

[143] Perera Díaz and Meriño Fuentes, *Para librarse de lazos*, 30.

[144] Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, 29.

[145] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 75.

[146] Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings, "Introduction," in *Sources and Methods in African History: Spoken, Written, Unearthed*, ed. Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003), xv.

[147] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 8-9.

[148] Brown, *Santería Enthroned,* 62-112.

[149] Helg, *Our Rightful Share*, 17; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 57-58.

[150] Helg, *Our Rightful Share*, 96; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 58.

[151] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 58.

[152] Brown, *Light Inside*, 7.

[153] Ibid., 133-167.

[154] Ibid., 132.

[155] Ibid., 5.

[156] Fernando Ortiz, *Hampa afrocubana—Los negros brujos* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1973), 18. I must recognize the value of the discussions I have had over the years with sociologist Teresita Pedraza. It was through her definition and understanding of this phenomenon that I initially grew to appreciate the significance of this process in the transmission of African religion in Cuba.

[157] Ortiz, *Los negros brujos*, 18.

[158] Miller, *Voice of the Leopard*.

[159] Ibid., 7.

[160] Ibid., 9-10; 22.

[161] Ibid., 142-45.

[162] Ortiz, *Los cabildos*, 11.

[163] Scott, *Slave Emancipation*, 267-68.

[164] Ibid., 140-43; 276n41.

[165] Ibid., 141-42.

[166] Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*.

[167] Ibid., 6-7.

[168] Ibid., 62-64.

[169] Ibid., 3-4

[170] Ibid., 22-23.

[171] Ibid., 19.

[172] N.A. "Espantoso asesinato de una niña de diez años," *La Discusión*, July 16, 1904, p. 1.

[173] Ibid., pp. 1, 10.

[174] Ibid., p. 10.

[175] Jorge Pavez Ojeda, "El retrato de los 'negros brujos'. Los archivos visuales de la antropología afrocubana (1900-1920)," *Aisthesis* 46, (2009): 84.

[176] N.A. "Brujos," *La Discusión*, January 21, 1901, pp. 3, 22.

[177] "Witchcraft Scare in Cuba," *New York Times*, March 17, 1930, p. 8; "Held as Witch in Killing," *New York Times*, March 30, 1930, p. 9; ILL, Fernando Ortiz Collection, caja 2, no. 9.35, "Se adoraba a 'Changó', 'Yemayá' y otros idólos en un extraño templo que fué descubierto por la policía de Regla," January 22, 1932.

[178] "A Voodoo Tragedy," *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 9, 1872, p. 2; "In a City of Horrors," *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 29, 1888, p. 16; "Child as Sacrifice," *The North American* (Philadelphia), November 1, 1899, p. 9; Obeahism in Haiti," *Vermont Watchman & State Journal*, May 12, 1897, p. 2.

[179] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 15, 17.

[180] Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 5.

[181] Reinaldo L. Román, *Governing Spirits—Religion, Miracles, and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1956* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[182] Ibid., 5.

[183] Ibid., 80.

[184] Ibid., 5.

[185] Ibid., 47.

[186] Ibid., 24.

[187] Ibid., 14.

[188] I first heard this expression from my paternal grandmother. Of Asturian descent, she expressed many of the prejudices of the times. Eventually, she was ordained to Shangó, but often continued to refer to Africans as uncultured. I have heard many Cubans, white and black, express this thought: *cosas de negros incultos e incivilizados*. From an emphatic belief probably born in the early twentieth century, the phrase continues in vogue to this very day. Undoubtedly, it has lost some of the harsh significance that it enjoyed

in the early 1900s; nonetheless, its survival to the present denotes the psychological effects of the prejudices that prevail among Cubans, on the island and in the Cuban Diaspora, to this day.

[189] Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 112.

Chapter III: Ethnicity, Ethnies, and Ethnonyms

Ethnic Groups

Cuba was probably second only to Brazil in terms of the number of African slaves it imported. The actual number of people brought to the island as slaves is still under revision. Many never made it to their destinations. Most estimates for Cuba agree that about 1,000,000 Africans were brought to the island during the trade. The Eltis Database, however, estimates that over 700,000 of the 1,200,000 enslaved Africans that were brought to the Spanish dominions in the New World disembarked in Cuba. The vast majority arrived between 1780 and 1866, the last recorded year in the database, but there were clandestine landings in Cuba until the 1870s.[1] In all probability, the figures are higher than the database estimates. The issue remains unresolved. Current research has argued that most African slaves originated from a limited number of regions and not the entire continent.[2] Historian Douglas Chambers, a specialist on social and cultural history whose work focuses on Atlantic Africa and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, has questioned the limited regions of origin view, primarily defended by another celebrated historian, John Thornton. Chambers has espoused the theory that, at least from the Atlantic side, the evidence argues in favor of greater heterogeneity.[3]

Relevant to this debate about regions of origin are the ethnonyms—names or designations given to a particular people—that were applied on the coast of Africa and in the Americas to the people imported on slave ships. The vast majority of African slaves in the Americas were classified using ten or fewer ethnonyms. In many Latin American regions, Africans were also collectively classified as members of *naciones* (nations),

castas (castes) and on rare occasions, *tribus* (tribes). *Naciones* were based primarily on the slave's geographical origin or the port of embarkation as well as dominant ethnonyms applied in that region. In many cases, these *naciones* or ethnic classifications may have been foreign concepts to some of the Africans they identified. Social scientists continue to debate whether the idea of a "nation" and a common ethnonym to identify specific African cultural groups may have been solidified in the Americas.[4]

Since the 1960s or so, the term *ethnicity*, introduced by anthropologists and sociologists, has become the term of choice and is currently preferred over the word "*tribe*" by most social scientists.[5] *Ethnicity* refers to groups of people that share a common ancestry, culture, history, and sense of identity, that are perceived by outsiders as being culturally distinctive. The phrase "*ethnic group*" is intrinsically linked to *contact* and *interrelationship*, as these terms are never significant in isolation. For a people to be an ethnic group, a mutual consensus must exist among the group's members that this is so, whether or not this recognition is openly expressed or voiced. Anthropologists posit that in the strictest sense, ethnic groups remain relatively separated from each other but they are aware of, and often in contact with, members of other ethnic groups. The ethnic categories are often born from that very contact, as generally the identity of a group is defined in relationship to its differences from other groups.[6] Employing a Marxist approach, Cuba's Jesús Guanche associated the development of an ethnos, or ethnic group, with a society's expansion and transformation. He argued that an ethnic group had to acquire an awareness of itself as a culture, which he called "ethnic consciousness," characterized by self-identification as a community and sharing basic assumptions about common origin and historical trajectories.[7]

Chambers argued that *ethnie* would be a more suitable term to classify most Africans. To qualify as an ethnie, the group must share myths of a common ancestry, a collective history, a link to a specific geographical location, and one or more elements of a shared culture. Chambers established specific distinctions between ethnie and ethnicity. By his definition, the latter encompasses the "cultural intangibles" that are common to ethnies. Chambers acknowledged that identities can overlap, as all groups and individuals develop responses that are conditioned by the different situations they confront. His study also accentuated that ethnies and ethnicities could only exist as the result of direct contact with others that are not like them, thereby creating the need to "distinguish 'us' from 'them'."[8]

An ethnonym may not always originate or be commonly adopted by a specific ethnic group. Sometimes foreigners impose these labels after initial or continued contact with the population. Such is the case of the !Kung or San "Bushmen" of the Kalahari Desert.[9] Similarly, toponyms, designations derived from the name of a geographical location, are signifiers that originate with outsiders. These are seldom, if ever, used by the people to whom they refer until much later. Such is the case of the terms "*Angola*" and "*Mozambique*," commonly used in Cuba and Brazil as toponyms for various peoples originating in those specific geographic regions.

Scholars from many academic disciplines have deliberated on the problem of slave ethnicity and nomenclature for quite some time.[10] Even Fernando Ortiz, as early as 1916, when he published his research on the African groups in Cuba, expressed his worries about the nomenclature dilemma.[11] Despite recent studies of great significance by Cuban scholars, inquiry is further complicated by the island's political situation since the

1959 revolution, which makes research by foreign scholars a more complex process.[12] Academics are currently making strong headway, but there is still much ground to cover. For Afro-Cubans, Cubans in general, and people of African descent in the Americas, the study of New World culture's African components is of immense significance. Similarly, studies of African ethnicity in the Americas is of great importance to Africa in light of the rapidly spreading Europeanization of the continent, as a result of which much of Africa's cultural traditions and ethnic identity—even languages—appear to be diminishing in favor of foreign elements.[13]

As the investigations and disputes continue, they undeniably benefit the debate because they contribute toward clarification of the overall picture. Africans may have come to the island aboard Christopher Columbus's ships, but the greater part of those who were brought to Cuba arrived in the last years of the eighteenth century and continued to do so until the 1870s.[14] The issue of ethnic nomenclature presents the greatest challenge for historians precisely after the slave trade to Cuba expanded in the latter eighteenth century, when the number of slave imports began to reach its highest proportions.

The difficulties associated with the identification of African ethnic groups in the Americas are plentiful, especially given the haphazard system of classification used by slave traders and the colonial authorities.[15] Additionally, this was what historian David Northrup referred to as an era of exploration, and Europeans and Africans were in fact enmeshed in a complex process of "discovering" each other.[16] As past research has indicated, the subject of "nations" is an intricate subject of academic debate. While some diasporic Africans may have identified themselves as members of what was eventually

associated with a specific ethnie or tribe, it is probable that many African peoples were not fully cognizant of themselves as composing a nation in the strictest sense of the term.[17] Additionally, if we accept the possible existence of African "nations" prior to the encounter between Africans and Europeans, many of these were probably known by designations that may have changed over time, as is the case with the use of the word *Yoruba*, which came into vogue during the mid-nineteenth century, before which time, there was no Yoruba "nation" to speak of.[18] Some African peoples were identified by ethnic denominations given by their neighbors. The Yorubas were known in Dahomey as Nagó, a term that was later used in Sierra Leone, Haiti and Brazil.[19]

The port of origin also affected which ethnonym was assigned. Many slaves were identified according to the port from which they departed. Such may be the case of the Carabalís, the Angolas, the Minas (who were brought from the environs of the Portuguese factory Sao Jorge de Minas on the Gold Coast), and the Cabo Verdes (who bought in or transported from the island of Cabo Verde, off the African coast). Slaves purchased on the Guinea coast arguably included a good number of people from varying regions; thus, anyone shipped from there was inaccurately documented as "Guineo." There are also orthographical issues. Spelling could vary according to the European language in which they were documented, as most ethnonyms and toponyms were spelled phonetically. *Locumí*, *Ulkumí*, *Oloukumí* and *Locumee* were all rendered as possible spellings of the ethnonym for the people today known as Yoruba.

Historians have often maintained that slave traders identified their cargo arbitrarily, applying ethnonyms at whim, using very broad categories, or as determined by circumstance.[20] The place of purchase may have taken precedence; thus many

Africans were branded according to the port where they were bought, even if this did not reflect the person's true origin or ethnie.[21] Europeans, however, were not the only ones misclassifying and creating new ethnonyms that would eventually enter the slave traders' logs. It is plausible that African middlemen transporting their human "cargo" to the coast misclassified the captives before selling them to the Europeans. There are documented cases where slaves were given names that may have reflected other circumstances, sometimes by their own countrymen. Traveling through the Lesser Antilles in the 1770s, Christian Oldendorp noted that the Tjambas (Chambas) called some of their countrymen *Kassenti*. He was told that the term meant, "I do not understand you," and was commonly cried out by members of this group when captured in slave raids.[22]

Africans surely had notions of belonging to a group or clan, even if the identifiers they themselves used were not necessarily the ethnonym or toponym that was later adopted by them or applied to them by outsiders. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, who specializes in the study of slavery in the southern United States, wrote that even when the traders used varying designations for their human merchandise, Africans, when asked to identify their nation, might have responded with the name of their village instead. She reasoned that although they did not necessarily identify themselves as members of a particular ethnic group, Africans did not lack a broad sense of self-identity, nor were they so insulated as to lack concepts of other peoples.[23] Olatunji Ojo, a Yoruba historian, has argued similarly. In fact, he indicated that in the case of the Yorubas in the Diaspora, they carried cultural and ethnic "resources…[and] cultural artifacts" that were "simultaneously molded into meaningful ideology, which became Yoruba ethnicity."[24]

Conversely, these views have been challenged. Though recognizing a series of possible problems in the recording of slave origins and identities, many historians and anthropologists place some confidence in documentation of the era. In 1944, Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán published a groundbreaking study on the ethnic origins of the Afro-Mexican population. Aguirre Beltrán was a Mexican surgeon who later obtained an anthropology degree under the tutelage of Melville Herskovits. His study was the first of its kind for Mexico, so he had to rely on scholarship from Africa and other areas of the Americas. The work of Brazil's Nina Rodrigues and Cuba's Fernando Ortiz indisputably influenced his investigation.[25]

According to Aguirre Beltrán, on the African coast, slaves were subjected to numerous examinations. Before loading them onto the slave ship, each African went through a detailed physical and medical assessment. Slavers wanted to transport the healthiest and strongest to avoid as many deaths as possible during the journey. Any scars and other marks on the body were carefully examined and annotated, along with other details about the slave's origin that could provide indicators as to their possible characteristics and behavioral tendencies. By so doing, they hoped to discover specific personality traits about the slave, which were often associated with a nation or place of origin. Slaves were categorized based on traits that the traders perceived. Any indicators that could suggest docility, rebelliousness, laziness, or inability to perform the tasks that they would be assigned were consistently recorded. These observations provided potential buyers on the African coast with the ability to "differentiate one black from the other…and one nation from another nation."[26]

Succeeding scholars have taken the same position as Aguirre Beltrán. Some have argued that there is little merit to the claims about the misclassification of the African slaves. The renowned Cuban historian Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, probably best known for his research on Cuban plantations and sugar production, fervently countered other social scientists' opinions about slave misclassification. His position was "the complete opposite," emphasizing, as Aguirre Beltrán had done before him, that because of the very nature of the slave trade, a massive business venture that "involved the greatest amount of capital investment in the world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries," traders were forced to keep a meaningful system of classification. If modern ethnic designations differ from those used by the traders in the past, Moreno-Fraginals reasoned, this does not necessarily confirm that the latter lacked significance at the time.[27] Later historians have supported this view as well.[28]

Herman L. Bennett appeared to support Moreno-Fraginals's overall argument. From his perspective, categorizing Africans using specific ethnonyms served several purposes, the most important of which was legitimizing enslavement. By Spanish law, some Africans could be exempt from slavery. Importing Muslims, for example, was forbidden. Cataloguing the slave's ethnie properly curtailed the possibility of committing a mistake of this sort. Bennett stressed that these labels structured the trade and administration of slaves in the colonies. The Portuguese and Spanish, he wrote, "focused on minutia of 'identity,' giving Africans labels that became the administrative categories in the New World and subsequently entered the colonial archives."[29]

David Eltis considered that slave traders were aware of differences between the peoples they purchased on the coasts; he stressed "the importance of African nationhood

in the shaping of the plantation regimes." It was vital to the survival of the business, as the financial success of the plantation owners in the Americas had a direct impact on the slave traders' own ventures. He wrote that owners contemplated numerous elements before deciding on the purchase of a slave. These included such things as diet, knowledge of crops, and any possible animosities between differing peoples because they were intrinsically and inexorably associated with the slaves' self-definitions.[30]

The documentation process changed during the nineteenth century with the last-minute scramble to collect as many slaves as possible because the end of the slave trade loomed on the horizon. In the nineteenth century, most slave traders and buyers on the African coast and in the few bastions of slavery that remained in the Americas cared little about the origin of their "pieces of ebony." The primary interest was obtaining laborers for their plantations. Subsequently, in the midst of the rush to escape the British patrols on the coast of Africa and in the Atlantic, many shortcuts were taken, and exact classification may have suffered. During this period, numerous slaves brought to the Americas were incorrectly classified. As well, Cuba's clandestine slave trade, which began after the 1821 Anglo-Spanish treaty took effect, made it unnecessary for slavers to provide the authorities with any accurate documentation about the origin of their cargo. In many cases, unlawfully imported slaves were replacements for slaves who had died. Since their introduction was illegal, there was a definite need to establish such slaves' status as lawful; thus they were given the name and ethnic nomenclature of the deceased slave whose place they were taking.[31]

In the light of his controversial position on the nomenclature dilemma, Moreno-Fraginals's study of Cuban estates and their slave populations using plantation records is

still very significant. On the basis of his findings, the great majority of the island's slaves who were imported between 1760 and 1870 could be classified into fewer than ten groups. Among these, the Congos, Gangás, Carabalís, Mandingas, Lucumís, Minas, and Ararás were possibly the most noticeable.[32] This list of the ethnic origins of slaves on Cuban plantations, born from Moreno Fraginals's own work, in some ways counters his argument about because it seems to allow greater support for the theories positing that slaves in the Americas originated in a limited number of geographical regions in Africa. The parish records from the churches of Regla and Matanzas that were consulted for the present research also lend credence to this notion as it applies to Cuba.

Congos, Carabalís, and Lucumís were frequently described and compared in the slavery-era literature. For a variety of reasons, many of these early chroniclers and scholars devoted considerable time to the observation and study of Africans in captivity. They faithfully recorded data that have proven valuable to the generations of scholars that followed. In many cases, their observations were perceptive and evocative, even when they reflected the dominant biases of the era. From this early literature, it is possible to infer that a noticeable preference for the Lucumís already prevailed at this time. The Congos, however, were repeatedly cast in less favorable light, usually characterized as one of the more difficult and less desirable groups. The Lucumís came across as hard workers and generally faithful, while the Congos were largely depicted as lazy and irresponsible. Unbeknownst to them at the time, these early writers laid the foundations for the social pyramid that was erected in the twentieth century that stratified Afro-Cubans based on idealized or romanticized notions of evolutionary stages analogous to those first proposed by sociologist Herbert Spencer.

The Earliest Social Scientist

The study of African ethnic groups began long before Africans were a significant presence in Cuba. In all probability, much of the preliminary data for many of the descriptions of Africans that gained popularity in Cuba after slavery's expansion originated in the work of the seventeenth-century Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval. In Book One of his *Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catecismo evangélico de todos los etiopes*, the priest documented his observations, experiences, and efforts among the slaves that he encountered in Cartagena, Colombia.[33]

In de Sandoval's time, Africans were frequently called *Etíopes*, or Ethiopians, those people that given "their color, we commonly call black." Despite his euro-Christian ethnocentrism, de Sandoval's descriptions were detailed and exact but seldom injurious. His position on slavery was also very clear, but unlike Bartolomé de las Casas, who came to the rescue of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, de Sandoval never pled on behalf of the Africans.

According to the priest's writings, Africans shipped to Cartagena came from four principal ports: the rivers and ports of Guinea and its hinterland, the port of Loanda (Loango) or Angola, and the islands of Cabo Verde and São Tomé, off the Continent's Atlantic coast. The people of the Guinea coast were much favored by the Spaniards because they were the most laborious and loyal; thus, they were more expensive.[34] De Sandoval associated various groups with those he classified as "Guineos" and, though he said they were too numerous to list, provided ethnonyms for the people he identified as Guinea natives.[35]

Many other Africans were exported from the ports of Cabo Verde and São Tomé, islands that had been discovered and colonized by the Portuguese. Countless West Africans were taken there as slaves to work on wheat and sugarcane plantations. De Sandoval wrote that these islands were typically redistribution centers for slaves who were later taken to the Americas; they were for the most part either African captives, creoles born in Africa and raised in the islands, or native-born islanders. The latter two were fluent Portuguese speakers and Christians from birth.[36]

These slaves were not as esteemed as those that came from Guinea's rivers and ports. They were not deemed trustworthy, yet they were costlier than the Angolas and Congos because they were more resistant to disease, more patient when struck by misfortune, and less likely to escape. Amongst this group were the Minas, Popos, Fulaos, Ardas [Ararás], Lucumí, Temnes, and "pure" Carabalís and their subgroups. Finally, the Angolas and Congos, shipped from Loanda—whom de Sandoval sometimes subsumed into a single group—were described in the most disparaging terms, a stigma that apparently pursued them during the centuries that followed.[37]

In total, de Sandoval classified well over 150 different African ethnic groups, some in great detail, and included in his descriptions information about their geographic location, religious beliefs, cultural practices, languages, and other details that he deemed meaningful. De Sandoval's influence was not difficult to find in later years. Examination of the literature that followed the Jesuit's compilations clearly confirms that he set the foundations for later works, academic and lay, many of which reflected either their author's deep entanglement in the era's ignorance, arrogance, and prejudice or, conversely, their abhorrence for slavery.

The Travelers and the Novelists

Almost 200 years to the date after de Sandoval's book was published, the New Englander Abiel Abbot, a Christian reverend, visited Cuba and provided impressions of the Africans' "national character" that he claimed to gather from the conversations that he had with several Cuban planters. Abbot wrote about the "Carrobalees," known for their arrogance. He said that the Mandingos were excellent workers and numerous, but the Gangas, also numerous, were thieves and prone to escape, just like the Fantee. In short, Abbot confirmed, or possibly regurgitated, what de Sandoval had stated earlier.[38]

The mostly negative descriptions about Africans soon grew out of proportion, circulating all over the island and especially in areas with large slave populations or free people of color. After Abbot's letters were published, several travelers and other writers repeated embellished versions of his and de Sandoval's descriptions, often duplicating inconsistencies in their works. The researcher can only speculate about the reasons for these great similarities, but the evidence of plagiarism, surely very common in the era, is compelling. It is just as plausible that many educated islanders, possibly those who had the most to lose if slavery was abolished, read and adopted the earlier descriptions and then conveniently propagated them or actually believed them.

In 1844, John G.F. Wurderman, a doctor from South Carolina, chronicled in his travel log what he claimed to have learned about certain African ethnic groups while on a trip through Cuba. Wurderman's observations were generally perceptive, but as Robert L. Paquette stressed, the doctor's reflections regarding Africans in Cuba may not have been his own.[39] For Wurderman, the Carabalís, Lucumís, and Lalas were warlike and explosive, characteristics that they had shared in Africa. It was essential to monitor them

closely. And the Congo stigma, first put to paper by de Sandoval, was intensified. Now, besides being hopeless and useless, they were also described as "stupid, great drunkards and sensualists."[40]

Thereafter, Wurderman's book was frequently mentioned in other travel journals. One travel guide cited Wurderman's description of Lucumí fierceness ("the Caribs of Africa") as well as of their pride and propensity to commit suicide. The writer recounted Wurderman's version of an event on a Cuban plantation in which a group of Lucumís rebelled when the plantation's overseer decided to punish one as an example to the rest. The slave's insubordination created so much chaos that the overseer had to summon the absentee owner, who immediately returned to the plantation and witnessed the Lucumí uprising. Supposedly, the Lucumís assembled after the punished slave had committed suicide because of the disgrace the punishment had brought upon their comrade. They began "dancing their war-dance" around the tree from which their fellow compatriot's lifeless body hung.

The story went on to state that the planter, seeing the futility of confronting the Lucumís with force, assured them that henceforth they would be treated kindly. He ordered that they lower the body from the tree and authorized them to "bury their friend with all the honours of their savage wake."[41] The travel guide was not the only one who repeated this story. Fredrika Bremer recounted it in her *The Homes of the New World*, and William Henry Hurlbert included it in his 1854 publication *Gan-Eden: or Pictures of Cuba*.[42] In fact, the traveler's guide's version was copied word for word in Hurlbert's account.

Fredrika Bremer, the Swedish traveler who spent a few months in Cuba in 1851, also commented on the different ethnic groups she encountered. Bremer was especially sympathetic with the slaves and often had very harsh things to say about slavery and the brutal treatment that she witnessed. She seemed to like the Lucumí or at least found that they looked less like “animals” than the Congos and the Gangás. Bremer also reiterated the biases that were by now attached to the common perceptions about the Congos.[43]

The impressions of another traveler, who visited the island a bit after Bremer, are also worthy of note. For Maturin Murray Ballou, who traveled through the island in 1854, Cuba was the “hot-bed of slavery.” Ballou had much to say about the characteristics of the various Africans he claimed to observe in Cuba, though his observations clearly originated elsewhere. Interestingly, even his spelling of the ethnonyms is identical to Abott’s.[44]

In *Palmy Days in Cuba*, Fanny Hale Gardiner and her alleged interviewee also drew heavily on Abbot’s descriptions. Gardiner claimed to have transcribed the memories of Doña Carolina, a “dear old lady whose narratives of her girlhood there [in Cuba] were like Arabian Nights' tales.” Carolina, supposedly born in 1830, was reported to have provided elaborated descriptions of the African tribes in Cuba as she remembered them from her childhood.[45]

The Historians

Historians were not the progenitors of the study of African ethnicity and associated nomenclatures. In fact, this school of inquiry began with an early group of primarily untrained social scientists, clergy, doctors, writers, and travelers, who for various reasons

began amassing information about Africans ethnies and ethnonyms in considerable detail. Surely, the documentation began as early as the first encounter between Europeans and the continent to their south. Africans were already in Europe before 1484, the year in which Diogo Cão first arrived at the mouth of the Congo River and encountered the Kingdom of Kongo.[46] Portuguese sailors and Catholic missionaries documented much about the people they met, in many cases with considerable attention. The work of Capuchin monk Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, who lived in Kongo in the seventeenth century, is one of several manuscripts in which Europeans recorded details about the peoples they encountered, their societies, cultures, and tribal identities.[47]

One of the early Cuban historians was the creole José María de la Torre, who was also a geographer and archaeologist. In 1854, de la Torre published several descriptions of Cuba's African ethnies. At the time, de la Torre made a remarkable claim: the "humane treatment" given to the slaves had not accomplished the desired goal—encouraging them to propagate. Although the island's climate was similar to that of their homelands, there were no more than just over a half million Africans in Cuba, despite their "considerable and constant introduction."[48] Like others, de la Torre echoed the recurrent legends based on the notions and stigmas that circulated in Cuba about the specific African *naciones*, legends that he surely took from the travel journals and that would be repeated yet again by subsequent writers. The great similarity between the portrayals of Africans in de la Torre's book and those of earlier publications cannot be dismissed.

African ethnonyms appeared in the 1875 edition of Esteban Pichardo Tapia's *Diccionario provincial casi razonado de vozes y frases cubanas*.[49] Pichardo included

entries for the major ethnonyms, among which he listed the prevailing groups in Cuba: the Ararás, Carabalís, Congos, Gangás, Lucumís, Mandingas, and Minas—as well as some of their subgroups.[50] Most sections have a supplement after the last entry for each letter containing material that was not included in the first edition. The ethnonyms do not appear in the supplement, indicating that they were probably included in the original 1861 edition.

Without a doubt, Pichardo's data originated from several sources. Much of Abbot's work, as well as the research of Henri Dumont, a French doctor who spent a considerable portion of his life attending sick slaves on eastern Cuban plantations, was incorporated into Pichardo's book. Surely, he also had access to other such publications, including Bremer's *Homes of the New World* and Ballou's *Due South*. Still, Pichardo was the first nineteenth-century writer to begin setting the record straight about Cuba's African ethnic groups, even if he, too, occasionally fell back upon his predecessors' often-repeated prejudices. He was definitely more cautious than his forerunners; specific omissions in Pichardo's *Diccionario* seem to clarify or correct the earlier writers' biases or errors.[51] All things considered, Pichardo's work is important because it was the first attempt at achieving a greater and more objective understanding of the African ethnic groups that were brought to Cuba.

The Physicians

The first official and methodical study of African ethnicity in Cuba dates to the eighteenth century and was not produced by a historian. As early as 1798, the Aragonese doctor Francisco Barrera y Domingo, who lived on a Cuban plantation in Oriente

Province, began accumulating notes on specific ethnic groups. Barrera y Domingo was researching melancholia, a medical condition suffered by many Africans after enslavement, and characterized by severe depression, guilt, hopelessness, and withdrawal. He claimed that the condition was most common among the Vivís (Bibís), Carabalís, and Minas.[52] It was slavery and the lack of freedom, he argued, that caused this malady among recently arrived Africans.[53]

The work of the previously mentioned French doctor Henri Dumont, who resided in Cuba from 1864 to 1866, has parallels to other studies. Dumont also gathered extensive notes about Africans. In 1876, he finished assembling his field notes, which included photographs and drawings and contained clear though often-unacknowledged references to earlier published sources, as well as personal conversations with Africans and slave traders. The initial draft remained unpublished until the twentieth century. Dumont's field notes proved indispensable for Ortiz's twentieth-century publication of *Los negros esclavos*, his celebrated classification of Africans in Cuba.[54]

During his stay on the island, Dumont took interest in studying the slaves' deportment, habits, history, religion, health, language, and other details that he later used to further his research on immunization. Dumont was very meticulous, taking very specific notes. He also consulted information that had been documented by earlier writers, including de Sandoval, Abbot, de La Torre, and possibly Pichardo. Dumont's research would later benefit scholars of Africa in Cuba and elsewhere. In his case histories, he noted his patients' African names, approximate ages, the number of children they had, height, and other physical details that he recorded in significant detail.

Dumont noted that the Lucumís were the most numerous and interesting of all the blacks that he observed in the infirmaries and plantations. He was most definitely confused, however. Apparently, Dumont assumed that other non-Lucumí groups taken from the neighboring regions were subgroups of the Lucumís. Given that their cultures and phenotypes were very similar, many people taken from ports in this region were identified as Lucumís when in reality they were not.[55] They may have shared many cultural similarities, but they were not the same peoples.

According to one Dr. M. Moreno, a "distinguished and esteemed colleague" from Guanabacoa, who may have been a slave trader and had traveled to the coast of Africa eight times, the Lucumís from Juda [Ouidah] were the most superstitious people on the African coast: they were snake worshippers. Dumont recounted Moreno's narrative about his participation and observations during a "Lucumí" ritual.[56] Probably, what Moreno saw and described may have been a ritual associated with the Fon (Arará) worship of Dan or Aido Hwedó, the Supreme Being, typically depicted riding a python or by a snake eating its tail.[57] With roots in ancient Dahomey (modern-day Benin), the Fon are directly related to the people known in Cuba as the Ararás, neighbors of the Lucumís. In Cuba, and especially in Simpson, these two groups frequently interacted and shared in each other's rites.[58]

Dumont's own bewilderment with the Lucumís became evident when he wrote that distinguishing them was challenging but that once identified "in the midst of the most numerous population of slaves, no matter how populous or complex it may be, they are extremely easy to recognize." The Lucumís apparently caught his attention, and in his

notes, Dumont provided what is probably the era's most complete synopsis of the ethnie.[59]

Although they often suffered from acute anemia (possibly sickle cell anemia, unidentified at the time), the Lucumís were otherwise exceptionally fit for arduous labor.[60] Dumont took special notice of vertical parallel scars that he observed on the legs of some Lucumís. He said that though some had told him they suffered these cuts when they came into contact with the sharp edges of the sugarcane leaves, Dumont believed that they were too uniform to have occurred accidentally. Later, he learned from others that scarification was traditional in Lucumí societies, where children received their *ilás* (tribal marks) soon after birth.[61]

Dumont claimed that when compared to other groups, the Lucumís enjoyed a higher degree of manumission and a propensity to prosper and accumulate money to rescue themselves from bondage. They were most often sought by the planters, despite their tendency to commit suicide. Their men were especially clean and paid close attention to their hygiene, more so than the women. They generally enjoyed excellent health, which Dumont attributed to their inherent physical makeup and not to any circumstances associated with their surroundings.[62] His overall evaluation of the Lucumís depicted them as an abundant group, found "in all the warehouses and mercantile deposits of Cuba's ports, as on the plantations as well"; being hard workers, dependable (especially for complex tasks), modest and loyal, and above all accepting of their condition as slaves, there was no better "race" than the Lucumís.[63] Dumont even documented some phrases in Lucumí. He argued that learning some of the African languages was imperative for properly diagnosing the illnesses that the slaves suffered so

as to "keep human medicine from acquiring the physiognomy of veterinary medicine that it takes on when applied to the Africans that in Cuba we call *bozales* [recently arrived]." Notably, Dumont prepared a small two-page questionnaire that doctors could use when treating recently arrived Africans.[64]

His appreciation for the Lucumís was curious in comparison to his commentaries about some of the others. The Mandingas, according to Dumont, were superior to the rest given their "natural intelligence," their level of culture, and their progressive spirit. Like de la Torre, he associated their character with their connection to Arabic civilization. "Their great advancement as a people allowed them to write, stimulate the quill, associate letters, form words, phrases and express sincere thinking by using them."[65] According to Dumont's criteria, the Minas were not as robust as the Lucumís. They were more delicate, impressionable, weak when assailed by disease, especially those aggravated by "constant variations in temperature that—like all the members of their race—leads them to greatly exaggerate their state and pain if it exists at all."[66] One Mina named Eugenio caught his attention. Dumont discussed his case in some detail possibly because Dumont's friend Moreno had brought him back from one of his trips to Africa. Given Eugenio's and his owner's complaints about his constant sleepiness, he may have been bitten by a tsetse fly in his native region of Africa, where this insect is common, or he may have suffered from anemia or a similar condition. Moreno was irritated, assuming that Eugenio was simply lazy or feigning an illness to avoid work.[67]

Carabalís occupied the center of Dumont's scale of strength and musculature. They were lovers of work, responsible, and complied with their obligations, trustworthy, and good at managing their money. The needs of their family were their primary concern.

When free, the stronger men amassed small fortunes working on the docks, and the women and weaker men did so as well, selling fruit on the streets and avenues of the city.[68] They originated from two points on the West African coast in the area of the Cross River basin, Old and New Calabar, and their characteristics differed on the basis of region of origin.[69] Those from Old Calabar were "more civilized" because they had enjoyed more frequent dealings with whites. Those who lived on the banks of the Bonny River to the west of Old Calabar were the Carabalís proper. The Bibís, Brichis and Carabalí Hatams were all subgroups or "types" of Carabalís who inhabited the hinterland. Bibís were inferior to those from Old Calabar; their nature was as "indomitable, violent and vengeful; frequently inclined to suicide like the Lucumís.[70]

The Loangos and the Congos Reales were the two most common Congo subgroups in Cuba. Like his predecessors, though, Dumont did not have a favorable opinion of the Congos. In fact, Dumont considered the Congos childish and not worth studying, reasoning that they had little to contribute to his research. Congos lacked elegance, grace, gallantry, poise, perseverance, valor, dignity, and "other brilliant and always sympathetic qualities" common to other Africans; all these were absent "almost always in the black Congos."[71]

Dumont went on to state that even though the Congos had not achieved the levels of the Mandingas, Lucumís, and Carabalís, they had managed to provide something that was truly characteristic of them as a people: they were the soul and happiness of the plantations, to which they had contributed chants, dances and drumbeats. Any drumming, singing, and merrymaking that occurred on the plantation, Dumont emphasized, was linked to the Congos, even when there were none on the estate. Dumont also took note of

the traditional call-and-response patterns common to African singing and attributed that to the Congos.[72]

The Real Academia de Ciencias Médicas, Físicas y Naturales De La Habana reviewed Dumont's research when it was nominated for an award by some of the academy's members.[73] They hailed the work, and though it is not clear whether the prize was ever awarded, its nomination suggests that Dumont's work prompted the interest of sectors of Cuba's scientific community. One of the study's sponsors reminded the academy about the importance of research such as Dumont's given the abundance of "materials" in Cuba for scientific observation of the "different races that populate the island and their cross-breeding." He reminded his comrades that slavery was slowly coming to an end "and with it certain races and the habits of these races that will soon be lost for science and history."[74]

The Ethnographers and Their Legacy

The data collected in these initial phases of study began influencing notions about Afro-Cuban identity by the close of the nineteenth century, but they were especially significant in the twentieth century. The Lucumí presence in Cuba's ethnographic literature continued growing. In the final years of the nineteenth century, Matanzas native José Antonio Rodríguez García, a linguist, historian, and journalist, discussed African ethnic groups in Cuba in a book titled *Croquis históricos*.[75] The book essentially reiterated the portrayals originally documented by Henri Dumont and others, but he added an important element. Though he provided no new details about the Lucumís, Rodríguez García wrote about "la religión Voudista"—that is Vodun or as it is more commonly known Voodoo—

and serpent worship, the religion that continued to strike fear in the heart of Cubans because it had been a major motivating force in the Haitian Revolution. Rodríguez García added more fuel to this fire when he stressed that the religion had been present in Cuba and stated that he remembered the “serpent that numerous cabildos paraded through the streets of Habana.”[76] Before his publication, a book by Spenser St. John, who had been the Consul General of Haiti in the 1860s, circulated stories about “Vaudoux worship and cannibalism,” in the neighboring island.[77] Many of these stories possibly served as the basis for other publications and media hype in Cuba’s northern neighbor as well.[78]

Another publication mentioning the Lucumís appeared in 1901. Historian Vidal Morales y Morales, director of Cuba’s archives, cited an interesting reference from an unpublished article by Plutarco González, a Cuban historian who studied a variety of topics, including abolitionism. The article referred to the famous Conspiración de la Escalera (literally “Ladder Conspiracy,” dubbed so because the slaves and free people of color that were implicated in it were tied to a ladder and flogged) of 1844. Unlike his precursors, it seems that González did not look too favorably upon the Lucumís. González wrote about the workers on the sugarcane fields in eastern Havana, “the area most populated with blacks of the bellicose Lucumí race.”[79] In addition to their purported belligerence, in some areas of the island the Lucumís also had a reputation for being immodest and haughty. A description of a carnival in Santiago de Cuba referred to the Lucumí as “jactanciosos” (boastful).[80] In addition, there is reason to argue that there may have been some animosity between the Congos and Lucumís in Santiago. A description of the cabildo’s parades through the streets of the town stressed that the king

of the Congos and the Lucumí king would never cross paths in the parade, even when they respected each other.[81]

In 1910, Spanish journalist Manuel Pérez Beato wrote a letter to the fledgling lawyer Fernando Ortiz that was published in *El curioso americano*, a quarterly Cuban journal under his direction. Pérez Beato had been writing for the journal since the 1890s. In his letter, he congratulated Ortiz for his recent publication, the controversial *Los negros brujos*. Ortiz's book made such an impact on Pérez Beato that he decided to share the data he had accumulated through the years on the origin of Cuba's population of African descent with Ortiz, hoping that it would serve him for future research. Ortiz later reproduced the letter in his *Revista bimestre cubana*.[82]

El curioso americano's readers often submitted questions that Pérez Beato would later address in the journal. In January 1893, a reader had asked Pérez Beato for information on the different African *naciones* that influenced Cuba's population as well as an estimate of the number of Africans who had been transported to the island.[83] In March 1893, in the Respuestas—(Responses)—section, Pérez Beato published a simple list of the African nations that he understood had contributed to the development of Cuba's population. He identified the Lucumís, Ararás, Congos, Congos Reales, Apapas, Mandingas, Mandingas Fulas, Gangás, Minas, and Carabalís.[84]

By 1910, when he sent his list to Ortiz, Pérez Beato had already identified fifty-three different ethnonyms, many of which described subcategories of ethnic groups. He took note of the century in which some of these ethnonyms came up in the documents he consulted. Six of the ethnic designations dated to the sixteenth century, and four were from the seventeenth century. One other important detail is Pérez Beato's mention of

several *cabildos* connected with some of the ethnies that he documented, as well as their locations, all of which he hoped would be useful for future research.[85]

According to Pérez Beato's early exploration of African ethnic groups, there was an Arará cabildo on Compostela and Conde. The Apapas' [a Carabalí sub-group] cabildo was located on Bernaza Street, in the home of the Silveras. The Congos Reales were located on Florida Street, in the *extramuros* neighborhood of Jesús María y José. The Mandingas had a cabildo in a lot in Havana, almost on the corner of Merced. The Oros, in 1819, had a *cabildo* in *intramuros*, on the "*esquina de la Pólvora* (gunpowder corner)," which in Pérez Beato's time had been renamed Progreso Street.[86]

Ortiz was the pioneer of Cuban (and Afro-Cuban) ethnographic research. Initially, Ortiz favored the ideas of the Italian Cesare Lombroso, "the father of criminology," founder of the positivist school of thought. In his book *The Criminal Man*, published in 1876, Lombroso claimed that his studies of the dead bodies of criminals revealed details proving that these social deviants were different from other people. He wrote that the dimensions of the skulls and jaws of the dead criminals he examined were irregular, evidence that he believed supported his ideas. Lombroso theorized that criminals were born with specific traits that incited their unacceptable behavior. His school of thought deeply influenced the young Ortiz when he was in Europe studying law, so much so that his first book, *Los negros brujos*, published in 1906, in many ways set him on his initial path: criminology.[87] Ortiz's support of this discipline was transitory though ironically significant, for it began a process that would bring about a paradigmatic and methodological shift in his scholarship.

By the 1920s, Ortiz's career was already on the verge of taking a surprising turn, one in which he experienced what Jorge Castellanos called an "*extraordinaria transición ideólogica*" (extraordinary ideological transition).[88] As time passed, Ortiz continued amassing knowledge about Cuba and its people, white and black, eventually becoming one of the most important students of Afro-Cuban culture.

Ortiz's first attempt to identify African ethnic groups came in *Los negros brujos*, but his intentions at the time were not necessarily associated with taxonomy or African ethnonyms. Shortly before, he had published an article in *Cuba y America* in which he discussed about two dozen ethnic groups, probably derived from his research for the book.[89] In 1916, with his second major publication, *Los negros esclavos*, Ortiz built upon Pérez Beato's list of ethnonyms, but most important, he incorporated into his work much of Henri Dumont's research.[90] Ortiz followed his predecessors' tracks and continued with the classification of Cuba's African ethnic groups. He documented more than ninety different ethnonyms, working with colonial documents and published accounts of early travelers to the African coasts. As was to be expected, however, given the nature of the documents he worked with and the limited published sources on Africa and its people during his time, several errors were introduced. Ortiz justifiably confused some of the ethnicities he documented.

As had Dumont in his own classifications, Ortiz wrote that several Africans told him that the Ararás were Lucumís, and he repeated Dumont's assertion that the Achantís of the Ivory Coast were as well. He also listed the Tapás (Tacuás), a group that stemmed from the region north of the Oyo Empire, as a Lucumí subgroup.[91] Table 1 displays the

ethnic groups and subgroups of paramount interest that were identified in Ortiz's research.

The Ararás were enigmatic for Ortiz. He wrote, "Various Africans tell me that the Ararás are a type of Lucumí. It seems plausible; at least the *superstitions* [italics mine] of the Ararás and the Lucumís are like those of the Yorubas or Nagos." Ortiz associated the term *Arará* as a possible toponym, derived from the name of a city, Arraraha, close to the Calabari coast, and speculated that this city may have been a distribution point for slaves. He did approximate their origin, though, as he correctly associated them with reports that stipulated a connection to Dahomey, Alladah or Ouidah. Ortiz also made a connection between the Ararás and the Mahís (Maginos), a town situated between former Dahomey and Yorubaland that was a tributary of the Oyo, invaded by Dahomey in 1731 and numerous times thereafter.[92]

Table 2 Ethnies Identified by Fernando Ortiz in 1916[10]

Ethnic Group	Subgroups
Arará	Arará Agicon, Arará Cuévano, Arará Magino (Mahí), Arará Nezeve, Arará Sabalú
Carabalí	Apapá, Suamo, Bibí,[11] Brícano, Bran (Bras), Abaya, Briche, Eluyo, Efi, Sicuato
Congo	Congo Real, Motembo, Mumbona, Musumdí, Mumbala, Mondongos, Cabenda, Mayombe, Masinga, Banguela, Munyaca, Loango, Musungo, Mundamba, Musoso, Entótera
Gangá	Arriero, Longoba, Maní, Firé, Quisí, Gola
Lucumí	Egguaddo, Eyó (Oyo), Ifeé, Iechas (Ijeshas), Engüei
Mandinga	
Mina	

[10] Ethnies as identified by Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 25–48.

[11] Though he included them among the Carabalí as a subgroup, he also listed them as an independent ethnic group and related them with the Ibibi (Ibibio).

African ethnonyms and nomenclature were still muddled when Ortiz carried out his research. Overall, though, his work on African ethnicities suggests that a greater interest was driving this study than had existed when he wrote *Los negros brujos*. His inquiry was laborious and reasonably accurate. He listed the Carabalí and the associated groups appeared as individual ethnies but he identified them in the general description under the Carabalí meta-ethnonym. For Ortiz, at least 10 groups were classified as Carabalí—some correctly so, some not. He correctly assumed that one group, the Bibís, were the Ibibios. The neighboring Lucumí feared them because they believed that the Bibís were cannibals.[93] Efí (or Efik) were the most important of the Carabalí subgroups, with the name derived from an earlier name for Old Calabar.[94]

Ortiz's treatment of the Congos was far more objective than his predecessors, and his discussion was more extensive than that of most of the other groups. He devoted almost an entire page to Congo history. He did not, however, repeat the derogatory archetypes that had been popularized by Dumont and others. While it is impossible to know exactly what he was thinking, Ortiz's refusal to include those stereotypical depictions recorded by earlier scholars could have been an early indicator of his eventual transition away from positivism and criminology.[95]

For Ortiz, the Gangá were the most perplexing group; his notes indicate that he spent considerable time researching them, but still, he had a very difficult time locating their specific region of origin. His predecessors had all provided different possible homelands, thus deepening the quagmire. After much deliberation, Ortiz concurred with the findings of de la Torre and Dumont, situating them in the vicinity of Liberia's hinterland. An informant, "a black Gangá," provided him with a long list of different

“types” of Gangás that, whether accurate or not, he repeated in his descriptions. The list was eventually helpful to Ortiz in furthering the research on this specific ethnic group, primarily because of the many possible regions of origin proposed in earlier studies.[96]

Ortiz’s identification of two Gangá groups, the Longoba and the Maní, with the Congos led succeeding scholars to perceive these two subgroups as Congos.[97] Ortiz speculated that *Longoba* could be an abbreviation of *Longobanda*, a region neighboring Lake Nangá in the Congo.[98] He quibbled with the possible origins of the Maní and could draw no firm conclusions about their origin. Ortiz was inclined toward accepting Senegambia and northern Ivory Coast as their most probable homeland, but he hesitated given his uncertainty that they were not in fact Congos.[99]

Ortiz had much more to say about the Lucumí than possibly any other group. His interest in this group seems to have originated early in his ethnographic career. In *Los negros brujos*, even when he referred to other *naciones*, the Lucumí practices were the author’s principal focus. In *Los negros esclavos*, Ortiz transcribed almost every word Dumont and de la Torre had written. He provided background information about the Yoruba region from several maps he had consulted and in many ways gave the impression that he was boasting—or maybe apologizing for his initial 1906 mischaracterization—about the many specifics he had been able to collect about this one group. Definitely, by 1916, when *Los negros esclavos* was published, Ortiz was in the early stages of the paradigm shift that would transform him into the scholar *par excellence* of Afro-Cuban culture and history. Ten years had transpired since the publication of *Los negros brujos*, by which time he had carried out substantial fieldwork among Afro-Cubans, especially the Lucumís. The benefits Ortiz derived from fieldwork

became very plain in 1916. His career also brought him into closer contact with other Afro-Cubans, especially the Congos and Carabalís, founders of the Abakuá society. All three groups had been subjected to considerable persecution and arrests during the years that Ortiz was writing *Los negros esclavos*. In 1906, Ortiz was named to replace Havana's retiring prosecutor, bringing him into direct contact with the trials linked to these arrests.

Unquestionably, after 1906, Ortiz established an excellent working relationship with the Sociedad de Protección Mutua y Recreo del Culto Africano Lucumí Santa Bárbara (henceforth SSB), which he identified in his book as a Lucumí *cabildo* in Havana, ostensibly the renowned Cabildo Changó Tedún.[100] The SSB's secretary, Fernando Guerra, made Ortiz honorary president of the society in 1911. The association, a *cabildo* by all counts, came to the fore since the early years of the twentieth century, contesting the growing anti-African legislation that arose during the era. Additionally, they publicly decried the persecution of Afro-Cubans unjustly accused of sorcery during the witchcraft craze that swept through the island following the murder of Zoila, a young girl from Havana Province. Afro-Cubans, and especially followers of African religions, were scapegoated. A group of seven Congos and devotess of Congo religion were eventually blamed and subsequently convicted for Zoila's death, further exacerbating the witchcraft scares; two of them received the death penalty.[101]

Ortiz described many Lucumí subgroups but may have been the first to mention the Egguaddo (Egbado), possibly one of the most important groups in both Regla and Simpson, though he was clearly wrong about their geographical location in Yorubaland. He associated them with another Yoruba town, Ado, located some miles south of Egbado

territory and closer to the coast.[102] In his discussion of the Eyó (Oyo), he mentioned that they had been sold into slavery after a rebellion in "18…" but does not provide the exact year. He also referred to Crowther, undoubtedly Samuel Crowther, the progenitor of the ethnonym *Yoruba* and writer of the first Yoruba grammar, which established the Oyo dialect as the official tongue of the people.[103] Ortiz clarified de la Torres's erroneous association of the Feé with the Gangás, stating that they were in all probability the Ifé. He also identified the Iechá, Yyecha, or Yjesa, all variant spellings of the Yoruba Ije«a, and clarified that the misspellings were due to phonetic and grammatical differences between the African language and Spanish. All four of these Lucumí ethnies were present in Cuba, though Oyo and Egbado were probably the most culturally significant.[104]

Other subgroups that Ortiz linked to the Lucumís are doubtful or problematic: the Engúei, Epa (possibly Egba), the Tapa, and as previously mentioned, the Ararás. The mistaken identification of the Ararás as a Lucumí subgroup may have originated with his informants. By the time he did the research for *Los negros esclavos*, a number of years had transpired since his return to the island and he was actively engaged in fieldwork among Afro-Cubans. He confirmed this by stating that many of his informants were Africans. Ortiz supported his incorrect association between the two groups by declaring that the "superstitions" of the Lucumí and the Arará were the same.[105] Ortiz's informants may have deceived him, especially in the shadow of the *brujería* (witchcraft) scare, which eventually fueled the media exaggerations that linked African religions with sorcery, ritual murder, and cannibalism. In the twentieth century's first two decades, given the general misperceptions that governed the relationship between whites and Afro-Cubans, many people of color, regardless of their descent, may have preferred to identify

with the Lucumís because this group was the one publicly sticking its neck out in defense of them all.[106]

Regardless of any possible shortcomings with Ortiz's classifications, his work has been invaluable to the ensuing generations of scholars and will undoubtedly continue to prove its worth. Ortiz's list of ethnonyms, for better or for worse, is a required foundation for any serious investigation into the often-confusing maze of African ethnonymic inquiry and the slave trade. As Jorge Castellanos argued, Ortiz's *Los negros esclavos* was, for many years, the "most detailed, complete and systematic manual about the structure of Cuba's slavery."[107]

La Escuela de Fernando Ortiz[108]

Rómulo Lachatañeré, Ortiz's disciple, whose life was unfortunately cut short in 1951 in an airplane accident near San Juan, Puerto Rico, continued where his mentor left off. Lachatañeré's 1939 article that was published in Ortiz's *Estudios afrocubanos* proposed a new schema to analyze and classify the origins of Cuba's African ethnic diversity.[109] He divided the different ethnic denominations into groups and subgroups, in the process identifying six principal sources for the Africans who were brought to Cuba and at least seventy-three different ethnic groups. He also attempted to classify the African presence in Cuba by considering their distribution on the island, thus providing an important assessment of the regions in Cuba where specific ethnic groups were more dominant.

As with Ortiz's classifications, some of Lachatañeré's were incorrect. For example, he, too, wrote that the Ararás were a "type" of Lucumí. In all probability, the two group's geographic proximity in Africa may have contributed to this continued

association between them. It is also likely that members of some of these groups were misclassified by slave traders, easily confusing one for the other because of their regional proximity in Africa and the physical and cultural characteristics they share.[110] Unlike Ortiz, however, Lachatañeré seemed to have reservations about his conclusions, which he made evident in his work.[111] There is little doubt that Lachatañeré had an uncanny ability as a scholar, and Ortiz strongly supported his academic development. By 1941, Lachatañeré was studying under Melville Herskovits at Northwestern University in Illinois. Ortiz praised Lachatañeré's qualities as a rising star and recommended him to Herskovits, with whom he had a distant but amicable relationship.[112]

Lachatañeré's research on Afro-Cuban ethnicity continued, concentrating primarily on the Lucumís. Herskovits must have seen his new student's potential because in a letter to Ortiz, he remarked that Lachatañeré had given him a manuscript that dealt with "Yoruba survivals" in Cuba. Herskovits told Ortiz that he had forwarded the manuscript to another of his disciples, William Bascom, who had by this time already done a year of fieldwork in Yorubaland and would soon become one of the most renowned anthropologists and specialists on the Yoruba peoples.[113]

In 1941, Bascom sent Herskovits his observations on the manuscript. He described it as "excellent" but found some conceptual flaws that he felt undermined the research. Bascom described the weaknesses he found, primarily having to do with the sources used by the young Cuban ethnologist as well as his failure to recognize the great cultural variations that existed in Yorubaland. Apparently, while attempting to explain the Lucumí diversities in Cuba, Lachatañeré was misunderstanding important elements that Bascom felt he had to correct.

Bascom wrote, “The author has set about to explain in terms of Cuban historical conditions, variations which in all probability came about in Africa and were maintained with little change in Cuba. The author is also incorrect in assuming that myths and folktales told among the Yoruba are always uniform.” Reviewing the manuscript may have been influential in Bascom’s later fieldwork in Cuba. One of Bascom’s suggestions was that having someone with greater familiarity with the Yoruba conduct research in Cuba would prove advantageous for the long-term study of Yoruba culture.[114] Undoubtedly, Bascom was motivated as he subsequently made several research trips to the island in the 1940s and published “The Yoruba in Cuba” the same year that Lachatañeré died.[115]

Research by other Cuban scholars continued to supplement the Cuban catalogue of ethnic identities. Juan Luís Martín’s primary concern was the Carabalís and the *Ñáñigos*, the Afro-Cuban religious brotherhood that received the most continuous attention and oppression from colonial and republican authorities since the latter nineteenth century. The study also attempted to ascertain the precise geographic origin of the Mandinga and Gangá, but his conclusions were totally flawed. Martín erroneously pinpointed Cabo Verde as the Mandinga homeland and identified the Gangá as the Serakoles, an unidentified group that he related to the Jolof, a group primarily originating in the region of modern-day Senegal.[116] Other scholars working on diverse topics indirectly provided additional ethnographic details on some of the Afro-Cuban ethnic groups. María Teresa Rojas, in 1956; Pedro Deschamps Chapeaux in a series of articles, beginning in the late 1960s; Jesús Guanche, in 1983; and Rafael López Valdés, in the late 1980s, all contributed to advance the scholarship of African ethnic identification and

ethnonyms in Cuba.[117] *El Monte*, written by Lydia Cabrera, Fernando Ortiz's sister-in-law and disciple, did not deal directly with ethnonyms but was helpful nonetheless because many of her informant's narratives discussed ethnic identities.[118]

Jesús Guanche's study in 1983 was especially significant given the time period and the position of Cuba's revolutionary government on race.[119] As the book's title implied, Guanche studied the different *Procesos etnoculturales de Cuba* (Cuba's Ethnocultural Processes). Primarily repeating Ortiz's and Lachatañeré's earlier descriptions of Cuba's African ethnicities, and possibly following Ortiz's lead, Guanche indirectly created a scale in which he, too, placed the Lucumís at the very pinnacle of the social scale. He wrote that in Cuba, "the ethnic group that came to present the major cultural dominance in Cuba is the one we know here under the ethnic designation of Lucumí, of unquestionable Yoruba affiliation."[120]

Immediately after describing the origins of the Lucumís and their subgroups, Guanche discussed the Congo and Carabalí presence, in that order. Then he briefly skimmed over the Ararás, Minas (among which he included the Ashantí and Fantí), Mandingas, Gangás (which he incorrectly classified as Mandé), and Macuás.[121] Guanche's study is significant in confirming that the process of stratification that placed the Lucumís at the top of the Afro-Cuban social pyramid had been in place for years.

Zoe Cremé Ramos's research on the origin of Santiago de Cuba's African population also relied primarily on the works of Ortiz and Lachatañeré. In addition, she consulted studies from the former Soviet Union, especially for her formulation of the definition of, and differentiation between, an ethnic group and meta-ethnic group. The former is composed of "linguistic, territorial, economic and cultural communities of

people configured historically, before the formation of a nation," whereas a meta-ethnic group is a "collective of communities in which elements of a common self-awareness [identity] has developed, based on ethno-linguistic affinities or on long-term economic, cultural or religious relationships.[122]

Following these definitions, Cremé Ramos recognized sixteen ethnic groups in Santiago, some of which had numerous subgroups. Among these, she was unable to determine the exact origin of the designation of eight groups. Five of these had a noteworthy numerical representation in the western half of the island: the Ararás, Lucumís, Bibís, Brícamos, and the Gangás. Her dilemma with the groups geographical origin is puzzling because by the 1990s, when she was conducting her research, there was a relatively ample body of literature in Cuba about all these ethnic groups.[123]

Cremé Ramos' study covers the forty-six-year span between 1792 and 1838. In Santiago de Cuba at that time, of 7,236 total slaves, 4,405 of which were African born, the ethnie of greatest representation was the Congos, totaling 1,501 (33 percent). Second in order of significance were the Guineos, with 638, followed by the Carabalís (450), Motembos (a group generally categorized as Congo that she classified separately), Mongos (287), Mandingas (279), Makuás (135), Mondongos (another Congo group; 115), Gangás (114), and Minas (106). The remaining groups all had fewer than 100 representatives, including the Ararás with 81 and the Lucumís with 19. Clearly, for the time period in question, Santiago de Cuba's slave population was relatively small in comparison to that of the western part of the island, primarily Matanzas and its environs.

After 1959, Cuban scholars on the other side of the Florida Straits also took up the study of Afro-Cuban ethnicity. Lydia Cabrera fled the island in 1960 and eventually

settled in Miami. Cabrera had published dozens of books on the African cultures of the island in Cuba, and she continued to do so in the United States as an exile. In addition, she influenced several U.S. scholars who researched and published studies about Afro-Cuban cultures in the island—in an era when the presence of Afro-Cuban religions was increasing in the United States. Most noteworthy among these were Mercedes Cros Sandoval and Jorge Castellanos and his daughter Isabel Castellanos, who produced the impressive, four-volume *Cultura afrocubana*. Cabrera was under Isabel Castellano's care, living in her home, when she passed away in 1991. All three scholars have always acknowledged and praised Cabrera's influence on their work.[124]

In her doctoral dissertation that focused on the Lucumís and was later published in 1975 under the title *La religión afrocubana*, Cros Sandoval discussed the African ethnicities that were present in Cuba. She wrote that more than sixty-five different African ethnic groups were transported to Cuba during the slave trade, of which three were major contributors to the island's culture and religiosity. The groups she identified were the Yoruba (using the modern designation, though she is clearly referring to the Lucumís); the Carabalís; and a cluster of peoples from the Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, and the Slave Coast and its environs, including the Fón or Arará. She associated various subgroups with the Lucumí, some of which were clearly Arará.

For unknown reasons, Sandoval's work undercut the importance of the Congo people in Cuba. Surprisingly, the Congos did not make up the third group but rather were only one of many constituent ethnies that composed it. Cros Sandoval included people originating from the Congo and its environs, such various Congo or Bantú ethnies known in Cuba (Mondongo, Mayombe, Loango, Musundi, and others) along with other ethnic

groups that she may have considered les important or numerous; possibly following Cabrera, Sandoval also counted the Bangbas (Gangás) among this group.[125] Even if Lucumí culture had become the more popular in the island, it is indisputable that the Congo, if not the majority of the enslaved Africans on the island, were still a sizeable population.[126] The Eltis Database's estimate is that at least 778,541 Africans disembarked in Cuba between 1674 and 1866; of those, 243,537 (31 percent) were from West Central Africa. In Cuba, slaves from this region were most commonly documented as Congo.[127]

In an impressive investigation of Afro-Cuban culture, Jorge Castellanos and his daughter Isabel described the ethnic origins of the more populous groups on the island. Possibly following Moreno-Fraginals's plantation study, they believed that the greatest contributors to Afro-Cuban culture were the Lucumís, Mandingas, Ararás, Minas, Gangás, Carabalís, and Congos.[128] Starting with Ortiz's 1916 publication, and incorporating data and maps published by travelers to West Africa as well as the numerous twentieth-century publications by ethnographers and anthropologists, they organized one of the more detailed and accurate descriptions of the African ethnies that were brought to Cuba.

In the process, Castellanos and Castellanos identified five geographic areas from whence Cuba's African population originated: the sub-Saharan north east (Senegambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia), Upper Guinea (Ivory Coast; Gold Coast, or Ghana; Togo; Dahomey; and modern-day Nigeria), the Bight of Biafra (Calabar and northeast Cameroon), Lower Guinea (northern Congo and Angola), and Mozambique.[129] They consulted an extensive number of sources, including Dumont and Pichardo, but neither Sandoval's nor Abbot's work is discussed in the ethnic descriptions. While they included

the priest's study in the bibliography, their work contains no reference to his ethnic descriptions.

The information derived from the notes of slave traders, doctors, travelers, and scholars, regardless of their individual biases or preferential treatment of one group over the other, proved to be of great value to several fields of Cuba's social sciences, including history and anthropology. Their research laid important foundations that have proved their worth to several generations of scholars that have consulted it. Undoubtedly, Ortiz's scholarship must be praised for numerous reasons but most significantly for the influence that his own work had on him as a scholar and as an eventual defender of the inclusion of Afro-Cuban culture in developing the island's identity. From his initial position in 1906 supporting the idea that blacks in Cuba were moved by a "cancerous fanaticism that corrupts the ignorant masses" he evolved to express support and outright praise of African culture, and especially Lucumí religion, in later years.[130]

In a few years' time, Ortiz became increasingly Lucumí-centric, at the expense of the other cultures, primarily the Congos. As he developed his relationship with Guerra and other Lucumís, his position shifted so much that he began to reproach Congo culture as he extolled Lucumí religion, something he clearly stated in his work: "The blacks that in Cuba we call "Lucumí" have a more elevated religion than that of the Congos," even when it had not achieved the level of "moral religion" that Catholicism enjoyed. In 1906, Ortiz had accused the Lucumís of practicing witchcraft, superstitious ignorance, and cannibalism. In his later years, however, Ortiz accepted that the Lucumís practiced religion, even if it was still in an early stage of development, his "first phase" of religious evolution. The Congos, however, were never moved up from their low place on the

scholar's evolutionary ladder. Instead, the image of this group as *brujos* and fetishists who practiced "unmoral religion" continues to the present.[131]

Notes

[1] Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (henceforth TASTD), Emory University, http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mjslptimp=31300; http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mjslptimp=31100.31200.31300.31400.40000; Rafael L. López Valdés, *Africanos de Cuba* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, 2004), 33.

[2] Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México* (México: Fondo de Cultura Ecónomica, 1944), 102; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 221; John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 118, 195-97; David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 244; D.B. Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora: The Slave-Trade and the Creation of African 'Nations' in the Americas," *Slavery & Abolition* 22, no. 3 (2001): 25; James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa—Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 19; Javier A. Galván, "Sugar and Slavery: The Bittersweet Chapter in 19th Century Cuba, 1817-1886," *Revista de Humanidades* 16 (2004): 215-16; Rosanne Marion Adderley, *"New Negroes from Africa"—Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 5.

[3] Chambers, *Ethnicity in the Diaspora*, 130-31.

[4] Stuart B. Schwartz, "The Manumission of Slaves in Colonial Brazil: Bahia, 1684-1745," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54, no. 4 (Nov. 1974): 612; Biodun Adeniran, "Yoruba Ethnic Groups or a Yoruba Ethnic Group? A Review of the Problem of Ethnic Identification," *África: Revista do Centro de Estudos Africanos da USP* 7 (1984): 58-59; Philip D. Morgan, "The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Destinations and New World Developments," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 18, no. 1 (1997): 124, 140-41; Trevor Burnard, "Slave Naming Patterns: Onomastics and the Taxonomy of Race in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31, no. 3 (Winter 2001): 331-32; Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora, 27; Lena Delgado de Torres, "Reformulating Nationalism in the African Diaspora: The Aponte Rebellion of 1812," *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 31-32; David Northup, "Becoming African: Identity Formation among Liberated Slaves in Nineteenth-Century Sierra Leone," *Slavery & Abolition* 27, no. 1 (April 2006): 2-3; Olatunji Ojo, "The Root Is Also Here: The Nondiaspora Foundations of Yoruba Ethnicity," in *Movements, Borders, and Identities in Africa*, ed. Toyin Falola and Aribidesi Usma (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2009), 53-54.

[5] Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism—Anthropological Perspectives*, 3rd ed. (London: Pluto Press 1993), ch. 1, http://folk.uio.no/geirthe/Ethnicity.html.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Jesús Guanche, *Procesos etnoculturales de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Letras Cubanas, 1983), 25-26.

[8] Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora," 27.

[9] "The San People," *Kalahari People's Fund*, accessed January 3, 2012,

http://www.kalaharipeoples.org/san_people.html.

[10] Rafael López Valdés, *Componentes africanos en el etnos cubano* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1985), 55; Óscar Grandío Moráguez, "The African Origins of Slaves Arriving in Cuba, 1789-1865," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, ed. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 176.

[11] Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos* (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 56-57.

[12] For example, the work of María del Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos: Negros en La Habana colonial* (La Habana: Ediciones Boloña, 2009; and *La otra familia—Parientes, redes, y descendencia de los esclavos en Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009).

[13] Emmanuel Oladesu, "Yoruba language is dying, say Omole, Adeniyi," *The Nation*, November 16, 2011, http://www.thenationonlineng.net/2011/index.php/news/26449-yoruba-language-is-dying-say-omole-adeniyi.html; Alakam Japhet, "Nigeria: Yoruba Race On the Brink of Extinction—Leaders, Monarchs," *All Africa*, December 13, 2012, http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201212140281.html.

[14] Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, *Cultura Afrocubana—El Negro en Cuba, 1492-1844* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1988), 1: 11; López Valdés, *Africanos*, 33. Recent studies by anthropologist T. Douglas Price, director of the Laboratory for Archaeological Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, have unearthed West Africans buried alongside the bodies of sailors from Columbus' ship in the first European colony, La Isabela, founded on the island of Hispaniola; Kari Lydersen, "Dental Studies Give Clues About Christopher Columbus's Crew," *The Washington Post*, May 18, 2009, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2009/05/17/AR2009051701885.html. In 2000, West Africans were also found in sixteenth-century burials in Campeche; T. Douglas Price et al, "Studies of Human Skeletal Remains from a Sixteenth to Seventeenth Century AD Churchyard in Campeche, Mexico: Diet, Place of Origin, and Age," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. 4 (August 2012): 396-433.

[15] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba," in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies*, ed. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1977), 188; Jesús Guanche, *Africanía y etnicidad en Cuba: Los componentes étnicos africanos y sus múltiples denominaciones* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2009), 5; Jane Landers, "Cimarrón-Ethnicity and Cultural Adaptation in the Spanish Domains of the Circum-Caribbean, 1503-1763," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery,* ed. Paul E. Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum Books, 2009), 30.

[16] David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), xi.

[17] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 49; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 20.

[18] See Samuel Johnson, *History of the Yoruba From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, 7th ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1973).

[19] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas—Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 23.

[20] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 49; Mercedes Sandoval, *La religión afrocubana* (Madrid: Playor, 1975), 19; Nery Gómez Abreu y Manuel Martínez Casanova, "Contribución al estudio de la presencia de las diferentes etnias y culturas africanas en la región central de cuba: Zona de Placetas (1817-1186)," *Revista Islas* 85 (1986): 111-12; Alejandro de la Fuente, "Denominaciones étnicas de los esclavos introducidos en Cuba. Siglos XVI y XVII," *Anales del Centro de Estudios del Caribe* 6 (1986): 76; Zoe Cremé Ramos, *Pesquisaje sobre la procedencia de los esclavos en la jurisdicción de Cuba entre 1792 y 1838* (La Habana:

Publicigraf, 1994), 3; Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 14.

[21] Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba," 190; Cremé Ramos, *Pesquisaje*, 3.

[22] Oldenthorp, in Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora," 25.

[23] Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities*, 48.

[24] Ojo, "The Root is Also Here," 55.

[25] Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 99.

[26] Ibid., 99.

[27] Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba," 190.

[28] Nathan Nunn, "The Long-Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, no. 1 (February 2008): 146.

[29] Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico—Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 6.

[30] Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery*, 244.

[31] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3549, exp. 4, 01, Juan Gisper to José de la Concha, "Proyecto de importación de mugeres esclavas en la Ysla de Cuba," July 1, 1855. The writer mentioned that the traders had already obtained baptism certificates for the arriving slaves.

[32] Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba," 190-91: Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora," 28.

[33] Alonso de Sandoval, *Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catecismo evangelico de todos los etiopes* (Seville, 1627). See Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Alonso de Sandoval—Un tratado sobre la esclavitud* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, S.A., 1987), 57-230; M.E. Beers, "Alonso De Sandoval: Seventeenth-Century Merchant of the Gospel," Kislak Foundation, accessed June, 2011, http://www.kislakfoundation.org/prize/199702.html; David Northrup, "The Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic World," in *The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1520-1624* ed. Peter C. Mancall (Chapell Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 170-193, 189; Eduardo Restrepo, "Eventalizing Blackness in Colombia" (PhD dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008) 261, http://www.ram-wan.net/restrepo/documentos/eventalizing.pdf.

[34] De Sandoval, in Vila Vilar, *Alonso de Sandoval*, 136.

[35] Ibid., 136-7, 139.

[36] Ibid., 139.

[37] Ibid.,141.

[38] Abiel Abbot, *Letters Written in the Interior of Cuba, Between the Mountains of Arcana, to the East, and of Cusco, to the West, in the Months of February, March, April, and May, 1828* (Boston: Bowles and Dearborn, 1829), 14.

[39] Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood—The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 112.

[40] De Sandoval, in Vila Vilar, *Alonso de Sandoval*, 141; John G.F. Wurderman, *Notes on Cuba* (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1971), 257.

[41] *The Traveler's Library, Complete in Twenty-Five Volumes, Voyages and Travel, Vol. 1, Brazil Cuba* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1856), 1: 107.

[42] Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World: Impressions of America* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1854), 2: 338-39; William Henry Hurlbert, *Gan-Eden: or Pictures of Cuba* (Boston: John P. Jewett and Company, 1854), 199-200.

[43] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, 383.

[44] Maturin Murray Ballou, *Due South; or, Cuba Past and Present* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1885), 275.

[45] Fanny Hale Gardiner, "Palmy Days in Cuba," *Self Culture* 9 (1889): 167.

[46] Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, 6-10, 33.

[47] Ezio Bassani, ed., *Un Capuccion nell'Africa del seicento: I disegni dei Manoscritti Araldi del Padre Giovani Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo* (Milan: Quaderni Poro, no. 4, 1987). Many of the drawings from Cavazzi's manuscript are available online through *The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas*, "Pre-Colonial Africa: Society, Polity, Culture," http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/return.php?categorynum=2&categoryName=Pre-Colonial%20Africa:%20Society,%20Polity,%20Culture.

[48] José María de la Torre, *Compendio de geografía física, política, estadística y comparada de la isla de Cuba* (Habana: Imprenta de M. Soler, 1854), 53.

[49] Esteban Pichardo y Tapia, *Diccionario provincial casi razonado de vozes y frases cubanas*, 4th ed. (Habana: Imprenta el Trabajo, 1875).

[50] Ibid., 21, 41, 49, 73, 98, 159, 226, 240, 256.

[51] Ibid., 27, 33, 113, 160, 220.

[52] Francisco Barrera y Domingo, "Reflexiones histórico físico naturales médico quirúrgicas—Prácticos y especulativos entretenimientos acerca de la vida, usos, costumbres, alimentos, bestidos, color, y enfermedades a que propenden los negros de África, venidos a las Americas," *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicopatología Fundamental* 11, no. 4 (Dec. 2008): 796.

[53] Barrera y Domingo, *Reflexiones*, 793; Adrián López Denis, "Melancholia, Slavery, and Racial Pathology in Eighteenth-Century Cuba," *Science in Context* 18, no. 2 (2005): 181; "Nostalgia y esclavitud en la era de las revoluciones," *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicopatología Fundamental* 11, no. 4 (December 2008): 779-90.

[54] Henri Dumont, *Antropología y patología comparadas de los negros esclavos*, trans. Israel Castellanos, (La Habana: Colección Cubana de Libros y Documentos Inéditos o Raros, Vol. 2, 1922); Jorge Pavez Ojeda, "El retrato de los 'negros brujos'. Los archivos visuales de la antropología afrocubana (1900-1920)," *Aisthesis* 46 (2009): 84.

[55] See Rachel Sarah O'Toole, "To be Free and Lucumí: Ana de la Calle and Making African Diaspora Identities in Colonial Peru," in *Africans to Spanish America: Expanding the Diaspora* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 73-92.

[56] Dumont, *Antropología*, 22-23.

[57] Melville J. Herskovits, *Dahomey—An Ancient West African Kingdom* (New York: J.J. Augustin, 1938), 1: ii.

[58] AHPM, Fondo Religiones Africanas, leg. 1, sig. 35, "Carta del moreno libre Jacinto Rey al sr. brigadier gobernador solicitando permiso para tocar," December 3, 1873. Interaction was also typical in the island of Trinidad, in the Eastern Caribbean: Maureen Warner-Lewis, "Ethnic and Religious Plurality among Yoruba Immigrants in Trinidad in the Nineteenth Century," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery,* ed. Paul E. Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum Books, 2009), 122.

[59] Dumont, *Antropología*, 18-21.

[60] Idowu A. Taiwo, Olufemi A. Oloyede, and Ade O. Dosumu, "Frequency of sickle cell genotype among the Yorubas in Lagos: implications for the level of awareness and genetic counseling for sickle cell disease in Nigeria," *Journal of Community Genetics* 2 no. 1 (March 2011): 13–18. *US National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health,* accessed September 11, 2013. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3186017/.

[61] See Johnson, *History*, 104-09.

[62] Dumont, *Antropología*, 24.

[63] Ibid., 25-62.

[64] Ibid., *Antropología*, 64-67.

[65] Ibid., *Antropología*, 11-12.

[66] Ibid., *Antropología*, 29, 32.

[67] Ibid., *Antropología*, 31.

[68] Ibid., *Antropología*, 33-34.

[69] William Balfour Baikie, *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the Rivers Kwóra and Binué Commonly Known as the Niger and Tsádda in 1854* (London: Frank Cass, 1856), 129; Enrique Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos* (La Habana: Ediciones Casa de las Ámericas, 1982), 25; David Northrup, "Igbo and Myth Igbo: Culture and Ethnicity in the Atlantic World, 1600-1850," *Slavery & Abolition* 21, no. 3 (2000), 8-9; David H. Brown, *The Light Inside—Abakuá Society Arts and Cuban Cultural History* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2003), 10; Ivor L. Miller, *Voice of the Leopard: African Secret Societies and Cuba* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 37-38.

[70] Dumont, *Antropología*, 35.

[71] Ibid., 37.

[72] Ibid., 38.
[73] Dr. Montané, "informe acerca de una obra intitulada 'antropología y patología comparadas de los hombres de color africanos que viven en la isla de Cuba,' presentada a la academia con opción a uno de sus premios anuales," Proceedings from presentation of Dumont's work before the Real Academia de Ciencias Médicas, Físicas y Naturales de La Habana (La Habana: Imp. La Antilla), 13: 122-136.

[74] Ibid., 122.

[75] José Antonio Rodríguez García, *Croquis Históricos* (La Habana: Imprenta de Mauricio Casanova, 1905); "Günther Schütz, J. A. Rodríguez García, y R. J. Cuervo Frente al laísmo," *Centro Virtual Cervantes* 53, no. 1 (1998), 97-103.

[76] Rodríguez García, *Croquis Históricos*, 100-01.

[77] Spenser St. John, *Hayti or the Black Republic* (London: Smith, Elder, 1884), 187-92.

[78] Stories about voodoo in the southern United States had circulated since the 1870s: "A Voodoo Tragedy." *Brooklyn Eagle*. July 9, 1872. In the late 1880s, following St. John's publication, New York periodicals, such as the *New York Times*, the *Brooklyn Eagle*, and other American newspapers, featured numerous voodoo stories, which primarily regurgitated the book: "Worshippers of the Voodoo." *New York Times*. June 25, 1893; "In a City of Horrors." *Brooklyn Eagle*. July 29, 1888. Some American newspapers began discussing the presence of "Voodoo" and witchcraft in Cuba as well. "Barbarism in Cuba," *The Yakima (Washington) Herald*. November 16, 1889; "Cuba is excited by Voodoo Trial," *Washington Times*. March 25, 1905.

[79] Vidal Morales y Morales, *iniciadores y primeros mártires de la revolución cubana* (Habana: Imprenta Avisador Comercial, 1901), 173.

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[82] Manuel Pérez Beato, "Procedencia de los Negros de Cuba," *Revista bimestre cubana* (1910), 161-63.

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[85] Pérez Beato, *Procedencia*, 162-63.

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[88] Jorge Castellanos, *Pioneros de la etnografía cubana* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 2003), 109.

[89] Fernando Ortiz, "Procedencia de los negros de Cuba," *Cuba y América—Revista Ilustrada* 20 (Oct. 1905-Mar. 1906): 91-92.

[90] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 41-59; Castellanos, *Pioneros*, 122.

[91] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 50-51.

[92] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 42; Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire c. 1600-c. 1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 2nd ed. (Hampshire: Gregg Revivals, 1991), 162.

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[123] Ibid, 13-19.

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[131] Fernando Ortiz, "Steps in the Evolution of Religion," *Revista Bimestre Cubana* 3, no. 1 (October 1919): 253; Fernando Ortiz, *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba*, 2nd ed., (La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1981), 170.

Chapter IV: Havana—Where *Moros* met *Cristianos*

Colonial Cuba—Havana

Cuba in the nineteenth century was the result of events and trends that date back to 1514, 22 years after Christopher Columbus first stepped on the island and pronounced, in Spanish, Spain's declaration requiring that the natives submit to the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church under the threat of war.[1] In so doing, he set a process in motion that would transform the once serene and slumbering "caiman" that basked in the waters and sun of the Caribbean Sea.[2] In the five hundred years that have transpired since its European "discovery," the once peaceful and mostly unoccupied island of Cuba has gone through a series of major upheavals, constant flux and transformations, and economic, political and outright revolutions that have changed its very nature and soul.

When the Europeans arrived, San Cristobal de la Havana—as its new inhabitants were to baptize the island's most famous city—was still a "treeless plain," as suggested by the indigenous name by which the city and province are known to this day.[3] In 1514, Diego de Velázquez founded a villa of that name on the island's southern coast, but in 1519, it was relocated to its current location. In 1594, Havana was declared a city, and in 1607, it was officially recognized as the island's capital, a status that originally belonged to Santiago de Cuba.[4] Under its colonial rulers, the region experienced a series of weighty metamorphoses, well into the latter nineteenth century.

The island's geographical position has made it a very strategic place, as it is a principal entry to three waterways: the Atlantic Ocean, and from there to the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. Because of its location, for the first three centuries

following contact with Europe, Cuba was considered the "Fortress of the Indies" and a "Key to the New World."[5] For Iberians, Saint Christopher, patron saint of the city, was also the protector of travelers. Much like the ferryman from Greek mythology that assisted the souls of the dead to cross to the underworld, Iberians believed that Saint Christopher aided those who crossed the Atlantic, and they prayed to him for safekeeping during the journey.[6] Upon safe passage and arrival in Cuba, the travelers' praises seemed answered, at least for that leg of their voyage.

The island was originally a trading post, hosting many European travelers and conquistadores searching for *hidalguía* (nobility), some of whom used it as a base for subsequent expeditions of conquest. Hernán Cortés, the vanquisher of Mexico and the Aztec Empire, was one of those. His attack on Mexico was orchestrated on Cuban soil.[7] Cuba often served as a layover for ships on their way to New Spain and New Granada. The island provided assistance for vessels in search of repairs and provisions, and their crew, generally desirous of "merrymaking," found that there as well. From Cuba, Iberian vessels continued their voyages to Nueva España and Tierra Firme.[8] All things considered, however, Cuba would not make its mark on the international scene until much later, primarily in the last half of the eighteenth century, when the backwater island began asserting its place in the so-called New World's history.

While not blessed with rich and fertile soil, as were other areas of Cuba, Havana continued to enjoy the spoils of its privileged position, both geographically and economically. The rewards derived from its harbor being such as an important stop for those ships travelling from or to Europe, gave Havana a tremendous advantage over other regions of the island. The fruits of its surrounding countryside and its reputation as a

“marvelous” city, altered the very nature of Havana in an almost mystical way. In the minds of many, Havana was the most enviable place in Cuba, where many Cubans sought refuge and status, though often at very steep prices.[9]

The Bourbon Reforms, Slavery, and Cuba’s Economic Ascent

Although Cuba experienced some sustained economic advances in the early eighteenth century, these were not impressive by any means, especially when compared to the financial standing of the surrounding Caribbean islands. Cuba’s economy expanded more significantly in the later decades of the eighteenth century, primarily because of an increase in the migration of Europeans and free people of color, a response to Spain’s Bourbon reforms, a series of significant changes in the island’s colonial administration that followed the British occupation of Havana in 1762.[10] Historians have generally attributed the island’s economic expansion to the sugar industry, but this idea is flawed. Historian Sherry Johnson has convincingly demonstrated that sugar cultivation had little to do with the transformation. In fact, sugar’s impact and the increased number of slaves did not arise until much later. Johnson’s assessment found that the increased presence of military forces and subsequent projects for the construction of forts to protect the island from future invasions were pivotal to the island’s economic expansion. The military became the island’s “new group of elites” as Cuba rebounded from the “consequences of a humiliating military defeat.”[11]

More recent scholarship emphasizes that sugar did not become significant until the mid-nineteenth century.[12] The Haitian Revolution, not to mention a series of other events of great magnitude in the later eighteenth century, no doubt had important

repercussions. Thereafter, Cuba's prosperity continued to ascend, leading to a momentous economic boom that would affect Cuban society in several ways. While in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century tobacco, coffee, and other agricultural products as well as cattle farming were the foundation of the island's economy, after the 1840s, sugar became Cuba's principal agricultural endeavor. Undoubtedly, the focus on the sweet crystals had various—and, ironically, often bitter—repercussions on the island's development.[13]

The need for workers increased the presence of Africans in Cuba, making the 1840s particularly significant for the growth of African culture in Cuba, even though Africans had been on the island since 1492. Resulting from the military reforms of the eighteenth century and the ascent of coffee and sugar production, Cuba's enslaved African population grew exponentially, transforming the island significantly as a result. Cuban planters defended the transition. During the closing decades of the eighteenth century, planters began pressuring the colonial government for increased participation in the slave trade, an industry that would have its greatest effects in the following century. For many, the massive immigration of Africans presaged the possibility of a slave revolt similar to the one that took place in Haiti. Others were not as pessimistic, however, and some became advocates for increasing the island's slave population as a means of expanding agricultural production.

Most notable among the planters was the celebrated Francisco Arango y Parreño. Dubbed the "father of the Cuban plantation system," Arango y Parreño Cuba became a vigorous defender of slavery on the island. He argued that unlike the neighboring French colony, Cuba would not be threatened by an increased African presence because Cubans

were not as liberal as the French and did not espouse the new revolutionary ideologies that had proved so ruinous for them. After all, the French were responsible for the spread of “anarchist” ideas of civil liberties and the rights of men—no wonder that these concepts had been inculcated in the minds of Haiti’s slaves and undoubtedly led to the eruption that cost France its dearest Caribbean possession. According to Arango y Parreño, Cuban slaves were happy—“among the happiest in the world”—and well treated, so they would never revolt, and Cuba’s agricultural sector would come to celebrate “happy times.”[14] As Manuel Moreno Fraginals has written, all islanders did not celebrate Arango Parreño’s “happy times,” but many surely benefitted.[15]

Regardless, the horror of Haiti continued troubling the minds of many who feared that Cuba was a hornet’s nest of sedition that could swarm at any given moment. Cuba was in danger, the group believed, because the growing African presence threatened its future. These ideas were further fueled by several slave insurrections that began in the later eighteenth century and culminated with the alleged *Escalera* conspiracy of 1844, in which hundreds of Africans and people of color were arrested and accused of plotting an insurrection.[16] These sentiments were echoed in the work of José Antonio Saco who argued that the slave trade was a “commercial enterprise that *stained* our [Cuba’s] character, and conducts our Antilles to its inevitable ruin.”[17]

Slavery and the slave trade, an undeniable, horrendous and shameful reality of Cuba’s economic system during the nineteenth century, was the indispensable catalyst by which Cuban agricultural production swelled. Despite coffee’s significance during the first four decades of the nineteenth century, it was sugar that became what historian Roland T. Ely has called the island’s “majesty.”[18] Sugar and slavery were interdependent.

Nonetheless, Cuba's true wealth did not derive from its soils, plantations and sugar mills but rather from its enslaved laborers, forced to produce the profits that were so arrogantly exhibited by the sugar barons.[19] As historian David Murray has argued, were it not for the slave trade—and the massive influx of Africans to the island—the economic transformation would have never occurred.[20] African slaves were as much a causative factor as sugar.

Sugar production required intensive labor, something that neither *peninsulares* nor *criollos* were willing to provide: it was socially unacceptable for white men to do *trabajo de negros*—slaves' work.[21] As such, they sought the manpower, the limbs and shoulders upon which the nascent industry depended from Africa. The greatest number of Africans transported to the island arrived after the rise of sugar production. Between the final decades of the eighteenth century and well into the 1870s, when the last clandestine shipload of Africans entered Cuban waters, Cuba imported close to over 770,000 Africans to work on its plantations.[22] Thousands more were not as "fortunate," perishing during the voyage through the raging Middle Passage on their way to the Caribbean. The population of the island clearly reflected the mounting influence of Africa in Cuba, as José Antonio Saco warned when he stressed that the most formidable enemy whites faced in Cuba was the slave trade.[23]

In the late eighteenth century, Cuba's population consisted of a minimum of 171,620 people: 96,440 whites, 36,301 free people of color and 38,879 slaves. By the first quarter of 1800, things had changed considerably. There were now at least 311,051 whites, 106,494 free people of color and 286,946 slaves. Both the number of whites and the free people of color had almost tripled, but more amazingly, there were over seven

times as many slaves as there had been in the later eighteenth century. Africans and their descendants now made up over half the population of the island: 393,440 out of a total of 704, 491.[24] There can be no doubt that during the nineteenth century the great majority of the enslaved were *bozales*, the designation given to the recently imported slaves from the African coasts. By midcentury, the figures were staggering. J.S. Thrasher, translator and editor of historian Alexander von Humboldt's 1856 publication *The Island of Cuba*, estimated that at the end of 1855, Cuba's population consisted of 564,693 whites (39 percent), 219,170 free people of color (15 percent) and 662,599 slaves (46 percent).[25]

Havana and Population Growth

Ironically, throughout the height of the era of slavery, Havana experienced its greatest prosperity to date. The city reflected the presence of numerous powerful "grandees," as Hugh Thomas called them.[26] There are indicators that support the opinion that Havana had money and many of its citizens flaunted it. Nowhere is this affluence more evident than in the palaces and large estates that still stand in the now-decayed city. Eventually, Havana came to count with *la crème de la crème* of Cuban colonial society, a stark change from the sort of people one would have found there in the previous century. Some scholars have argued that before its abrupt ascent, Cuba, and Havana in particular, attracted a great number of reckless adventurers, rogues, and felons. The city was a haven for many displaced individuals who sought anonymity and cover from their past exploits. The island's reputation was scandalous: Cuba was the "refuge and haven of Spain's *desesperados…*"[27] Some went so far as to call it the Babylon of the Spanish Americas, where the "scum and dregs of society" flocked.[28]

Cuba's population, and especially Havana's, grew at a substantial rate beginning in the mid-eighteenth century.[29] Unfortunately, the era's census figures—gathered in 1775, 1791, 1811, and 1817—are both questionable and contradictory; the numbers are in all probability greater than the census indicated. Alexander von Humboldt ardently made his distrust known: "Everyone is aware that both these [1775 and 1791 censuses] were made with great negligence, and a large part of the population was omitted."[30] In 1976, Kenneth Kiple made a similar argument, warning historians about the unreliability of the island's censuses. He stressed that various factions in Cuba working toward specific political or economic goals often purposely distorted census figures.[31] Some years later, Johnson argued that all Cuban censuses were essentially flawed because they intentionally omitted counting the active military personnel. She pointed out that as many as one-half of adult white males were never officially recorded.[32] Despite the inaccuracies, later censuses substantiated that the region was clearly experiencing a sizeable population increase.[33]

Johnson's analysis of the city's population cast important light on the matter. She noted that between 1755 and 1778, the city experienced a 78 percent increase in population. Its suburbs' population soared by 81 percent, and the outlying areas grew by 88 percent. By 1810, this growth spur changed slightly as Havana's population was not continuing to expand at that same pace. Johnson reasoned that by this time, the city itself had reached its point of saturation. Regardless, Havana's growth and expansion are irrefutable.[34]

The 1811 census, though deemed incomplete by von Humboldt and other scholars, listed a minimum of 98,000 people residing in Havana.[35] By the time of the

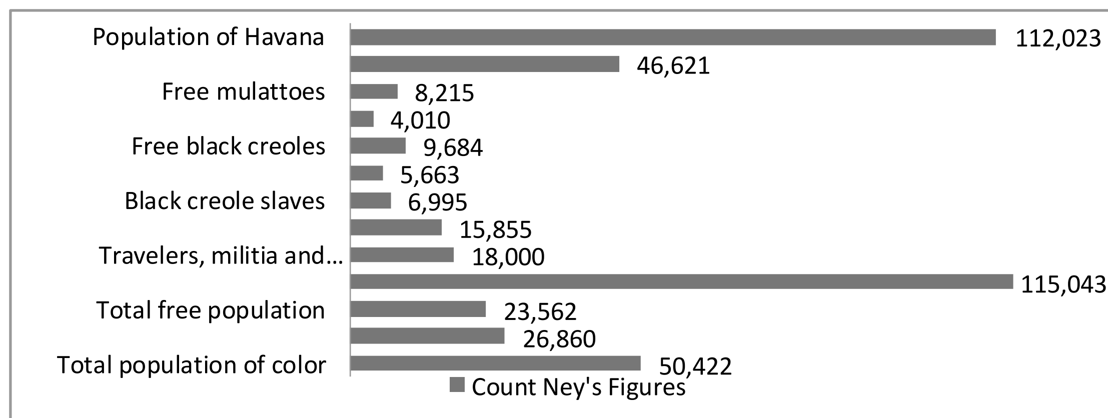
more reliable 1827 census, 112,000 of the island's 311,051 whites—over a third of the island's residents—lived in the city of Havana. The second decade of the nineteenth century saw Havana become the largest city in the Caribbean and the third-largest metropolis in the Americas.[36] Some of Havana's outlying regions attracted migrants, but the vast majority of the elite and their families, along with some favorite slaves, lived within the walls of the city, inside the confines of *intramuros* (within the wall), the section of Havana that was bordered by an impenetrable wall. The erection of the wall was part of a project approved by the Spanish Crown in the latter sixteenth century to protect the city's inhabitants from foreign attack by land.[37] When the final phase of the wall's construction ended, the elite sector of the city was enclosed within a massive stone barrier that measured 6 feet thick and 14 feet high, and approximately 1,900 yards long, with entrances at each end and near the center.[38] At nine o'clock every evening, a cannon shot signaled the closing of the gates until the following morning. Anyone not within the city at that time had to spend the night wherever possible outside. There was no way to enter or exit the city once the gates had been locked.[39]

The city of Havana continued growing and new migrants to the region took up residence in the surrounding towns, which were also booming, possibly at an even faster pace. These settlement patterns were part of a continuing trend that had also begun in the latter half of the eighteenth century.[40] The 1827 census counted 39,980 people within the city walls and 94,023 residing in *extramuros*—outside the walls— in the outlying regions located on the other side of the stone barrier.[41] In fact, between 1817 and 1841, the *intramuros* population never surpassed 40,000, while the population of the outlying suburbs continued to grow. Starting at least as early as the 1820s, over half of Havana's

population lived outside the walls, and by 1841, blacks accounted for 60 percent of the people living in the area.[42] Regla was a prime example: after the Spanish Crown ceded Florida to Great Britain in 1764, many evacuees from the neighboring peninsula relocated there. Regla was also an important enclave for militiamen and retired military personnel.[43] The town's growth was significant throughout the nineteenth century, and it continued expanding well into the twentieth century.

The French count Eugene Ney visited Cuba in 1830, and, as was the custom of most travelers of the era, he kept a diary during his time on the island. According to Ney's statistics, the population of the city of Havana in 1829 included 46,621 whites, 23,562 free people of color, and 26,860 slaves.[44] Though Ney guaranteed the authenticity of the data, he did not cite his source; thus these figures may not be totally accurate, but may still be of some use to gauge the city's racial makeup at the time. Ney wrote that the total population of Havana comprised 112,023 people. His figures were organized to reflect the number of whites; free and enslaved mulattoes; free and enslaved black creoles; free and enslaved Africans; and travelers, militias, and marines. (Table 1)

Table 3. Population of Havana in 1829[12]



[12] Ney, *Cuba en 1830*, 73.

There are numerous concerns with Count Ney's data. First, there is a conflict between Ney's figures for the total population of Havana and the actual sum. While he wrote that there were 112,023 people in the city, the actual sum of the itemized figures he provided is 115,043. There is a difference of 3,020 people. In addition, when adding the total number of whites and the colored population, excluding the 18,000 travelers, militias and marines, the sum is 97,043. The 112,023 figure he provided is erred. Ney did not account for any of these discrepancies in his diary, so these errors remain a mystery. Additionally, Ney's "travelers, militia and marines" category includes the people of color who served in Cuba's *pardos y morenos* militias, meaning that the island's colored population is underrepresented in his tally. People of color made up a considerable percentage of members of the city's militias. Johnson calculated that at least two-thirds of Havana's militias were free colored males because military service was the only official class that was open to this sector of the population.[45] Unfortunately, Ney failed to differentiate the individual racial composition of these militias.

Despite these shortcomings, though, Count Ney's data still provides an important approximation of the city's racial makeup. Even if the 18,000 racially undefined "travelers, militia and marines" are excluded, the population of color still surpasses that of whites by 3,801 people. Based on Johnson's calculations, if we add a conserved estimate of 10,000 people (slightly less than Johnson's suggested two-thirds) to account for the population of color affiliated with the city's militias, the difference becomes even more significant: people of color exceeded the white population of Havana by 13,801 or 30 percent. Clearly, the African component of Havana's population began to stand out.

Blacks continued to outnumber whites, well into the latter years of the nineteenth century.

The trend was apparent throughout the island, but especially so in the western region where the number of sugar plantations was rapidly increasing and so, too, was the African presence. As a result, Cuba's racial composition and culture were progressively coming under the sway of African influences. The island's 1817 census also reflected the greater presence of people of color: 239,830 whites, 114,058 free people of color, and 199,145 slaves—thus providing a total of 313,203 Africans and people of color. In 1827, by contrast, whites totaled 311,051. Africans and people of color equaled 393,440. This latter group had been steadily growing since the eighteenth century.[46] In 1846, shortly after the infamous *Escalera* conspiracy, when there was a drop in the volume of slave imports, whites continued to be in the minority: 425,767 to 472,985. Not until the slave trade ended and abolition loomed on the horizon did the populations' composition shift and the number of whites begin to grow. By 1862, there were 793,484 whites and 593,986 people of color.[47] If we allow for the numerous traders who illegally introduced slaves—who as a result were not taken into account in the official figures—the total population of color most probably exceeded these figures. British commissioners stationed in Havana after the British-Spanish accords to bring an end to the slave trade calculated that one-third of the 246,798 slaves brought to Cuba between 1840 and 1867 were introduced clandestinely.[48]

Havana and the Agricultural Revolution

Population growth was not the only process bringing change to the island. The sugar

industry's expansion during the nineteenth century was most notable in the island's western half. Pérez identified three major regions where sugar production was concentrated. The first zone ran along the island's northern coast, beginning in Pinar del Río, on the island's western verge, and ending in Matanzas. The second was located primarily in central Cuba, and included the regions of Matanzas, Cárdenas, Jovellanos, Colón, and Sagüa la Grande. The third zone encompassed Cienfuegos, Trinidad, Santa Clara, Sancti Spiritus, and Camagüey.[49]

Although most of the era's sugar estates were not in Havana or its suburbs, during the nineteenth century, the city and adjacent areas were the preferred residence of many of Cuba's wealthiest sugar barons, the "princes of agriculture," as the U.S. journalist William H. Hulbert dubbed them in 1854.[50] By contrast, Matanzas, then a small, remote region with a sparse population, had all the necessary elements required for sugar cultivation as the area was still in its developmental stages. Sugar had been introduced to Matanzas toward the end of the eighteenth century but until this time had not been a noteworthy product. The Province's agricultural direction was about to change, as the area had numerous characteristics that were favorable for the production of sugar. Several navigable rivers running along the fertile Yumurí Valley complemented the region's forests, pastures and virgin lands and emptied into the bay which was itself a boon. The first Matanzas plantations were established along these rivers because these made for an easier exchange of services and goods, including an enslaved workforce.

Spain officially liberated Matanzas's port for international trade in 1806, thus allowing sugar growers greater facility for conducting business with Spain and other European nations and, most importantly, with the United States.[51] Matanzas and the

adjacent towns quickly became the island's strongest centers of sugar production, and the region steadily earned its place on the island's map, second only to Havana. Cuba's greatest sugar plantations put down strong roots in the jurisdiction. By the 1830s, Matanzas had become the island's most energetic *entrepôt* for sugar and the world's wealthiest sugar-producing region.[52]

The arrival of the railroad further intensified the pace of the sugar revolution. After the first rail line from Havana to Güines became operational in 1838, a second railroad project began that would connect the bay of Cárdenas with the interior, in particular the region of Jovellanos, disparagingly branded "Bemba" (big puffy lips) because of the large African population working there in the sugar fields. By the 1830s this diminutive area of Matanzas had become a key sugar producer. The railroad was operational by 1840, and Cárdenas began showing tremendous promise for nearby sugar producers who could now export their product from its bay.[53] Matanzas's planters were understandably worried. A project to make significant improvements to Matanzas's wharf was approved in 1842, but its budget grew too big for it to be completed. It would take a while longer to complete the repairs.[54] The planters' fears escalated. Dreading the competition from Cárdenas and its likely effects on their investments, a consortium of powerful Matanzas *hacendados* residing in Havana began negotiating their own railroad project that would connect other zones in the interior to the bay of Matanzas, increasing the area's exports and thus their revenues.[55] By the 1860s, Cuba's railroad system connected the island's major centers of sugar production with its principal ports, Havana's included.[56]

As several historians have observed, the railroad was the most important technological advancement to help ensure sugar's ascent to the Cuban throne.[57] Franklin Knight drew attention to this idea when he stated that beyond doubt, the Cuban railroads "were created to serve the sugar industry."[58] Likewise, Cuban historian Óscar Zanetti Lecuona stressed that sugar was "the only apparent motor of the Cuban railroad."[59] The railroad had several significant ramifications that proved particularly beneficial to Matanzas: the growth and expansion of port cities and the rise of new ones, the rapid development of the island's hinterlands, and a significant growth in the arrival of newcomers to those areas. The greater ease of transporting the plantations' product contributed to the growth of the sugar export market; most importantly, the lower cost of sugar production and transportation for export allowed for greater profit and further expansion of the industry.[60]

By mid-century, absentee owners in Havana were in charge of almost 50 percent of the Matanzas sugar mills. Most left the day-to-day operation of their estates to overseers and other personnel, leaving the comforts of Havana to visit their holdings only when needed. As stressed by an old Yoruba adage that would soon become part of the island's folk wisdom, the rewards of the farmland always travel to the city. Nothing could have been closer to the truth in nineteenth-century Cuba. Many plantation and mill owners also had interests in other endeavors, as was the case with the consortium that united to build the railways from Havana to Matanzas, further expanding their sphere of influence by remaining the majority shareholders in the companies that operated them.[61] Not only did they build the means with which to export their product at a substantial

savings, but they also retained control over the railroad to ensure their continued profit—all the while enjoying the eminence and remunerations of their investments in Havana.[62]

Havana, Urban Growth, and Conflict

The German sociologist Georg Simmel has theorized that conflict is one of the most productive and indispensable elements in any human society. For Simmel, the causes of conflict are dissociating factors—hate, envy, need, desire. Conflict breaks out because of these, but then again, so does its solution. Simmel postulated that conflict is designed to resolve divergent dichotomies and achieve unity, even if this results in the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties.[63] In discussing his theory of conflict, Simmel wrote almost as if he were referring to Cuban history because in the nineteenth century, Havana was a hotbed of conflict, reverberating with life, and conflictive life at that. Much like the proverbial Cuban metaphor, Cuba was *el solar del reverbero*, best approximated by the colloquial American expression "hellhole."

Havana was crowded and tense, a beehive of constant hustle and bustle. The city's harbor was a dynamic and unremitting center of maritime activity, the heart of converging sea routes and one of the world's most productive ports, the eight busiest in the world.[64] While she sometimes appeared to be selectively myopic, in 1844, Mercedes Santa Cruz y Montalvo, the francophone Condesa de Merlín, described the constant movement she witnessed upon returning to her native Havana. The picture of Havana's people of color painted by the countess was set against a backdrop of incessant motion where scantily clad blacks operated a school of small boats, all the while screaming, smoking, and showing "their teeth as a sign of their happiness, to welcome us."[65]

The condesa's portrayal of the agitated port and the city beyond it was probably one of the most vivid depictions of that era. Havana was bustling, boisterous, restless. Many areas of the city flooded after ain, becoming muddy and impassable, and owing to the lack of a proper system for garbage collection, its residents discarded their refuse on the streets. Von Humboldt complained about the smell of *tasajo*, dried salted meat whose odor "…often poisons, the houses, and the winding streets…"[66] Until the appointment of Luís de las Casas as captain general and his subsequent crusade to clean up the city, not only was Havana noisy but also foul-smelling.[67]

Still, its streets were continuously packed with people of all sorts, and from all over the world. Opportunity abounded "for those that want to work," and a large population of working-class Spaniards had been flocking there since the close of the eighteenth century.[68] Numerous shops lined the streets of the city, frequented by *havaneros* who were all the while surrounded by the singing and "obstreperous screams marked by pronounced cadences" of those "poor blacks" who did not know how to work any other way. Nothing ever came to a stop in *la condesa's* Havana. Everything she saw evoked feelings of excitement and dynamism: "an animated life and as ardent as the sun whose rays vibrate above our heads."[69]

The condesa's myopia, however, seemed to occasionally affect her writing. Some of her descriptions were accurate, even astute, while at other times she saw Havana through jaundiced eyes. Her earlier description of the city is offset by her assertion that "*no hay pueblo en la Habana; no hay más que amos y esclavos*—there are no folks in Havana; there are only masters and slaves."[70] The *condesa's* description could not be farther from the truth, for while there were numerous wealthy planters residing in the

city, Havana had become the greatest recipient of *el pueblo*, the humble people who were the backbone of the society precisely because they provided the goods and services that the wealthy could or would not.[71] Blinded by her own biases, she failed to see the reality that surrounded her. Sadly, her attitude was common at the time. Earlier in the century, Count Ney's descriptions of people of color were consistently derisive. He wrote about Havana's dangerous character, especially at night. It was important to keep one's pace to avoid the "black or perfidious mulatto that would, hiding behind any door, allow you to pass and then stab you in the back" In Ney's version, blacks were often hired as assassins and paid with gold.[72] Surely, there was crime in Havana, and for the most part, blacks were accused of perpetrating them, whether they had or had not. Even the British, the fiercest defenders of slaves and people of color in Cuba, contributed to the dissemination of these stories, which were probably infused with racism, resulting in urban legends and gross exaggerations, if not outright fabrications.[73]

Like any city in the New World, Havana had its share of problems and troublemakers. Still, given the penalties to which blacks were subjected if apprehended, especially for killing a white person, these claims of "proverbial lawlessness" are questionable.[74] Sadly, like all urban areas the world over, Havana's problems often obscured the visibility of the greater segment of its population, the hard-working people who went about the duties of daily existence, often enduring or subsisting the best way possible in a world that was always willing to pose obstacles and present ordeals.

This particular sector, the urban working class, made up most of the city's inhabitants. Havana and its suburbs were major hubs for people of color who undoubtedly were able to prosper there if they worked hard enough. Many people of

color found the city receptive to their aspirations. Several historians have commented that in the nineteenth century, people of color made a good living indeed in Cuba's cities as artisans and craftsmen, dockworkers, militias, and in many other trades. Many Africans and their descendants abandoned the countryside and moved to the cities where opportunities for them were much greater. Most people of color in Cuba carved out enclaves in the major cities; Havana, Matanzas and Santiago de Cuba were especially attractive to recently manumitted slaves and their families.[75]

People of Color—The Backbone of the City

Early in the nineteenth century, other scholars and travelers noted the significant presence of free people of color in the cities; they were almost always described in the process of working, something that Ney missed and the condesa somehow failed to see. Von Humboldt wrote that in 1810, a minimum of 25,979 free people of color lived in Havana. The total population was estimated at 96,114 minimally. Free people of color represented at least 27 percent of the population.[76] Numerous barrios and suburbs—and some *arrabales* (shanty towns)—in Havana were marked by a distinct African flavor. Jesús María, San Lázaro, Salud, Chávez, El Cerro, Belén, El Manglar, Pogolotti, and certain sections of Guanabacoa and Regla had a sizable number of Africans and people of color living within their limits, and in many of these areas, free people of color and slaves surpassed the white population in numbers.[77]

Havana was one of those cities in which Cuba's population of color made a marked difference. According to census figures analyzed by Robert Paquette, in 1840, one out of every five free people of color lived in Havana. Most were proficient in the

numerous trades and vocations that were open to them.[78] Also, slaves were often hired by their masters or worked on the city's streets as hawkers, selling utensils, housewares, food, fruits, and a wide variety of sweets, the delectable treats for which black women were especially appreciated.[79] Centered only on herself, la condesa was mesmerized. She liked everything she saw, including the black men who sold the tropical fruits she enjoyed so much and the black women who walked the streets selling their goods, moving like peacocks, "balancing their hips with their scarves on their head, their bracelets and a cigar in their mouths."[80] Clearly, it was not the slave dealers or the sugar barons who were performing these tasks. They were neither *Dons* nor *Doñas* but rather the folk—*el pueblo*—the hard-working, simple people, many of whom were former rural dwellers, even if some of them were slaves.[81]

By the middle of the nineteenth century, free people of color, as well as some slaves, were "a typical element in Cuban cities."[82] Many of these people were very entrepreneurial and reasonably successful. In fact, one nineteenth-century writer commented that some Cuban slaves wore gold and silver ornaments that glittered in the sun.[83] Several, and especially the colored militias, were literate and wealthy. By the 1860s, there were slaves lived and worked on their own, and a few even had employees and/or owned slaves who worked for them. Sometimes, slaves were rented by their owners to another person in need of temporary workers. In addition, there were those who allowed their chattel to earn an income. These salaried slaves shared a specific portion of their earnings with their owner.

In theory, colonial legislation allowed a slave to purchase his or her freedom, a practice that was commonly employed in all the Iberian colonies.[84] This process, known

as *coartación*, was first instructed during the reign of Charles V in 1526 and intended to ensure that the slaves would "work and serve their owners with more willingness," thus preventing insurrections. In 1708, Madrid issued a royal decree recognizing slaves' right to *coartación* and manumission.[85] According to the royal decree, the slave and master were to agree on a price for the former's freedom, a procedure that usually required the presence of a third person. After reaching a mutually accorded settlement, the slave contributed a specific sum, generally half of the stipulated price, and then began working to earn the balance, typically paid in installments. Once the slave had made a deposit toward his or her freedom, the master had limited rights over the slave. Many salaried slaves were *coartados* and worked to contribute toward the balance on their freedom.[86] Women were especially numerous among the *coartados* and the free colored population, generally exceeding the number of males.[87]

Though not infallible, the island's code afforded the slave certain protections. By law, the slave had the right to appeal any breaches by the master and mandated the creation of a new administrative position, the *procurador síndico* (legal administrator), to supervise the affairs of the *coartados*.[88] As Gwendolyn Midlo Hall has pointed out, however, "there was no one rigid condition or system of slavery in America," and by extension, the entire New World.[89] Though in theory the system of *coartación* and eventual manumission appeared sound, it had several flaws, especially during the years of intense sugar cultivation. Not all slaves found the means to take advantage of the system's grace. *Coartación* was more prevalent in the cities, and women living in urban areas were more likely to obtain this status because of their greater access to cash. One important study of Matanzas plantations found that over 68 percent of the *coartados* in

their sample were women.[90] The predominance of women among the *coartados* seems to have prevailed in Puerto Rico as well.[91] By the last half of the nineteenth century, more *coartados* lived in the cities than in the rural areas. Over 40 percent of them lived in Havana.[92]

Whether or not *coartación* benefited the plantation slaves is debatable, as these had fewer opportunities to gain the money that was required for manumission.[93] Furthermore, access to the legal system may have been significantly curtailed in rural areas. Requests to leave the plantation had to be approved by the master or overseer, who would surely turn down any appeal if it were suspected that the slave was going to seek help.[94] Many masters violated slaves' rights and attempted to cheat them even though under the law's provisions slaves were granted the right to take their masters before a third party, the *procurador* (special prosecutor), when disputes arose.[95] Slaves also had the right to inherit property and to bequeath their belongings to whomever they chose, granted that they had testaments drafted before their death, most often on their deathbed.[96]

Manumission and *coartación* in Cuba have led to serious debates among scholars about the nature of Cuban slavery. The controversy has been active since the nineteenth century. Von Humboldt was probably one of the first to write about the benign nature of the Spanish slave laws and to comment on the great number of manumissions that occurred in Cuba.[97] The debate became more pronounced in 1946 when Frank Tannenbaum's book, *Slave and Citizen,* asserted that slavery in Latin America was more benevolent that it was in the U.S. South. Tannenbaum stipulated that in the Spanish colonies, slaves were endowed with a legal and moral identity as a person, something that

was lacking in the British colonies, and that this difference would continue having subsequent repercussions in the race relations that evolved in each region after emancipation.[98]

Sometime later, Herbert Klein also inferred these ideas when comparing the Virginian and Cuban systems of slavery; he extolled the role of the Catholic Church and asserted that it inspired masters to liberate their slaves as a sign of compassion.[99] Some of these ideas were the subject of the 1976 film *La última cena*, directed by the celebrated Cuban cinematographer Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, in which the local priest convinced a slave owner to redeem his soul by inviting twelve of his slaves to have Easter dinner at his table as a sign of religious devotion and human empathy.

The idea of humane Iberian slavery versus the less benign British form has led to another of those major academic frontlines where historians continue to present evidence both in favor of this view and, with equal fervor, against it.[100] It is arguable that some slaves could have benefited from remaining in captivity, especially the old and infirm. Unable to care for themselves, it is possible that for them, enslavement was preferable to liberty. In theory, and as dictated by legislation, the master would have to provide for the slave. Historians have argued that in some cases, older and sickly slaves were manumitted precisely to avoid complying with the decree.[101] The truth of the matter is that regardless of which side of the historian takes, slavery, by its very nature, is never truly sympathetic or compassionate, no matter how benign the particular slave system and its associated legislation may appear.

The African mutual aid societies, *cabildos de nación*, were often helpful in purchasing the freedom of their members and their families.[102] Slave owners often

liberated their slaves in their wills, in recognition of the services that they had provided them. Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux found documents indicating that in their wills, free people of color and mulattoes had a greater tendency to manumit their slaves than did whites.[103] For the most part, the slaves who were liberated in wills were generally domestic slaves and sometimes mulatto children of the master who were not officially recognized by the father until his death.[104]

Given their closer proximity to their masters, domestic slaves were able to create greater bonds with them. They often ate and dressed better than plantation field slaves, and they definitely had greater access to information about relatives in Africa from the continuous arrival of ships loaded with slaves, especially in Havana and Matanzas. They sometimes located lost relatives in the city or learned about the whereabouts of those who were still in bondage. Timotea Albear, Ajayí Lewú (better known by her Lucumí nickname, Latuán) an emancipated slave who was an important founder of the Lucumí religious tradition in Havana, located a sister, Omódelé, after learning that she was still alive in Jovellanos.[105] In addition, slaves in urban areas had greater access to social and religious activities, both African and Spanish, which often proved beneficial in establishing important liaisons, in numerous respects.[106] Many people of color were not only linked to the *cabildos* but were also active in the Catholic lay brotherhoods.[107]

Female domestics, though often physically and sexually abused, were very influential in transmitting African values and culture to the children they raised.[108] Many of them enjoyed considerable access to white families, and perhaps more importantly to their children. Many women of color who had recently given birth sometimes earned a living as wet nurses for white families. Sociologist Teresita Pedraza advocated the idea

that African women, in their role as surrogate mothers, acted as socializing agents, thus playing a significant role in the transmission of culture to white children.[109] The greater number of Cuban midwives between 1820 and 1845 were women of color. On 6 February 1828, an article in the *Diario de La Habana* denounced the fact that midwifery had been "degraded and abandoned completely to the city's most miserable and deprived colored women."[110]

Domestic slaves also enjoyed greater freedoms than those condemned to the plantations. Many, especially women, were able to accumulate money to purchase their freedom by working on the side, either on their own during their spare time or for their master. In either case, they had to share their earnings with their owner.[111] Many mulattoes and free blacks often spent years saving whatever money they could to purchase a slave who would later be set to work to produce them extra income.[112] Deschamps-Chapeaux argued that "master" had no color and that "slave" was "slave" regardless of master's skin tone. Thus, the color of the master's skin mattered little to the slave—he or she was still chattel.[113]

Emancipados

Another important group on Havana's streets was the *emancipados*. When the British began their anti-slavery campaign, Africans rescued from captured slave ships were, at least in theory, automatically liberated. Under the English-Spanish treaty of 1817, any slave taken from a seized ship would remain with whichever government seized the vessel and immediately freed.[114] A similar agreement was made between England and Brazil in 1818.[115] Initially, courts were established in Sierra Leone and Cuba where the

crews of ships that were caught transporting slaves would be tried and sentenced. The trial's location depended on the region where the ship was captured. Those rescued from vessels seized closer to West Africa were emancipated in Sierra Leone and placed under British care. In Cuba, *emancipados* should have been the responsibility of the colonial authorities, but this was not always the case. There, newly freed slaves were initially placed in the care of islanders but were soon appointed to planters as well who were, in theory, selected by the court after careful consideration and payment of a fee. Since the caretakers appointed by the court paid money to receive the emancipated Africans the British soon began protesting what they perceived as a new form of slavery.[116]

While some liberated Africans in Cuba were fortunate to be assigned to families that treated them humanely, not all enjoyed the same fate. Many ended up on sugar plantations, and almost all of them were exploited in one way or another—something that also occurred in Brazil, the other great bastion of slavery in the nineteenth century, where a similar agreement with the British was in place.[117] Emancipated Africans were also a "welcome relief to the [expanding] railroad [industry]".[118] For the most part, *emancipados* were treated so much like slaves that often it was hard to distinguish which of the two were worse off.[119] When the *Relámpago* was seized in 1824, Henry Theo Kilbee, a judge with the British Mixed Commission's court in Havana, presented specific guidelines stating how the *emancipados* had to be treated.[120] As part of the agreement, *emancipados* had to learn trades, with all adults to be apprenticed for five years, or seven years for children and women with children. Once the apprenticeship ended, the *emancipados* had to be completely liberated.

Evidently, these guidelines were like most other standards and regulations: they were received but not observed. Soon after the apprenticeship ended, many *emancipados* were reassigned to other "caretakers," so long as the appropriate "fees" were paid, a process that became tradition.[121] By the 1830s, the number of manumitted Africans and *emancipados* was increasing at what the authorities considered an alarming rate. Solutions were sought: relocation to Spain, British Sierra Leone, or other British colonies. Many were sent to Trinidad, and soon other British islands, badly in need of laborers, were requesting *emancipados*.[122] Transfer to other locations was a temporary solution but legislative debates over the diverse possibilities for relocation to Brittain's "sugar islands" brought the idea to an abrupt end.[123] The fate of the liberated Africans continued to change, almost always for the worse. Murray wrote that by the 1860s, some *emancipados* had been assigned and reassigned for over twenty years, in essence becoming, as he called them, "state slaves."[124] Over the years, many had been falsely reported dead, and documentation was fabricated to the effect. Plantation owners and corrupt colonial officials often replaced dead slaves with *emancipados* and the forged documents proved their new identity.[125]

Regla's church records list 129 *emancipado* baptisms and 140 deaths in the town between 1828 and 1873. In addition, fifty-two children were born to the liberated Africans in the town, many having "arrived" while the parents were being processed and assigned. It is quite probable that they were allocated for domestic duty and possibly hired out or worked in some business venture for the families to which they were assigned. Slaves for hire were prominent thus it would not have been strange for *emancipados* to engage in similar functions.[126] Given the absence of plantations in the

town, these were probably the only available options. The road toward absolute emancipation was paved in the 1870s, after the passing of the Moret Law that liberated all children born of slave mothers after 1868. However, in Cuba, *emancipados* were, for all intents and purposes, enslaved until final abolition in 1886.

The battle among England, Spain, Cuba's colonial authorities, and the Cuban planters over the fate of the *emancipados* brewed for close to fifty years. In reality, it was never resolved. Even Cuban people of color, free and enslaved, were irritated over the *emancipado* travesty. While some supported the liberated Africans and their plight, others held them in contempt.[127] The *emancipado* drama was almost like a tragic stage production. With each captain general that arrived from the metropolis, the fate of the *emancipados* was altered at whim, even if at times Spain gave the impression that it was trying to find a solution to the problem. For the most part, Spain's decrees referring to *emancipados* were never truly observed. The captains general had too much to gain from the ambivalent status of this class of slaves.[128] The British, staunch defenders of the *emancipados*, never conceded but were almost always defeated in their numerous efforts to find solutions. Historian David Murray's admirable examination of the process proved that in reality, all British attempts to mitigate the plight of the *emancipados* were essentially futile.[129]

Those few *emancipados* who managed to gain their freedom also sought the advantages of city living. Likewise, some of those who were assigned to work as domestic servants probably brought much-needed income for the family that received them by selling goods on the city streets. Others were hired out. The island's *Junta de Fomento* (Development Council) "hired" *emancipados* for public works projects,

repairing roads that had deteriorated and also taking on other, more general construction work, including Havana's aqueduct.[130] This practice added further aggravation to the worried authorities, fearing the possible examples *emancipados* could provide for the slaves. While they strived to keep these "liberated" Africans as far away from the slaves as possible, the *emancipados* were a visible element in Havana's streets and in one way or another, established a presence in the lives of some people of color.

Murray wrote that many free blacks and slaves spoke disparagingly of the liberated Africans, disdainfully calling them "English."[131] There were some exceptions. *Emancipados* had a presence in Cuban *cabildos*, where several of them gained great followings as priests of African religions. Although *cabildos* were legally established as ethnic associations, their most significant functions were religious. Two specific priestesses stand out. Timotea Albear, Latuán, who performed frequent ordinations in the Havana *Cabildo San José 80* in the latter nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth century, was a *'mancipá* (colloquial distortion of the word *emancipada*).[132] Her close companion, Rosalía Abreu, Efunshé Warikondó may have been one as well. Most sources agree that she was never a slave in Cuba and insist that she arrived there as a free woman.[133]

Havana, Cabildos, and African Culture

No matter how many may have disdained its presence, African culture gained its own position in Cuba. Supported by legislation that ensured Africans and their descendants their own niche, albeit a minor one relegated to the outskirts, African culture thrived. Arguably, the most important avenue for the retention of African cultural identity in Cuba

was the *cabildo de nación*. These fraternities and mutual aid societies served as temporary respites by which Africans and their descendants could escape the reality of enslavement and return to their often idealized notions of the pristine Africa they had left behind, even if indirectly and for a very brief period of time. In reality, that Africa of their dreams; that remote and yearned-for land located in the back of their subconscious, no longer existed, at least not as they envisioned it. Still, a return to that idea of home, the ancestral home, even if only temporarily and psychologically, offered Africans some much-needed hope and alleviated the alienation and anxiety that enslavement engendered, a phenomenon that has been studied and debated since at least the eighteenth century.[134]

The *cabildos de nación* were ethnic associations or fraternities, sanctioned by Spanish law that allowed Africans the space in which to socialize and hold celebrations on holidays and weekends, *al uso de su tierra*—in the custom of their land."[135] They were based on the Spanish *cofradías—*guilds or fraternities—first organized in Seville around the fourteenth century. The membership consisted of people affiliated by vocations, principally craftsmen, seeking the protection of their craft's (and fraternal organization's) patron saint. These *cofradías* were placed under the tutelage of a Catholic saint and normally held their meetings in the saint's chapel.[136] Usually urban phenomena, c*abildos de nación* were most common in Havana and Matanzas but were also found in other cities and towns. Most people of color either frequented the *cabildos* or had links to them. In the first half of the nineteenth century, many of them were located in *Jesús María*, a predominantly black section of Havana.[137]

Ortiz wrote that these guilds were organized during the reign of *Alfonso el Sabio*, who, after the creation of the Spanish legal code known as *Las Siete Partidas*, wanted to "give order to matters ecclesiastical and civil."[138] As early as 1474, African slaves in Seville were allowed to "gather for their dances and celebrations on holidays, from which they would then attend to their work with pleasure and be more tolerant of their captivity."[139] Like Ortiz, Spanish historian Isidoro Moreno stated that these associations were the precursors to the Afro-Cuban *cabildos*. Philip Howard has also adopted this view in his research, pointing further to the existence of comparable institutions in Africa.[140]

The Swedish traveler Fredrika Bremer visited several *cabildos* toward the end of her stay in Cuba. The barbarity of African slavery on the island had made sufficient impression on her that she felt she had the absolute need to visit these *cabildos* before returning to Europe. Her descriptions are very significant. Bremer was probably one of the first Europeans to see possessed *olorishas*—priests/esses—in Cuba and document what she witnessed. Though undoubtedly marred by the biases of the era, Bremer visited a "Luccomée" *cabildo* in Havana, where she received a "demonstration of good-will" from the *cabildo's* queen and king. Her descriptions were considerably objective.[141] She portrayed the scene as a "wild but not rude sort or lawlessness" and unlike other travelers, she regarded the sound of African drums as "gay [and producing] measured beats…" Blacks were not the only participants in the activity, as around the *cabildo's* various gated doorways stood white sailors "endeavoring to get sight of what was passing inside." Her encounter with the possessed *olorisha* apparently did not intimidate or upset her. Instead of pulling away when she was approached by the dancing "figure… [who

stood] before me with extended hands [and] …apparently friendly grimaces…I comprehended that all his bowings and bedizenment were intended as a compliment to me [to *la bonita*], and I made my reply by shaking one of the black hands, and placing within it a silver coin."[142] Apparently, Bremer saw nothing strange in the practices of the *cabildo.*

Membership in a *cabildo* was very common in the nineteenth century. Initially, only Africans could participate under penalty of law, a decree that was often disregarded. In the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, Cuban society, feeling deeply threatened by its own insecurities about slavery and slave revolts, awakened to the possibility of a similar reign of terror and mayhem on its own soil. In 1812, José Antonio Aponte, a mulatto and retired commander of the *Batallones de Pardos y Morenos*, was accused of orchestrating one of the earliest slave conspiracies in Cuba.[143] The conspirators, it was believed, had a Haitian connection and planned to kill all the whites and take over the island, as their comrades on the neighboring island had done years before.[144] Though there are some lacunae in his claim, Cuba's much-respected historian José Luciano Franco wrote that Aponte was a Lucumí, ordained to Shangó, orisha of thunder; a member of the Ogboni society; and at one point, the director of the *Cabildo Shangó Tedún*. The *cabildo* was reportedly tied to the conspiracy.[145] Furthermore, Franco also stated that one of Aponte's comrades, Clemente Chacón, was an *Abakuá*. According to the proceedings, *Abakuá* symbols were found when his house was searched.[146]

Some scholars have subsequently repeated Franco's assertions.[147] It seems as though Franco (and those of us who promulgated his assertions) was wrong. Stephan Palmie, Matt Childs, and other historians have recently called attention to Franco's

error.[148] Clearly, as a mulatto, it is possible that Aponte descended from Lucumís, but he was not one by birth. In addition, mulattoes, as well as creoles of any racial category during that specific period, were proscribed from participating in *cabildos*, especially in Havana.[149] Finally, recall that Franco alleged that Aponte was a member of the *Ogboni*, an important Yoruba political-fraternal society associated with the city of Ifé in Yorubaland. In retrospect, however, there is no evidence that an Ogboni society was ever founded in Cuba, and much less in 1812 when the Lucumí were not yet a significant group.

Some later conspiracies were in all likelihood devised in *cabildos*, so therefore it is not improbable that Aponte's rebellion could have been born in one as well.[150] The Lucumí *babalawo* (diviner) Remigio Herrera, Adeshina, has been linked with the 1844 *Escalera* conspiracy. Oral sources have stressed that his *Cabildo de Santa Bárbara* in Simpson, Matanzas, which Adeshina directed at the time, was a meeting place for the conspirators.[151] Whites perceived the possible danger posed by the *cabildos* and often made attempts to do away with them.[152] Colonial—and later, republican—legislation repeatedly attempted to regulate and limit the functions of the *cabildos*, until finally they were structurally altered and then eliminated altogether. Interestingly, Matanzas may have resisted the repressive drive with greater strength. There are still numerous cabildos in the city and the smaller towns of the province that have been active since the nineteenth century. Possibly, colonial and republican-era officials were more tolerant outside of Havana.

Most historians establish 1792 as the year in which official legislation was adopted that prohibited, among other things, the location of *cabildos* within the confines

of *intramuros*, the region of the city of Havana that was located within the confines of the wall. An eminent Cuban historian, María del Carmen Barcia, has found archival evidence to support a possible earlier date of 1783.[153] Before that time, African drums echoed throughout many areas of the city, to the chagrin of many whites and Hispanicized mulattoes that considered them barbarous and crude. In 1842, another *cédula* once again reiterated the prohibition against *cabildos* within the city walls and went on to limit their gatherings to Sundays and holidays. African chanting, drumming, and certain ritual customs had been proscribed earlier, something that the new decree reinforced. Africans and their descendants could not hold wakes *al estilo africano* or accompany their loved ones to the grave with African rites, religious or cultural. Neither could they play their drums in the streets, use ritual attire, or parade with their *cabildo's* flag. After the 1842 decree was passed, life became more complex for those associations but the complexities were not insurmountable. Those *cabildos* that were not already on the outskirts of the city moved to *extramuros* and to the suburban towns, and for the most part, their affairs continued as African culture refused to die.

Clearly, though, there was a greater agenda behind the legislation. Historian Martha Silvia Escalona Sánchez argued that an underlying cause was the racial tensions that were arising, which eventually led to greater expressions of anxiety and paranoia. The *Escalera c*onspiracy probably marked the peak of this fear. The frictions that were born during the era lasted through the remainder of the nineteenth century and possibly influenced some twentieth-century developments as well. In her view, much of the governmental pressure was intended to contain the spread of Afro-Cuban culture and the group's quest for social equality.[154]

The Alexandrian legislation surely attempted to undermine any existing bonds between Africans and free creoles of color by sowing disunion, something that many believed would benefit both whites and free people of color. The possible effect that the existence of free blacks could have on other blacks, on those still suffering the harsh reality of enslavement, was a dilemma that had to be resolved. The colonial authorities surely devised the decree as a way to curtail cultural, racial, ethnic, and political solidarity among blacks. The major problem was that the population of free coloreds, which was growing at a worrisome rate, did not conform to either "white and free or black and slave."[155] Free people of color, and especially those who had migrated to the cities, sought to liberate themselves from the stigmas associated with slavery and the perceived lack of civilization attributed to the *bozales* who continued to enter the island well into the 1870s. Elite people of color supported the decree as a way of distinguishing themselves from the slaves and other blacks.[156]

After the 1844 *Escalera* conspiracy and the heightened fears occasioned by Haiti and its revolution—which continued to distress many Cubans almost 50 years after the fact—Captain General Leopoldo O'Donnell attempted to eradicate the *cabildos* with a decree that forbade their activities, but his order was never effective.[157] Well into the last years of the nineteenth century, most legislation related to *cabildos* stressed the measured eradication of the fraternities, by then considered a grim reminder of slavery's past, a humiliating chapter that most Cubans wanted to erase. Repentance or embarrassment over slavery and cultural tolerance were not universal feelings, however. Colonial and post-independence Cuban legislators continued perpetuating the venom of racism well into the twentieth century, ardently decrying *cabildos*. In 1922, the Machado regime

outlawed cabildo dances because they were "detrimental to public safety and contrary to morals and good customs."[158]

Prominent Afro-Cubans of the twentieth century, such as journalist and senator Juan Gualberto Gómez, and the burgeoning Afro-Cuban organization the Club Atenas, also favored their forceful extinction.[159] These sentiments were undoubtedly behind the 1884 legislation that once again forced the *cabildos* to mutate, requiring them to become *asociaciones*. Possibly hoping to exercise greater control and pressure over these organizations, the government created the *Registro de Asociaciones*, an agency that would thereafter monitor the affairs and activities of all the ethnic associations, ensuring their compliance with the law.[160] The agency existed until the 1960s.

Cabildos had played important roles assisting their members in times of crisis, hardship, and death. Additionally, they often contributed funds for the manumission of its members and their families.[161] That being said, Afro-Cuban *cabildos* were not free of conflict. Probably all had disputes and rivalries that led to internal divisions and separations. Court documents attest to their contentions over property and ownership as far back as the seventeenth century that continued well into the twentieth century.[162] Despite the bickering and intragroup rivalries, though, it is irrefutable that *cabildos* were one of the greatest contributors to the preservation of African religions in Cuba.

Once on the island, Africans refused passive acquiescence to slavery and found numerous ways to avoid forced acculturation. Manumission, emancipation from slave ships, *cabildos*, revolts and insurrections, and most of all, continuous contact with (and often gentle yet crafty influence over) the dominant majority were all significant mechanisms used by Africans and their descendants to counter Spanish hegemony.

Ironically, many of these mechanisms were supported by Spanish legislation and in some ways worked against the intended desires of the dominant class. Havana became one of the cities in which Africanity would become an indispensable ingredient in the Cuban *ajiaco*, and though other regions in Latin America have their own equivalents of this tuber, vegetable, and meat stew, the ingredients vary regionally. In an exquisitely revealing quote recounted by Robert Paquette, novelist Félix Tanco's letter to Domingo del Monte sums it up. Cuba was indelibly colored by Africa:

> *Everything is African, and the poor, simple blacks, without asking for it and without any other force than that born of the relation that they are in with us, are returning our cruel treatment by infecting us with simple customs and manners proper to the savages from Africa.*[163]

Notes

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[1] Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 54; Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba—Between Reform and Revolution*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 21.

[2] Scholars have compared the shape of the island to a caiman. For example, Uva de Aragon, *El Caimán ante el espejo: un ensayo de interpretación de lo cubano* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 2000). *El Caimán Barbudo*, the title of a Cuban journal that was first published in 1966, also plays on the metaphor.

[3] Hugh Thomas, *Cuba—The Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971), 22n23. Another possible interpretation is that *Havana* may be derived from Habanaguex, the name of a local indigenous chief.

[4] Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 30.

[5] Ibid., 1.

[6] Elizabeth Hallam, *Saints: Who They Are and How They Help You* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994) 21; Joseph L. Scarpaci, Roberto Segre, and Mario Coyula, *Havana: Two Faces of the Antillean Metropolis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 13.

[7] Gloria M. Delgado de Cantú, *Historia de México—el proceso de gestación de un pueblo* (Naucalpan de Juárez: Pearson Educación de México S.A. de C.V., 2002), 226.

[8] Franklin W. Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba during the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 3-4.

[9] "La Habana en 1800," in *Revista Cubana* (La Habana: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Soler, Álvarez y Comp., 1885), 454.

[10] Roland T. Ely, *Cuando reinaba su majestad el azúcar* (La Habana: Imagen Contemporánea, 2001), 55-6; Sherry Johnson, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 2-3.

[11] Roland T. Ely, "The Old Cuba Trade: Highlights and Case Studies of Cuban-American Interdependence during the Nineteenth Century," *The Business History Review* 38, no. 4:456; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 57-58, 72, 80; Evelyn Powell Jennings, "War as the 'Forcing House of Change': State Slavery in Late-Eighteenth-Century Cuba," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser. 63, no. 3 (July 2005): 412.

[12] Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change: Hurricanes & the Transformation of Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 41, 92; Verene A. Shepherd, *Slavery without Sugar: Diversity in Caribbean Economy and Society Since the 17th Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 2; William Van Norman Jr., "Shade Grown Slavery: Life and Labor on Coffee Plantations in Western Cuba, 1790-1845." (PhD dissertation. University of North Carolina, 2005), 9-10; Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2011), 124; Sarah L. Franklin, *Women and Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Colonial Cuba* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2012), 9.

[13] Pérez Jr., *Cuba,* 54-55; Sherry Johnson, "'La guerra contra los habitantes de los arrabales': Changing Patterns of Land Use and Land Tenancy in and around Havana, 1763-1800," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 77, no. 2 (1997): 182-83; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 26.

[14] Francisco Arango y Parreño, "Representación hecha a S.M. con motivo de la sublevación de esclavos en los dominios franceses de la isla de Santo Domingo," in *Obras* (Havana: Dirección de Cultura, Ministerio de Educación, 1952) 1: 110-112. Also, see Franklin, *Women and Slavery*, 8, 163-64nn44, 46.

[15] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, *El ingenio* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978) 1: 36.

[16] See Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar Is Made with Blood—The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988); Michelle Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash: Free People of Color in Cuba and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 28.

[17] José Antonio Saco, *La supresión del tráfico de esclavos africanos en la isla de Cuba examinada con relación a su agricultura y a su seguridad* (Paris: Imprenta de Panckoucke, 1845), 5, 47.

[18] From the title of Rolan T. Ely's book, *Cuando reinaba su majestad el azúcar*.

[19] *La Habana en 1800*, 455.

[20] David Murray, *Odious Commerce—Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 2.

[21] María del Carmen Barcia, *Burgesía esclavista y abolición* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1987), 8.

[22] Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 63; María del Carmen Barcia Zequeira, *La otra familia—parientes, redes, y descendencia de los esclavos en cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009), 48; Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database [henceforth TASTD]. Emory University, http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1750&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=701.

[23] Saco, *La supresión*, 24.

[24] Knight, *Slave Society*, 22; Pérez Jr., Cuba, 64.

[25] J.S. Thrasher, in Alexander Humboldt, *The Island of Cuba*, trans. J.S. Thrasher (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1856), 209-10.

[26] Thomas, *Cuba*, 17.

[27] Knight, *Slave Society,* 12; Thomas, *Cuba*, 12; Ely, *Cuando Reinaba*, 45.

[28] Raimundo Cabrera, *Cuba and the Cubans* (Philadelphia: The Levytype Company, 1896), 139.

[29] Johnson, " 'La guerra,' " 199.

[30] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 193.

[31] Kenneth F. Kiple, *Blacks in Colonial Cuba, 1774-1899* (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1976), 3, 9.

[32] Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 185.

[33] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 198.

[34] Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 52-53.

[35] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 198.

[36] Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 210.

[37] Powell Jennings, *War*, 417.

[38] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 110.

[39] Ibid.; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 18.

[40] Johnson, " 'La guerra,' " 190; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 53.

[41] Thomas, *Cuba*, 109n3.

[42] Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 115; María del Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos: negros en la habana colonial* (La Habana: Ediciones Boloña, 2009), 31-32.

[43] Francisco M. Duque, *Historia de Regla—descripción política, económica y social, desde su fundación hasta el día* (La Habana: Imprenta y Papelería de Ramela, Bouza y Ca., 1925), 14; Sherry Johnson, "Maintaining the Home Front: Widows, Wives and War in Late Eighteenth-Century Cuba," in *Gender, War and Politics—Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, ed. Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 218.

[44] Eugene Ney, *Cuba en 1830—diario de viaje de un hijo del Mariscal Ney*, trans. Miguel F. Garrido, ed. Jorge J. Beato Núñez (Miami: Ediciones Universal 1973), 73

[45] Johnson, *Social Transformation* , 63.

[46] Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 18.

[47] Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 64.

[48] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 244.

[49] Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 60.

[50] William Henry Hulbert, *Gan-Eden or Pictures of Cuba* (Boston: John P. Jewett. and Company, 1854), 142.

[51] Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century—The Social and Economic History of Monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 22-23; Óscar Zanetti Lecuona and A. García Álvarez, *Sugar & Railroads: A Cuban History, 1837-1959* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 41.

[52] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, xvii.

[53] Zanetti Lecuona and García Álvarez, *Sugar & Railroads*, 39.

[54] Jacobo de la Pezuela, *Diccionario geográfico, estadístico, histórico, de la isla de Cuba* (Madrid: Imprenta del Establecimiento de Mellado, 1863), 515.

[55] Zanetti Lecuona and García Álvarez, *Sugar & Railroads*, 41.

[56] Ibid., 64.

[57] Ibid., 39.

[58] Knight, *Slave Society*, 35.

[59] Zanetti Lecuona and García Álvarez, *Sugar & Railroads*, 63.

[60] Knight, *Slave Society*, 32; Pérez Jr., Cuba, 58-59.

[61] Zanetti Lecuona and García Álvarez, *Sugar & Railroads*, 113, 119.

[62] Ibid., 119; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 23; Alberto Perret Ballester, *El azúcar en matanzas y sus dueños en la habana* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2007), 9.

[63] Georg Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations*, trans. Kurt H. Wolff (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1955), 13-17.

[64] Luís Martínez Fernández, *Fighting Slavery in the Caribbean—The Life and Times of a British Family in Nineteenth-Century Havana* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 18.

[65] Mercedes Santa Cruz y Montalvo (Condesa de Merlín), *Viaje a La Habana*, ed. Adriana Méndez Rodenas (Doral, FL: Stockcero, Inc., 2008), 10.

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[67] Rosario Márquez Macías, "Havana during the Nineteenth Century: A Perspective from Its Spanish Immigrants," trans. Franklin W. Knight, *The Journal of the Historical Society* 9, no. 2 (June 2009): 269-70.

[68] Antonio Félix Mariñas to José Jiménez de Berzosa, 1828, in Márquez Macías, *Havana*, 270-71.

[69] Santa Cruz y Montalvo, *Viaje a La Habana*, 10.

[70] Ibid., 29.

[71] Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 55.

[72] Ney, *Cuba en 1830*, 35.

[73] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 271.

[74] Martha Silvia Escalona Sánchez, "Los momentos que precedieron a la 'conspiración de la escalera' en la jurisdicción de matanzas. La población negra de la zona (1840-1844)," *Anales del Museo de América*, 13 (2005), 307-08.

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[76] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 113.

[77] Duharte Jiménez, *El negro,* 13; Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar*, 39.

[78] Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar*, 38.

[79] Samuel Hazard, *Cuba with Pen and Pencil* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low & Searle, 1873), 88-89; Moreno-Fraginals, *El Ingenio* 1: 259; Duharte Jiménez, *El negro*, 13-14.

[80] Santa Cruz y Montalvo, *Viaje a La Habana*, 12.

[81] Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 55.

[82] Robert Richard Madden, "Informe del Dr. Madden sobre la esclavitud en la isla de Cuba," *Observaciones sobre la esclavitud y comercio de esclavos,* ed. P.J.G. Alexander (Barcelona: Imprenta de A. Bergnes y Ca., 1841), 50; Duharte Jiménez, *El negro*, 13; Philip A. Howard, *Changing History. Afro-Cuban cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1998), 13; Soledad Otero, *Afro-Cuban Diasporas in the Atlantic World* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 34, 53; Rachel Sarah O'Toole, "To be Free and Lucumí: Ana de la Calle and Making African Diaspora Identities in Colonial Peru," in *Africans to Spanish America: Expanding the Diaspora* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 76.

[83] Hurlbert, *Gan-Eden,* 44; José L. Luzón, José Baila and Francisco Sardaña, "Sociedad y espacio en La Habana de 1877. Un ensayo de geografía urbana histórica," *Revista de Geografía* 24 (1990): 78, 80; Paquette, *Sugar*, 105; Martha Silvia Escalona Sánchez, *Los cabildos de africanos y sus descendientes en Matanzas. Siglo xix y primera década del XX* (Matanzas: Ediciones Matanzas, 2008), 43; Barcia Zequeira, *La otra familia*, 50.

[84] See Robert Edgar Conrad, *Children of God's Fire—A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1984), 190; Keira M. de Queiros Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550-1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, 5th ed., (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 157; Dale Torston Graden, *From Slavery to Freedom in Brazil, Bahía, 1835-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 54.

[85] Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana—El negro en Cuba, 1492-1844* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1988) 1: 79.

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[87] Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860–1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1985), 8; Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market, 1790-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 30, 123; Franklin, *Women and Slavery*, 142; O'Toole, *To be Free and Lucumí*, 76; Herbert Klein, "The African American Experience in Comparative Perspective: The Current Question of the Debate," in *Africans to Spanish America: Expanding the Diaspora* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 211.

[88] Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 54-55; Herbert S. Klein, *Slavery in the Americas—A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, 1989), 59-65; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1: 79-81; Paquette, *Sugar*, 63-64; Bergad, García Iglesias, and Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 18. Luís A. Figueroa, *Sugar, Slavery, & Freedom in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005) 84.

[89] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas—Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 14.

[90] Bergad, García Iglesias, and Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 124.

[91] Figueroa, *Sugar, Slavery*, *& Freedom*, 90.

[92] Scott, *Slave Emancipation*, 14.

[93] Howard, *Changing History*, 29.

[94] Barcia Zequeira, *La otra familia*, 60.

[95] Ibid., 59.

[96] Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1:81.

[97] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 211-12.

[98] Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen*, 46-62; Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slave Law and Claims-Making in Cuba: The Tannenbaum Debate Revisited," *Law and History Review* 22, no. 2 (Summer 2004), http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/lhr/22.2/forum_fuente.html#REF2.

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[100] See Knight, *Slave Society*; Verena Martínez-Allier, *Marriage, Class and Colour in Nineteenth-Century Cuba: A Study of Racial Attitudes and Sexual Values in a Slave Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974); Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1: 81; Francisco A. Scarano, *Haciendas y barracones: azucar y esclavitud en ponce, Puerto Rico, 1800–1850* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracan, 1992); Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

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[102] Paquette, *Sugar*, 64.

[103] Deschamps-Chapeaux, *El negro*, 51-52.

[104] Bergad, *Comparative Histories*, 104-05.

[105] Leonardo González, Omó Oyó Obá, interview with the author, Cárdenas, Cuba, August 15, 2000.

[106] Paquette, *Sugar*, 38.

[107] Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 192-94.

[108] Teresita Pedraza, sociologist, Florida International University and Miami-Dade College. I had the pleasure of taking classes with Teresita and working with her on numerous occasions during the 1990s. Over the years, we had several conversations about the important role played by black women in Cuba as socializing agents for white children and the ensuing transmission of African cultural values. I am indebted to her for these ideas.

[109] Teresita Pedraza, personal conversation with the author, Miami, Florida, 1994.

[110] Deschamps-Chapeaux, *El negro*, 169; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 107.

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[112] Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1: 80.

[113] Deschamps-Chapeaux, *El negro*, 50-51.

[114] Aimes, *A History of Slavery*, 103, 127; Knight, *Slave Society*, 29; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 271; Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade-The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1997), 599.

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[117] Martínez Fernández, *Fighting Slavery*, 51-57; Conrad, *The Destruction*, 41.

[118] Zanetti Lecuona and García Álvarez, *Sugar & Railroads*, 119.

[119] Scott, *Slave Emancipation,* 70; Gabino La Rosa Corzo, *Los cimarrones de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1988), 61; Óscar Grandio Moraguez, "Dobo: A Liberated African in Nineteenth-Century Havana," TASTD, http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/essays-grandio.faces; Otero, *Afro-Cuban Diasporas*, 46.

[120] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3547, exp. 1, "Caso de la goleta española El Relámpago, apresada por el buque ingles Lion, con 150 bozales."

[121] Knight, *Slave Society*, 102; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 273.

[122] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 280-82; Rosanne Marion Adderley, "*New Negroes from Africa"—Slave*

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[123] Adderley, *New Negroes*, 50-52.

[124] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 294, 290.

[125] Ibid., 282.

[126] García Rodríguez, *Voices of the Enslaved*, 41.

[127] Howard, *Changing History*, 83.

[128] For example, Captains General Leopoldo O'Donnell and Domingo Dulce; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 289, 294.

[129] Knight, *Slave Society*, 138; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 271-97.

[130] Knight, *Slave Society*, 32; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 277.

[131] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 282, 284.

[132] Candelario Zurria Albear, Olotundé (grandson of Timotea Albear), interview with the author, Marianao, Havana, Cuba, March 20, 2001.

[133] Obá Oriaté Amador Aguilera, Omí Laí, interview with the author, San Miguel del Padrón, Havana, Cuba, June 18, 1998 and June 24, 1998; María Eugenia Pérez, Oshún Niké, interview with the author, Atarés, Havana, Cuba, September 30, 1999; Obá Oriaté Roque Duarte, Tinibú, personal conversation, Miami, Florida, October 15, 2001.

[134] Francisco Barrera y Domingo, "Reflexiones histórico físico naturales medico quirúrgicas-prácticos y especulativos entretenimientos acerca de la vida, usos, costumbres, alimentos, bestidos, color, y enfermedades a que propenden los negros de África, venidos a las Americas," *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicopatología Fundamental* 11, no. 4 (December 2008), 791-804.

[135] AHPM, Religiones Africanas, leg. 1, sig. 2, "Petición al Gobernador Civil, petición hecha por Ma Monserrate González para 'tocar al uso de su tierra' el día de año nuevo."; Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 48-9.

[136] Fernando Ortiz, *Los cabildos y la fiesta afrocubana del día de reyes* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1999), 4-5. The article originally appeared in *Revista bimestre cubana* 16 (January-February 1921); Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 192-94.

[137] Howard, *Changing History*, 52.

[138] Ortiz, *Los cabildos*, 5; Mercedes Cros Sandoval, *La religión afrocubana*, (Madrid: Playor, 1975), 44; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1: 110. See also Isidoro Moreno, *La antigua hermandad de los negros de sevilla: Etnicidad, poder y sociedad en 600 años de historia* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1997).

[139] Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Anales eclesiásticos y seculares de la muy noble y muy leal ciudad de Sevilla, metropolí de Andalucía* 12, no. 10 (Madrid, 1677), in Moreno, *La antigua hermandad*, 40.

[140] Howard, *Changing History*, 24-25; Moreno, *La antigua hermandad*, 40; Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos,* 52.

[141] Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World: Impressions of America* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1854) 2: 338-39.

[142] Ibid., 379-81.

[143] See José L. Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte* (La Habana: Consejo Nacional de Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional, 1963); Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 2006).

[144] AMGU, Protocolo de Cabildo, 1810-1812, 155-57, "Conspiración e incendio del Yngenio Peñas Altas. Condena. April 12, 1812."

[145] Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte*, 24-25; Paquette, *Sugar*, 123; Howard, *Changing History*, 73-74; David H. Brown, *Santería Enthroned—Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 31-32; 312nn17-19; Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection—Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2008), 29-30; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 45.

[146] Franco, *La conspiración*, 50.

[147] Howard, *Changing History*, 22, 74; Miguel Ramos, "The Empire Beats On: Oyo, Bata Drums and Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," (master's thesis, Florida International University, 2000), 84, 154.

[148] Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists: Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 89-90; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 31-32; Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*, 144-45.

[149] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos,* 88-89, 129.

[150] Howard, *Changing History*, 72; Lena Delgado de Torres, "Reformulating Nationalism in the African Diaspora: The Aponte Rebellion of 1812," *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (Fall 2003) 38; Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*, 123-24; Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos,* 174; Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection*, 47; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 39.

[151] Esther Piedra, wife of Rolando Cartaya, Adeshina's grandson, interview with the author, Matanzas, Cuba, August 2000.

[152] Paquette, *Sugar*, 125.

[153] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos,* 123.

[154] Escalona Sánchez, *Los cabildos*, 74.

[155] Herbert Klein and Vidal Luna, "Free Colored in a Slave Society: São Paulo and Minas Gerais in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 80 no. 4 (2000) 916; Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slave Law and Claims-Making," 346; Michelle Bernita Reid, "Negotiating a Slave Regime: Free People of Color in Cuba, 1844-1868," (PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2004) (Proquest # 3143456), 22; Michael Zeuske and Orlando García Martínez, "Estado, notarios y esclavos en Cuba—Aspectos de una genealogía legal de la ciudadanía en sociedades esclavistas," *Nuevos Mundos Mundos Nuevos*, *debates 2008* (April 22, 2008), http://nuevomundo.revues.org/index15842.html.

[156] Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 112-13; 114.

[157] Deschamps-Chapeaux, *El negro*, 44; Howard, *Changing History*, 96-97.

[158] "Se prohiben los bailes africanos." *El Mundo*. November 22, 1922.

[159] Ramiro Neyra Lanza, "El problema de la brujería tratado por los hombres de color." *El Día*. September 6 through October 7, 1918; ANC, Secretaría de la Presidencia, caja 89, sig. 66, "Carta abierta del club atenas dirigida al país referente a los supuestos actos de brujería y canibalismo cometidos en Regla y Matanzas," (July, 1919); ANC, AD, box 65, no. 4201 "Manifiesto relativo a los sucesos ocurridos en Regla y Matanzas a consecuencia de las prácticas de brujería y canibalismo," (Havana, July 1919); Helg, *Our Rightful Share*, 242; Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality—Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 96; Reinaldo Román, *Governing Spirits—Religion, Miracles and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 103; Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, "From Slaves to Spaniards: The Failure of Revolutionary Emancipationism in Spain and Cuba, 1868-1895," *Illes i Imperis* 2 (1999): 185.

[160] Ortiz, *Los cabildos*, 7-11; Paquette, *Sugar*, 120; Howard, *Changing History*, 54-56.

[161] Equivalent practices existed in Brazil. See João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil—The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahía* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 149.

[162] Deschamps-Chapeaux, *El negro*, 31; Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos,* 78; AHC, Audiencia de La Habana, leg. 423, no. 15, "Cristóbal Bruzón, presidente de la Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos Espíritu Santo (antiguo Cabildo Arará Dajome) contra Néstor Noriega y otros sobe nulidad de la disolución de la sociedad."

[163] Paquette, *Sugar*, 102.

Chapter V: A Story of Two Towns—Regla and Simpson

The town of Regla, a Havana suburb, and Simpson, a neighborhood in the city of Matanzas, were two particularly important sites for the preservation of Lucumí culture in Cuba, but by no means were they the only ones. Lucumí enclaves existed all over the western half of the island, and a small pocket of Lucumís was also present in Santiago de Cuba.[1] Still, both towns were intrinsically connected in several ways, especially after 1850. Numerous shared similarities—and particularly as they relate to each region's African components—were of vital importance for the ascent of Lucumí culture in Cuba. Beyond doubt, Regla and Simpson paved the way in several important respects.

Regla—the Port Town on the Outskirts of the City

The impact of Cuba's social and economic transformation that drove its economy during the latter eighteenth century and the subsequent effects of sugar cultivation on the island were felt everywhere, well beyond the Caribbean basin.[2] During these years, many small Cuban towns blossomed into major municipalities and cities, and after the massive shift to sugar cultivation, virgin regions of the island were explored and settled. The suburbs surrounding Havana and the province of Matanzas experienced significant growth as well. Regla, once a sleepy, insignificant fishing town that had become popular with retired militiamen, and its neighbor, Casablanca, quite rapidly became major centers of economic activity. New industries and trades, from shipbuilding and repair to slave trading and the storage and transport of the island's sugar and other commodities, provided Regla with a new outlook for the coming century. As a result, not only did the

town profit from the agricultural expansion, but it also grew and expanded beyond both the physical and economic scope of the initial settlement.

Arguably, both Regla and Casablanca entered the limelight during these years. Of specific interest to the present study, however, is Regla's transformation in another way, a process that led to the town becoming one of the most influential regions for the rooting and dissemination of Lucumí—and by extension, African—culture in Cuba. While Casablanca was an important enclave for the island's landed aristocracy, Regla became a significant community for Africans and their descendants. In much of her writings during her exile in the United States, Cuban ethnographer Lydia Cabrera nostalgically reminisced about her native homeland and the town of Regla. Living in Miami after the 1959 revolution, Cabrera espoused the notion that Cuba was "saturated by secret African influences." She maintained that Regla was "the strongest and most secular bastion" of Lucumí and Congo religiosity.[3]

Originally known by its indigenous name, Guaicanamar—"facing the sea"—Regla is a small peninsular port town that borders on Havana's bay, directly across from the city. For the most part, until the seventeenth century, a small aboriginal population that lived further inland in Guanabacoa derived its sustenance from Guaicanamar. These peoples scoured the coastline for fish and other marine life that they would then transport back home.[4]

Sometime between 1596 and 1598, the Crown granted a license to Antonio Recio y Avellaneda (Antón Recio) to found the San Pedro de Guaicanamar sugar mill, built to the east of the Bay of Havana, in what would later become Casablanca. San Pedro de Guaicanamar was the first Cuban *ingenio*—sugar mill—to rely on the power of oxen to

operate the cane mills. Horses and manual labor had powered the few mills that existed on the island before. Years later, after the mill was demolished, Recio's great grandson would donate the land for the shrine of Our Lady of Regla.[5]

The name *Regla* owes its origin to the town's Catholic patron, Our Lady of Regla, a black Madonna whose worship originated in North Africa. Legend has it that the original image of the Madonna was carved by Saint Augustine "*el africano*," bishop of Hippo Regius, modern-day Annaba in Algeria, following instructions revealed to him by an angel sometime in the first half of the fifth century. After his death, the image was kept in the town of Thagaste, where Augustine was born. Sometime in the late fifth century, Cipriano, a deacon in Augustine's church, took his mentor's cherished carving and brought it to Chipiona, a small villa in Cadiz, on the southern coast of Spain. During the voyage, Cipriano encountered a powerful storm that rocked the boat and its sacred cargo, but he eventually found safe passage to his destination. Cipriano attributed his safe arrival to the virgin's grace— Regla's first "miracle." Accordingly, after the word of the miracle began to circulate, a shrine was erected to Regla on the spot where Cipriano disembarked with her image.[6]

Manuel Antonio "*el peregrino*" (the pilgrim), who was born in Lima, Perú, introduced the virgin's worship to Cuba in the latter half of the seventeenth century. He obtained permission from the *alguacil mayor* (chief constable) to erect a small shrine, initially made of wood and thatched with palm fronds, on Camaco Key, land that had been donated for that purpose from the Ingenio San Pedro de Guaicanimar. Once the shrine was erected, *el peregrino* placed a painting of the virgin in what would later become the town named after her.

In October, 1692, a strong hurricane struck the western portion of the island, and Manuel Antonio's shrine was destroyed. Providence had it that during the storm, the sanctuary's next benefactor, Juan Martín de Conyedo, "*el ermitaño*" (the hermit), was on board a ship sailing from eastern Cuba to Havana. Fearing for his life, he promised the Virgin of Regla that if she saved him, he would devote his life to her worship. When his ship finally arrived safely in Havana's harbor, he learned that the storm has demolished the shrine. He vowed to rebuild it, erecting a sturdier and more lavish sanctuary in its place.[7]

On September 8, 1694, the Castilian Don Pedro Aranda de Avellaneda, stationed at the Fortaleza Militar de la Punta in Havana, brought an image of the black Madonna from Spain that was set up with much pomp and solemnity in the sanctuary. It is believed that the image is the one that is still venerated in the church overlooking the bay. On December 14, 1714, the Church declared Our Lady of Regla to be the patron saint of Havana's bay. Thereafter, the worship of Regla by the town's residents—black and white, slave and free—gained ample popularity, steadily gaining adherents throughout the rest of the island.[8]

Once again, in the fall of 1810, another storm lashed out against the virgin's abode. The townspeople joined Bishop Juan José de Espada y Landa and sought funds to erect a new church on the site. *Desvistiendo un santo para vestir a otro* (undressing one saint to dress another), the bishop sold the town of Regla's other shrine, dedicated to Saint Joseph, and put the money toward the cost of rebuilding the virgin's sanctuary. The community came together and raised the rest of the money to cover the expense. The final phase of the Church of Regla, which continues to watch over the harbor to the

present, was finished in 1811.[9] *Reglanos*, whether devotees of Catholicism or African religions, still celebrate the virgin's feast day on September 8, commemorating the arrival of the image that Aranda de Avellaneda brought to the town.[10]

Commonly, Afro-Cubans "baptized" many Havana neighborhoods with peculiar names, for the most part in Spanish.[11] Regla's case was somewhat different. The Lucumí named the town as Ará Olokún—"Land of Olokún."[12] They associated the Virgin of Regla with Yemojá, goddess of the waters, and Olokún, deity of the sea. It is Yemojá's relationship with the Madonna that is best known throughout the island and the Cuban Diaspora. Like the virgin, linked with the sea and confronting storms almost from the onset of her worship, in Cuba (and Brazil) Yemojá is inseparable from the ocean. The relationship was possibly forged during the perilous journey through the Middle Passage, the most treacherous region of the Atlantic Ocean, in which many Africans perished.[13] In Cuba, devotees believe that Yemojá, the nurturing mother of the sea, provides safe passage to those who navigate her waters.

The correspondence between the virgin and Yemojá was interesting, to say the least. Devotees, Catholic and African, attributed many miracles and special powers to the virgin. Cabrera wrote that some old pious black women once told her that the virgin "Yemayá" went out during the evening hours for a sojourn around Havana's bay. There were "eyewitnesses," too. For the faithful, this legend explained why the virgin's attire was usually wet every morning.[14] Cabrera reminded her readers of dominant perceptions in the town. Throughout the day, the virgin appeared as the Christian Madonna. At night, like the fluid society that surrounded her, the Madonna became Yemojá, the Lucumí orisha who would swim the waters of the bay; she was especially perceived as such by

the children of Africa who entrusted her with all their hopes and aspirations. It most certainly would not be the first time that the orisha of the seas “swam” to assist her children.[15] The ensuing liaison between the Christian virgin and the Lucumí deity propelled the eventual fusion of religious symbols and concepts that burgeoned in the town. More than syncretism, Cabrera’s informant was alluding to multiculturalism, or as Fernando Ortiz called it, transculturation.

Regla and Population Growth

During the first half of the eighteenth century, when the population of Havana was on the rise, Regla’s population was relatively insignificant when compared to that of other areas of *extramuros*. In 1755, the town had 164 inhabitants. By 1778, however, there were 789 people living in the town, a number that had grown to 955 people in 1786. Numerous dynamics spurred the town’s demographic expansion, principal among which was the growing military presence, especially after the immigration surge that followed the British occupation of Havana in 1762 and the ensuing reforms.[16] Another important group came from the mainland; Regla received numerous evacuees from Florida after the British takeover. In addition, the town began attracting many active and retired military personnel and their families.[17] The trend continued throughout the latter decades of the eighteenth century and persisted after Regla was named a *cabeza de partido* (township).

By the end of the eighteenth century, Regla had an average population of less than 2000 people. Though not impressive at first glance, the figure presaged an impending explosion that would more than double the town’s population in less than twenty-five years. The town’s growth spur seemed to follow what was already a general trend, at

least for the Western part of the island. In Havana, these developments were especially noticeable in areas of *extramuros*. Population density in Havana's suburbs had begun increasing in the second half of the eighteenth century, and this growth spread to the outlying areas and immediate suburbs.[18] The number of people in the city burgeoned between 1755 and 1810, swelling from 941 to 13,854 inhabitants per square mile.[19]

Regla continued experiencing substantial growth throughout most of the nineteenth century. In 1810, the town had 2,218 residents; by century's end, it had 20,000. Some historians have attributed the town's rapid expansion to several local developments in industrial, military, commercial, and maritime activities that attracted many immigrants in search of fame and fortune.[20] Although a good number of people settled in the neighboring town of Casablanca, in the majority of cases, their interests were in Regla.

The great movement of rural families displaced by hurricanes in the mid-1840s, as well as Europeans lured to the island by the growing sugar industry, placed an additional stress on the island's cities. Thousands flocked to the city in search of opportunities not available elsewhere. Havana was especially attractive, as it offered greater chances for success than the countryside, and by 1841, its population passed the one-million mark.[21] Free people of color were part of the population spur in the urban centers, many of them abandoning the agricultural work of the countryside, *el campo*, where they had been constantly subjected to witness the fruits of slavery: cruelty and suffering. Travelers often took note of the presence of this sector in the cities. In 1851, Swedish traveler Fredrika Bremer wrote about the free people of color's gravitation to the city in search of a better life.[22]

Free people of color made up an important percentage of the migrants, contributing to the economy in several ways. Many of them took up residence in the city's suburbs, even if during the day they traveled to the city for work or to sell their wares and crafts. By 1846, approximately 25 percent of the island's people of color worked in the cities.[23] In 1861, Havana's population of free people of color consisted of approximately 40,000 people.[24] Havana and its environs continued to grow well into the twentieth century.[25]

Although Casablanca became a preferred place of residence for numerous rich Catalans, Galicians, and Majorcan and Canary Islanders, many Spaniards lived in Regla as well. The town became home to Asturians, Italians, English, French, North Americans, and a great number of Africans and people of color. Some of the island's most renowned families, whose surnames are still associated with wealth, opulence, sugar, and in some cases, slavery, first settled in the town's environs or participated in business ventures that connected them to Regla.[26]

The boom years of sugar provided Regla with an enviable position. Intimately linked to the sea by more than just geographic factors, Regla was visible to every traveler who entered the Bay of Havana. As the century advanced, so did the town. Virtually from its creation, Regla was founded on numerous industries associated with shipping. Boats and other small sea-faring crafts were built, adorned, equipped, careened, cleaned, and repaired on Regla's coast. Many other industries soon made their home in Regla. Distilleries brewed rum for local consumption and export. By 1815 some *reglanos* worked in the Fábrica Inglesa de Jabones (English Soap Factory), which was located in neighboring Casablanca. Later in the century, the Primera Empresa de Vapores de La

Bahía (The First Steamship Company of the Bay) operated ferries that connected Regla with the city of Havana. Crate-building companies manufactured wooden boxes and other containers for the sugar industry, and Regla's nail factory provided the means with which to secure the boxes and build the warehouses where they were stored.[27]

The Almacenes de Regla o del Quinto (Regla's Warehouses or The Quinto Warehouses) and the Almacenes de Santa Catalina (Saint Catherine's Warehouse), where sugar and molasses from many areas of the island were stored for eventual export from the port, had, by mid-century, made Regla their home base.[28] Construction of these warehouses began in 1843. Many rich sugar planters whose plantations were in *el campo* (the countryside), primarily Matanzas, resided in Regla and Casablanca. By 1851, these facilities were transporting over half a million cases of sugar annually, in addition to other products derived from the sugarcane.[29] Regla's warehouse was storing 579,437 boxes a year by 1857. As the nineteenth century continued to progress, the warehouses developed a reputation as centers of great commercial activity.[30]

Several travelers also lauded Regla's wealth. Richard Henry Dana, a lawyer and poet from Massachusetts who visited Cuba in 1859, claimed he was told that Regla's warehouses stored "a great part of the sugar crop of the island…as wine is stored in the London docks."[31] Samuel Hazard called them "the most substantial warehouses it has ever been my lot to see, and I am told [they] rival anything of the kind, in capacity and system, to be seen in Europe."[32] Hazard provided a vivid description of the warehouses, their construction, the laborers, and the daily operations.[33] Even after surviving the hurricanes of 1844 and 1846 as well as a fire shortly before Hazard's visit, the docks quickly rebounded and were back in full swing.[34]

Soon after the first railroad linking Havana to Güines became operational in 1838, a small segment of rail was laid out that connected Regla and Casablanca. By 1843, the Primera Empresa de Vapores de La Bahía (First Steamship Company of the Bay) inaugurated an additional line that ran almost 3 miles, linking Regla to neighboring Guanabacoa. Initially established to transport coal from the Prosperidad mines, this leg of railroad subsequently proved valuable for transporting sugar to the warehouses in Regla.[35]

Though the railroad's most important purpose was to transport sugar, it also led to an increased facility for travel. By 1856, one could board the train at the Fesser station (named after Eduardo Fesser, founder of the great warehouses) and travel from Regla to Matanzas in a matter of hours as opposed to the drudgery of traveling to Matanzas and the island's interior on horseback or carriages.[36] Havana's Ferrocarril de la Bahía (Railroad of the Bay) made two daily trips from Regla to Matanzas, one in the morning and another in the afternoon, stopping at all the major towns along the way. Trains left other stations from the province of Matanzas, arriving at the major hub in the city of Matanzas. From there it was possible to connect with the Regla- and Havana-bound trains.[37] The ease with which residents of one town could now make contact with those of another would later have significant ramifications for some of the African groups in both regions. The ease of movement provided by the trains was especially important for the Lucumí and the Carabalí; their respective religions and cultures flourished as the result of greatly increased movement and communication between the countryside and the city, between Regla and Simpson. A solid network had been forged between the towns.[38]

Indeed, Remigio Herrera, Adeshina, often commuted between the two towns after moving from Simpson to Regla. After her departure from Havana, Monserrate González, Obá Tero, surely made use of the railroad to attend ceremonies and celebrations in Regla on many occasions. Both were popular Lucumí priests, the former an Oyo native and the latter from Egbado, with a considerable following in both towns. Regla was an important Egbado enclave in the Havana area, and Simpson became one as well after Gonzalez's arrival. She and Herrera were *compadres* (co-parents, a symbolic kinship), an important vehicle fostering solidarity, because González had served as his daughter Josefa's second godparent during her ordination into the priesthood of Elegbá, the orisha of the crossroads, sometime in the early 1860s.[39] Conceivably, the railroad made it possible for the two *compadres* and their communities to maintain an active relationship, even when González's departure from Havana was prompted by disputes over ritual performance that she had with other dominant priestesses of the era.[40]

The Chinese in Regla

Soon, another group arrived to the town that would add an additional ingredient to the melting pot. Regla was the landing point for numerous indentured Chinese laborers brought to the island during the 1840s.[41] Many free Chinese and fugitive Chinese contract laborers began carving out a niche in Regla.[42] The need for cheap sources of labor to work Cuba's cane fields had led to the conception of numerous schemes to find workers capable of substituting for the slaves, especially after the 1844 Escalera conspiracy, when the population of color was reduced and the number of slave imports reached its lowest level.[43] The increased focus on sugar production, coupled with British attempts to bring

an end to the slave trade and slavery, drove planters to search for other sources of labor. On June 3, 1847, Regla's port received the *Oquendo*, the first ship to carry a load of indentured Chinese laborers—200 in all—from Amoy to work on the island.[44]

Several earlier schemes to introduce indentured laborers to Cuba had had an unsettling effect on the island's Junta de Fomento (Development Council)—a conglomerate that sought to promote entrepreneurs and their ventures.[45] The renowned (and infamous) slave trader and sugar baron Julian de Zulueta, founder of the town of Colón in Matanzas province, failed in his attempt to convince the Junta, which was under his direction at the time, to allow the importation of Yucatecans. The Junta had also created a special commission to encourage Spaniards and Canary Islanders to immigrate to Cuba. The project was not very successful, and only a handful of people from these countries actually made the journey. Miguel Aldama, one of Zulueta's contemporaries, and son of the founder of Los Almacenes de Regla, devised a project to attract laborers from northern Spain, but this plan also met failure because the idea of working alongside black slaves did not appeal to the workers.[46] Canary Islanders, Basques and Yucatan Indians were also considered as possibilities, but in the end, the Chinese were preferred.[47]

Changing his scope to the Far East, Zulueta then became a principal supporter of introducing Chinese laborers to the island.[48] The pressure from planters requesting laborers was too strong for the Development Council to ignore the new scheme, but the group did not necessarily make much of an effort to follow up on it. Eventually, the planters and the Junta selected Zulueta to contract and provide the laborers. The successful import of Chinese laborers, argued Franklin Knight, marked the onset of the process that helped to facilitate the transition from slavery to wage paid labor.[49]

Soon, the Chinese had become a visible Cuban population. In Regla, many Chinese worked in a small nail factory, owned by the Irish coffee and sugar baron James Lawton, behind which Richard Henry Dana attended a slave sale in 1859. Dana commented that the Chinese were considerable in number and living all over the island.[50] Dana's statement is ironic when considering that the Chinese were often treated as if they were slaves. The Italian traveler Antonio Gallenga, who visited Cuba in 1873, fourteen years after Dana, was also taken aback by the apparent abuse of the Chinese coolie. Gallenga stated that Cubans seeking to contract with a Chinese worker spoke of "buying a Chino."[51]

In time, the mistreatment of the Chinese in Cuba was decried. On February 17, 1872, the New York Times wrote that the "enslavement of the Chinese is now a settled fact." They had become an "innocent and suffering instrument" that, along with the "negroes," produced the fortunes amassed by Cuba's landed aristocrats.[52] The Chinese, like their African predecessors, were horrendously mistreated and very poorly paid. Slaves hired out to the railroad companies received higher average monthly wages for their work than the Chinese: 20.25 pesos versus 4.65 pesos, respectively.[53]

Despite the many abuses, Zulueta never ceased defending the importation of Chinese laborers to the island. He employed over 260 Chinese laborers on his various plantations in Matanzas: there were 110 Chinese laborers in his Álava plantation, 25 in Vizcaya, 43 in Habana, and 86 in España.[54] Zulueta claimed to be satisfied with their work overall, though he found them to be weaker than the Africans, something that he thought the work regime would remedy. By the third year of work, Zulueta reasoned, the Chinese became strong enough to rival the Africans. Zulueta also championed the idea

that the Chinese were better prepared to work with mechanical equipment, and that they performed their work with more precision and diligence than the slaves. But they had a weakness: many Chinese found it difficult to adjust to the harsh world into which they had been thrust. As a result, this group experienced a considerable degree of suicide, something that Africans suffered as well.[55]

In a groundbreaking study of Chinese contract laborers in Cuba, historian Lisa Yun stressed that the Chinese laborers' death rate from suicide was the highest in the world. Citing Cuban historian Juan Pérez de la Riva, Yun posited that between 1850 and 1860, the Chinese suicide rate was 5,000 per million inhabitants, compared to 350 Africans and 57 whites.[56] To be clear, the Chinese were not totally submissive, preferring death to hard work. A commission studying the possibilities for "moralizing slaves and Chinese" found a high rate of murders of overseers committed by Chinese laborers in Matanzas. Coolies often rebelled against the abuse of overseers who considered them "as of equal or worse status than the black slaves."[57]

By the 1870s, the Chinese government began taking greater interest in the matter. Heeding the numerous complaints, including those concerning the abduction of Chinese men, the Chinese government initiated an investigation in 1874 and sent a group of officials, the Chin-Lan-Pin Commission, to Cuba to inquire.[58] Soon after the commission presented its findings to the Imperial Government in China, importation of indentured Chinese laborers ended. By 1877, Chinese legislation officially canceled the arrangement that it had made with the colonial government and the Cuban planters.[59] Through a system of contract labor that was by all means a veiled form of slavery, between 125,000 and 150,000 Chinese laborers had been introduced to the island.[60] Juan Jimenez Pastrana,

a Cuban scholar who studied the role of the Chinese in various Cuban insurgencies, wrote that in total, at least 250,000 laborers boarded ships headed for Cuba. Some never made it.[61]

Even though some documents confirm the presence of Chinese women in Cuba, they were very few in number.[62] Chinese women were seldom, if ever, contracted. Often, Chinese men found suitable partners among the free people of color, taking up residence with their common-law spouses in the city of Havana and its environs.[63] It is quite possible that homosexuality and opium use were also frequent. The "unspeakable vices" mentioned in the documents consulted by Verena Martínez-Alier (Verena Stolcke) for her research of marriage, class, and skin color in nineteenth-century Cuba suggest that this was the case.[64] Opium dens operated on Zanja Street in Havana, in the area that is still called *el barrio chino* (Chinatown), and in other urban areas of the island.[65] The Chinese were also often associated with criminal behaviors. Israel Castellanos, Fernando Ortiz's disciple who attempted to apply the tenets of the Lombrosian School to study the alleged genetic predisposition of Afro-Cuban criminals, also studied the Chinese and their "criminality."[66] Ultimately, Regla became an important enclave for many Chinese nationals.[67] In the twentieth century, the Chinese were still a significant group, dominant proprietors of many of the town's retail outlets, laundries, fruit shops, and celebrated for their fritters, soups, sweets, and glazed tropical fruits. They remained so until the eve of the 1959 revolution.[68]

Havana's Playground

The town of Regla was also a sort of playground for *havaneros*. The town was frequently

visited by merrymakers from the city. In the mid-nineteenth century, many of the greater Havana area's most animated celebrations took place in Regla. Numerous annual festivals, dances, and general entertainment attracted city folk to the town. One of these was the very popular Romería de San Rafael (Saint Raphael's Day celebration), held on the eve of the saint's feast day, October 24. The tradition began as an annual pilgrimage in the Canary Islands, but in Cuba, and especially in Havana and Regla, it took on a life of its own, very different from the Spanish celebration. During the festival, people adorned their homes and balconies, burned straw effigies of fishes filled with gunpowder and other fireworks, and sold food on the streets. One staple item that day was *la tortilla de San Rafael* (St. Raphael's omelet), and Afro-Cuban cooks competed to make the best *tortilla*. Lydia Cabrera recounts how *invertidos* (literally "inverted people," or homosexuals) gathered and "met" in the *barrio del Ángel* in Havana, at affairs where a type of licentiousness reigned.[69]

Havaneros and *reglanos* were partiers, no doubt. As far back as September of 1772, in preparation for the upcoming festivities on behalf of the town's patron saint, Regla's town administrator wrote to the captain general about the many clandestine places in the town where liquor and food were sold during feast days and the means by which he had decided to put a stop to these unacceptable practices. The letter highlighted the continuous abuses that he claimed took place during what were supposed to be religious celebrations, in which "diversion became vicious." Arguments, fights, mayhem and disorder were frequent, especially in the *bodegones* (taverns) and the *ranchos* (literally "ranches," but in this context huts) and other temporary installations that were set up for the festivities. The administrator insinuated that other activities were taking

place, specifically licentious ones that threatened the town's morality. Dances, hosted at all hours of the day and night in several "ordinary houses" were particularly worrisome because they were, in his opinion, "indecent and provocative." Anyone could attend, and, once inside, participate in "various sinful acts, gambling, games of chance and deceit, detrimental to all types of people."[70]

The administrator's decree required that all merrymaking cease at 8:00 P.M., and all *bodegones* and *ranchos* had to close by that time. As well, food sales had to come to an end at the established curfew, including transportation of the sweets that many black women made to sell in the city. The decree made clear references to what the administrator considered "indecent and provocative dances," which, like food sales and gambling, were also regulated or proscribed. These prohibitions were extended in late November, almost two weeks before the feast day of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated on December 8.[71]

Without question, Regla was also a hotspot. In the nineteenth century, the Soles y Rayos de Bolívar conspiracy aimed to eliminate Spanish rule and establish the República de Cubanacán and there was a Regla connection.[72] Throughout the nineteenth century, the town developed a reputation as a place where outlaws roamed the streets. Lydia Cabrera noted complaints filed by a British agent—possibly an abolitionist, maybe David Turnbull—who indignantly expressed his repulsion for what went on in the town, where "the Spanish government's maliciousness" was clearly visible. The agent complained that the government, well aware that hordes of pirates continued the slave trade in Regla, was turning a blind eye and allowing these activities to persist.[73] Count Eugene Ney noted some of these issues as well. In his diary, he complained about the "murderers and cut-

throats" and pirates who lived in Regla.[74] The town administrator's prohibitions and colonial legislation led to arrests on numerous occasions but seem to have made little difference in the long term, especially in a town that enjoyed its festivities and found reason to make merry every chance it could. These problems continued well into the nineteenth century. During the celebration of the Virgin of Regla's feast day in September, 1866, 12 men, whites and free and enslaved people of color, were arrested over the two-day course of the festival after being accused of committing numerous of offenses.[75]

Vagrancy also became a concern in Regla, and the town's shady reputation persisted. In 1869, the neighboring Guanabacoa's lieutenant governor wrote to the Island's captain general to complain about the number of "lazy and other undocumented individuals of bad antecedents that can compromise the public order." Regla was under Guanabacoa's jurisdiction, but the lieutenant governor complained that Guanabacoa did not have enough policemen to deal with the problem and requested help from the Captain General.[76] An order was issued to arrest vagrants and others found without the necessary documents to account for their presence in the town.

Not everyone felt the same way about the town, however. In the early nineteenth century, the French traveler Etienne Michel Massé, wrote about the Regla's jovial spirit and the many "appalling" activities that took place during its celebrations. He visited Regla for the virgin's feast day. Despite its "terrible" shortcomings, though, Massé lauded the town's festivities: "it is in good tone to go."[77] In April 1830, the island celebrated the marriage of King Ferdinand VII to María Cristina de Borbón, "princess of the two Sicilias," with all the pomp and extravagance possible. Regla had been given

license to hold its own celebration, and the town's people feasted for a week. A year later, *reglanos* were once again applying for a license to hold another celebration, this time in honor of the much-awaited birth of the monarchs' child, "the successor to the crown." The petition, signed by the honorable *oidor* (judge) Estevan José Zorilla, requested that the king grant the town the pleasure of commemorating "such a worthy succession."[78]

Regla, Africans, and Celebrations

Africans participated actively in the Spanish-based traditions and festivities, but they had their own celebrations too, primarily religious in nature. The evidence from Lucumí oral tradition emphasizes that batá drums and drumming styles were introduced to the island sometime during the nineteenth century. According to Fernando Ortiz, these drums were made in Havana around 1830 by an Oyo Lucumí, Ño Juan el Cojo, Añabí and Ño Filomeno García, Atandá.[79] A robust Lucumí community had settled in Regla by this time, and many of the Lucumí traditions seem to have put down strong roots in the town. By 1866, Añabí, Atandá, and Adeshina had founded the Cabildo Yemayá, the Lucumí parallel of the town's patron saint.[80] The Egbado Lucumí were possibly the most influential of the Lucumí ethnies since the early nineteenth century. Ortiz wrote that the Egbados held an annual celebration for Olokún in Regla on January 6.[81]

Despite Cabrera's assertions about the position of the Congos in twentieth-century Regla, not much is known about their activities during the nineteenth century. The Carabalí, however, made their presence felt early in Regla through the Abakuá Society. In 1836, the island's first *potencia* (literally "Power" or lodge), *Efik Butón*, was founded

in Regla during the administration of Captain General Miguel Tacón.[82] From the small port town, Abakuá lodges quickly spread to Matanzas and eventually to Cárdenas. Ten years later there were at least forty lodges in Havana alone.[83] The presence of the *potencia* in Regla in the 1830s no doubt suggests that they were sponsoring religious festivities as much as the Lucumí and possibly other African groups in the town.

The African presence in Regla laid its deepest roots during the nineteenth century. Parish records from Regla's church documented a sizeable number of baptisms and deaths of Africans and their offspring in the town during this time period.[84] From these records, it appears very likely that several African ethnies and their offspring contributed to the growth of Regla's reputation as a major African enclave in the Havana area. The names of many founders of Cuba's African religions, including Adeshina, Añabí, Atandá, and others, appear numerous times in these records, documenting when they baptized their children, served as godparents, and buried their loved ones.

People of color had always been present in Regla, but not in such large numbers. After the 1762 British occupation of Havana, many members of the island's Batallón de Pardos y Morenos (Battalion of Mulattoes and Blacks, henceforth *Batallones* or Militias) lived in Regla. The militia, which had white and black members, provided security for the island. As a port town on the Bay of Havana, Regla was an ideal and strategic place for them to reside. Many of the militia's wives and widows also provided for the island's security, although indirectly. They were contracted to sew uniforms for new members of the battalions. These families often accumulated significant wealth, owned property and slaves, and made a point of flaunting their opulence.[85]

Regla's slave population fluctuated between the latter eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth, generally ranging between 10 and 20 percent of the total. The great majority of these slaves were probably domestics, spared from the toil of the plantation although living continuously in its shadow. The fear of plantation enslavement was mentally torturous for some.[86] Even though in cities such as Havana, most slave owners eschewed torture and mistreatment, domestic slaves were never truly free from the threat of being sold and/or sent to work on a plantation if they were troublesome and incurred their master's wrath.[87] The presence of slaves in Regla gradually increased during the nineteenth century, even more so after its second decade. Not only was Regla a significant port of entry, but it also drew numerous ex-slaves and their descendants who moved to the city of Havana in the nineteenth century, when population experienced an upsurge on all sides of the bay.[88]

While it is hard to gauge the town's degree of Africanity based on cold, statistical data, the town's continued demographic transformation during and following the latter two decades of the eighteenth century is a definite indicator of possible changes taking place at different levels. These changes would, in the nineteenth-century, provide very distinctive characteristics to the town. The figures from the 1786 census provide an initial impression of the African population of the town in the eighteenth century (Table 1).

Given that the town was not an agricultural zone, most slaves in Regla were likely occupied in domestic work and sales or were slaves for hire (day laborers). Thus, the relationship between them and whites was possibly more intimate than that which existed with field hands on the plantations. Some slaves may have worked on plantations in Guanabacoa, but this is speculative. There were a total of 115 slaves in Regla in 1786,

approximately 12 percent of the total adjusted population of the town (955). Sixty-three (54.8 percent) of those individuals who were documented as slaves in 1786 were African born (Table 2).

Table 4. 1786 Census Data for Regla[13]

Total census entries	**1018**
Empty house or incomplete information	63
Adjusted Population	955
Whites	779
Free Africans	2
Free mulattoes	21
Free blacks	10
Enslaved Africans	63
Enslaved creoles[14]	37
Enslaved blacks not born in Cuba	8
Enslaved mulattoes	7
Indefinable, mestizos, and a "white Moor"	28
Totals	
Total white population	**779**
Total free people of color	**33**
Total slave population	**115**
Empty houses & Indefinable	**91**

[13] AGI, Papeles de Cuba, leg. 1472, "Censo de Población, Regla, 1796," Levi Marrero Collection, Special Collections, Florida International University, Miami. I express my gratitude to Dr. Sherry Johnson for sharing the document.

[14] Cuban-born people of color.

Table 5. Total African Slave Population Living in Regla in 1786[15]

Total population 1786	**955**
Carabalí	20
Congo	26
Mandinga	12
Mina	2
Lucumí	1
Gangá	1
Guinea	1
Chamba	1
Bon….(?)	1
Total African population 1786	**65**

At the time, the Lucumí were not an important group in the town. There was only one Lucumí documented in Regla in 1786. The Carabalí and the Congos, by far the most numerically prominent African ethnic groups in the town with 20 (31 percent) and 26 (40 percent) natives, respectively, completely eclipsed the Lucumí presence. Ten years later, in 1796, the overall population showed significant signs of increase, as would be expected, but this significance is not necessarily apparent in terms of the total numbers. The size of the population becomes more impressive when considering the percentage of the free people of color and slaves, which grew at a more substantial rate than that of the white population. There were 955 residents in 1786 as opposed to 1796 when the census listed 1,084 whites, 52 free mulattoes, 15 enslaved mulattoes, 43 free blacks, and 217 slaves—a total of 1,411. When compared numerically, the white population continued to retain its majority throughout the latter 1700s.[89] What is most noteworthy when both

[15] AGI, Papeles de Cuba, leg. 1472.

censuses are compared, however, is the statistically significant increase in the town's nonwhite population between 1786 and 1796. Even when the white population's increase is statistically important, the growth of the population of color is also noteworthy: the group represented 15.49 percent of the population in 1786 and 23.16 percent by 1796 (Table 3).[90]

Table 6. Comparison of Regla's Population for 1786 and 1796[16]

	1786	% Pop.	1796	% Pop.	Diff.	% Increase
Whites	779	81.6%	1,084	76.82%	305	39.15%
Free mulattoes	21	2.20%	52	3.69%	31	67.74%
Enslaved mulattoes	7	.70%	15	1.06%	8	46.67%
Free blacks	12	1.26%	43	3.05%	31	38.71%
Slaves	108	11.31%	217	15.38%	109	100.10%
Other	28	2.93 %				
Total people of color	**148**	**15.49**	**327**	**23.16**	**179**	**120.95**
Total blacks	**120**	**12.56**	**260**	**18.43**	**140**	**116.67**

By the first decade of the nineteenth century, the rate of increase in the percentage of people of color continued owing to sustained growth of the presence of slaves in the town. Census figures for the town for 1800 recorded 330 slaves—18 percent of the population—and expanded to 375—almost 19 percent—by 1808, meaning that Regla's slave population had more than tripled from the 115 slaves present in the 1786 census. Regla's white population was also growing but at a slower pace, only doubling in size by 1808. Even when the white population was numerically greater, and its increase continued to keep them in the majority, the growth of the colored population reflected the increasing volume of the slave trade. The upsurge in the slave population can indicate a

[16] AGI, Papeles de Cuba, leg. 1472.

mounting African presence in the town, whether or not the new imports were recent arrivals from West Africa. (Table 4)

Table 7. Census Figures, Regla, 1800 and 1808[17]

	1800	% Pop.	1808	% Pop.	Diff.	%Increase
White	1,434	76.27%	1,515	74.78%	81	5.65%
Free Mulattoes	116	6.17%	63	3.11%	-53	- 54.3%
Enslaved Mulattoes	24	1.28%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enslaved blacks[18]	306	16.28%	375	18.51%	69	22.55%
Free blacks	N/A	N/A	73	3.60%	N/A	N/A
Totals	**1,880**		**2,026**		**246**	**13.09%**

In 1841, when the island's population exceeded the one million mark for the first time, Cubans awakened to the realization that the population of color had surpassed that of the whites: 58.5 percent of the population was black.[91] The trend worried many, among them José Antonio Saco, who had written about his fears of the day's arrival.[92] Regla counted 7500 people in 1841: 4,700 (62.7 percent) whites, 749 (9.9 percent) free coloreds, and 2,051 (27.3 percent) slaves. Twenty-eight hundred (37.3 percent) people of color lived in the town in 1841.[93]

By 1846, however, two years after the Escalera conspiracy, these numbers took a relative dive. The conspiracy had a negative bearing on overall figures for the Afro-

[17] AGI, Cuba, 1689, Padrón de Regla, 1800, Resumen general de los moradores del Barrio de Na. Sa. De Regla; Cuba, 1687, Padrón de Regla, 1808, Resumen general de los moradores del Barrio de Na. Sa. De Regla.

[18] The 1800 census does not identify origin of the slave thus, we cannot be sure if all those who appear in the category are African or creole.

Cuban population.[94] The 1846 census recorded 5,071 (76.12 percent) whites, 644 (9.7 percent) free people of color, and 947 (14.2 percent) slaves living in the town. In the aftermath of *la Escalera,* the slave population in Regla was reduced by more than half. The total population of color in 1846 consisted of 1,591 people, almost 24 percent of the population, just slightly over half the colored population of the town five years earlier.[95] In that short time, the town's population of color fell from over one-third to under one-fourth of the total population. While the white population showed a sustained increase, the population of color did not (Table 5).

Table 8 Comparison of Regla's Population Based on Census Figures, 1841 and 1846[19]

Year	1841		1846		Diff.	%
Total	Pop. 7,500	%	1,846 6,662	Pop.	Diff. ↓838	% ↓11
Whites	4,700	62.7	5,071	76.12	↑371	↑8
F.P.O.C.[20]	749	9.9	644	9.7	↓105	↓14
Slaves	2,051	27.3	947	14.2	↓1104	↓53.8

An African Enclave on the Outskirts of Havana

A small town of barely 3.55 square miles, Regla has an established reputation, academically and traditionally, as one of the most important centers for the retention and propagation of African culture in Cuba.[96] The town's importance is in all likelihood due to its location. While not entirely urban, neither is it totally rural but rather close enough to each setting to meet the religious needs of the various African populations that settled there. Two of the three African religious complexes that established themselves there, the

[19] Figures compiled from the Comisión del Censo General de Población, *Resumen del censo de población de la isla de Cuba a fin del año de 1841*; Martínez-Aler, *Marriage, Class and Color*, 62.

[20] Free people of color.

Lucumí and Carabalí, were more suitable for urban settlement.[97] These two traditions were easily able to settle in Regla, Havana, Matanzas, and other cities. The third religion, the Congo tradition, was more reliant on nature and *el monte*—the forest. Though all three traditions depend on specific elements derived from nature and the wild, a rural location or proximity to rural areas would have been preferred by the Congos more so than the Lucumís and Carabalís.[98] Regla met the needs of all three groups.

The town of Regla has been an important area for African cultures and religions since at least the third decade of the nineteenth century. The three African complexes that flourished in Regla were the ones with the highest number of Cuban followers overall. Devotees of these systems, as well as Ortiz and other early writers, considered Regla to be one of the island's most important African religious enclaves. The Bantú or Congo magico-religious complex that is known in Cuba as Regla de Congos or Palo Monte has had ties to Regla from at least the eighteenth century. Palo Monte was in all probability the earliest African religious tradition on the island, as the flow of slaves from West Central Africa, the people primarily known in Cuba as Congos, was constant from the slave trade's start. They made up over 45 percent of the total number of Africans transported to the Americas between 1519 and 1867.[99] Based on David Eltis's *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, of the almost 12.6 million Africans enslaved between 1501 and 1866, about 5.7 million originated in West Central Africa.[100]

The presence of the Carabalís in Cuba grew in the eighteenth century. At least 1.5 million people were exported from the Bight of Biafra, where the group originated.[101] The Carabalí were distributed all over the Americas.[102] The Carabalís are best known for the fraternal-religious societies, known in Cuba as La Sociedad Secreta Abakuá (The

Abakuá Secret Society). In reality, Abakuá is not a religion per se, but rather a mutual aid fraternity or association with strong religious undertones. The Cuban societies were derived from the Ékpè leopard societies of the Cross River Basin in the Bight of Biafra, which date to the eighteenth century.[103] Its first recognized *potencia*, or lodge, was created in 1836 in Regla.[104] Members of these fraternities were often identified in colonial documents and the media by the pejorative rubric *Ñáñigos*, a term that may possibly mean "those that are dragged."[105] Participation in these societies, which were very similar in many ways to those of the Freemasons, was limited exclusively to men, though women attended their celebrations and public rituals.

Abakuás were highly stigmatized in Cuba. Even before the first society was founded, the Abakuás had already piqued the interest of the colonial authorities. Various meetings to plan the failed Aponte rebellion of 1812 were said to have been hosted in several Carabalí cabildos.[106] Soon after the founding of Regla's society, an arrest on July 11, 1839, uncovered leaflets with writing and drawings of what was later identified as Abakuá documents. These documents invited a local group of Abakuás residing in Jesús María y José, in Havana, to participate in a meeting to discuss the constitution of a new Abakuá fraternity.[107]

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and even after the 1959 revolution, the Abakuás remained under constant watch. Captain General Francisco Lersundi began an oppressive persecution of them in 1866, resulting in the deportation of many.[108] The authorities' crusade was intensified during the Ten Year's war, when the Abakuás were accused of siding with the insurrectionists and the independence campaigns.[109] In 1875, their lodge gatherings were officially declared illicit

associations.[110] Subsequently, throughout the remainder of the century and well into the twentieth century, Abakuás (or Ñáñigos, as they were increasingly called) were accused of committing heinous atrocities of all sorts, including murder and cannibalism. Abakuás were arrested and sentenced to prisons in Ceuta, on the northern coast of Morocco, and to the island of Fernando Poo, off the coast of Africa.[111] Over 700 were imprisoned in Ceuta, many of whom were not truly Ñañígos but had been identified as members of the sect because the Spanish authorities considered them dangerous to their colonial interests. Havana was in a state of uproar when, in October 1898, authorities were reconsidering allowing the exiled Abakuás to return to the island.[112]

The third African complex was the religion of the Lucumís (currently known as Yoruba), or Regla de Osha, often referred to by the pejorative Santería, first coined by Fernando Ortiz.[113] Lucumí religion seems to have had a marked presence in Regla since at least the mid-nineteenth century, after the first known ordinations into its priesthood on Cuban soil. One of those initiated was Josefa "Pepa" Herrera, the daughter of Adeshina.[114] Already by the 1870s, many creoles of all skin tones and African heritages began joining the priesthood after the 1871 ordination of the celebrated *mulata* Yeya Menocal, Omí Toké, best remembered for swimming across the bay of Havana in the 1930s, which was said to be shark laden at the time, while possessed by her orisha, Yemojá.[115] Ortiz—probably the most "Lucumí-centric" of Cuba's scholars—stressed that the growth of the Lucumí in the town began in the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, a more specific time period for the increase is difficult to discern from extant documents and traditional primary sources. Thus, the only available archives are the oral traditions of the people in question.

Many of the Lucumís who were brought to Cuba were natives of the Oyo Empire and its numerous subject states, including Egba, Egbado, and other coastal peoples. This mighty West African kingdom met its downfall in the latter 1820s. As subjects of Oyo, the Egbado also played a significant role in the development of Lucumí religion. Though there were other clearly identifiable Lucumí subgroups—Iyesá, Ifé, Ijebú, and others—the strength of these two groups is irrefutable, especially in Regla and Simpson. Regla was a major Oyo and Egbado Lucumí enclave in the Havana area.[116] Ortiz noted: "the most solemn and popular Santería celebrations in which drums are played generally take place in Regla, Guanabacoa, Marianao or in one of Havana's marginal neighborhoods." He emphasized that many of the Lucumí traditions arrived through Regla's port.[117]

Of all the Lucumí ethnic groups that were linked to Oyo, the Egbados were probably the most influential in Regla.[118] Along with the Oyo proper, they were the progenitors of the Lucumí system of worship that laid the strongest roots in Cuba. The Egbados' impact in Regla probably dates to the eighteenth century or the first two decades of the nineteenth, as it is very probable that they were in Cuba earlier than the Oyo. The pioneering historian of the Yoruba, Samuel Johnson, wrote that the Egbados in ancient Yorubaland had been "very loyal subjects of the Alafín [king of Oyo] before the revolution." Though their loyalty may be questioned, especially after several Oyo incursions into Egbado territory in the late 1700s, there was a clear association between the two groups. Still, there are signs of unresolved tensions between them that provoked several intragroup repercussions in Cuba.[119] It is possible that the Oyo sold Egbado casualties from the eighteenth-century incursions and that these people were sent to Cuba and arrived when Regla was in its infancy. Ironically, in time, the Egbado were followed

into slavery by their original subjugators, the Oyo, who were transported through many of the same market exit and entry points.

Simpson—Africa's heartbeat in Matanzas

Before the mid-nineteenth century's sugar rush and Cuba's economic upsurge, Matanzas was a region of minor economic importance. In the sixteenth century, the possibilities for cattle ranching and timber harvesting had awakened the interest of a few wealthy *havaneros* who soon began petitioning the Crown for land grants in the region.[120] Subsequently, the Matanzas area provided for the population of Havana, at the time primarily devoted to shipbuilding and repair, offering provisions to travelers on their way to other areas of the Americas or returning to Europe, and relieving much of the demands of Havana's growing consumer market for products such as timber, salted pork and beef, hides, and other cattle by-products.[121] As the Matanzas-born historian Miguel Bretos wrote, "Havana was essentially a fortified supply depot, and Matanzas part of its productive backyard."[122]

During the seventeenth century, foreign ships frequented Matanzas's unfortified bay. The jurisdiction was a hub for a prosperous contraband trade that was supported by settlers from the hinterland and areas near the coast. Many nations' vessels entered the bay where local products were exchanged for European goods and occasionally slaves.[123] Sugar cultivation was first introduced to the region in the seventeenth century, but it did not meet with much success. Though several minor villages had existed in the region since the sixteenth century, Matanzas had not received official recognition.

Sometime in 1682, the Crown had begun seeking families from Spain's Canary Islands to populate the region and take up residence on the shores of the Yumurí River and the bay onto which it emptied. Approximately 3,000 settlers relocated to Cuba after the English seizure of Jamaica in 1655. The new settlements rekindled Spanish concerns about the possibility of future British assaults on their colonies, a fear that was first awakened by Sir Francis Drake's West Indies raid of 1585-86, which revealed that the Spanish were inadequately prepared for defending their Atlantic possessions.[124] The schism provoked by these events in Jamaica convinced the Spanish monarchy of the need for greater defenses to protect the island from foreign attacks. By the latter seventeenth century, the Crown approved the construction of several fortifications. Matanzas profited from Spain's apprehension. In 1690 the Crown authorized the official founding of a town on the coast of Matanzas, north of the Yumurí River.[125]

Thirty families were eventually authorized and arrived at the area where a small settlement, totally funded and sponsored by Madrid, would soon arise. The town of San Carlos and San Severino de Matanzas was officially established in October 1693.[126] By the 1700s, the settlers had planted tobacco; the coveted leaves soon became the region's lifeblood.[127] Europeans used Matanzas's tobacco to make snuff, much in vogue among the nobility.[128] Combined with cattle ranching, timber harvesting, and smuggling, tobacco farming provided the community with a modest livelihood and paid for the many popular European goods that were obtained through clandestine exchanges with foreign ships.[129]

In the 1730s, Juan José de Justiz, a local tobacco grower, made an indelible mark on Matanzas. Justiz had served a term as *alcalde ordinario* (judge) of Havana and had also been *Contador General de la Real Hacienda de Cuba* (general accountant for

Cuba's Royal Treasury). He had gained a substantial income from the sale of his *hacienda's* (estate's) product. The well-connected, and, by now, rich planter, financed the construction of a church that would eventually become the San Carlos Borromeo Cathedral, named after the town's patron saint. Before Justiz's death in 1759, the Crown praised his religious fervor, and he was awarded the title Marquis Justiz de Santa Ana.[130] His descendants later became a significant constituent of the Matanzas oligarchy.

Matanzas and Agricultural Production

As with sugar, Cuba's coffee industry was also a by-product of the Haitian Revolution that disrupted European domination on the neighboring island of Saint Domingue. The transplantation of French settlers and their slaves to Cuba during the latter eighteenth century brought several unexpected benefits to the island. Bolstered by numerous trade reforms and the Haitian sugar and coffee economy's collapse after the 1791 revolution, Cuban planters took advantage of the void that the Haitian collapse had provoked and the strong demand for these products on the international market. Production of coffee as well as of sugar grew in Cuba during the nineteenth century.[131] The French count Eugene Ney, traveling through Cuba in 1830, visited a coffee plantation in Matanzas whose *mayoral* (overseer) was a native of St. Domingue. Ney was given a first-hand look at the process by which coffee was cultivated and produced.[132] Cuba's greatest coffee plantations, according to Moreno-Fraginals, were established in the provinces of Havana and Matanzas, but others have argued that coffee cultivation made its most notable mark in eastern Cuba, where many French migrants relocated, and especially in Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba.[133] The increasing demand for coffee on the world market and the

destruction in St. Domingue in the revolution's wake affected the product's cost, which doubled between 1792 and 1796. Cuba's economy was already on the rise, and by 1804, Cuban coffee exports began to increase exponentially, from 7,101 *arrobas* (1 *arroba* = 25 lbs.) in 1792 to 2,566,359 *arrobas* by 1833.[134]

Matanzas soon profited from the introduction of coffee, as the territory's practically virgin soil was very fertile and suitable for many agricultural undertakings. Coffee made its presence there by at least 1797, spreading rapidly thereafter until the 1820s.[135] Its production was not as labor intensive as sugar and its cultivation was not as environmentally damaging as sugar's, so it would not deplete the soil's nutrients as quickly. The coffee shrub, better suited for shadier areas, could easily coexist with other vegetation. Probably, coffee's only disadvantage was that its production did not deliver as quick a return on the planter's investment as would sugar. The coffee shrubs would take at least four years to fully mature and provide the seeds that would later be used to brew the "black nectar."[136]

Some historians have argued that sugar production has numerous advantages over coffee production. Historian Laird Bergad highlighted some of these. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he wrote, Cuban sugar was more lucrative than coffee, even when the initial investment was higher, because of the former's greater dependency on machinery. Additionally, sugar was more apt to withstand Cuba's tropical storms. Sugarcane's greater flexibility made it more resilient than the coffee shrub, whose stems are easier to break and whose seeds dislodge quickly when ravaged by hurricane-force winds. The land on which coffee plantations were initially established further aggravated the industry's its inherent weaknesses: most of Matanzas's coffee was planted on estates

located in the region's flatlands, offering no protective barriers against storm winds and flooding.[137]

Coffee did not necessarily oblige or tie the planter down to his investment as much as sugarcane did. Colonial legislation recognized the *privilegio de los ingenios* (Sugar mills' Privilege). The sixteenth-century decree stipulated that planters could not mortgage their plantations, slaves, animals, or fixed property. While it was a concession that benefited planters by forbidding creditors from confiscating their haciendas, it did allow creditors to place liens on the planters' harvests.[138] Based on this provision in the decree, some historians have argued that coffee planters had little to worry about. They would accept a loss graciously, because coffee's initial financial outlay was usually far smaller. Coffee plantations required less capital to establish thus, if the crop failed or a storm devastated the farm, the planter could sell his land much faster than a sugar planter and diminish the loss.[139]

Louis Pérez Jr.'s work on hurricanes and their effects on the island's coffee industry presented an additional factor. Three hurricanes, one in 1842, another in 1844, and a third in 1846, took a tremendous toll on the coffee industry from which planters found it difficult to rebound.[140] Pérez reasoned that most of the Europeans settlements in Cuba were in areas that were "most subject to direct encounters with hurricanes."[141]

At the same time that Cuba suffered under the onslaught of successive hurricanes, Brazil's coffee industry was thriving, producing one-half of the coffee consumed worldwide. Production in Brazil had increased considerably, and the price of coffee on the world market was decreasing.[142] All of these factors no doubt proved influential in coffee's eventual demise in Cuba after the rise of the sugar industry. In fact, after the

arrival of sugar, hurricanes and Brazil's upsurge in coffee production share the responsibility for the transfer of its cultivation from the western end of the island to the eastern provinces in the 1830s.[143] Eventually, a competition of sorts developed between the two products, especially regarding access to land and slaves.[144] Simply put, although sugar cultivation had greater prerequisites, coffee was riskier and far weaker before the might of the sweet but powerful queen. By the 1840s, sugar won the battle for Matanzas, and coffee withdrew to the mountainous regions of the island, primarily in the east.[145]

Cuba's soil, some argued, "privileged by nature for sugarcane's precious fruit," was suffering some environmental degradation in the jurisdiction of Havana.[146] A viable solution was expansion into the island's primarily uncultivated interior, a necessary response to the years of exploiting the soil in the agricultural regions that surrounded the city. Matanzas's virgin land promised to make up for that abuse in many ways. With Havana's expansion and sugar's introduction to the territory on a large scale, Matanzas's pace of life now faced a major upheaval. Sugar production practically annihilated tobacco cultivation in Matanzas. Coffee fared no differently, harassed by both nature and sugar. Matanzas's landscape would hereafter change forever, as sugar eventually brought other companions that would in many ways alter the region not only physically, but also culturally and socially.

The sugar era saw the large-scale propagation of the great *ingenios* and *trapiches*—the plantations and mills that now dotted the jurisdiction's valleys and fields where tobacco and cattle ranching had once held sway.[147] Technology also proved beneficial to sugar.[148] Pérez wrote that favorable market conditions coincided with new production technologies during the early nineteenth century, beginning with the

introduction of steam power in 1817.[149] Sugar greedily claimed the soil. In many ways, however, as sugar "catapulted Matanzas" from its "obscurity," its effects were felt far and wide.[150] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were only three *ingenios* in the region, but by the 1820s, sugar had begun expanding throughout the province, and the number of *ingenios* began to reflect this growth.[151] The territory was not fully prepared for such a drastic change. Its few roads were in total disrepair, and it had only one port available on Matanzas's bay. So bad were the roads that the colonial authorities exempted slaves from working on Sundays and holidays so that they could work improving the transportation infrastructure.[152] The transformation would have to be quick if the territory was to profit from its newest crop.

Agricultural Production, African Slaves, and the Population of Matanzas

The early nineteenth century was also an era of transformation in another region on the opposite side of the Atlantic. Africa would soon feel the effects of coffee's and sugar's ascent in Cuba—and Brazil. The arrival of coffee and eventually intense sugar cultivation to Cuba would take its toll in West Africa, where planters found the laborers for their budding industries. By all accounts, the process was dynamic, planting the seeds for the demographic revolution and the subsequent Africanization of Matanzas via the introduction of the greatest number of enslaved Africans to arrive to the island since its discovery.[153] Arguably, no other region in nineteenth-century Cuba felt the impact of slavery as profoundly as Matanzas.[154]

The 1775 census estimated that there were at least 171,600 persons in Cuba: 96,400 whites, 36,300 free people of color, and 38,900 slaves.[155] As is well known,

however, census figures for Cuba up to and including the 1817 census are sketchy and unreliable at best. Baron Alexander von Humboldt, who visited the island in the early 1800s and attempted to estimate the population of the island, commented that the oldest census figures he had been able to obtain were those of 1774 and 1775, which had been compiled by the Marquis de la Torre, and the 1791 census, taken during Luís de las Casas's administration of the island. He expressed his complete distrust for these censuses and revised the figures to obtain a more accurate estimate of the island's population.[156] In 1900, the U.S. War Department expressed confidence in the censuses of 1775 (or 1774), 1792, 1817, and 1827; despite that, the overall consensus is that all tallies of the island's population taken before 1841 are not necessarily reliable.[157]

The 1774 census was revised in 1778, increasing the original total by more than 80,000 people.[158] Revisions were required with subsequent censuses as well. Von Humboldt noted that the original 1817 census was retaken because it, too, had flaws thus, two versions of the census were produced that year. To complicate matters further, the provincial authorities modified the second version of the census before a final report was sent to Madrid, adding an additional 32,641 whites—to include transient traders and crews of vessels—and 25,967 African slaves imported in 1817 who had not been included in the original. According to the figures from the modified version, of which von Humboldt was still skeptical, the population of Cuba was 630,980—290,021 whites, 115,691 free people of color, and 225,261 slaves. Later scholars have generally referred to von Humboldt's work or drawn their own figures from the actual census records (Table 6).

Von Humboldt and those who followed provided clear demographic statistics that indisputably show the rapid growth of the slave populations of Havana and Matanzas. Based on the baron's avowed distrust for the original, earlier censuses, suffice it to say that these figures represent the bare minimum of the two cities' population.

Table 9. Comparison of 1775 and 1817 Census of Cuba (Based on von Humboldt's statistics)[21]

	Whites	FPOC[22]	Slaves	Totals
Census figures, 1775	96,400	36,300	38,900	171,500
2nd Census 1817, (modified)	290,021	115,691	225,261	630,980
Increase	193,621	79,391	186,361	459,480

Table 10. Population of Havana and Matanzas (Based on the modified census of 1817)[23]

Census 1817, (modified)	Whites	FPOC	Slaves	Totals
Havana	135,177	40,419	112,122	287,718
Matanzas	10,617	1,676	9,594	21,887

Revisions of the 1817 census by subsequent writers may have either exaggerated or downplayed the statistics, especially the number of slave imports, depending on their position vis-á-vis slavery.[159] In his *Historia física, política y natural de la isla de Cuba*, botanist Ramón de la Sagra provided the lowest figures for the period, which Hubert Aimes later repeated. De la Sagra may have relied on the first version of the 1817 census.[160] While the actual figures may have varied slightly, the difference is not great, as is apparent in the work of later scholars such as Fernando Ortiz and a more recent study by Pablo Tornero Tinajero (Table 8). Ortiz provided statistics for the years 1532 through

[21] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 199-200.

[22] Free people of color.

23 Ibid., 199.

1907, but as with much of his work, he failed to provide citations. The figures in his *Cuadro de los principales censos de la población de Cuba desde 1532 a 1907* were taken from "diverse sources and all of them, even when official, worthy of merit; but a firmer estimate is impossible." Notwithstanding, his numbers are more or less in line with von Humboldt's.[161]

Tornero Tinajero's figures for 1817, taken directly from the census documents in Spain's Archivo General de Indias (henceforth AGI), do not deviate greatly from von Humboldt's original statistics. Based on the figures, it seems that like the baron, he, too, consulted the revised version of the 1817 census. Though Tornero Tinajero combined the figures for the white and free population of color under the "Libres (free)" category, his numbers barely differed from von Humboldt's: 631,029 total population; 405,958 *Libres*; 225,071 slaves.[162] For the most part, then, it is safe to assume that von Humboldt's data were within an acceptable range.

Table 11. Comparison of 1817 Census (Based on von Humboldt and later scholarship)

	Whites	FPOC	Slaves	Totals
Aimes's data	239,830	114,058	199,145	553,033
Von Humboldt's data	290,021	115,691	225,261	630,980
Ortiz's data	276,689	119,221	239,694	635,604
Tornero Tinajero's AGI data	N/A	405,958	225,071	631,029

Despite the discrepancies, numerous indicators strike a common note. The first is the population increase between the years 1775 and 1817—from over 171,000 to a minimum of 630,000—even if the figures for the prior years are not totally reliable. Second, populations of people of color, both free and enslaved, grew exponentially. When reviewing these figures and the census data from Regla, there can be little doubt

that people of color were the fastest growing sector of Cuba's population in the nineteenth century, despite the European population's continued dominance. Not until the mid-nineteenth century would the population of color exceed that of the whites.[163]

Matanzas's population growth during the nineteenth century was just as striking. By 1817, the region had evolved from a sparsely occupied settlement to an urban area with a burgeoning population. Bergad's data for Matanzas, taken from the 1817 census, coincide with von Humboldt's figures. (Table 9)

Cuba's population was in a state of constant flux, responding to the economic and sociopolitical factors inherently linked to the agricultural explosion that was powering the island's progress. The entire population of the island in 1817 exceeded 630,000. Records of slave imports in Havana also indicate a dramatic escalation between the latter eighteenth century and the year 1821.[164] The presence of Africans had also increased exponentially. Though there will never be a consensus, the scholarship has suggested that the years of the "open slave trade," 1790-1821, were crucial to the expansion of Cuba's trade. During these thirty-one years, Cuba imported 300,000 Africans, three times as many as they imported before then.[165]

Table 12. 1817 Census Data for Matanzas, 1817[24]

City of Matanzas	Males	Females	Totals
Whites	1,248	1,172	2,420
Free people of color (black & mulatto)	442	449	891
Free Africans	61	58	119
Total free people of color (Africans & creoles)	**503**	**507**	**1,010**
African slaves	256	278	534
Creole slaves	212	270	482
Total slaves (African & creoles)	**468**	**548**	**1,016**
Outlying regions[25]	**M**	**F**	**T**
Whites	4,051	2,940	6,991
Free people of color (black & mulatto)	251	219	470
Free Africans	51	43	94
Total free people of color (Africans & creoles)	302	262	564
African slaves	5,595	1,285	6,880
Creole slaves	1,823	1,054	2,877
Total slaves (African & Creole)	7,418	2,339	9,757
Totals for Both Regions			
Total whites	**5,299**	**4,112**	**9,411**
Total free people of color	**693**	**668**	**1,361**
Total free Africans	**112**	**101**	**213**
Total Africans slaves	**5,851**	**1,563**	**7,414**
Total creole slaves	**2,035**	**1,324**	**3,359**
Total free people of color	**805**	**769**	**1,574**
Total enslaved	**7,886**	**2,887**	**10,773**
Total population	**13,990**	**7768**	**21,758**

In 1807, in a surprising turn of events, Great Britain declared that it would prohibit the slave trade throughout its colonies, a pronouncement that surely worried the growing Cuban sugarocracy. Since 1789, a series of royal *cédulas*, the latest in 1804, had

[24] The table is derived from Begard, *Cuban Rural Society*, Table 2.1, 29.

[25] Includes: Yumurí, Ceiba Mocha, Santa Ana, Guamácaro, and Camarioca.

given Spanish slave traders the crucial governmental approval they desired to pursue their nefarious enterprise on the African coast.[166] Luis de las Casas, Cuba's Captain General between 1790 and 1796, directed a new group of entrepreneurs that attempted to steer the island's economic orientation from military operations in favor of agricultural production.[167] The entrepreneurial group, which by this time had made significant investments in the Cuban plantation economy, was concerned about what might happen if the new British attitude toward slavery spread to the Spanish courts. The Haitian revolution had presented a unique opportunity; world coffee and sugar prices had skyrocketed, and Cuban planters saw the possibility to capitalize on this new window of opportunity.[168] Their worries were exacerbated in the summer of 1814, however, when England and Spain signed an accord guaranteeing that the Spanish Crown would end the slave trade within its colonies by 1821.[169]

Even when deemed unreliable by more recent historians, the data from the Havana customs house records for the years 1815 through 1821 clearly support the belief that Cuban planters were apprehensive about the treaty.[170] It appears that Cuban slave traders scrambled to import as many slaves as possible before the accord went into effect. Based on the customs house records, between 1790 and 1821, over 200,000 African slaves entered the port of Havana.[171] Focusing more specifically on the six years between the signing of the treaty with Great Britain and the year that it would take effect, 1815 and 1821, a minimum of 108,084 Africans entered the city—approximately 50 percent of all the slaves introduced through Havana between 1790 and 1821.[172] Before these years, the number of slaves in Cuba was minimal. The Slave Trade Database documented approximately 26,647 entering the island between 1674 and 1790.[173] Clearly, of course,

these were not all the slaves introduced to Cuba during that time period. In addition, Havana's figures do not take into account those slaves that were brought in clandestinely through other ports.

Matanzas and the Clandestine Slave Trade

While foreign traders could sell slaves legally in Cuba only by bringing them through the port of Havana, documentary evidence gathered by historian David Murray has corroborated the illegal sale of slaves in other Cuban ports.[174] Murray debated these figures after the publication of Philip Curtin's *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census*.[175] Curtin's figures for Cuba and Puerto Rico were extracted from several sources, including Cuban censuses taken between 1774 and 1861. He calculated that there were 367,400 slaves in Cuba, but failed to account for the free colored population.[176] The Eltis database's figures for Cuba do not contain any statistics for 1770 through 1783. Nonetheless, Curtin's figures fell exceedingly below the database's figure for the years 1783 through 1866: 766,411.[177]

For many years, Matanzas and the many hidden coves and inlets along its shoreline were the heart of a contraband slave trade. Based on Spain's accord with the British, the Crown promised to stop importing slaves from the African coast by May 30, 1820, allowing those that sailed before this date a five-month extension. On December 19 of that same year, the colonial authorities issued an official *cédula* informing Cuban residents of the accord's provision.[178] Madrid received £400,000 from the British as compensation.

Abolitionists were delighted, but those who had vested interests in the trade and the by-products of slavery were not. To this latter group, the British were simply being selfish and abusive by imposing their will on Spain, and they felt that opposing this imposition was a Spaniard's prime "patriotic duty."[179] In reality, the treaty had too many loopholes and was doomed to fail from the onset. Traders soon found ways to circumvent the accord's stipulations. Disregard for the treaty began almost immediately after it took effect in November. The traders were intent on abrogating the accord's regulations. By November of that year, as the British attempted to impose the treaty, the slavers were sending a delegation to Madrid to request another extension.[180]

Initially, the Spaniards gave the appearance that they were complying with the treaty when in November 1821 they sent a circular addressed to the Captain General ordering him to obey and enforce the treaty, however, the slave trade continued after 1821. The continuing violation of the treaty incensed British authorities, provoking frequent clashes owing to Spanish and Cuban slavers traveling to the African coast to purchase slaves. Eventually, a second treaty was signed in 1835. This time the British, building on the experience they had acquired from eighteen years of constant frustration, included a clause that allowed them to seize and condemn any vessel that was fitted for the slave trade, even if slaves were not on board, something that had not been included in the initial treaty. The 1817 agreement had permitted boarding a vessel only if slaves were on board. As well, the 1835 treaty mandated that any slave that was rescued from a seized ship was to remain with the government that seized the vessel and immediately placed at liberty.[181]

Though the 1835 accord proved a bit more effective, the clandestine slave trade remained a serious issue in Cuba for a few decades more and often provoked complicated situations for all parties involved. The authorities, in Spain and on the island, were well aware of its existence. The slavers had connections with members of the government's upper echelons. Colonial officials, obviously interested in their own financial gains, were all too willing to accept bribes for turning their backs and looking the other way.[182] Bremer repeated a story she had heard about the introduction of 700 slaves through Havana for which the authorities were paid 50 dollars for each slave as hush money.[183] The Crown was just as complicit. Although not receiving direct bribes, it still benefited financially from the economic growth of its colonies—not to mention their loyalty—and sugar in Cuba, produced by slaves, was one of its greatest sources of income. Captain General Miguel Tacón, who was also benefiting indirectly from the clandestine trade, admitted as much many years later. Spain had sent confidential orders to the captains general of Cuba and Puerto Rico asking them to look the other way.[184]

The illegal trade threatened to disrupt the island on several levels and became the colonial government's most pressing issue. Permitting the trade would ensure the island's continued prosperity, but the price was steep. Obviously aware of treaty violations, already rampant by 1824, Captain General Francisco Vives wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs admitting his complicity and justifying it based on the colony's need for laborers to attend to its "flourishing agriculture." Otherwise, he argued, the island's wealth would surely disappear. One may infer from Vives's letter that the island's stability was also at issue; a labor shortage would agitate the planters, especially when they considered the prosperity of their counterparts in other colonies.[185] Still, when called

out by the British, Vives was indignant and harshly rebutted the accusations about his lackadaisical enforcement of the treaty.[186]

Enforcing the treaty was not simple, as is obvious from the number of slaves who were rescued off the Cuban coast by British ships. Between 1824 and 1866, the British successfully spared 26,024 Africans from enslavement. Despite Bergad's assertion that the number of rescued slaves reflected British success, these figures are relatively minor when compared to the number of those who were successfully introduced to Cuba.[187] The earliest ship discovered violating the trade was the *Relámpago*, intercepted in 1824, on which 150 Africans were found. The incident was described as the "first and only" violation of the treaty. Neither the British in Cuba nor the Cuban officials knew how to handle the situation. They discussed the possible consequences of the presence of the illegal slaves and even considered sending them off to one of the British islands to avoid further complications.[188] Time and again, Britain presented official complaints to Spain. In 1828, the British consuls provided documentation identifying the number of Spanish and Cuban ships that sailed from Havana's port to bring back slaves from Africa during the years 1827 and 1828.[189] Spain agreed to comply but its citizens did not necessarily obey.

Besides the illegal importations from Africa, the slave traders conjured all sorts of schemes to get around the law and were often successful. Slaves were illegally brought to Cuba from Puerto Rico and other islands in the Caribbean, from Brazil, and possibly from the United States.[190] On July 30, 1832, Captain General Vives was forced to reinstate legislation dating from Luís de las Casas's administration in the previous century imposing fines to punish the "greediness" of those who violated the law. He had

received a letter from the governor of Curação warning him about a shipload of slaves that was rumored to be on its way to Cuba from that island.[191] Illegal slave landings were often decried by the British authorities who were stationed on the island to enforce the antislavery treat. On June 27, 1844, in the midst of the Escalera conspiracy, "an ordinary citizen" sent an anonymous letter to Miguel Tacón, allegedly from Barcelona, expressing concerns over the manner in which the laws forbidding the slave trade were blatantly violated by the authorities. The writer tried to describe—as if Tacón did not already know—the intrepid manner in which the slavers ridiculed the Crown by participating in "this illegal and reproachable speculation."[192]

Some Captains General were not as apprehensive over the illegal imports as much as they were about the havoc that might result from introducing slaves from other islands to Cuba. As the Cuban "abolitionist" José Antonio Saco stressed in the 1840s, the Haitian terror was always on everyone's mind.[193] On April 11, 1833, the captain general felt it was once again necessary to publicly post the laws concerning the introduction of "blacks from neighboring islands, belonging to foreign nations since these are educated with ideas that are contrary to the moral savvy and occasion bad examples to many of the slaves in Spanish colonies gravely endangering their tranquility."[194]

Spaniards and Cubans were not the only ones participating in the contraband slave trade. A Portuguese consul in Havana had connections to the trade: his brother lived at a slave factory in Ouida, a notorious port on the coast of Dahomey (modern-day Benin), considered a major supplier of slaves during the nineteenth century. Murray wrote that the brothers connived to assist Cuban traders.[195] Many people were taking interest in the illegal trafficking. An article appearing in an 1836 journal revealed the existence of a

secret port near Matanzas where slave ships often delivered *bozales* (recently introduced Africans). From the port, the human cargo were marched to Matanzas, where they were sold in the local slave market, with “the authorities winking at this violation of the laws of the nation.” U.S. vessels built and outfitted for slave trading were increasingly serving as the vehicles of choice. The anonymous author challenged abolitionists, writing that they should direct their attention to the unlawful Cuban trade and the vehement mockery of the pacts signed with Britain, “instead of making so much useless injurious effort in the United States.” He claimed that in so doing, abolitionists “would do an essential service to the human race.”[196]

The 1841 arrival of Gerónimo Valdés, the new Captain General, is deemed by some historians as momentous: “Without necessarily abandoning his support of slavery, Valdés was the first governor that procured an end to the clandestine introduction of slaves.”[197] During his tenure, he pleaded with the sugar barons but his imploration fell on deaf ears.[198] Valdés’s influence would require a major upheaval, one whose origin continues to be the subject of debate to the present. In 1844, during the proceedings that followed the discovery of the Escalera conspiracy, Cuba, and especially Matanzas, realized the possible dangers posed by a major slave revolt on the island. Cuban planters had been anxious about the possible repercussions that the Haitian Revolution and its aftermath could have in Cuba since early in the nineteenth century, and especially after the Aponte Rebellion of 1812. As a result, in the fear and turmoil that reigned in Cuba after *la Escalera*, legislators began considering the potential dangers of the clandestine trade. On March 2, 1845, another law handed down from Madrid that attempted to curb slave trafficking also increased the repression of slaves and free people of color.[199] The

new edict stipulated that the captain of any seized vessel was to be arrested and deported, as well as the ship's crew, owners, and outfitters. The traders pushed back, succeeding in adding an amendment that would exempt illegal slaves who were already on the island. The 1845 law was a total failure, however, on the African coasts that year the British successfully captured 400 vessels, more seizures than in any other year before or after.[200]

Despite these attempts to curtail the inhumane traffic, slave imports continued to rise. The volume of imports varied during the year, usually increasing during winter and spring, as harvest approached. By 1841, when Valdés was named Captain General, there were close to 100,000 slaves in the province, almost double the number in 1827. Slaves constituted a little over 62 percent of Matanzas's population, and according to Bergad, in some *partidos* (districts) the ratio of slaves to free people was even greater.[201] In the 1830s many new mills had been founded in the province, so the demand for slaves increased accordingly.[202] British legislation was no deterrent when it came to the interests of the planters. According to some estimates, Matanzas received 6,000 to 8,000 slaves annually and African-born slaves constituted the majority of the region's slaves until at least the 1850s.[203] The British commissioners estimated that almost 247,000 slaves were illegally introduced to Cuba between 1840 and 1867.[204] The actual figures were probably higher. Cuba continued exporting sugar produced by slaves. Barely 12,000 boxes of sugar were exported from Matanzas in 1806, but by 1819 Matanzas was contributing over 49,000 boxes of sugar to the island's total exports of 380,000. These figures seem trivial when compared to the region's exports less than twenty years later, when over 224,000 thousand boxes of sugar were exported from Matanzas.[205]

Africans and the Transformation of Matanzas

The increased presence of Africans also had many cultural repercussions in Matanzas. As was the case in Regla, Simpson, a neighborhood in the heart of the city of Matanzas, served as an important cradle for the three primary African religious complexes that exist in Cuba: Congo-Bantú religion, the Carabalí or Abakuá religious-fraternal associations, and Lucumí religion. Simpson was also a strong center for Arará religion, a close relative of the Lucumí tradition, with roots in ancient Dahomey. The Lucumí referred to Matanzas in general, and Simpson in particular, as Ará Ataré—"land of hot peppers."[206] The town's name was immortalized in the first Cuban *danzón*, *Las Alturas de Simpson,* written in 1879 by Miguel Failde, Shangó Deí, a Lucumí priest of Shangó, ordained by Arabia Oviedo, Shangó'bí. Simpson served as the most significant locus of the three major Afro-Cuban traditions in Matanzas during the nineteenth century.

In several colonial records, Simpson is known as the Barrio de San Francisco. Most *havaneros*, when speaking about the religious traditions of the area, generally refer to Matanzas or to *el campo* (the countryside, a dismissive term used by Havana residents to describe any region outside the city of Havana) and not to the town of Simpson. Commonly, when Afro-Cubans and their religious heirs discuss activities or traditions that stem from the area, they will stress their origins are in Matanzas. Exactly when the name Simpson came about is unclear. Nonetheless, Africans, free and slave, and their descendants were the heartbeat of the small neighborhood.

Once again the pattern of ex-slaves and their families congregating in the cities is evident in Simpson. As argued for Havana and Regla, the city of Matanzas appears to have been particularly alluring to the free population of color. By 1841, almost 66 percent

of Matanzas's free people of color were living there. In 1863, a very significant year for the Lucumí, the presence was greater. San Francisco had a total population of 5,853 people: 2,705 whites, 56 Asians, 729 free mulattoes, 1,420 free people of color, 135 mulatto slaves and 808 black slaves. The barrio's population of color was greater than the white population: 3,092 to 2,705, respectively. In addition, it is significant to note that the slave population itself was considerably lower than the total number of free people of color (943 to 2,149), and the number of blacks surpassed that of the mulattoes (2,228 to 864).[207] San Francisco's/Simpson's African identity was clearly taking form.

Documents suggest that many Lucumís migrated to Simpson after obtaining their freedom. They were often a numerically dominant presence on many of Matanzas's plantations and in the numerous revolts and insurrections that plagued Cuba during the nineteenth century.[208] Of the 700 slaves on the San Juan estate in Sabanillas in 1854, 503 (72 percent) were Africans and 197 (28 percent) were creoles. Of these, 176 were Lucumís, making them 25 percent of the total population and 35 percent of the total number of enslaved Africans. The rest were Gangás (160), Carabalís (82), and Congos (64).[209] The figures coincide with the data gathered by Moreno-Fraginals from Cuban plantation records. According to his study, by 1850 the Lucumís were the dominant group, constituting 34.5 percent of the total slave population in Cuban *ingenios*. They were followed by the Carabalís, with 17.3 percent, and the Congos, with 16.7 percent.[210] Lucumís were still arriving to the island in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1855, Juan Gisper, district captain of Cabañas, reported to Captain General José de la Concha that the smugglers were expecting a cargo of Lucumís in the days that followed.[211]

Lucumís were linked to many of the frequent rebellions and insurrections that plagued the region during the first half of the nineteenth century and especially to the most notorious of all, the Escalera conspiracy. In the latter nineteenth century, Justo Saragoza, secretary of the Political Government of Havana, researched the Escalera conspiracy for use in a study he intended to publish. He took note of various markers of interest, including the ethnie or "race" of all the people who were questioned by the commission that handled the alleged plot. Of the 185 cases in which an ethnie of an African slave was documented, sixty-six (36percent) were Lucumí, a figure that also coincides with Moreno-Fraginal's survey.[212] Adeshina, who at the time directed the Cabildo Lucumí de Santa Bárbara on Daoiz and Manzaneda streets in Simpson, is believed to have been involved in the rebellion, possibly providing religious services for the rebels, though he never testified before the commission that was sent out to investigate the conspiracy.[213]

Much like Havana, other areas of Matanzas, including the city of Matanzas itself, had strong African components and served as seats of African religions in several different forms and manifestations. In Matanzas city, closer to the bay, the areas of La Marina and Pueblo Nuevo had a robust African population. These communities grew in direct response to the province's expansion and the growth of sugar cane cultivation. In the immediate vicinity of the city of Matanzas, Cidra, Limonar, and Sabanilla del Encomendador housed large Congo and Lucumí populations. The towns of Jovellanos, Perico, Cárdenas, Taverna de Reyes [later known as Unión de Reyes], Coliseo, and Colón became important centers of African worship. As sugar was being used to fuel the industrial revolution of Europe, the religions of the African slaves were similarly

providing a source of sustenance in Cuba. Africa had laid its own roots in Cuba alongside those of the sugarcane. In most respects, Africa was inseparable from the planting of every stalk of cane, from its cultivation and its eventual processing into sugar. If sugar was queen in Cuba, her ascent to the throne was made possible by the might of its African legions.

Regla and Simpson shared many things in common. There is little doubt that Simpson was the heart of Africa in the city of Matanzas. Regla, too, was a strong African enclave. The vigorous presence of the Egbado people and their descendants in Simpson and Regla, and especially the worship of Olokún, are important elements in the consequent expansion of Lucumí culture in both towns. Because of their geographical proximity to the coasts, the three territories—Egbado, Regla, and Simpson—enjoy a fundamental relationship with the sea, Olokún's domain.

It is also interesting to see how some of these same patterns discussed previously were repeated elsewhere in the Diaspora. During the nineteenth century, the era during which the greatest number of Yorubas was exported to the Americas, Brazil was the only other country where this group became a significant population. A similar series of networks like those established between Regla and Matanzas is noticeable in the cities of Salvador and Río de Janeiro. There, the presence of the Nagô, as the Yoruba were known in that country, grew to eclipse that of other African groups despite not being the major ethnie in the region. In Río de Janeiro, the Nagô became an influential majority at the same time that the Lucumís were rising to prominence in the towns of Regla and Simpson.[214] In what seems like an incredible historical coincidence, the case of Cipriano Abedé discussed by Brazilian historian Mariza de Carvalho Soares seems to almost

parallel the circumstances of Adeshina's arrival to Regla and his importance in that town and in Simpson.[215] By adapting elements from their immediate surroundings and reinterpreting them under their own cultural lenses, both men began what was an unmistakable though covert movement to resist acculturation and retain their Africanity. It would seem, then, that the Lucumís' propensity for resistance, embracing, and adaptation as a means to retain its cultural identity was universal.

Notes

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[3] Lydia Cabrera, *Yemayá y Ochún—Kariocha, iyalorichas y olorichas* (Miami: C.R., 1980), 17.

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[8] Gómez Luaces, *Historia*, 5; Cabrera, *Yemayá y Ochún*, 9-11; Baños et al., *Historia de Regla*, 10.

[9] Gómez Luaces, *Historia*, 6-7.

[10] Cabrera, *Yemayá y Ochún*, 9-11; Baños et al., *Historia de Regla*, 10, 43.

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[15] Mercedes Cros Sandoval, *La religión afrocubana* (Madrid: Playor, S.A.), 11-12.

[16] Sherry Johnson. *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 2-3.

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[26] Duque, *Historia de Regla*, 14.

[27] Baños et al., *Historia de Regla*, 11-12.

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[32] Samuel Hazard, *Cuba with Pen and Pencil* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low & Searle, 1873), 267.

[33] Ibid., 267-69.

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[35] Moreno-Fraginals, *El ingenio*, 1: 151; Baños et al., *Historia de Regla*, 14.

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[57] Jimenez Pastrana, *Los chinos*, 38; Martínez-Alier, *Marriage, Class and Colour*, 76.

[58] Yun, *The Coolie*, 146.

[59] Baños, *Los chinos*, 28-9; Yun, *The Coolie*, 34.

[60] Jimenez Pastrana, *Los chinos*, 31; Corbitt, "Chinese," 130; Yun, *The Coolie*, 16.

[61] Jimenez Pastrana, *Los chinos*, 31.

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[63] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 231; Pedro Cosme Baños, personal conversation with the author, April 17, 2008.

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[94] Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 113;

[95] Martínez-Aler, *Marriage, Class and Color*, 62.

[96] Baños et al., *Historia de Regla*, 25-26.

[97] William Bascom emphasized the "unique place" of the Yoruba as an urban people in *The Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), 1. As a society that features processions walking through neighborhood streets for ritual purposes and communal healing, the Abakuá traditions also reflect a dependency on community and thus greater inclination for urban settlement.

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[108] Joan Casanovas, *Bread or Bullets!: Urban Labor and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850-1898* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), 93; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 114.

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[114] Personal conversation with Ester Piedra, wife of Rolando Cartaya, one of Adeshina's grandchildren, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000.

[115] Personal conversation with Ángel de León, Oloyadé, Regla, Havana, Cuba, September, 1999; Personal conversation with Jorge Luís Sánchez, Cuban cinematographer and historian, Havana, Cuba, January 27, 2011.

[116] Pronounced and written Egguado by most Cubans.

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[118] Fernando Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 451.

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[123] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 7.

[124] Hans P. Kraus, *Sir Francis Drake: A Pictorial Biography* (Amsterdam by N. Israel, 1970), Library of Congress, Rare Books & Special Collections Reading Room, accessed February 12, 2013,

http://www.loc.gov/rr/rarebook/catalog/drake/drake-6-caribraid.html#top; Pérez, Jr., *Cuba*, 45; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 19.

[125] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 8; Bretos, *Matanzas*, 26.

[126] Bretos, *Matanzas*, 33.

[127] Ibid., 38.

[128] Pérez, Jr., *Cuba*, 51.

[129] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 9.

[130] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 10; Bretos, *Matanzas*, 39-40.

[131] Knight, *Slave Society*, 12-13; William C. van Norman, Jr. "The Process of Cultural Change among Cuban Bozales during the Nineteenth Century," *The Americas* 62, no. 2 (October 2005): 177-207.

[132] Ney, *Cuba en 1830*, 20.

[133] Moreno-Fraginals, *El ingenio*, 1: 72n45; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 57-59.

[134] Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 72-73.

[135] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 16.

[136] Ibid., 57; Bretos, *Matanzas*, 53.

[137] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 57-59.

[138] Ibid., 354n13.

[139] Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood—The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 38; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 57-58; Jr., *Winds of Change*, 42.

[140] Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 10.

[141] Ibid., 26.

[142] Ibid., 86-87.

[143] Moreno-Fraginals, *El* ingenio, 1: 72n45; Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 92.

[144] Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 54.

[145] Knight, *Slave Society*, 13.

[146] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3552, Marcelino Ordá, Consejo de Ministros, December 22, 1846.

[147] Pérez, Jr., *Cuba*, 61.

[148] Linda K. Salvucci and Richard J. Salvucci, "Cuba and the Latin American Terms of Trade," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31, no. 2 (Autumm 2000): 204.

[149] Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 48.

[150] Bretos, *Matanzas*, 54.

[151] Moreno-Fraginals, *El ingenio*, 1: 141.

[152] AHC, Gobierno Superior Civil, leg. 936, no. 33002.

[153] José Manuel Espinosa Fernández, "Una aproximación a la trata esclavista en Cuba durante el periodo 1789-1820," in *Metodología y nuevas líneas de investigación de la historia de América*, ed. Emelina Martín Acosta et. al (Burgos: Universidad de Burgos, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2001), 191; Javier Galván, "Sugar and Slavery: The Bittersweet Chapter in the 19th Century Cuba, 1817-1886," *Revista de Humanidades* 16, (2004): 216; Bretos, *Matanzas*, 57.

[154] Pérez, Jr., *Cuba*, 62-63.

[155] U.S. War Department, *Report on the Census of Cuba*, 703; Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 38; Knight, *Slave Society*, 22; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 23-24.

[156] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 193.

[157] There are discrepancies with the date of the 1774 census, with some sources listing 1775. U.S. War Department, *Report on the Census of Cuba*, 708; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 24.

[158] Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 24.

[159] Jose Antonio Saco, "Análisis de una obra sobre el Brasil," in *Colección de papeles científicos, históricos, politicos, y de otros ramos sobre la isla de Cuba, ya publicados, ya inéditos* (Paris: Imprenta de D'abousson y Kugelmann, 1858); Jose Antonio Saco, "De colonos africanos en Cuba y sus inconvenientes," *Revista Hispano-Americana* 2 (1865): 9; Hubert H.S. Aimes, *A History of Slavery in Cuba, 1511-1868* (New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1907); Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 34; David Murray, *Odious Commerce—Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 18; Pablo Tornero Tinajero, *Crecimiento económico y transformaciones sociales—Esclavos, hacendados y comerciantes en la Cuba colonial (1760-1840)*, (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1996), 109-11.

[160] Aimes' source was the work of Ramón de la Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la isla de Cuba*, *suplemento*, 14 vols. (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1838-1861) 9-11, in Aimes, *A History of Slavery*, 89n2. Aimes did not specify the volume. The same figures were reported by Louis Pérez Jr. in 1988 and 2006; Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 64, 86.

[161] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 38.

[162] Tornero Tinajero, "Crecimiento económico," 109-11.

[163] U.S. War Department, *Report on the Census of Cuba*, 97; Le-Roy y Cassá, *Desarrollo de la estádistica*, 421; Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 55.

[164] Saco, *Analísis*, 2: 74, in Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 16; Juan Pérez de la Riva, "El monto de la inmigración forzada en el siglo XIX," *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Martí* 1 (1974), in María del Carmen Barcia, *Burgesía Esclavista*, 41.

[165] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 19.

[166] Ibid., 11-13.

[167] Johnson, "From Authority to Impotence," 196.

[168] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 13;

[169] Ibid., 23, 51.

[170] Murray, *Statistics*, 132.

[171] TASTD's figures (222,267), differ somewhat from the 240,747 reported by von Humboldt based on Custom's House data. Accessed February 12, 2013, http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1790&yearTo=1821&disembarkation=701.

[172] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 196; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 18-19; TASTD, accessed February 12, 2013, http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1815&yearTo=1821&disembarkation=701.

[173] TASTD, accessed February 12, 2013, http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1526&yearTo=1790&disembarkation=701.

[174] Murray, *Statistics*, 133.

[175] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*.

[176] Ibid., 34; Murray, *Statistics*, 137.

[177] TASTD, accessed February 12, 2013,http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1770&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=701.

[178] Aimes, *History of Slavery*, 86.

[179] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 71.

[180] Aimes, *History of Slavery*, 96.

[181] Ibid., 103, 127; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 100.

[182] Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 7; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 203.

[183] Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World: Impressions of America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1854), 2: 309.

[184] AHN, Estado, leg. 8, no. 35, "Miguel Tacón to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Marine," June 27, 1844; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 85; Enrique Pérez-Cisneros, *La abolición de la esclavitud en Cuba* (Costa Rica: Litografía e Imprenta Lil, S.A., 1987), 17.

[185] AHN, Estado, leg. 8, no. 36, "Francisco Vives to the Minister of Foreign Affairs," January 6, 1825; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 85.

[186] Aimes, *History of Slavery*, 106-07.

[187] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 203-04.

[188] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3547, exp. 1, "Caso de la goleta española El Relámpago, apresada por le buque ingles Lion, con 150 bozales."

[189] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3547, exp. 2, "Barcos habaneros en busca de Esclavos."

[190] AHC, Gobierno Superior Civil, leg. 946, no. 33374, "Esclavos del Brasil," December 18, 1850; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 104.

[191] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3547 1, exp. 3, "Carta del Capitán General de Oficio no. 12," July 30, 1832.

[192] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3547, 1, exp. 12, "Carta anónima a Miguel Tacón," June 27, 1844.

[193] José Antonio Saco, *La supresión*, 15.

[194] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3547 1, exp. 5, April 11, 1833.

[195] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 104.

[196] N.A. "Correspondence of the New York Express," *The African Repository and Colonial Journal* (Washington: H.C. Dunk, 1836) 12: 324-35.

[197] Pérez-Cisneros, *La abolición*, 18.

[198] Paquette, *Sugar*, 80.

[199] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 241; Reid, *Year of the Lash*, 100-01.

[200] Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 283; Pérez-Cisneros, *La abolición*, 21-22; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 241; Laird W. Bergad, Fe García Iglesias, and María del Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 59.

[201] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 67.

[202] Ibid., 71.

[203] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 246; Escalona, *Los cabildos*, 18; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 208.

[204] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 244.

[205] Humboldt, *Island of Cuba*, 254; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 58.

[206] Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, interview with the author, Matanzas, Cuba, August 13, 2002; John Mason wrote that Matanzas was "Ará atá"—also meaning land of peppers," *Olóòkun*, 26.

[207] AHPM, Miscelanea de Expedientes, leg. 1, sig. 12, Censo de Población—San Francisco, 1863.

[208] Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection*, 36-41.

[209] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 194.

[210] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba," in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies*, ed. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1977), 191; Moreno-Fraginals, *El Ingenio*, 2: 9.

[211] AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3549, exp. 4, 01, "Juan Gisper to José de la Concha, Proyecto de importación de mugeres esclavas en la Ysla de Cuba," July 1, 1855.

[212] "Fragmentos de declaraciones tomadas a los morenos y mulatos libres y esclavos en el enjuiciamiento criminal a que fueron sometidos en los procesos que tuvieron lugar durante la Conspiración de La Escalera en 1844, según consta en los expedientes de los fondos coloniales del Archivo Nacional de Cuba." The notes were compiled by Justo Zaragoza for *Las Insurreciones en Cuba* (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1872).

[213] Esther Piedra, wife of Rolando Cartaya, Adeshina's grandson, interview with the author, Matanzas, Cuba, August 2000. Also see Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 110-11.

[214] Mariza de Carvalho Soares, "From Gbe to Yoruba: Ethnic Change and the Mina Nation in Rio de Janeiro," in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 240.

[215] Ibid., 240-41.

Chapter VI: Censuses, Population, and Parish Records

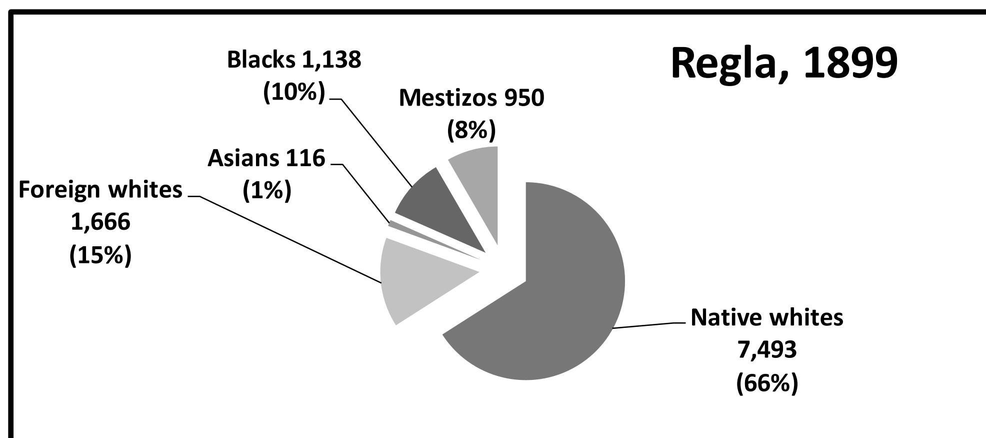
The Church of Our Lady of Regla, overlooking Havana's bay, may have been the first Catholic house of worship that some Africans saw as their ships were unloaded at Regla's wharf. During the nineteenth century, this small port town, measuring less than 4 square miles, experienced extensive growth relative to its small size. Africans and their descendants were an intrinsic factor in the town's growth, as they were in other areas of Cuba. Despite the apparent population increase, though, Regla's expansion was in no way comparable to that of larger Cuban cities. Well over 235,000 people lived in the city of Havana and around 45,000 lived in the city of Matanzas. Regla was just a small town by comparison.

In 1899, the interim U.S. administration that governed the island following Cuba's independence from Spain, counted the population. That census recorded 11,363 persons living in Regla, a big change from its initial population of 164 in 1755. Census-taking methodologies varied throughout the nineteenth century. The 1899 census classified the population into four racial categories: whites (distinguishing between native and foreign), Asians, "negroes," and "mixed"—mestizos or mulattoes.[1] The town had 7,493 native whites and 1,666 others that had been born elsewhere, either in Europe or the Americas. In addition, 116 Asians called Regla home. (See Chart 1)

Throughout the nineteenth century, Regla's population of color was relatively minor when compared to that of other regions. Although the town was a point of entry for many Africans, it was not a plantation town, so its slave population was not large. In 1899, there were 1,138 blacks and 950 mestizos (mulattoes) in the town, approximately

10 and 8 percent respectively. People of color thus represented 18.4 percent of Regla's overall population.[2] Statistics about the town's residents of color at the end of the century were not all that different from earlier years either. Many of the slaves in the town were domestics or salaried workers. They joined, and possibly worked for, members of the island's *Batallón de pardos y morenos* (Battalion of Mulattoes and Blacks, black militias), many of whom lived in the town since the last decades of the eighteenth century.[3] A small group of upwardly–mobile people of color were also living in Regla, some of whom had migrated to Cuba from other Spanish territories. Moreover, beginning in the mid-1820s, a small community of *emancipados* (smuggled slaves rescued from seized vessels) and ex-slaves began calling Regla home.

Chart 1. Population of Regla, 1899[26]



Census figures from the city of Matanzas differ significantly from Regla's (Chart 2). The city's size and its population growth in the nineteenth century were certainly superior to that of the small Havana port town. Matanzas's population was about four

[26] *Informe sobre el censo de Cuba 1899,* ed. J.P. Sanger, trans. F.L. Joannini (Washington DC: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1900).

times as large as Regla's. By the end of the century, there were 202,444 people in the province of Matanzas, and about one-fifth of the population, 45,282, lived in the city. Of these, 27,571 whites had been born in Cuba, 4,512 were foreign-born whites, and 360 people were Asians, the vast majority of which were males. The city's population of color consisted of 5,722 blacks and an interestingly large proportion of mestizos, 7,117, approximately 55 percent of the total. All told, there were 12,839 people of color residing in the city, a notable 46.6 percent of the city's residents.

Chart 2. Population of Matanzas, 1899[27]

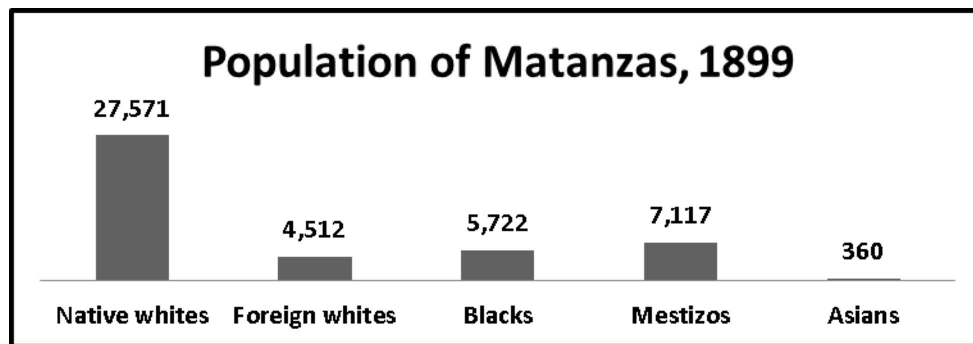


Table 1 Population of the Cities of Havana, Regla and Matanzas, 1899[28]

1899	Havana	Regla	%	Matanzas	%	Difference Regla/Mtz	% > Regla
Province	424,804	*	*	202,444	*	*	*
City/Town	235,981	11,363	*	45,282	*	33,919	398.5
Native whites	115,532	7,493	65.94	27,571	60.89	20,078	368.0
Foreign whites	52,901	1,666	14.66	4,512	9.96	2,846	270.8
Mestizos	36,004	950	8.36	7,117	15.72	6,167	749.2
Blacks	28,750	1,138	10.01	5,722	12.64	4,584	502.8
Asians	2,794	116	1.02	360	.80	244	310.3

[27] *Informe Sobre el Censo de Cuba 1899,* J.P. Sanger, editor, F.L. Joannini, translator (Washington: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1900).

[28] Ibid., 189, 204-05.

At the end of the century, the populations of the two zones were very different. In 1899, the area of the province of Matanzas was 3,700 square miles, with approximately 202,000 residents, or some 55 people per square mile. Over 100,000 of them lived in urban areas.[4] Roughly 22,000 people lived in the city's districts and neighborhoods. The city was divided in three: Matanzas proper or "Old Town," Pueblo Nuevo, and Versailles.[5] The province's population then was more than six times larger than Regla's, and the number of the city's residents doubled that of the Havana town.[6]

People of color were to be seen all over the city's neighborhoods, though they were concentrated in specific areas. By the 1840s, more than 25 percent of the island's slaves were involved in urban endeavors.[7] Most liberated slaves flocked to the cities, where there were greater possibilities of employment or receiving assistance from relatives or friends. Along with the promises of economic ascent, the city offered a welcome repose from the countryside's barbarity. Women were generally more prone to obtain or purchase their freedom, so they were especially noticeable in the cities, typically exceeding the male population.[8]

The "heart of Africa" in Matanzas was the neighborhood that came to be known as Alturas de Simpson (or simply Simpson), which almost throughout the entire length of the century was known as Barrio de San Francisco. Simpson's population was much closer in size to Regla's.[9] It was not a very big barrio (neighborhood). In fact, in area it was smaller than Regla. Its easternmost street was Santa Isabel, which ran south for three blocks, through Salamanca and Velarde, ending on Daoiz Street. Dos de Mayo and Capricho Streets are the southern and northernmost, respectively, approximately six blocks from one end to the other. In all, the barrio does not exceed 2 square miles.[10]

The other distinctly African neighborhood, La Marina, was closer to the sea and nearer to the city's entrance. As it was downhill from Simpson, it was referred to as *allá abajo* (down there), and still is, but the reference implied other understandings of the word *abajo* (down, low, below, under). In time, the area was stigmatized as a center of criminality, prostitution, and *brujería de negros*—blacks' witchcraft.[11] Many practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions also lived in La Marina, including Ño Blas Cárdenas, one of the founders of the Cabildo Lucumí Santa Teresa, who in later years was the first person from Matanzas to become a babalawo (Lucumí divination priest).[12] Cárdenas had ties to La Marina and to Pueblo Nuevo, where he resided during the late 1890s. Though the focus of the present study concentrates more on Simpson, La Marina and Pueblo Nuevo are areas of the city deserving of further study because of their large African population.

Given the enormous influx of Africans to Matanzas during the nineteenth century, the difference between Regla's and the city of Matanzas's populations of color was statistically substantial. There was a greater presence of people of color throughout the entire province of Matanzas. Unfortunately, church records seldom provide details about where the baptized would end up residing, but in all likelihood the vast majority of the Africans christened in San Carlos's cathedral were destined for the adjacent rural areas: the towns of Ceiba Mocha, Cabezas, Guamácaros, Sabanilla del Encomendador, Santa Ana de Cidra, Limonar, and others. Africans living in San Francisco, like Regla's population of color, were primarily domestics, salaried workers, *emancipados*, or ex-slaves.

Several censuses were conducted during the course of the nineteenth century, but as emphasized by von Humboldt and others, the early censuses are not very reliable.[13]

Historians insist that the 1899 census was the most precise, but all of them had shortcomings of one sort or another. Still, despite its flaws, the 1862 census is reasonably accurate as well.[14] To be clear, insofar as the information available in the Cuban censuses is concerned, there will always be considerable room for error, but certain years offered greater clarity than others. The censuses taken during 1841, 1846, 1862, and 1877 documented the population of the town of Regla; however, the process used to gather the demographic data varied. Differences were also evident in the case of Matanzas. Both regions' variations were probably linked to the census takers and not to the overall organization of the tallies. Havana census data sometimes included Regla's population in the total figures for the city, but at other times these were detailed individually. In these cases, the town's statistics reflected only the total combined number of residents for each of the racial categories. In Matanzas, while all four of the post-1840 censuses recorded population statistics for the city, individual figures for the districts and neighborhoods located within the city itself or its outskirts appeared infrequently.

The totals for Simpson's residents were also included in the overall figures for the city of Matanzas, but on two occasions, in 1858 and 1863, they were listed individually (Table 3). The 1858 figures combined data for both the province and the city, and also divided the figures according to districts. Simpson's population figures were clearly expressed. The data for 1863 were extracted from the 1862 census and organized as individual reports. These two reports provide a basic idea of Simpson's population in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The 1863 count reported a total of 30,539 people living in the city of Matanzas, with 11,494 residing in the Distrito Norte (northern district) in which Simpson was

located (Chart 3). At least half of the district's residents lived in the neighborhood. There were 5,753 people in the barrio: 2,705 (47 percent) whites and 56 (1 percent) Asians. The colored population totaled 2,992 (52 percent) people. Between the 1858 and 1863 counts the neighborhood's population grew little.

Table 2. Census Statistics for Regla, 1841, 1846, and 1862[29]

	1841		1846		1862[30]	
	Regla	**%**	**Regla**	**%**	**Regla**	**%**
White males	2,529	53.8	2,696	53.2		
White females	2,174	46.2	2,375	46.8		
Total whites	4,700	62.6	5,071	76.1	7892	73.5
FPOC[31] males	335	44.7	324	50.3		
FPOC females	414	55.3	320	49.7		
Total FPOC	749	10	644	9.7	1266	11.8
Slaves males	1300	63.4	519	54.8		
Slaves females	751	36.6	428	45.2		
Total slaves	2,051	27.4	947	14.2	1574	14.7
Totals	**7500**		**6,662**		**10,732**	

Africans and people of color represented 11,956 (39 percent) of the 30,539 people living in Matanzas's districts. Approximately 4,915 (41 percent) of them were concentrated in the Northern District's two zones, while the rest resided in the neighborhoods located within the remaining districts. This specific data corroborates testimonies gathered during interviews with older residents of Simpson whose parents

[29] Cuba, Comisión del Censo general de población, *Resumen del censo de población de la isla de Cuba a fin del año de 1841* (La Habana: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1842); *Cuadro estadístico de la siempre fiel Isla de Cuba, correspondiente al año de 1846* (La Habana: Imprenta del Gobierno y Capitanía General por S.M., 1847); *Noticias estadísticas de la isla de Cuba, en 1862* (La Habana: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1864).

[30] The 1862 data combined the populations of Regla and the neighboring town of Casablanca. There is confusion as to the year in which this census was taken. It has been described as the census of 1860, 1861, and 1862. The census officially began in 1860, in Spain. The Cuban figures were gathered in 1861 but not published until 1862, thus the confusion with the dates. Kiple, *Blacks,* 62.

[31] Free people of color.

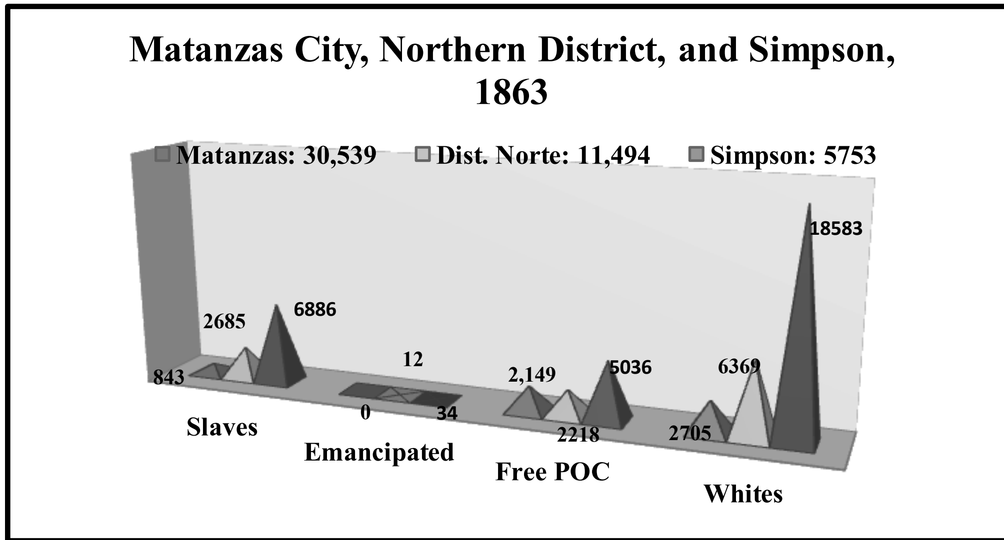
and grandparents settled in the neighborhood in the nineteenth century. Several suggested that Simpson housed *muchísimos* (many, many) people of color who worked in varying capacities for whites in the barrio and its surrounding neighborhoods. Milagros Palma Zequeira's mother, of Arará descent, moved to Simpson to be closer to a centrally located white family for whom she cooked. Her godmother, Micaela Ruíz Arzuaga, was a *planchadora*—she ironed clothes for a living.[15] Dora García Oliva's mother, Lucumí, was a domestic servant for a white family that lived in an elite area of the city, "*donde vivían los ricos, tú sabes*" (where the rich lived, you know). Her mother purchased the house she was raised in with the money she saved by working for the *ricos*.[16]

Table 3. Census Figures for Simpson, 1858 and 1863[32]

	1858				**1863**	
	Matanzas	**%**	**Simpson**	**%**	**Simpson**	**%**
Whites	14,810	57.94	2,547	45.18	2,705	47.02
FPOC			2,176	38.60		
Free mulattoes	2,218	8.68			729	12.67
Free blacks	2,296	8.98			1,420	24.68
Mulatto slaves	428	1.67			35	.61
Black slaves	5,781	22.61			808	14.04
Slaves			890	15.79		
Asians			24	.43	56	.97
Emancipated	30	.12				
Totals	**25,563**	**100**	**5,637**	**100**	**5,753**	**99.99**

[32] AHPM, Miscelánea de Expedientes, Signatura 7, L1, Estadísticas demográficas, 1841-48; Miscelánea de Expedientes, Signatura 8, L1, Estadísticas demográficas, 1858; Miscelánea de Expedientes, Signatura 12, L1, Estadísticas demográficas, Barrio de San Francisco, 1863.

Chart 3. Total Population Statistics for Matanzas City, the Northern District, and Simpson, 1863[33]



Parish Records and Data collection

Starting in the fifteenth century, the Catholic Church required that all parishes keep registers of baptisms and other sacraments administered to the growing number of Africans being introduced to the faith, albeit forcefully.[17] The christening of Africans, however, was not mandatory until 1789, when a Royal Decree issued by the Spanish Crown stipulated that all slaves had to be "instructed in matters of the Catholic religion and its truths" and baptized within one year of their residence in the king's dominions.[18] Evangelizing enslaved Africans was a prime concern, mostly for its potential to curtail suicide and promote obedience and respect; however, these goals often clashed with the harsh reality of the particulars that hindered the process.[19]

The church's position in nineteenth-century Cuba was wanting in several respects. One of its major problems was a general shortage of priests. Ironically, the church and some clergy owned plantations and slaves, and employed brutal overseers.[20] Some of the

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[33] AHPM, Miscelánea de Expedientes, Signatura 10, L1, Datos Estadísticos, 1862.

priests whose names appeared throughout the ledgers also owned slaves who worked for them as domestics, and some slaves were "related" to the clergy in "other" ways. Though it is not clear if the same conditions existed on plantations or estates owned by the church or clergy, teaching religion was not a priority for most slave owners. The lack of clergy amplified the challenges with which the church had to contend, but attempts to increase the number of priests met with repeated failure.[21] Religious instruction, when provided, was given in the evening, at the end of a long workday. Most slaves were worn out from laboring arduously in the cane fields. Exhaustion was surely more potent than the "word of God."[22]

In 1841, the Irish abolitionist Robert Richard Madden commented on the religious instruction given to slaves in Cuba. Based on his observations, slaves were generally taught "to repeat like parrots the Our Father, the Creeds and the Hail Mary of the rosary, but as far as having the least idea of the meaning of the words they repeat, it would be insane to expect."[23] Thus, even though there may have been sincere attempts to spread European religion among Africans, it was never successful on an official scale. Whatever Africans learned about Catholicism, in Cuba and elsewhere, they learned from their observation and the piety of the people that surrounded them, not from any official indoctrination.[24]

Although thousands were christened and interred in Regla's and Matanzas's churches, the present study focused on the baptism of two specific groups: Africans and their first generation, those who eventually served as a cultural conduit between their parents and the new society. Records of each parish's rites were annotated in ledgers that segregated the data by the sacrament that was administered and the individuals' race.

Each church kept two sets of ledgers, one for whites and another for *pardos y morenos*—mulattoes and blacks. Asians, in these cases, were recorded with the people of color, even when in censuses and other nineteenth-century documents they were sometimes documented as whites.

The parish books were digitalized as part of a valuable conservation project that aims to preserve endangered secular and ecclesiastical documents from the Americas. Needless to say, the ledgers themselves were in a very dilapidated state, and their digitalization has ensured that these documents will survive for future scholarship. The conservation project was conducted under the supervision of several renowned historians of slavery, including Jane G. Landers, Paul E. Lovejoy, and Mariza de Carvalho Soarez. The digitized documents are now part of the Ecclesiastical & Secular Sources for Slave Societies (ESSSS) collection, directed by Landers and administered by Vanderbilt University.[25] The project's goal is vital for historical studies and can be advantageous to all scholars, regardless of their discipline, who should not only make use of the data it makes available but also support and appreciate the team's hard work and dedication. Anyone who has ever consulted Caribbean historical documents knows the difficulties of the terrain and can appreciate the time and effort that was invested in this undertaking.

Transcription of the data in these records was a time-consuming but crucial task for the current study. Although a random sample of the entries in the ledgers could have sufficed for more limited studies, the constantly fluctuating nature of the slave trade and of the period would have intensified the challenge to determine the presence of specific populations with a sufficient accuracy. The baptismal data from Regla were recorded in a total of seven books, beginning in 1805 and ending in 1887, shortly after Cuba

emancipated all its slaves. The number of baptismal ledgers from Matanzas's San Carlos Cathedral is greater: twenty-nine books, spanning the years 1719 through 1887. Both sets of ledgers contain a plethora of valuable and absorbing particulars that provided meaningful and fascinating details about the lives of Africans and their descendants in nineteenth-century Cuba.

The time span covered in Regla's ledgers was less than that which was available for the city of Matanzas. Though their expansion began almost during the same period, Regla's population began growing more toward the end of the eighteenth century.[26] Given the consensus among historians that the most significant growth of Cuba's slave trade started around 1790, the decision was made to begin the transcription of Matanzas's baptisms with the third ledger. These books contained baptisms beginning in 1782 and ending in 1796. In total, the Matanzas data, spanning the years 1782 to 1887, included entries for twenty-three additional years.

The churches' interment records also provided important insight into the number of Africans who either lived in these towns or established residence in them at some point in their life. Earlier studies have demonstrated that a considerable number of people of color moved to the cities after purchasing or acquiring their freedom, especially after the 1840s.[27] As with the baptismal records, the interment registers for Regla began in 1805 and ended in 1886. The Matanzas ledgers were more extensive than Regla's and contained burial information spanning the years 1762 to 1887. The data transcriptions began with the entries for 1782, in keeping with the timeline for the baptismal records.

It was impossible to document all of the christenings and deaths that took place in the two zones. The digitalization of the ledgers was hampered by the lamentable state of

the records. Several of the registers were missing pages, and more than a few were illegible, due to either the priest's handwriting or, in the great majority of the cases, environmental factors, natural wear and tear, the effects of time, and traces left behind by insects and rodents. The present study benefited mostly from the documents in the ESSSS collection, but work with the actual, non-digitized ledgers was also necessary to account for a number of years that were somehow missed in the original endeavor. The latter need made the transcription process more complex and time-consuming because of the delicate nature of the ledgers and the care with which they had to be handled.

In addition to the given name, each entry documented the christening's date and place; the names of the officiating priest, parents, owners, and godparents; gender of the person being baptized; and usually the date and place of birth, if the person being baptized had been born in Cuba. During some periods, and especially in the 1840s, the ledgers documented the person's approximate age and the names of the grandparents, if known. The entries generally specified the child's legitimacy or lack thereof. If the father was known and the parents were married, the child was an *hijo legítimo* (legitimate child) or, on the contrary, an *hijo natural* (illegitimate child) if the parents were not married or the father was unknown. Slaves were clearly identified, sometimes using the term *alma bozal* (recently arrived soul), in addition to their ethnie, which was generally lowercased.

Circumstances surrounding the birth or regarding arrival to the island were commonly described. Numerous Africans came off the slave ships in such debilitated state that they were baptized *en articulus mortis*—on the verge of death, requiring emergency baptism before they died. Without this rite, they could not receive burial in the church's cemetery.[28] Once all the data were documented, the priest signed his name at

the bottom of each entry, confirming that the baptism was official, and stating that he had informed the godparents of the "*parentezco spiritual que contrajeron*" (of the spiritual parentage [responsibility] that they had contracted).

Remarks appeared frequently in the margins of the ledgers, some written years after the christening had occurred. These notes could refer to parents who had married years after their child's baptism had taken place. In so doing, the priest recognized the child's legitimacy. In the late 1860s, several annotations in the margins clarified the status of baptized children once the Moret Law—also known as the Free Womb's Law—took effect in September 1868, which proclaimed that all children born after September 1868 were to be free. In addition, everyone over the age of sixty was declared free as well.[29] Publication of the law was purposely delayed until September 1870. Numerous corrections emerged in the ledgers for those baptized before knowledge of the decree was made public.[30]

The information in the death registers was essentially straightforward. The record noted the deceased's name, place of birth, condition (slave or free), gender, marital status, spouse's name if married, children's' names, owner's name if applicable, approximate age, profession, cause of death, and any other detail considered pertinent. Sometimes, the date of the entry differed from the actual day the death occurred. If the deceased's spouse had died previously, the person's name was also noted; and all the prior spouses' names were often annotated if the decedent had married more than once. In some entries, the deceased's address was part of the record, especially if there was a will. When testaments were prepared and legalized before death, the ledgers would note its provisions, successors, executors, and whatever other relative facts were available.

Religious vows were common. Some deceased requested burial wearing specific shrouds in honor of a saint, which varied depending on the decedent's piety. Some Cuban and other Latin American Catholics still dress in *ropa de promesa*—devotional attire (literally "clothes of a vow"). These outfits are customarily based on the clothing worn by the saint to whom the individual was devoted, as depicted in images or lithographs, or dictated by tradition. In 1829, the Congolese María Rosalía Molina requested burial *amortajada con hábito de Ntra Sra de la Merced*—shrouded in the habits (attire) of Our Lady of Mercy. On the other hand, Antonio Arredondo, Carabalí, requested burial in *la ropa de su uso*—the clothes he commonly wore.[31]

Two hundred eighty-six people were baptized in Regla's church *en articulus mortis*. 1817 was a particularly noticeable year, with fifty-six deaths registered in the ledgers of people who were baptized under such unfortunate circumstances. Other occurrences were striking. It is doubtful that slave owners would report deaths caused by their abuse or neglect. Still, though not numerous in comparison to the overall mortality, a few cases may indicate a bit more than the obvious. A total of seventy-seven deaths were reported as "violent" or resulting from a "violent disease." In addition, seventy-three deaths were described as having happened "abruptly." It is hard to gauge how many deaths caused by owner or overseer abuse were reported in these ways, but surely many more went unreported. Epidemics also took a large toll on slave life. In October 1870, an unidentified outbreak struck the population of Matanzas. Approximately sixty Africans died between October and November 1870; 48 of these deaths occurred in October. Of the roughly sixty deaths, forty-four were slaves. Certainly the death toll was larger, given

that the present study only documented the death of Africans and their first generations.

Some of the victims of the Escalera conspiracy trials emerged in the Matanzas's ledgers, including Plácido, the celebrated mulatto poet who was brought before a firing squad on June 28, 1844.[32] Six men were sentenced to death, suffering the *pena de último suplicio fusilado por la espalda*—the death penalty, shot in the back. Three of these men belonged to Don Tomás Owens, who owned the Ingenio Santa Bárbara in Agramonte.[33] Other prisoners not sentenced to death also died in the process, surely as a consequence of the floggings they received or the cruelties to which they were subjected during the course of the repression and subsequent investigations. Two hundred sixty-nine deaths were registered in Matanzas in 1844, thirty-eight of which were incarcerated men. Over twenty died in jail, and thirty-nine others died in the city's hospital. All the dead were male, aged twenty-two to eighty, and most of them were younger than fifty.

The vast majority of the accused brought before the special prosecutors were not questioned in the city, but there were a few in Matanzas. Twenty-seven men and one woman were clearly identified as having suffered Escalera-related deaths. The majority of them were Gangá, a total of ten. The others were Carabalí (six), Congo (five), Lucumí (four), Mandinga (two) and "África" (one). Based on the scholarship and oral history, Lucumís were prevalent among the alleged conspirators and participants in the insurrections that took place on the Triunvirato estate and its immediate surroundings.[34] Curiously, the ledgers identified a total of six Lucumís with links to the Escalera conspiracy, but only four were unequivocally classified as Escalera-related prisoners. The ledgers noted the manner of death for only two of them: Blas Owens went up against the firing squad on June 18, and José Cruz García was found dead in his cell. Perhaps he was

tortured, or maybe he succumbed to the terror that anyone in his position would have undoubtedly felt. The manner of death for the remainder is more difficult to establish. Rafael *emancipado* lucumí died in the hospital. Esnardo Hernández died on his way from the jailhouse to the hospital, possibly never making a statement before the prosecutors. There was no explanation provided for the other two deaths.[35]

The total transcriptions from the baptismal ledgers for Regla consist of 2,528 people of color, of which 1,313 (52 percent) were African and 1,215 (48 percent) Afro-Cuban. All but three of the Cuban children were born in Regla: two in neighboring Casablanca and one in Havana. San Carlos Cathedral's ledgers contained over six times as many entries as Regla's, documenting a total of 18,466 baptisms, 11,731 (63.5 percent) Africans and 6,735 (36.5 percent) Afro-Cubans. Collection of interment data varied slightly from the method that was used to gather the baptismal data. As the study's primary objective is to gauge the influence of specific ethnies, the transcriptions from the burial ledgers only took note of the Africans that were recorded in each church's ledgers. Regla documented 2,576 interments and Matanzas had 9,685. In all, the sample under consideration in the present study consists of 20,994 christenings and 12,261 burials (Table 4).

Table 4. Baptisms and Burials, Regla and Matanzas, 1782-1887

Town	Africans	%	P of C34	%	Total Baptisms	Burials
Regla	1,313	52	1,215	48	2,528	2,576
Matanzas	11,731	63.5	6,735	36.5	18,466	9,685
Totals	13,044	62	7,947	38	20,994	12,261

[34] People of Color.

The Ethnic Presence in the Parish Records

More than ninety different ethnonyms were recorded in both parishes' ledgers. Even when considering that there were errors in classification, the potential ethnic diversity that these records reveal is exceptional. Still, the number of regions in Africa from whence the majority of these people arrived was not as broad as these ethnies seem to indicate.

African Ethnonyms Identified in Regla's and Matanzas's Church Records

> Amuni, Apopo, Arará (Ará), Asadano, Ayua, Bacá, Balanda, Bambara, Bamá, Bamba, Vamba, Bengali, Bibí (Viví), Bicó (Vica), Biogu, Biqui, Bocó, Brícamo (Brica), Briche, Brigán, Brines, Broco, Bulo, Cabanisamba, Cabinda, Carabalí (Caraba, Carab), Carabalí Cronato, Carabalí Sicuato, Casambé (Casabi), Chamba (Changua), Chugo, Congo, Congo Luango (Loango), Congo Mondongo, Coso, Cuala, Curanco, Din, Dole/Doli, Enchina, Eque, Fancué, Fanti, Fara, Fay, Fiminy (Faminé, Femene), Fore, Fula, Gangá (Gagá), Gangá Longoba (Longova, Nangoba), Gavan, Gilmina (Elmina?), Gono (Cono), Guache, Gurá, Hausa, Jolofe (Yoló), Senegal, Lala (Alalá), Landi, Lará, Llegú, Loamba, Lokó, Lucumí, Lucumí Elló (Ayó), Machagua (Mancagua, Michagua), Macuá, Mainá/Majín (Mahí), Mambaza, Mandinga, Mapu, Maquí, Masambí, Mina, Mina Fanti, Mina Popó, Mozambique. Musundia, Ouc Quisingula, Sambó, Sangasanga, Soso, Suá, Sucó, Sunga, Tapa, Yansaire (Zaire?), Ybo/Ibo, Ynda, Yolá/Olá, Zambá/Zambac, Zapé, Zara.

Several ethnies appeared with greater frequency. In the baptismal records for the Church of Our Lady of Regla, there was a larger Congo presence: 405 entries were identified as either Congo or a Congo sub-group. Gangá was the second most-recorded

ethnie, with 345 entries. There were 281 Lucumís, 256 Carabalís, 124 Mandingas, and 73 Minas. The remaining groups have fewer than 50 entries each. For those ethnies that appeared in the interment registers, once again the Congos made up the majority, with 532 entries, followed by the Carabalís, with 455 recorded deaths; the Gangás, with 421; the Lucumís, with 364; the Mandingas, with 210: the Minas, with 98; the Macuás, with 75; and the Ararás, with 57.

In Matanzas, the Gangás were at the forefront, with 3,483 christenings. Congos occupied the second place, with 2,247 baptisms, followed by the Mandingas, with 1,573; the Carabalís, with 1,556; the Lucumís, with 1,393; the Minas, with 480; the Macuás, with 153; the Ararás, with 87; and the Mozambiques, with 62. There were 2,410 Gangás recorded in the church's death register, along with 1,855 Congos, 1,387 Carabalís, 1,043 Mandingas, 877 Lucumís, 321 Minas, 104 Macuás, and 71 Ararás.

Chart 4, Most Frequent Ethnicities in Regla's and Matanzas's Baptism Records

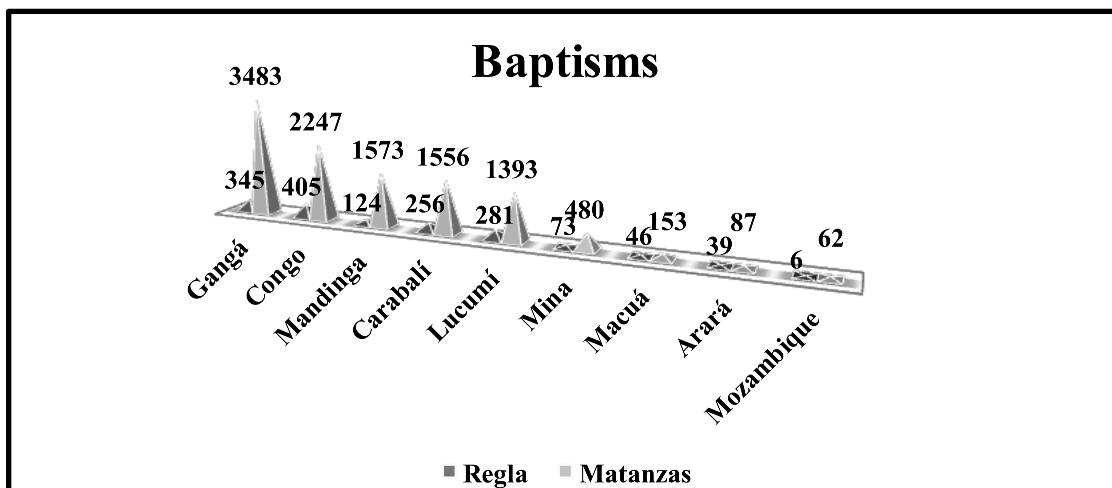
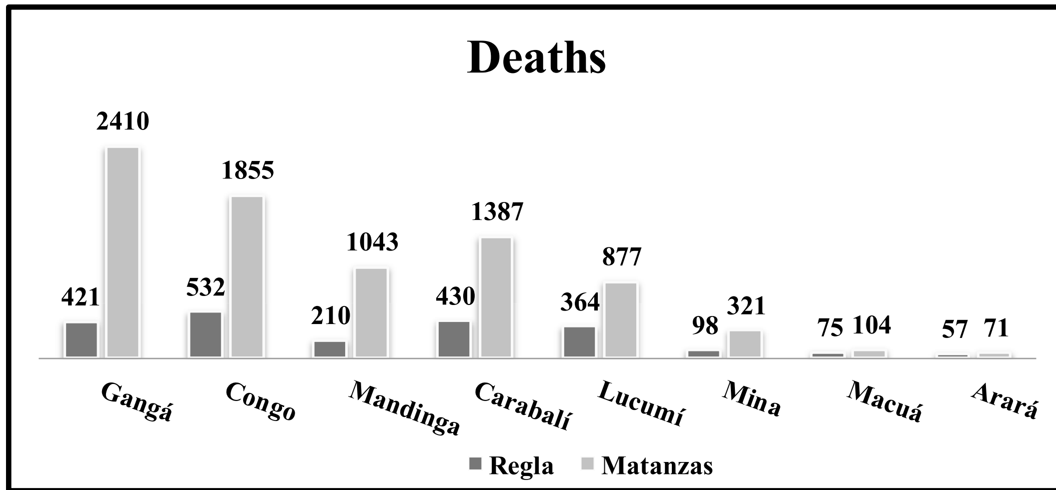


Chart 5. Most Common Ethnicities in Regla's and Matanzas' Death Registries



By and large, the church registers agreed with earlier studies that examined plantation data records. Moreno-Fraginals's research indicated that the great majority of those Africans who were imported between 1760 and 1870 could be classified into fewer than ten groups. He stated that the Congos, Gangás, Carabalís, Mandingas, Lucumís, Minas, and Ararás were the most noticeable ethnies on Cuban plantations during the nineteenth century.[36] The parish records indicated that the prevalent groups in the two areas surveyed for the present investigation were the Carabalís, Congos, Gangás, Lucumís, and Mandingas. The other ethnies that were documented in the ledgers were not as numerically strong and were probably not as culturally significant. The findings of the present study about African ethnies in nineteenth-century Cuba most definitely concur with Moreno Fraginals's research.

Notes

[1] The terms *pardo, mulato*, and *mestizo* were used interchangeably at times, but its use also varied depending on the era.

[2] *Informe sobre el censo de Cuba 1899,* ed. J.P. Sanger, trans. F.L. Joannini (Washington DC: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1900), 189, 204-05.

[3] Personal conversation with Sherry Johnson, later confirmed via email, May 12, 2013: "Many *floridanos* (military families from Florida), came to Regla with the evacuation in 1763, and I suspect that they became the nucleus of the new community." I appreciate Dr. Johnson's sharing the data from Diego Jose de Navarro, "Padrón general de la isla de Cuba formado a consequencia de Real Orden de 1 de noviembre de 1776," AGI, Indiferente General, leg. 1527, 1778, photocopies in the LMP, Special Collections, Florida International University, Miami.

[4] U.S. War Department, *Census of Cuba Taken Under the Direction of the War Department, U.S.A.* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), 11-12.

[5] Miguel Bretos, *Matanzas: The Cuba Nobody Knows* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 90.

[6] U.S. War Department, *Census of Cuba*, 15-16.

[7] Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba Between Reform and Revolution* 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 70-71; Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Esclavitud, familia y parroquia en Cuba: Otra mirada desde la microhistoria* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2008), 123.

[8] Jane G. Landers, "Cimarrón and Citizen: African Ethnicity, Corporate Identity, and the Evolution of Free Black Towns in the Spanish-Circum-Caribbean," in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives—Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Jane Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 116-17; Pérez Jr., *Cuba*, 49-50; Michele Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash—Free People of Color in Cuba and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 21-22.

[9] To avoid confusion, henceforth we will refer to the town as Simpson.

[10] Several attempts were made to obtain the exact area of the town. Unfortunately, these were hampered by inefficiency and bureaucratic impediments. The eventual response given by city officials was that the measurements of the barrio do not exist on record because they have never been taken.

[11] Bretos, *Matanzas*, 156.

[12] Osvaldo Cárdenas Villamil, priest of Babalúayé, interview with the author, La Marina, Matanzas, Cuba, October 6, 1999; Israel Moliner, historian, interview with the author, October 6, 1999; Esther Piedra, widow of Herrera's grandson, Rolando Cartaya, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000; David H. Brown, *Santería Enthroned—Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 76.

[13] Alexander Humboldt, *The Island of Cuba*, trans. J.S. Thrasher (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1856), 193; Kenneth F. Kiple, *Blacks in Colonial Cuba, 1774-1899* (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1976), 3, 9; Sherry Johnson, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 185.

[14] Fernando González Quiñones, Pilar Pérez-Fuentes Hernández, and Lola Valverde Lamsfús, "Hogares y familias en los barrios populares de La Habana en el siglo XIX. Una aproximación a través del censo de 1861," *Boletín de la Asociación de Demografía Histórica* 16, no. 2 (1998): 92-93.

[15] Milagros Palma Zequeira, Kashé'enjué, interview by the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 5, 1999; Francisca Chamalapo Rodríguez García, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 5, 1999.

[16] Dora García Oliva, Alonamí, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 15, 2000.

[17] Ecclesiastical & Secular Sources for Slave Societies, (henceforth ESSSS), http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/contact/questions.php.

[18] "Real cédula e instrucción circular a Indias, sobre la educación, trato y ocupación de los esclavos," in Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 409-15; Javier Laviña, *Doctrina para negros* (Barcelona: Sendai Ediciones, 1989), 47.

[19] Gabino La Rosa Corzo, *Los cimarrones de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1988), 50-51.

[20] Pablo Tornero Tinajero, *crecimiento económico y transformaciones sociales—esclavos, hacendados y comerciantes en la Cuba colonial (1760-1840),* (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1996), 239; Aurelia Martin Casares and Christine Delaigue, "The Evangelization of Freed and Slave Black Africans in Renaissance Spain: Baptism, Marriage, and Ethnic Brotherhoods," *History of Religions* 52, no. 3 (February 2013): 220.

[21] Laviña, *Doctrina*, 48-49.

[22] William Henry Hubert, *Gan-Eden or Pictures of Cuba* (Boston: John P. Jewett and Company, 1854), 168-69; Laviña, *Doctrina*, 48-49; Jane G. Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 154; Herbert S. Klein, "The African American Experience in Comparative Perspective: The Current Question of the Debate," in *Africans to Spanish America: Expanding the Diaspora,* ed. Sherwin K. Bryant, Rachel Sarah O'Toole, and Ben Vinson III, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 215-16.

[23] Robert Richard Madden, *Observaciones sobre la esclavitud y comercio de esclavos e informe del Dr. Madden sobre la esclavitud en la isla de Cuba*, ed. J.P.G. Alexander (Barcelona: Imprenta de A. Bergnes y Ca., 1841), 41.

[24] Laura de Mello Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross: Witchcraft, Slavery, and Popular Religion in Colonial Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 46; Klein, "The African American Experience," 216.

[25] ESSSS, http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/contact/questions.php.

[26] De Navarro, "Padrón general de la isla de Cuba."

[27] Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux, *El negro en la economía habanera del siglo XIX* (La Habana: UNEAC, 1970), 16; Rafael Duharte Jiménez, *El negro en la sociedad colonial* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 1988), 13; Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century—The Social and Economic History of Monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 85; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas—Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 238; Johnson, *The Social Transformation*, 9; Gloria García Rodríguez, *Voices of the Enslaved in Nineteenth-Century Cuba*, trans. Nancy L. Westrate (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 40; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*, 18.

[28] Luís Martínez Fernández, " 'Don't Die Here': The Death and Burial of Protestants in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1840-1885," *The Americas* 49, no. 1 (Jul., 1992): 36-8; Alfred L. Brophy, "Grave Matters: The Ancient Rights of the Graveyard," *Brigham Young University Law Degree* no. 6 (2006), 1469n88.

[29] Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba—The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 64; María del Carmen Barcia, *Burguesía esclavista y abolición* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1987), 146; Bergad, *Cuban Rural*, 93-5.

[30] Scott, *Slave Emancipation*, 99; Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Para librarse de lazos, antes buena familia que buenos brazos—Apuntes sobre la manumisión en Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009), 69.

[31] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," August 26, 1829, libro 1, 1805-1829, DSCN2915; libro 4, 1850-1866; May 5, 1850, DSCN2327.

[32] ESSSS, San Carlos de Matanzas, "Entierros de Pardos y Morenos," libro 19, 1841-1844, June 28, 1844, DSCN0684.

[33] Alberto Perret Ballester, *El azúcar en Matanzas y sus dueños en La* Habana (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2007), 426.

[34] Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 40-41.

[35] ESSSS, San Carlos de Matanzas, "Entierros de Pardos y Morenos," libro 19, 1841-1844, September 9, 1844, DSCN0707; September 12, 1844, DSCN0708; November 14, 1844, DSCN0724; and November 18, 1844, DSCN0725.

[36] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba" in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies*, ed. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (New York: The New York Academy Of Sciences, 1977), 190-91; D.B. Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora: The Slave-Trade and the Creation of African 'Nations' in the Americas," *Slavery & Abolition* 22, no. 3 (2001): 28.

Chapter VII: Ethnies and the Church records

The Cuban slave trade

Cuba's direct participation in the slave trade did not begin until the latter eighteenth century, shortly after the British takeover of Havana. A royal decree in November of 1789 authorizing slaving ventures to Africa responded to the island's needs for workers for the island's fortification projects, but it had important repercussions elsewhere. Cuban planters, seeking cheap labor, began pressuring the Crown for open access to the slave trade, which until that time had been chiefly controlled by the British. The decree opened the trade to all citizens residing in Spain or in the Indies and was originally to have expired in six years. Eventually, however, the Crown acceded to swelling demands from the planters and in 1790 extended these privileges, thus inaugurating the full-fledged participation of Cuba in the slave trade.[1] Over 90 percent of the Africans imported to Cuba arrived after 1790, an era marked by often desperate efforts to increase the pool of workers, sometimes at great costs. Experiencing various booms and busts, the new phase of Cuban slavery persisted until the 1870s.[2]

After 1820, an agreement between Spain and Great Britain seeking to end Cuba's new endeavors led to a clandestine slave trade through which thousands of slaves were smuggled into the island, often at great risks. Several of these smugglers conspired with government officials and the Crown turned a blind eye. A number of Cuba's Captains Generals were silent participants and generally ignored the illegal trade.[3] A supplementary treaty between Spain and the British, signed in 1835, was almost just as blatantly ignored. The contraband trade mocked the treaties continuously, smuggling

slaves through the island's many coves, especially in the northern regions of Matanzas and central Cuba. During the approximately 50 years that the clandestine trade lasted, the island's chattel crossed the Atlantic on ships departing from regions that were "out of sight and almost out of reach of the British navy," which was monitoring the coasts of Africa, and the Caribbean waters, attempting to curtail the slave trade by boarding and searching vessels involved in it.[4] Smugglers covertly landed and disembarked in Cuba, mostly usually under the shelter of night.[5]

Human life was constantly imperiled, as African mortality was generally high. Dysentery and other contagious illnesses, worsened by the cramped conditions of the slave ship, were often devastating. The Portuguese called slave ships *tumbeiros*—floating tombs.[6] The ship's crew was not exempt from these hazards. While docked in Africa, they risked yellow fever and malaria, and on their way to the Americas, smallpox and other epidemics.[7] Many of those Africans who boarded ships on the coasts never made it to Cuba, and a good percentage of those who did, arrived in deplorable conditions.[8]

Rachel Wilson Moore's travel journal offered a vivid description of a slave ship that had recently unloaded slaves in Cuba, as relayed to her by an informant. Taken under cover of night to a location that Moore did not disclose, he witnessed the arrival and unloading of a slave ship. Afterward, he was brought inside, where he encountered a "horrid spectacle that met my vision…from stem to stern, [the ship] was a mass of filth and noxious vapor; it looked as if all the excrements accumulated on the passage, were there deposited, during a voyage of ninety days." Moore's source told her that 1,100 slaves had arrived that fateful night.[9]

The Three Ethnies—Those Who Most Influenced the Culture

Most enslaved Africans in Cuba were generally imported from a limited number of ports on the west coast of the continent: the Congo River, Mozambique, the Gallinas, Bonny, Ouidah, and Lagos.[10] The homelands of the dominant ethnies documented in the parish records transcribed for the present study coincided with these embarkation points. The implications of the processes studied in the present analysis require familiarity with the three ethnic groups that became the most significant cultural contributors to Cuba as well as some of the historical events that led to their presence there.

Carabalí

The Niger River delta in the Bight of Biafra was a major contributor of human merchandise. Many Carabalí slaves originated from the region surrounding the Oil Rivers that flow through New Calabar, located in modern-day southern Nigeria, and parts of Cameroon. Others were drawn from the coves and estuary of the Cross River area of New Calabar. Many of the people exported from the region were branded with the Carabalí toponym, largely because of their ports of origin.[11] Kalabary was a town in the Delta to which the term *Calabar* initially referred. By the seventeenth century, Calabar began appearing in Dutch maps as *the* name for the region.[12] The Portuguese called the people from the region *Calabaros* and *Calapongos*, while the Dutch referred to them as *Kalbongers*.[13]

In its more than 300-mile course to the sea, the Cross River meets the Calabar and other small rivers, flowing through areas where many small, interrelated communities resided. These people made a living primarily from trading. Additionally, the coastal

community had established important trade networks that kept them in contact with others from the littoral and hinterland, primarily the Efiks, Efuts, Ejaghmas, Ibibios, Igbos, Ijaws and others.[14] The Portuguese explored the region in the fifteenth century. In the two centuries that followed, they and the Dutch conducted minor trade in the Cross River's estuary, establishing "factories" to stock slaves for export. Moreover, the Portuguese founded Christian missions. Factories and religious missions almost always went hand in hand.[15]

By 1620, the "king" of Calabar was one of several West African monarchs appearing on a list identifying the sovereigns with whom the Portuguese traded from their settlement on the island of São Tomé, off the African coast. Sao Tomé was colonized by the Portuguese during the fifteenth century and planted with sugarcane.[16] Initially, there were only three embarkation points within the Bight of Biafra: Old Calabar, New Calabar and Bonny, though the latter did not enjoy much prominence until after 1699.[17] By 1730, when the bight became the greatest source of slaves for the New World, Bonny was the principal port of embarkation.[18]

Exports rose significantly in the eighteenth century, in direct relation to controversies that gave birth to stronger native political organization. These polemics provoked enduring social upheaval, affecting the area's people on all levels and lasting well into the latter nineteenth century. More than a million people were captured between 1700 and 1807. British traders alone carried 1,155,590 slaves from the Bight of Biafra.[19]

The people of the Cross River basin were a cluster of scattered and independent communities united by networks of obligation and prestige.[20] These societies maintained order and cohesion under a system of social organizations or lodges known as Ékpès or

leopard societies. Usually, the communities' elders and men of high social ranking within the organization were the directors. These men preserved the important secrets and ritual knowledge that provided for perpetuation of the social fabric that gave the people a sense of identity and harmony.[21] Acting as an extra-official governmental institution, Ékpès fulfilled many functions, including conflict resolution.[22] The region's trade networks were sustained by the Ékpès, and though their effectiveness was initially limited, in the absence of a more structured state, these societies eventually grew to ensure the welfare of all the communities.[23]

The Ékpès' rise was linked to the slave trade, and internal struggles for control of the Carabalí society may have resulted in struggles for control among its members.[24] Some of these skirmishes ended with the sale of Ékpè members into slavery. The dates marking the escalated hostilities on the African side of the Atlantic coincide with the increased presence of Carabalí slaves in Cuba and the founding of the island's first official Abakuá lodge in 1836.[25]

Carabalí slaves had begun making their mark on the Americas sometime after 1730, with their numbers growing significantly between 1764 and 1800—the same period during which importation of Carabalís to Cuba rose sharply.[26] Though some evidence suggests that in the initial phases many captive women were not sold and instead were integrated into the community, their exports grew as the trade advanced.[27] Coastal regions became a prime source for female slaves.[28] In some areas, young girls and mature females who were considered "loose" or troublesome, were often sold, as were widows and their children.[29] The Bight of Biafra was very significant in the transport of

enslaved women to the Americas. Paul Lovejoy demonstrated that in the Americas, the presence of women from the region was greater than that of any other ethnic group.[30]

The vast majority of Carabalís were probably members of the Igbo (also spelled Ibo) people.[31] The presence of Europeans on the coast and the rising demand for slaves affected the stability that the region enjoyed for many centuries. Both the coastal groups as well as the hinterland communities, and especially those in the area of Old Calabar, responded to these demands by developing ingenious institutions that provided the middlemen with the justification for their own people's enslavement. An Ibibio-Igbo-Aro oracle, generally referred to as the Aro Chukwu, was instrumental in these processes and manipulated at will by unscrupulous profiteers.[32] The oracle was used to mediate disputes between merchants. Once an agreement was reached, the oracle's overseers demanded slaves as payment for their assistance.[33] The prevalence of trade in the ports of Bonny, Brass, Calabar (Old and New), Opobo, Efik, and others facilitated the spread of the oracle's influence in the region.

Warfare, induced by the increased demands for slaves, may not have been ubiquitous in the Calabar region, but it was not absent either. Aro Chukwu may have helped to curtail the bellicosity associated with the slave trade, which was ravaging the region.[34] Nonetheless, competitive battles and intercommunity clashes continued at an increasing rate.[35] Some of these historical events were recounted in ritual chants sung by Cuba's Abakuá societies, the island's equivalent of the Ékpès. Stressing the bounty of historical information that is stored in the living repositories—the "oral texts"—Ivor Miller supported the of value oral history when applied in conjunction with documentary

evidence, an argument that is founded on Melville Herskovits' theories and supported by others who have taken this methodological approach.[36]

Various Carabalí ethnies in the Americas originated in these settlements that were plagued by warfare and mayhem. Taken to ports on the banks of the river or on the coasts, they were registered in the traders' logs as Carabalís and subsequently shipped out, possibly after many days of agonizing waits and emotionally tormenting uncertainty. Some slaves from the region were transported to the island of São Tomé before shipment to the Americas; many of these were classified as "São Tomé" but were in fact Carabalís, Bantús, Ararás, or of some other ethnic background.[37]

A handful of Carabalís were present in Cuba during the sixteenth century, being mentioned in Cuban documents since 1579. By 1588, *Carabalí* was becoming the standardized spelling.[38] Writing in the seventeenth century, Alonso de Sandoval indicated that the "Caravalí" were of two types, either of "natural" or "pure" stock or "as we say particular…Caravalies." The latter were "countless" but did not communicate well with each other because they did not speak "languages mutually intelligible with pure Caravalí." He provided the first classifications of the different ethnies that composed the Carabalí meta-ethnonym.[39]

Rebellious from their arrival, the Carabalí were not liked everywhere. Planters in the British islands did not care much for them and attributed their aversion to the group's supposedly shorter stature. In 1675, an agent of the Royal Africa Company stressed the "…miserable sales for those that come from the Callabare."[40] In Puerto Rico, Carabalí slaves were also a source of tension. Neither were they popular in Brazil, where, between

the years 1817 and 1843, the Carabalí were slightly short of 3 percent of the slave population, albeit, their disrepute was not universal.[41]

Researchers have divided the Carabalís into three families, primarily Igbo, Ijaw, and Bantús (and semi-Bantús), as well as an extensive number of subgroups.[42] Thus, in Cuba various ethnonyms appeared in colonial documents, publications, and traveler's journals, generally preceded by the Carabalí label. Abaya, Apapa, Brícamo, Briche, Bibí (Viví), Efik, Ékpè, Elugo, Isuama, Igbo, Oro, and others were all regarded as "nations" or "types" of Carabalí.[43] Rafael López Valdés identified 150 Carabalí ethnonyms, though some may be variants of the same ethnie or simple misspellings.[44] There is little doubt that by the nineteenth century, the Carabalí were among the more prevalent African communities in Cuba, but the exact number of ethnies is subject to debate. Unlike other regions, sources suggest that by the 1800s, the Carabalí had become Cuban planter's "preferred slaves."[45] Havana alone hosted 41.6 percent of the Carabalí population between 1764 and 1800, and the numbers continued to grow thereafter.[46] The figures seem to agree with those provided by Moreno-Fraginals's study of the island's plantations.[47]

The rearrangement of the letters *l* and *r* is enigmatic, possibly due to Portuguese orthographic influences. In the Americas, the spelling of the term—*Carabalí* (or *Caravalí*) as opposed to *Calabarí*—seems to be universal after the sixteenth century.[48] Ortiz supposed that it was influenced by the English and said that it was a possible corruption of the word *Kalbary*.[49] Cuban documents from the latter sixteenth century referred to them as Calabarí, but this soon changed, possibly after the increased English presence in the region and in the slave trade.[50]

Carabalí *cabildos de nación* were important contributors to the development of an identity that responded to the generic toponym. The first on record may have been located in Havana. Barcia identified the Cabildo Carabalí Isieque as the earliest Carabalí *cabildo* founded in Havana, and another in Puerto Príncipe—modern-day Camagüey—under the guidance of the Holy Trinity, which may have initially been a *cofradía*—a Catholic brotherhood.[51] Miller suggested 1750 as the earliest founding.[52] By the nineteenth century, the Carabalí had at least five *cabildos* in Havana, the greatest number of ethnic associations related to a single group. Assimilation of smaller ethnic groups by numerically larger ones was common.[53] Aligning themselves under a single ethnic denominator allowed many Carabalí subgroups to gain greater power and social prestige. Despite their shared African links, each group had different mythologies and traditions that surely influenced the evolution of the Abakuá societies in the nineteenth century.

Many Carabalí *cabildos* amassed great sums of money in Havana, often renting rooms in the houses that they purchased for Abakuá society functions.[54] Given the great diversity of ethnicities that were grouped under the generic classification, transculturation inevitably gave birth to perceptions of archetypal behaviors that were amalgamated and generalized as typical of the Carabalí, such as their propensity to accumulate wealth.[55] Much of the early writings about the Carabalí in Cuba suffer from the influence of the stigmas that were ascribed to the group. These were especially noteworthy during the nineteenth century because of the group's most prominent contribution to the island's Africanity, the Abakuá societies.[56] Though one study suggested an eighteenth-century founding, most sources agree that the island's first *potencia*– (literally, "power" or figuratively "lodge")—*Efik Butón*, was founded in Regla, in 1836, during the

administration of Captain General Miguel Tacón.[57] From the small port town, it eventually spread to Matanzas and Cárdenas, the three regions where the Abakuá societies have had the greatest influence. Ten years after the Regla lodge was established, there were at least 40 lodges in Havana alone.[58]

The Carabalís and the Abakuás were linked to criminality starting early in the nineteenth century, beginning with the Aponte conspiracy of 1812, one of the largest slave plots of the era. The alleged accomplices were purported to have connections to the Haitian Revolution.[59] Shortly after the founding of Efik Butón, the society's reputation began suffering incessantly. In the nineteenth century, the Ñáñigos—as the society's members were called—were accused of murder, cannibalism, insurrections against the government, and general mayhem. The lodges were accused of being a haven for the island's criminal underworld.[60] The meaning and origin of the term *ñáñigo* are still obscure. Enrique Sosa Rodríguez suggested that it meant *arrastrados*—literally "dragged along"—and said it originated with a group of destitute African fishermen who had an Ékpè type society in Regla in 1834.[61] In the modern Cuban context, *arrastrado* may be used colloquially to indicate individuals who are submissive and thus humiliated or who allow others to humiliate them, a far cry from the reputation that was given to the Ñáñigos in later years.

While it may be true that some Abakuá associates were involved in criminal activity, this participation was by no means related to the dictates or nature of the Abakuá societies. During his fieldwork in Cuba, Miller provided his two principal collaborators—both of whom had been Abakuás for much of their lives—with copies of materials from the early Cuban literature on the Abakuás. Neither man had seen these publications

before then, even when they had heard about them. After reading them, the men expressed their discomfort with the depictions of their comrades of yore as "primitive and unholy." Andrés, Miller's most outspoken informant, stressed that when a man was known to be problematic or violent, his acceptance into the society was "highly unlikely."[62] To become an Abakuá, the candidate must make a series of pledges to God and the fraternity.[63] It is possible that one of these vows may have provoked some of the general misperceptions of the association. During the initiation, candidates swear to avenge a fellow member's injury or death. Notwithstanding, they must also pledge to uphold the law. In fact, it is the first pledge that the candidate must make.[64] The oath, however, may have been subjected to various interpretations. The major problem was that the pledge contained no clear definition of which "law" was inferred. Modern-day Abakuás insist that the first law that they must respect is the law of the land.[65]

In the nineteenth century and well into the first quarter of the twentieth, spurred by the authorities and exaggerated media hype, the Abakuás were constantly linked to criminality. These connotations originated with the Spanish colonial authorities during Cuba's wars of independence.[66] They purposely spread rumors about a black takeover of the island and played on the fear of a Haitian-style revolution that had been on every Cuban's mind since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Spanish legislation banned the Abakuá societies in 1875, declaring them seditious, and took advantage of the prohibition to clean the island of those considered undesirable to their cause.[67] Spain's political opponents in Cuba were conveniently branded as Ñáñigos. The label justified the deportation of hundreds of possible rebels from the island, many of which had never been involved in Abakuá. These men were condemned to serve jail sentences under the

most horrendous conditions in the islands of Ceuta or Fernando Poo, off the coast of West Africa, and banned from all Spanish dominions.[68]

The defamation and vilification of the Abakuá persisted in the twentieth century with the witchcraft scares that followed the death of a young child from Havana Province named Zoila. During the first three decades of the twentieth century, people of color—including some who did not practice African religions—and other social "undesirables" became the object of police and media persecution. While in the nineteenth century only the Abakuás suffered from the abuse of the Spanish and colonial authorities, in the early twentieth century all devotees of Afro-Cuban religions were subjected to frequent police incursions, arrest, and public condemnation by the press. The Cuban constitution's freedom of religion clause in many ways prevented the authorities from pursuing their aggressive campaigns against African culture and religions; thus, most searches and arrests were justified on the pretense of unlawful association. Cuban judges had little recourses to proceed in court against the accused, and most cases never went beyond the imposition of fines and minor prison sentences that were usually declared served by the time the accused came before the court.[69]

Despite several academic debates, it is futile to deny that Cuban society, like most New World societies in the era, was racist and that race played a role in these processes.[70] The Abakuás were probably the most stigmatized African sociocultural organization in Cuba. Sadly, not only were they victims of racism, but their unfortunate and frequent skirmishes with the law also laid the foundations for much of the published material on the fraternity.[71] Lydia Cabrera's pioneering study of the Abakuás in Cuba reprimanded Cuban society for their *negrofobia* and their belief in the intellectual inferiority of Afro-

Cubans. While "*hoy el pueblo cubano, sin distinción de razas rinde abiertamente culto a los orishas Yorubas*" [today, Cubans, regardless of their race, openly pay homage to the Yoruba orishas], in Cuba, she argued, a place where the study of culture had yet to be understood as a valid science, the Abakuás had been discriminated against, historically maligned as criminals, and regarded as part of an embarrassing past that most preferred to ignore.[72]

Cabrera's brother-in-law, Fernando Ortiz, who very early in his career had promised to publish an extensive study of the Abakuá in Cuba, failed to do so before his death in 1969. He did, however, publish several articles and dedicated large sections in his books to them.[73] Ortiz must be applauded for the gigantic step taken in 1942, while presenting an acceptance speech at the Afro-Cuban Club Atenas of which he had been named honorary member. Ortiz, already well-embarked on his folklorization campaign, openly admitted that his initial perception of the Ñáñigos and the "macabre fables and bloody tales" spread by ill-intentioned men had been "utterly confused." The seemingly repentant Ortiz praised the numerous contributions of the Abakuás to Cuban culture and their overall importance for all Cubans. Sadly, he continued to use the word *ñáñigo*, loaded as it was with the stigmas that Cuban society had attached to the label since the prior century. Indisputably, the nineteenth-century urban legends shaped the image that was planted in the mind of many Cubans, white and black, and that continues to tarnish the Abakuás to this day.[74]

While scholars lament Ortiz's failure to publish the book, an urban legend explaining why it never happened circulates among Cubans to the present, Abakuá or not: the study never took place because the Ñáñigos threatened to take Ortiz's life if he

published it. It contained too many secrets that could not be made public because they would compromise the group's esoteric mysteries and ritual knowledge.[75] Whether there is truth to the legend is speculative, but, to his last day Ortiz swore that he would publish the book before his death. Apparently, he entrusted the task to his disciple, Cabrera.

Ñáñigos developed a reputation that they could not easily dismiss. While it may be true that some of their members had committed criminal offenses, so, too, had other Afro-Cubans, Europeans, Americans, and others. Clearly, there were other underlying issues that were not—or could not be—discussed openly and honestly. Moreno-Fraginals vindicated the Ñáñigos, stressing that the majority of the nineteenth-century reports were about individual cases—men who, because of the society's racism, took justice into their own hands, knowing that the land's laws were designed to benefit whites and not blacks.[76] To the present, however, the descendants of the Carabalí are still fighting to erase a stigma that refuses to go away.

Congo

Kongo[77] *dia Ntotila*—hunting land—was totally transformed in the sixteenth century. The once-peaceful paradise was in the midst of becoming one of the most ravaged regions of the trade in human beings. Oral tradition recounts that Angola (Ngola), as the area came to be known, was initially a land of great beauty and bounty. The Kikongo peoples believed that in the beginning, when the region was still in a virgin state, a hunter came across it and was immediately captivated by its beauty. Spellbound, the hunter returned to the primordial forest to gather his family and bring them to the place where they would make their new home: Angola, land of splendor.[78]

A Kongo proverb stressed that only “strong hunters” were meant to rule. Those who were not resilient hunters were weak and destined to failure. Like the hunter in the origin myth, Kongo rulers were expected to be strong “men,” even when at times their sovereigns were women. Weakness eventually gave rise to dissension within the splendorous land. Political and religious conflict led the founding community to spread out in different directions and populate other expanses of the territory to the south and east, giving rise to the great diversity that exists among the region’s peoples.[79]

The Angola that the Portuguese first came upon was a small territory, in the hinterland of Luanda; however, in time, the term *Angola* was used to refer to almost the entire western coast of Central Africa.[80] As the kingdom extended its power beyond its original borders, the Portuguese presence and influence grew alongside it. Soon after, adjacent territories came under Portuguese sway, particularly the kingdom of Ndongo, which descended from the original settlement, but eventually separated from its parent kingdom. After a failed attempt at establishing relations with Ndongo in 1520, the number of renegade Portuguese soldiers increased among Ndongo’s ranks and within its court. Eventually the two territories were at odds. Kongo’s expansion campaigns aggravated the tensions because the crusade impinged on Ndongo’s territory and interests.[81] Needless to say, civil wars soon marred the region. Thereafter, the Portuguese began playing *com Deus e com o Diabo*—with God and with the Devil. While Portuguese forces became directly involved in the fighting that broke out all over the region, Portuguese slave traders increased their participation in the sale of human cargo for the Americas.[82] The unfortunate lots of war captives soon found themselves on plantations on the other side of the Atlantic.

The respected historian Joseph Miller argued that these wars of expansion were deliberately started by the Kongo kings to gain slaves and that the Portuguese participation had been minimal. The weaponry used by the Portuguese mercenaries that joined the Kongo troops—first crude and later upgraded—had little effect in the resultant civil wars. Miller stressed that since firearms played an insignificant role in the process, by extension, so, too, did the Portuguese. Ultimately, he believed, it was greed and not foreign influence that led to the region's devastation. Drought, he added, may have also contributed to the increased presence of specific groups from the interior.[83] The great variety of Kongo peoples who were involved in these wars becomes clearer when reviewing their presence in the Americas.

Scholars almost universally agree that the ethnies that were catalogued loosely as "Congos" made up the most preponderant group among the enslaved peoples in the Americas. Ample evidence supports this notion. Kongos were present in Europe before the rise of American slavery. Known as "Aethiops," Africans from different areas of the continent had been in Europe since at least the Roman era.[84] In Spain, Portugal, and other areas of Europe, the African presence precedes Columbus's voyage to the Indies. The dates vary according to the sources, but it is estimated that the African presence grew since at least the fourteenth century. African slaves were brought to Seville sometime before 1406, during the reign of Henry III.[85] Another observer from the era wrote that in 1443, the Portuguese navigator Joao Gonçalves Zarco brought ten slaves to Seville from the Congo region.[86] Spanish historian Isidoro Moreno's research on the Antigua Hermandad de los Negros de Sevilla (Ancient Society of Blacks in Seville) conducted during the same era, concluded that based on the founding of the Hermandad's hospital

for blacks in 1550, Africans had been present in Seville since before the fifteenth century.[87] Thereafter, they were found in the palaces of Madrid, and the *esclavos del rey*—royal slaves—tended to the needs of the king and his entourage.[88] By the early sixteenth century, most Spanish elites had African domestics, primarily brought from the north and southwestern regions of the continent.[89]

As early as 1484, the king of Kongo sent ambassadors to Portugal, and in 1486, another delegation traveled there from Benin. Two years later, Jolof ambassadors also visited the peninsula.[90] By 1491, the king of Kongo, Nzinga a Nkuwu, converted to Catholicism, becoming Kongo's Afonso I. By the sixteenth century, Benin was toying with the idea of conversion, though the Obá's (king's) motives are still a matter of speculation.[91] What is a given is that Africans were no strangers to Europeans when the Atlantic slave trade gained force. The honeymoon did not last very long, though. By the mid-1520s, the Catholic king of Kongo was sending official communications to his "brother," the Portuguese monarch, complaining about slave traders and their disruptions on his coast.[92]

When the Atlantic trade was in its infancy, Spain purchased slaves from the Portuguese. The latter were the major provider of slaves from West and Central Africa, which, after the establishment of the first Christian missions, became a "chaotic source of slaves."[93] By 1608, the Portuguese had been in Angola for close to 150 years, but their influence grew stronger with the conversion of Nzinga a Nkuwu. When Christianity became the official religion of the kingdom, the Portuguese were the church's representatives; thus, Portuguese sway in the kingdom's affairs was unavoidable. Despite Miller's statements to the contrary, Portuguese soldiers played a key role in Kongo

expansion to the south and east after the onset of the kingdom's colonial campaigns early in the sixteenth century.[94]

Most of the slaves identified as "Congo" originated from several ports in the vicinity of the Congo (or Zaire) River. Many were war captives from the hinterland, and a good majority came from a vast expanse of territory in West Central Africa, especially the region north of the Congo River, reaching well beyond southern Angola.[95] São Tomé was the other point of embarkation. When New World demands for slaves increased, many Congos departed from the port of São Tomé.[96]

In the early sixteenth century, slave traders applied the term *Congo* (*Kongo*) to the Bakongo people, but this gradually changed, with the ethnonym increasingly ascribed to anyone originating in the region.[97] In reality, however, even when recognizing shared cultural elements, most Africans that were classified thusly would not have considered themselves Congo.[98] By the seventeenth century, the Congos were among the four most significant groups in Cartagena. De Sandoval distinguished between Angolas and Congos, though the differences were sometimes blurry.[99] Precisely when this association gained strength is not clear, but it has been linked to the expansion of European slave trafficking in the region.[100]

Ethnic denominations, whether used by members of a group to describe themselves, or as applied by others, are often problematic. The difficulty is compounded where Africa is concerned, and especially in the case of the African Diaspora. As a forced migration, members of the Diasporic community had little influence in choosing the nomenclatures that were applied to them. During the era of Cuba's contraband slave trade, many of the Congos who were smuggled onto the island between the 1820s and

1860s originated from numerous areas along the Central African coast.[101] Usage of the term *Congo* as an ethnic denominator in Cuba was based on whether the individual spoke Bantú or any of its numerous dialects.[102]

Most captives would surely not have identified themselves using the all-inclusive *Congo*, and probably referred to their individual place of origin or a clan name instead. Still, captives from the region spoke languages that were intelligible to their neighbors because of their shared origins. The Teke, Tio, Loango, and Kimbundu were among these. Because their language was closely related to Bakongo, they were categorized as Congos when they were sold in the area's ports, having been either transported from the interior via the Congo River or captured in the coastal towns.[103] Art historian Robert F. Thompson proposed that the relationship between language and the resulting ethnic label could have originated because many of the people from Kongo and Angola shared basic beliefs and languages. When brought together on plantations and in the cities of the New World, relationships were built upon a common culture. Their shared condition, bondage, superseded any differences that may have existed between them, including those that could have resulted from wars or inter-group conflicts in Africa.[104]

Congo, though far from being a flawless label, was an acceptable one for the people to whom it was applied given their many historical and cultural similarities, not to mention the geographical proximity of their homelands. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall expressed that using the term *Congo* to refer to West Central Africans was not unreasonable.[105] In Cuba, where many Congo-related ethnies were documented, the term *Congo* was used as a general label, though sometimes it was used alongside an additional ethnic identifier (Congo Mondongo, Congo Musundi, etc.). Bantú religious practices in

Cuba emphasize Kikongo dominance. Bakongos were also numerous in Cuba, but again, not all of the people labeled *Congo* were members of a recognized Kongo ethnic group.[106] To be Congo in Cuba, though, could have meant diverse things to the peoples to whom the name was given. The Congo ethnonym included various subgroups or peoples from areas adjacent to Congo and generally clustered as speakers of Bantú languages. Thus, Angola, Cabenda, Loango, Masambi, Mayombe, Mondongo, Musundi, Reales (Spanish for "royals"; i.e. slaves of the king), and others are all considered Congo subgroups. Macuás, a Bantú group from Mozambique, were often associated with the Congos as well.[107] Even non-Congo groups were at times associated with this ethnie. The Bibí (or Viví, possibly the Ibibio) and the Gangá were at one point erroneously believed to be "types" of Congos.[108]

Despite several descriptions that portrayed the Congo as a "lively bunch," "good laborers," or a "crude" people, in Africa they were reputed to be good soldiers. In their homeland, even when lacking a body of structures full-time specialists, Congo soldiers "seem to have been professional … [possessing] special skills and training." Anyone from the free population could have been called to war, and soldiers often were recruited from the enslaved populations who were "[e]specially trained for war."[109] Their competence as soldiers and fighters soon became evident in the Americas. Congo slaves were important participants in several insurrections, among them the Stono Rebellion of 1739 in South Carolina and Cuba's notorious Escalera conspiracy in 1844. They were also a sizeable presence in many of the maroon communities that were founded by Caribbean and South American runaways, prominent in Jamaica, Haiti, Brazil's celebrated Palmares, and in nineteenth-century Cuba.[110]

Among the enslaved Africans who had been working on the Royal Mines of El Cobre since early in the seventeenth century, Angolan Congos were the major population, followed by those who were generically identified as Congos. *Esclavos del rey* (literally "the king's slaves," or royal slaves), 186 of them, were introduced to the area in 1608. Sixty-seven of them were classified as "Angolans," 57 males and 10 females. Among the Congos "proper" were 10 males and 2 females, 12 altogether. In total, 89 of those 186 Royal slaves were, in all probability, legitimately Congo. The remaining population, though, consisted of slaves from areas adjacent to official Congo territory, who in later years would have probably been considered Congo as well. Arguably, then, the "more refined" Royal slaves, as Cabrera referred to them, were either "Congo" or "passing for" Congo.[111]

Congos were an important group in Cuba, especially after the English capture of Havana in 1762. Close to 130,000 Congos arrived in Cuba, many on English ships, between 1760 and 1820.[112] The Congo became a numerically significant group in plantation documents, as shown by Moreno-Fraginals. Also, Gabino La Rosa Corzo confirmed that Congos were plentiful among those runaways appearing in the *Registro de Cimarrones* (Maroon's Registry), as well as in other official papers associated with the island's maroons. Congo slaves were also one of the most populous groups among Havana's *emancipados* between 1826 and 1835.[113] Parish and notarial records, the available documentation on the *cabildos de nación*, oral history documented by Fernando Ortiz and Lydia Cabrera, and the more recent microhistorical Cuban studies on slavery all support the idea of a dominant Congo presence. Just as significant is Robert Farris Thompson's investigation of Kongo art and religion in the Americas, as well as a similar

body of research and literature that exists in Brazil where the Congos, or "Bantos," were just as prevalent.[114]

In Cuba, there is a saying that "*aquel que no tiene de congo tiene de Carabalí*" he who does not have Congo [blood] has Carabalí). Many islanders use the proverb to affirm their unavoidable connection with Africa, insinuating that all Cubans have Congo or Carabalí—in other words, African—blood running through their veins.[115] To challenge the connection and demonstrate "purity of blood," one had to present a grandmother so that she could demonstrably "corroborate"—and then only by her appearance—that this was not the case. Thus, when Cubans discuss their own racial purity—exchanges that often become heated arguments—someone will eventually ask, "*¿Y tu abuela donde está?*" (And where is [show me] your grandmother?)

There is little doubt that throughout the Americas, the Congos were a presence to contend with. They were the most widely represented African group throughout the duration of the slave trade.[116] Beyond doubt, the various Central African peoples who were loosely identified as Congos were the most demographically significant ethnie in Cuba.[117] The Congo presence on the island was so prevalent that many Afro-Cubans, regardless of pigmentation or stature, are to this day nicknamed "Congo," because of the term's association with proximity to African ancestry.[118]

Many Cuban *espiritistas* (spiritualists), followers of the European variant of spiritualism that captivated Latin America starting in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, have Congo spirit-guides.[119] It matters not if the spirit was of legitimate Congo origin. What is important is that the guide establishes its Africanity and black skin and speaks *bozal*—the slurred Spanish spoken by recently imported Africans. The spirit

generally presents an association with a mythical, idealized African past that perplexingly often ignores the spirit's possible enslavement or connection with slavery in life. Thus, so long as these criteria are met, practitioners may refer to any African spirit-guide as a Congo.[120]

A spiritist *transmisión* (literally "transmission," a chant), sung in *bozal*, provides another curious insight into the common Cuban application of the appellation *Congo* to all Africans and the term Guinea to the continent:

Congo de Guinea soy	Congo from Guinea, I am
Muy buena' noche' criollo	a very good evenin', creoles
Yo deja mi nganga 'tras	I left ma' *nganga* behin'
Yo vengo 'asé caridá'	I [now] come to do char'table deeds

In Africa, belief states, all Congos were formidable sorcerers, possessing strong *ngangas*—spiritual vessels of magic and power. Perceived as "amoral," *ngangas* are generally misunderstood and associated with "black magic." Exaggeration and urban legends, born of the general misgivings about Congo rituals that many Cubans perceived as "dark" magic, have given rise to the stigmatization of Congo practices. The *nganga* is the abode of raw energy and can be easily upset if not attended properly. This energy can be manipulated by the priest at will. Most Cubans who are unfamiliar with Congo religiosity believe that it is generally dedicated to causing harm.[121] The stigma linking Congo peoples and evil seems to follow them throughout the New World. Ironically, despite the many biases, Congos were often sought to assist with disease and worldly

matters. The general consensus was that they were practitioners of the dark arts, and association with them was never openly admitted.[122]

Soon, a particular archetype developed about the persona of the Congo and the *nganga* that presented both as intimidating sources of evil; its priest were deceitful and ambivalent magicians to be feared. When the spiritist chant reiterates that the Congo from Guinea has left his *nganga* behind and that he now performs *caridá'*, the assumption is that all Congo magic is powerful, and thus negative. Spiritist doctrine stresses the need to rectify worldly mistakes and atonement for past sins, so as part of a karmatic process, the Congo "magician" must return to perform charitable deeds to make up for the evils allegedly committed during his lifetime.[123]

Lucumí

The Lucumí left an indelible mark on Cuba and in other areas of the New World. They were one of several West African ethnic groups amalgamated during the geographical division of Africa to form the present Nigerian nation-state. To the present, their cultural contributions continue to influence their New World descendants and their host societies. The Yoruba impact, while most prominent in Brazil and Cuba, was also important in Trinidad, Haiti, and other Caribbean islands. The Yoruba impact has been so dynamic that any study of African influences in the Americas has to make at least a minimal reference to them. As William Bascom wrote, "No African group has had greater influence on New World culture than the Yoruba."[124]

Lucumí was the name given by Cuban slave traders to the people today known as

Yoruba. Currently, the term is primarily used in Cuba to refer to the slaves introduced from what is now the Yoruba region of West Africa. In the twentieth century, when the native Lucumí populations began to decline, the designation persisted, identifying both the group's religion and its devotees. Today, many followers prefer the more traditional *Lukumí* to the Hispanicized spelling with a *c*. *Lucumí* predates the possibly younger term Yoruba. The dominant theory suggests that the term was derived from a salutation, *oloku mi*, "my fellow tribesman" or "close friend." It is said to have been the greeting that two members of the group in Africa exchanged when they met.[125] Cabrera noted that a similar understanding existed in Cuba.[126]

Most opinions conclude that *Lucumí* was the earliest European appellation for the Yoruba.[127] Early travelers on the western coast of Africa used the terms *Ulkami, Ulkumi, Licomeen,* or *Alkamy* to refer to the group, the region, and particularly the Oyo people. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, John Barbot, who represented English and French trading interests, made at least two voyages to West Africa. His experiences in Benin were published in 1682. Barbot took note of the Ulkami, a people who were reputed to be from a fierce and powerful realm. Barbot, and other Europeans, made two things obvious: that there was a Lucumí people and that the group, especially the Oyo, was respected for its strong military. Barbot stressed: "That remote inland nation, which I suppose to be the Oyeo [Oyo] and Ulkami, strikes such a terror at Ardra [Allada] that they can scarce hear them mentioned without trembling."[128]

Several seventeenth-century maps and other writers of the period referred to the kingdom of "Oulkoumi" or "Ulkumi." The Dutch traveler Olfert Dapper was probably one of the first to use the term. He described a large kingdom, somewhere in the interior,

northeast of Allada (Benin's coastal port), which had been an important seaport for the Portuguese since the sixteenth century.[129] Dapper identified the region as the kingdom of Ulkami. He wrote that the Ulkami sent large numbers of slaves to be sold at Allada, where they were exchanged for salt extracted from the coastal areas. According to Dapper, because of the continuous trade between the two regions, the language Ulkami was widely spoken in Allada. During the same era, a French missionary identified "Licomin" as a language that was widely spoken in Benin. Furthermore, on the nearby coast of Whydah, traders purchased cloth from "Concomin" to resell on the Gold Coast.[130] In 1753, "Locomin" cloth was among the several gifts sent by the king of Dahomey to the viceroy in Brazil.[131] All these variant spellings no doubt point to the Lucumí.

The Lucumí region retained its prominence as a provider of slaves during the eighteenth century. In 1727, an account by the English slave trader William Snelgrave referred to an inland kingdom called "Lucamee" and identified the region as a source of slaves for sale at the coast.[132] Law, the most prolific historian on the Oyo, found several other sources from the era that either mention the Lucumí kingdom or make reference to it.[133]

The more recent term *Yoruba* may also predate the European arrival. Samuel Johnson, author of the first Yoruba history, associated its origin with the Hausa and Fulani peoples of the northern region.[134] The scholarship concurs that *Yoruba* was the name that the Hausa people used for the Oyo. It was derived from *Yöoba*, denoting the Hausa perception of Oyo's "cunning" nature.[135] Consciousness of a common Yoruba identity did not emerge until the nineteenth century, possibly in Sierra Leone.[136] When

the language was first written for Christian evangelization campaigns, missionaries in Sierra Leone began using *Yoruba* as a generic label for all the linguistically related ethnic groups.[137]

Oyo native Ajayi was repatriated to Sierra Leone after he was rescued from a slave ship bound for Brazil. Ajayi eventually became Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Africa's first Anglican bishop. In 1843, he wrote the earliest vocabulary of the Yoruba language. Crowther's vocabulary was the catalyst for the gradual acceptance of the term *Yoruba* as the generic denominator for the people of the region.[138] There were other ethnonyms, though. According to the missionary Sigismund Whilem Koelle, stationed in Sierra Leone, *Yoruba* was a misnomer for the Akú, as the group was initially known.[139] Koelle also used "Nagun," probably derived from *Anago*, another ethnic label that was also used in various parts of Yorubaland during the eighteenth century. The term *Nagó*, as used in Brazil and Haiti, is derived from *Anago*.[140]

By the middle of the nineteenth century, and especially after the establishment of the British consul in Lagos during the second half of that century, the Yoruba label gained wider acceptance, but the issue of a shared identity is still vague. Yoruba historian Biodun Adeniran argued that the Yoruba had developed a consciousness as a single ethnic group before their encounter with Europeans. Historians and anthropologists are still debating the issue.[141] *Yoruba*, from Adeniran's perspective, was one of "many collective names" that several subgroups used to identify themselves as a common cultural group. He suggested that the term was used before the eighteenth century but its meaning was lost over time.[142] Possibly, when the British rescued the Egba Joseph Wright from slavery in the 1830s, the term may have been already popular. Wright, like

Ajayi Crowther, was also saved from slavery by British patrols monitoring the African coast and repatriated to Sierra Leone. While Western ideas may have influenced his narrative, Wright's chronicle seems to sustain the notion of a unified Yoruba awareness: "We are one nation speaking one language."[143] If this awareness did not exist before the arrival of the Europeans, it is possible that it was taking form shortly thereafter.

After the publication of Crowther's dictionary, missionaries entering Yoruba territory, they diffused the term *Yoruba*. If the word *Lucumí* gradually faded in West Africa, it continued to appear on shipping manifests and documents associated with the slave trade and slavery in Cuba. It is highly probable that most of the people brought from this region to the Americas may not have identified as Yoruba. In the Diaspora, the term *Yoruba* was practically unknown until the twentieth century. It came into common knowledge following publications by Fernando Ortiz and Rómulo Lachatañeré in Cuba and by Raimundo Nina Rodrigues and Edison Carneiro in Brazil. In Cuba, its use is only now gaining greater acceptance, but it is not used frequently.[144]

One of the earliest references to the Lucumí in the Americas comes from seventeenth-century Peruvian slave records. There were 635 Africans registered in Peru between the years 1605 and 1650. Only 17 were identified as Lucumí. Five of them entered Perú between 1615 and 1630.[145] Law also found some Lucumí in Hispaniola in 1547 and Colombia in 1627.[146] *Lucumí* appeared as a surname in Colombia during the early 1900s, especially among people of African descent. In a 1905 revolutionary manifesto supporting President Rafael Reyes, the last name of six of the supporters is Lucumí.[147] Law also referred to a document from a plantation in French Guyana where

he found one person identified as an Oyo among the estate's slaves. He was brought from Africa in 1682.

Before the seventeenth century, Lucumís were rarely—if at all—found in the Americas. Law noted that most references to the Oyo Empire, and by extension the Lucumí, come from the eighteenth century, beginning around 1720, when the first of Oyo's numerous encounters with neighboring Dahomey began.[148] The Lucumí do not stand out again in the historical record, at least in any significant way, until the mid to latter eighteenth century. There are no traces of a Lucumí-Yoruba presence in any of the British islands, and their presence expands in the French possessions, primarily in Sainte-Domingue, only after the eighteenth century.[149] It is quite probable that they were war captives taken by Dahomey during its many conflicts with the Oyo Empire and other nearby states.[150]

The Oyo Lucumí

It is impossible to discuss the Lucumí presence in Cuba or elsewhere without making reference to the Oyo Empire. Like many other West African kingdoms of the period, Oyo was not a politically unified nation-state until the early seventeenth century, when its presence became more noticeable, largely in response to the slave trade. Greatly aided by its geographic location—an area of vast savannas—and the use of horses as one of its principal military resources, by the late eighteenth century Oyo exercised extensive control in the region. Initially, the empire was an important contributor to the slave trade, selling war captives and other unfortunates it purchased from the Islamic trans-Saharan trade caravans that frequently crossed its territory. Oyo prospered tremendously as a

result of their trade with the Muslim caravans. Despite its driving strength and rapid, vigorous growth, the Oyo Empire grew weak and was eventually destroyed by its inability to control its own development and the power imbalances that the slave trade bred within its own core.

In the sixteenth century, Oyo was inconsequential and felt the pressure of its neighbors when Benin expanded into its territory and controlled areas of southeastern Yorubaland.[151] The neighboring Baribas and Nupes conducted campaigns into northern Yorubaland, which also resulted in territorial occupation. Law speculated that at the time, the Baribas and Nupes had recently adopted the use of heavy cavalry, extremely advantageous for warfare, whereas Oyo's soldiers were still waging battle on foot.[152] Nupe penetrations into Yorubaland seriously wounded the empire, and a small number of Lucumís appeared in the Americas as a result.[153]

Starting in the early seventeenth century, the Oyo Empire began its hegemonic ascent. It was at this time that Oyo's army adopted the use of cavalry, gaining great advantages. Oyo successfully curtailed the debilitating northern raids and took back its capital from the Nupes.[154] Cavalry was an ideal innovation for the vast savannas surrounding the city, and it revolutionized Oyo's war machine. In fact, the adoption of the horse as a mode of military transport was probably the most instrumental contributor to Oyo's rise to dominance in the centuries to come.[155] Subsequently, Oyo became a formidable power in West Africa. By the first quarter of the eighteenth century, Oyo's aggressive nature was notorious: "Ayois. Those of this nation are warriors, hardy and very daring, they are bad for work . . . a single one of these people in a cargo is enough to cause a revolt in it. The Blacks of every other nation are afraid of them."[156] Writing in the

early 1700s, William Bosman, chief agent of the Dutch West India Company, alluded to the terror that the simple mention of Oyo inspired in other West Africans.[157]

The mighty empire evaded direct participation in the slave trade until the latter years of the seventeenth century. Middlemen sold Oyo's war captives. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, internal strife and dissension, greatly influenced by the slave trade, began weakening Oyo's might. To complicate matters, in the nineteenth century, a Hausa jihad engendered a period of escalating tension and continuing decadence that eventually led to Oyo's downfall and the enslavement of many of its people. Lucumís were in Cuba before the 1800s, but by the early nineteenth century, the Oyo presence became stronger. Henry Lovejoy suggested that the period immediately following the fall of Oyo marked the greatest entry of the group to Cuba.[158] In Cuba, their arrival was felt almost immediately. They were especially noted as participants in several of the major slave revolts and insurrections that occurred in the nineteenth century.[159] The Lucumí were among the seven most-mentioned groups in reports about maroons, rebellions, and escapes, and the Oyo were probably well represented among these.[160]

Pandemonium reigned as Oyo's might disintegrated. The empire's vigor had provided relative stability for many years, but that hastily came to an end. Sadly, the entire region became engulfed in strife, lasting almost until the end of the nineteenth century. Dahomey, whose ambition had been kept in check by Oyo for many years, took advantage of the chaotic state of affairs and went on an irrepressible rampage. Fighting over control of trade and commerce, as well as frequent slave raids into small towns by Yoruba warlords and Dahomey's war machine, ravaged the territory continuously as power-hungry chieftains arose and fell, each fighting unremittingly to establish political

and economic supremacy.[161] Oyo, the hegemon, had kept relative peace while it was in power, but it could do so no longer. The victims of the era's turmoil who managed to survive were gathered, tied, and walked in long caravans to the coast from whence they departed for the plantations of the Americas.

The downfall of the empire, however, was but the first of two historical coincidences leading to the arrival of Oyo nationals to Cuba in significant numbers. The late eighteenth-century expansion of the island's agricultural production was the second, beginning with coffee in the early 1800s and turning to sugar production by the 1840s. Both products were highly dependent on forced African labor. During and after the empire's eventual collapse, a significant number of Oyo and other Lucumí casualties of war were sold into slavery and shipped to the island. Though Puerto Rico was the only other remaining Spanish colony in the region, most of the era's slave trading was linked to Cuba. Puerto Rico was only marginally affected by the nineteenth-century agricultural explosion, so the population of slaves on that island was significantly smaller. Lucumís were not present in Puerto Rico in any meaningful numbers.[162] The other region where slaves were in high demand during the nineteenth century was Brazil, where the Nagó (Yoruba) presence also increased. The British island of Trinidad received a small share of Yorubas, as did the Bahamas, but there is no doubt that the vast majority of them went to Brazil and Cuba.[163]

Lucumís were in Cuba since at least the eighteenth century, but during that time, the greater numbers were in Sainte-Domingue and other French colonies. The French exported over 350,000 slaves from the Bight of Benin during the eighteenth century.[164] Paul Lovejoy used data gathered by David Geggus to compile statistics of the African

ethnic groups present on eighteenth-century French plantations.[165] Geggus's sample population consisted of 13,334 slaves. At the time, the Yorubas represented 11.8 percent of the sample, or 1,580. The Gbe or Ewe-Fon peoples from Dahomey, known in Cuba as Ararás, were also significant: 1,962, or 14.7 percent. They were the second most populous group. Many captives from both territories were sold into slavery and may have been confused or misclassified, so much so that Ortiz and others considered the Ararás as a "type" of Lucumí.[166] If measured together, the Yoruba-Gbe region represented a little over 25 percent of Geggus' sample population. The Congos were the only group surpassing these figures, with 4,561, or 34.2 percent of the population. Surely, prisoners from the encounters between Oyo and Dahomey arrived during the eighteenth century, as suggested in earlier studies and supported more recently by Lovejoy.[167] Still, the evidence indicates that the greatest number of Lucumís did not arrive until the 1800s, and especially after the latter 1820s with the fall of the empire.

Since the latter eighteenth century, the port of Lagos (or Oním, the name by which the region appeared in Brazilian documents), was an important supplier of slaves sold by Oyo.[168] Its exports waned somewhat in the first decades of the nineteenth century but recuperated after 1825. In the nineteenth century, Lagos's port rose to become the century's most important in the region until 1851 when the British presence in the region withdrew the port from the trade.[169] Ironically, Lagos was the port from which the Oyo were forcibly taken away. During these years, given its proximity to the collapsing Oyo Empire and the conflicts that grew after its downfall, Lagos's port was positioned in the perfect location. Lagos was a principal point of departure for thousands of Lucumís, as well as war captives from neighboring areas. Many of these exports were misclassified as

Lucumí because they originated from a Yoruba port. The majority of the port's cargo arrived in Cuba or Brazil.[170]

Defiant Impact

The most culturally dominant Lucumí subgroups in Cuba were the Oyo (sometimes spelled *Eyo*, *Ello*, *Ayo*, or *Ayoi*) and the Egbado. Nevertheless, there were others. Oral history and fieldwork suggest that the Ijeshá—spelled *Yesá* in Cuba—were an important group in Simpson, as well as in the towns of Jovellanos and Cárdenas. Lucumís from Egba, Ijebú, Ifé, Ekití, Ketú, and other towns were found in different areas of western Cuba.[171] Likewise, there were several groups from Ajá territory, a Yoruba enclave in Dahomey, as well as people of Ewe-Fon extraction, Tapas (Tacuás), and Minas who were misclassified as Lucumí.[172] Possibly because of their geographical proximity in Africa, and the common links that grew in the island, many Ararás were often either subsumed as "types" of Lucumís or greatly influenced by Lucumí culture. Such is the case of the Mahí (Magino, Majino), a popular group in the Matanzas towns of Jovellanos and Perico, the Mina Popós in Jovellanos, and conceivably the Gangás as well. Given the relative proximity of many groups in the cities and towns, the Lucumí often assimilated some groups, while others adopted the identity because of the religious ideologies and practices that they shared.[173]

The three ethnic groups examined in the present study came from different regions in West Africa. Each made considerable cultural contributions to Cuba. Their impact was felt in several different areas. They expressed their profound denunciation of the system that denied their humanity through maroonage, rebellion, and both open and

covert resistance but also, significantly, through culture. While the Lucumís' strongest contribution was religion, they, the Congos, Carabalís, and other ethnies of lesser numerical importance contributed to the cuisine, aesthetics, dance, and musical forms that undoubtedly built Cuban culture and provided *cubanidad* with its distinctive flavor. Ortiz used the *ajiaco* metaphor to describe Cuba.[174] Akin to the idea of a melting pot, an *ajiaco* is a dish that is common in other areas of the Caribbean, where it is known by different names. It combines tubers, meat, vegetables, and spices to produce a heavy and starchy stew that acquires its flavor from the harmonious complementarity of all the ingredients in the pot. But given that the island is, unequivocally, a mulatta, a more accurate metaphor would have been *moros y cristianos*, the Cuban national rice dish—black beans cooked together with white rice, far more representative of the unmistakable "flavor" produced by the encounter of Africa and Spain on Cuban soil. Purely numerical statistics suggest that the Lucumí population was not as significant as that of the Congos and others, but the cultural evidence demonstrates otherwise. While no single African group can truly take credit for Cuban identity, the Lucumís were extremely influential because, in living up to the Hausa perception, they may have been more cunning, confrontational, and resolute in retaining their cultural identity in Cuba. They accomplished it with the unintentional help of one man and the outcries of another.

Notes

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[27] Hilary McD. Beckles, "Female Enslavement in the Caribbean and Gender Ideologies," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2009), 165.

[28] Paul E. Lovejoy, "The Yoruba Factor in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade," in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 47.

[29] Carolyn A. Brown, "Memory as Resistance: Identity and the Contested History of Slavery in Southeastern Nigeria, an Oral History Project," in *Fighting the Slave Trade—West African Strategies*, ed. Sylviane A. Diouf (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 222.

[30] Brown, *Memory as Resistance*, 220; Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African*, 126; Paul E. Lovejoy, "Enslaved Africans in the Diaspora," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (New York: Wellington House, 2009), 23.

[31] Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 187.

[32] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 228; Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 187.

[33] K. Onwuka Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885—An Introduction to the Economic and Political History of Nigeria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 37-41.

[34] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 228; Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 187.

[35] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 208.

[36] Miller, *Voice of the Leopard*, 6-8.

[37] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 99-101; 104-5; Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos*, 68; López Valdés, *Africanos*, 21.

[38] María Teresa de Rojas, *Índice y extractos del archivo de protocolos de La Habana* (La Habana: Archivo General de Protocolos, 1947-1950) 3: 35; Alejandro de la Fuente, "Denominaciones Étnicas de los Esclavos Introducidos en Cuba, Siglos XVI y XVII," *Anales del Caribe del Centro de Estudios del Caribe* 6 (1986): 79; López Valdés, *Africanos*, 210.

[39] Alonso de Sandoval, *Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catecismo evangelico de todos los etiopes* (Seville, 1627); Paul Pavy, "The Provenience of Colombian Negroes," *Journal of Negro History* 52, no. 1 (January 1967): 50; Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Alonso de Sandoval—Un tratado sobre la esclavitud* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, S.A., 1987), 57-230.

[40] David Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 186.

[41] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 215.

[42] Aguirre-Beltrán, *La Población*, 135-36; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 3: 210.

[43] Aguirre-Beltrán, *La Población*, 135-36; Cabrera, *El monte*, 195; Sosa Rodríguez, *Los Ñáñigos*, 38; De la Fuente, "Denominaciones Étnicas," 79; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 3: 210; Adderley, *"New Negroes from Africa"—Slave Trade, Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 97-98.

[44] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 214.

[45] Alejandro de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 106.

[46] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 157.

[47] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba," in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies*, ed. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden, (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1977), 190.

[48] Aguirre-Beltrán, *La población*, 134.

[49] Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos* (1916; repr., La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 45; Aguirre-Beltrán, *La población*, 135.

[50] de Rojas, *Índice y extractos*; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1: 35.

[51] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 64-65, 393.

[52] Miller, *Voice of the Leopard*, 40.

[53] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 158.

[54] Ibid., 67, 105.

[55] Shubi, "From Africa to Cuba," 263.

[56] Lydia Cabrera, *La sociedad secreta Abakuá narrada por viejos adeptos* (Miami: Editorial C.R., 1970), 7-8.

[57] Cabrera, *El monte*, 196; Fernando Ortiz, *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba,* 2nd ed. (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1981), 75; Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos*, 118; Shubi, "From Africa to Cuba," 254 & 264; David H. Brown, *The Light Inside—Abakuá Society Arts and Cuban Cultural History* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 14; Ramón Torres Zayas, *Relación barrio-juego Abakuá en Ciudad de La Habana*, (La Habana: Fundación Fernando Ortiz, 2010), 3.
[58] Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 3: 212.

[59] Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 162-69.

[60] Cabrera, *El monte*, 199; Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos*, 125.

[61] Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos*, 117; Shubi, "From Africa to Cuba," 264.

[62] Miller, *Voice of the Leopard*, 22.

[63] Cabrera, *El monte*, 213-14; Fernando Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 517-18.

[64] Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñáñigos*, 232-33.

[65] Interview with an Abakuá (the person preferred to remain anonymous) by the author, Guanabacoa, Havana, Cuba, June 2010.

[66] Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba—The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 267; Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share—The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 29-30.

[67] Stephan Palmie and Elizabeth Pérez, "An All Too Present Absence; Fernando Ortiz's Work on Abakuá in its Sociocultural Context," *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 79, no. 3 and 4 (2005): 219.

[68] Rafael Salillas, "Los ñáñigos en Ceuta," *Revista General de Legislación y Jurisprudencia* 98 (Madrid: Imprenta de la Revista de Legislación, 1901), 337-60; María del Carmen Barcia, "Desterrados de la patria. Cuba 1869-1898," *Universidad de La Habana, Cuba* 258 (July-December 2003): 14n51; Dolores García Cantús, "Fernando Poo: Una Aventura Colonial Española en el África Occidental, 1778-1900" (PhD dissertation, Universitat de Valencia, 2004); Michelle Bernita Reid, "Negotiating a Slave Regime: Free People of Color in Cuba, 1844-1868" (PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2004); Torres Zayas, *Relación Barrio-Juego*, 38; Miller, *Voice of the Leopard*, 122.

[69] Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists—Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Alejandro De la Fuente, *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality: Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[70] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 220; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 5; Carmen Barcia Zequiera, *La otra familia—parientes, redes, y descendencia de los esclavos en Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009), 13.

[71] Palmie and Pérez, "An All Too Present Absence," 222.

[72] Cabrera, *Abakuá*, 8-9.

[73] Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñañigos*, 13.

[74] Fernando Ortiz, "On the Relations between Blacks and Whites in Cuba," *Phylon* 5, no. 1 (October 1944): 19-21. The article was initially a speech presented by Ortiz at the renowned Afro-Cuban Club Atenas of Havana on the day that he was given honorary membership. Its original title was "Por la Integración Cubana de Blancos y Negros."

[75] Interview with an Abakuá (the person preferred to remain anonymous) by the autor, Guanabacoa, Havana, Cuba. June 2010.

[76] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, *El Ingenio: Complejo Económico Social Cubano del Azúcar* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978) 2: 38.

[77] Though presently *Kongo* is the preferred spelling, in the Diaspora it was generally written as *Congo*. The term *Kongo* may be used interchangeably in the text when referring to the African Kingdom, whereas *Congo* as used throughout the text is primarily used to refer to the Diasporan peoples.

[78] Simon Bockie, *Death and the Invisible Powers—The World of Kongo Belief* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 2-3.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 198; Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit—African and Afro-American Art & Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 103.

[81] Thomas, *Slave Trade*, 131-33; John K. Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa 1500-1800* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 99-100.

[82] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 102; Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic*, 102-4; Adderley, *"New Negroes,* 210; Stuart B. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels—Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 125-26.

[83] Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death—Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 109, 118-19.

[84] Lloyd A. Thompson, *Romans and Blacks* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 6-7.

[85] John Weiss, "The Horrors of San Domingo," *The Atlantic Monthly* 10 (1862): 213-14.

[86] George Henry Townsend, *The Manual of Dates—a Dictionary of Reference to the Most Important Events in the History of Mankind to be Found in Authentic Records*, 2nd ed. (London: Frederick Warne & Co., 1867), 23; David Northup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 5.

[87] Isidoro Moreno, *La antigua hermandad de los negros de Sevilla: Etnicidad, poder y sociedad en 600 Años de Historia* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1997), 25.

[88] María Elena Díaz, *The Virgin, the King, and the Royal Slaves of El Cobre—Negotiating Freedom in Colonial Cuba, 1670-1780* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 9.

[89] Hugh Thomas, *Slave Trade*, 120.

[90] Northup, *Africa's Discovery*, 5.

[91] Law, *Slave Coast of West Africa*, 153-54; Northup, *Africa's Discovery*, 30-32.

[92] Miller, *Way of Death*, 108-09; Northup, *Africa's Discovery*, 36.

[93] Paul Pavy, "Provenience of Colombian Negroes," 36.

[94] Basil Davidson, *The African Slave Trade*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 134-36; Thomas, *Slave Trade*, 82-3; Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa*, 99-100; Adderley, *"New Negroes*, 210.

[95] Jesús Guanche, *Componentes étnicos de la nación Cubana* (La Habana: Fundación Fernando Ortiz y Ediciones Unión, 1996), 49.

[96] Joseph C. Miller, "Central Africa During the Era of the Slave Trade, c. 1490s-1850s," in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. Linda M. Heywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 24.

[97] Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 103.

[98] Miller, "*Central Africa*," 40.

[99] de Sandoval, *Naturaleza*. See Vila Vilar, *Alonso de Sandoval*, 57-230.

[100] Grandío Moraguez, "African Origins," 193-94

[101] Miller, "Central Africa," 35.

[102] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 243

[103] Grandío Moraguez, "African Origins," 193-94.

[104] Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 104; Also see Fernando Ortiz, *Los cabildos y la fiesta africana del día de reyes* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1992); Miller, "Central Africans," 45; Jane Landers, "The Central African Presence in Spanish Maroon Communities," in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformation in the American Diaspora*, ed. Lynda M. Haywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 22.

[105] Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African*, 65.

[106] Grandío Moraguez, "African Origins," 193-94.

[107] Heriberto Feraudy Espino, *Macuá* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2007), 8.

[108] Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 43, 48-49, 52; Rómulo Lachatañeré, "Tipos Étnicos que Concurrieron en la Amalgama Cubana," in *El Sistema Religioso de los Afrocubanos* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1992), 179.

[109] John K. Thornton, "The Art of War in Angola," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, no. 2 (1988): 362; Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection—Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 2008), 22-3.

[110] John G.F. Wurdermann, *Notes on Cuba* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1971), 257; Maturin Murray Ballou, *Due South; or, Cuba Past and Present* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1885), 275; R. R. Kent, "Palmares: An African State in Brazil," *The Journal of African History* 6, no. 2 (1965): 166; Gabino La Rosa Corzo, *Los cimarrones de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1988), 123-29; John K. Thonrton, "African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion," *The American Historical Review* 96, no. 4 (Oct. 1991): 1001-1113.

[111] Cabrera, *La sociedad secreta*, 65-66; Díaz, *Virgin*, 43.

[112] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 256-57.

[113] Based on the figures compiled by Babatunde Sofela, *Emancipados: Slave Societies in Brazil and Cuba* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011), 107-13.

[114] La Rosa Corzo, *Los cimarrones*; Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba"; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*; Cabrera, *El monte*; Lydia Cabrera, *Reglas de Congo—Palo Monte Mayombe* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1986); María del Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*; Aisnara Perera Díaz and María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes, *Para librarse de lazos, antes buena familia que buenos brazos—Apunte sobre la manumisión en Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2009).

[115] Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar (advertencia de sus contrastes agrarios, económicos, históricos y sociales, su etnografía y su transculturación*) (1940; repr., La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1983).

[116] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 99-102; 227; Davidson, *African Slave*, 170; Roger Bastide *The African Religions of Brazil* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 47; Robin Law. "Slave-Raiders and Middlemen, Monopolists and Free-Traders: The Supply of Slaves for the Atlantic Trade in Dahomey c. 1715-1850," *Journal of African History 30* (1989): 45-68; Paul E. Lovejoy, "The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa: A Review of the Literature," *Journal of African History 30* (1989): 365-394; David R. Murray, "Statistics of the Slave Trade to Cuba, 1790-1867," *Journal of Latin American Studies 3* (1971), 131-149.

[117] López Valdés, *Africanos*, 31; Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African*, 144; Martha Silvia Escalona Sánchez, *Los cabildos de africanos y sus descendientes en Matanzas-Siglo XIX y primera década del XX* (Matanzas: Ediciones Matanzas, 2008), 104; de la Fuente, *Havana*, 105.

[118] Congos had a reputation for being short and small, as expressed by Abiel Abbot, a Christian reverend, who visited the island in the 1820s. Abiel Abbot, *Letters Written in the Interior of Cuba, Between the Mountains of Arcana, to the East, and of Cusco, to the West, in the Months of February, March, April, and May, 1828* (Boston: Bowles and Dearborn, 1829), 14.

[119] Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Brazilian *espiritistas* share the same beliefs.

[120] Stephan Palmie's experience with Cuban *espiritistas* and "Tomás" in Miami during the 1990s is reminiscent of this widespread belief. Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 1-2.

[121] The term *nganga* as used by the Kongo in West Central Africa generally referred to a religious specialist or priest and not to the priest's ritual vessel.

[122] Fernando Ortiz, *La africanía de la música folklorica de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1993), 158; John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 264-65; James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa—Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 7.

[123] Allan Kardec, *The Spirits' Book* (Río de Janeiro: Federação Espírita Brasileira), 41; See also Tina Gudrun Jense, "Discourses on Afro-Brazilian Religions: From De-Africanization to Re-Africanization," *Latin American Religion in Motion*, ed. Christian Smith and Joshua Prokopy (New York: Routledge, 1999), 267-68; Maria Laura Viveiros de Castro Cavalcanti, "Vida e morte no Espiritismo Kardecista" *Religião e Sociedade* 24, no.1 (2004): 3.

[124] William R. Bascom, *The Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969), 1.

[125] Timothy Awoniyi, “The Word Yoruba,” *Nigeria* (1981), 134-35.

[126] Cabrera, *El monte*, 230.

[127] Bascom, *The Yoruba,* 5; Peter Morton-Williams, “The Oyo Yoruba and the Atlantic Slave Trade,” *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 3 (1964): 25-45; Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire c. 1600 - c. 1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 2nd ed. (Brookfield: Gegg Revivals, 1991), 219-20; Robin Law, *Contemporary Source Material for the History of the Old Oyo Empire, 1627-1824* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, 1992).

[128] J. Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea; and of Ethiopia Inferior* (London: 1732), in Morton-Williams “Oyo Yoruba,” 27.

[129] I would like to express my gratitude to Isabel Castellanos for guiding me in the right direction regarding the term *Lucumí*. She provided me with a copy of an early, undated French map of the Kingdom of Oulcoumi. The map appears in an article by Castellanos, “From Ulkumí to Lucumí: A Historical Overview of Religious Acculturation in Cuba,” in *Santería Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art*, ed. Arturo Lindsay (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 39-50.

[130] Robin Law, *Oyo Empire,* 219; 224n169.

[131] Theodozio Rodriguez da Costa, director of the Portuguese fort in Dahomey to the Viceroy of Brazil, May 27, 1753, in Pierre Verger, *Fluxo e Refluxo: Do Tráfico de Escravos Entre o Golfo do Benin e a Bahia de Todos os Santos,* 3rd ed. (Sao Paulo: Corrupio, 1987), 191; Law *Oyo Empire,* 219n127.

[132] Law, *Oyo Empire,* 221.

[133] Law, *Oyo Empire,* 219-20.

[134] Samuel Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, 8th ed. (Thetford: Lowe & Brydone Printers, 1976), xix.

[135] Hugh Clapperton, *Journal of a Second Expedition Into the Interior of Africa From the Bight of Benin to Soccatoo* (London, 1829), in Curtin, *Africa Remembered—Narratives by West Africans from the Era of The Slave Trade*, ed. Philip D. Curtin, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 248; Bascom, Yoruba, 5; J. F. Ade Ajayi and Robert Smith, *Yoruba Warfare in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 1-2; J. F. Ade Ajayi, “The Aftermath of the Fall of Oyo,” in *History of West Africa*, ed. Michael Crowder and J. F. Ade Ajayi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972) 2:1-2.

[136] Law, *Oyo Empire,* 7.

[137] Ibid.*,* 4-5.

[138] Samuel Ajayi Crowther, *A Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1843); J. F. Ade Ajayi, “Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo,” in *Africa Remembered—Narratives by West Africans from the Era of The Slave Trade*, ed. Philip D. Curtin 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 289-316.

[139] Sigismund Whilem Koelle, *Polyglotta Africana: Or a Comparative Vocabulary of Nearly 300 Words abd Phrases in More Than One Hundred Distinct Languages* (London: 1854), 5; Biodun Adeniran, “Yoruba Ethnic Groups or a Yoruba Ethnic Group? A Review of the Problem of Ethnic Identification,” *África: Revista do Centro de Estudos Africanos da USP* 7 (1984): 59.

[140] Law *Oyo Empire,* 5n14.

[141] Biodun "Yoruba Ethnic Groups," 59.

[142] Ibid., 60.

[143] Philip D. Curtin, "Joseph Wright of the Egba," in *Africa Remembered—Narratives by West Africans from the Era of The Slave Trade*, ed. Philip D. Curtin 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 323.

[144] Fernando Ortiz, *Hampa afrocubana: Los negros brujos* (1906; repr., Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1973); Rómulo Lachatañeré, *Oh Mio Yemayá!* (1938; repr., La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1992); Nina Rodrigues, *O Animismo Fetichista dos Negros Baianos* (1905; repr., São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1945); Edison Carneiro, *Religioes Negras, Notas de Etnografia Religiosa* (Río de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira 1936).

[145] Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave Trade in Colonial Perú, 1524-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 41-3.

[146] Robin Law, "Ethnicity and the Slave Trade: "Lucumi" and "Nago' as Ethnonyms in West Africa," *History in Africa* 24 (1997): 207.

[147] Letter to General Rafael Reyes, December 25, 1905, *La Conspiración y el Plebiscito Nacional, Segundo Cuaderno* (Bogota: Imprenta Nacional, 1906), 191-92.

[148] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 16.

[149] David Geggus, "Sex Ratio, Age and Ethnicity in the Atlantic Slave Trade: Data From French Shipping and Plantation Records," *Journal of African History* 30 (1989): 23-44; Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 253.

[150] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 16.

[151] A. I. Asiwaju and Robin Law, "From the Volta to the Niger, c. 1600-1800," *History of Africa*, ed. J. F. Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1985) 1: 413-64.

[152] Ibid., 425-26.

[153] Robert Smith, *Kingdoms of the Yoruba,* 3rd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 32-33; Law *Oyo Empire,* 39; Asiwaju and Law, *From the Volta*, 426.

[154] Asiwaju and Law, "From the Volta," 426.

[155] Robin Law, "Horses, Firearms, and Political Power in Pre-colonial West Africa," *Past and Present* 72 (1976): 112-132.

[156] Chevalier des Marchais, "Journal du voiage de Guinée et Cayenne, par le Chevalier de Marchais, commandant la fregatte de la Compagnie des Indes, l'Expédition, pendant les Années 1724, 1725 et 1726," (N.d.), in Robin Law, *Contemporary Source Material For The History of the Old Oyo Empire, 1627-1824* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan: 1992), 14.

[157] William Bosman, "*A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*," in Robin Law, *Contemporary Source Material For The History of the Old Oyo Empire, 1627-1824* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan: 1992), 13.

[158] Henry B. Lovejoy, "Old Oyo Influences on the Transformation of Lucumí Identity in Colonial Cuba" (PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2012), 95-96.

[159] See Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*; Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux, "Etnias africanas en las sublevaciones de los esclavos de Cuba," *Revista Cubana de Ciencias Sociales* 4, no. 10 (1986): 14-30; Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection*, 16-18.

[160] Deschamps Chapeaux, "Etnias africanas," 14-30.

[161] Smith, *Kingdoms*, 126; Ajayi and Smith, *Yoruba Warfare*; Funso Afolayan, "Warfare and Slavery in 19th Century Yorubaland," in *War and Peace in Yorubaland, 1793-1893*, ed. Adeagbo Akinjogbin, (Ibadan, Nigeria: Heinemann Educational Books, 1998), 31. See Toyin Falola and G.O. Oguntomisin, *Yoruba Warlords of the 19th Century* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001).

[162] *Secretaria del Gobierno Superior Civil de la Isla de Puerto Rico: Registro Central de Esclavos, 1872.* National Archives Microfilm Publications, Microcopy T-1121. I went through Puerto Rico's 1872 slave census and found that it did not identify the slaves by nationality or ethnicity. It simply identified the place of birth as Africa. Interestingly, many of the slaves had *Cangá* as a surname. It is quite possible that *Cangá* was a misspelling of *Gangá*, indicating a large *Gangá* presence on the island in 1872. Although it cannot be definitely concluded that the Yoruba were insignificant in numbers in Puerto Rico, the lack of clearly identifiable Yoruba religious traditions on the island support this notion as well.

[163] David V. Trotman, "The Yoruba and Orisha Worship in Trinidad and British Guinea [Apparently an editor's mistake: it should have read *Guiana*]: 1838-1870," *African Studies Review* 19, no. 2 (1976): 1. Actually the vast majority of the Yorubas who were brought to Trinidad at this time came via Sierra Leone as indentured laborers and not as slaves. See James T. Houk III, *The Orisha Religion in Trinidad: A Study of Culture Process and Transformation* (Baton Rouge: University of Louisiana Press, 1992), 68-69; Maureen Warner-Lewis, *Trinidad Yoruba: From Mother Tongue to Memory* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), 35; Cleveland W. Eneas, *Bain Town*, 3rd edition, (Bloomington: Author House, 2007); Adderley, *"New Negroes*, 122-24.

[164] David Richardson, "Slave Exports from West and West-Central Africa, 1700-1810: New Estimates of Volume and Distribution," *The Journal of African History* 30, no. 1 (1989): 14.

[165] Lovejoy, "Impact," 377.

[166] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 42.

[167] Miguel Ramos, *The Empire Beats on: Oyó, Batá Drums, and Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (master's thesis, Florida International University, 2000), 145-46; Lovejoy, *Old Oyo*, 163-72.

[168] See Pierre Verger, "Notes on Some Documents in Which Lagos is Referred To By The Name 'Onim' and Which Mention Relations Between Onim And Brazil," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* ¼, no. 4 (1959), 343-50.

[169] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 303; David Eltis, "The Diaspora of Yoruba Speakers, 1650-1865: Dimensions and Implications," in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 24-28; Alexandre Vieira Ribeiro, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade to Bahia, 1582-1851," in *Extending the Frontiers—Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, ed. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 143; Grandío Moraguez, "African Origins," 190.

[170] Grandío Moraguez, "African Origins," 190.

[171] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, *46-47,* 51; Lachatañeré, *Tipos étnicos*, 167; Mercedes Sandoval, *La religión afrocubana* (Madrid: Playor, S.A., 1975), 19-20; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana*, 1: 30.

[172] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 56; I.A. Akinjogbin, "The Expansion of Oyo and the Rise of Dahomey,

1600-1800," in *History of West Africa*, ed. J.F.A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972) 1: 304. Also, for the Ajá, see C.W. Newberry, *The Western Slave Coast and its Rulers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961).

[173] Cabrera, *El monte*, 26. One of her "Lucumí" informants was the child of a Mina.

[174] Fernando Ortiz, "Los factores humanos de la cubanidad," in *Estudios etnosociológicos*, ed. Isaac Barreal Fernández (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1991 [First published in *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, 1949]), 16.

Chapter VIII: Church Records, Archival Documents, and Oral History

Parish Ledgers and Glimpses of the Past

Parish records are invaluable historical research tools. Scholars have repeatedly emphasized their worth, as well as the difficulties associated with collecting, organizing, and assessing the data they contain.[1] The church registers consulted for the present study illustrated many of these concerns. While these records provided glimpses into the lives of the people they documented, extracting data from them, interpreting the information, associating it with other documentation and sources, and inserting it within the larger historical context was not an easy task. Several of the ledgers were in very bad condition and required strict attention to details. Though the obstacles were numerous, they were not insurmountable, and despite the complications, the Regla and Matanzas parish records proved their worth many times over.

The majority of the ledgers obeyed a uniform system of data recording and the annotations were relatively clear as to their purpose. Nevertheless, problems arose. Not all priests and clerks were as devoted or as careful when chronicling events. While a general pattern is evident through most ledgers, individual preferences become evident when comparing between entries. That some priests and clerks were neglectful there can be no doubt. A few were so careless that they were admonished repeatedly and warned by ecclesiastical authorities about the haphazard state of their parishes' records.[2]

On March 19, 1849, a Holy Visit to inspect the affairs of Regla's church mandated that thereafter, all ledger entries must identify whether or not the parents were legally married and also include the name of the grandparents, whenever known. In December of the same year, the Holy Visit to Matanzas's cathedral seems to have made

the same request. Yet, the first documented entry that followed these directives was not made 1855. Sadly, although there is an abundance of meaningful narratives and information in the ledgers, many incomplete or badly documented entries that could have provided details pertinent to the present investigation proved frustrating.

All things considered, most clergy and clerks took the task of recording the data very seriously. Their annotations generally provided evocative details about ethnicity, age, gender, ownership, descent, and extended as well as fictive kinship. In a few cases, the ledgers revealed the slaves' eventual destination—the name of the estate or plantation where they would be put to work as well as the name of its owner. When free people of color served as godparents, the ledgers sometimes indicated some minutiae about their social status, either explicitly or by inference. In several cases, free people of color baptized slaves or the children of other members of their social class, an indicator of the growth of class-consciousness and important social clout and networks among the members of this sector of the society.[3]

The parish records also contained evidence of bonds between whites and people of color, something that inferred the possibility of strong and sincere affection in some cases. Whites frequently christened slaves and appeared regularly as the godparents of the children of upwardly mobile people of color. The importance of *compadrazgo* (co-parentage, or fictive kinship established between parents and godparents when someone baptizes another person's children) and its advantages in a class- and race-based society, as was nineteenth-century Cuba, is often illustrated in these relationships. Blacks may have perceived these relationships as links that granted prestige and honor. In addition, there were the benefits that came from founding networks through *compadrazgos*

conferred definite benefits. Many black godparents could afford only to provide affection and guidance, while white godparents could be a means of financial support and possible *palancas*—literally "levers," that is social leverage.[4] These details can be very meaningful when looking at many facets of the life of Africans and people of color in nineteenth-century Cuba. The ledger's annotations unveiled many features about Cuban society that are not available in other archival documents, making them a perfect complement to the more traditional sources that historians appraise.

Smuggled Slaves, Children, and Destination

A recent study noted that owners were forced by law to baptize their legally acquired slaves but were proscribed from christening those who had been illegally purchased.[5] Most slave owners responded to Madrid's dictates about slavery as they did to most other colonial legislation or canon laws: *acato pero no obedezco*—I abide but I will not comply. Several Matanzas baptisms alluded to clandestine introductions of slaves and the priests' frequent disregard for the Anglo-Spanish treaty banning the slave trade after the Anglo-Spanish treaty that took effect in 1820. Large lots of slaves were baptized in the cathedral as late as 1865. The priests were probably aware that these Africans had been introduced to Cuba illegally. By christening them, they were just as complicit in the endeavor as the smugglers.

Some cases were remarkably blatant. On October 3, 1857, the heirs of Matanzas's governor Don Juan Cruz (de la Cruz) brought 60 *bozales* to baptize in San Carlos, 47 males and 13 females. There were 39 Congos, 21 Mozambiques, and a Macuá, all destined for the Ingenio Santa Lutgarda.[6] Four years before, between the second and

thirtieth of September, 1853, Cruz lost 33 of his slaves, all of whom were interred in temporary burial grounds established on the plantation. The plantations' private cemetery was created in 1831 when, according to an entry in the interment ledgers, Cruz was given permission to establish provisional burial grounds in Santa Lutgarda. The slaves he baptized in 1857 were probably gradually introduced to his plantation to replace the slaves he had lost.

The 33 slaves who perished in Cruz's estate in 1853 succumbed to an epidemic, possibly cholera, which often took large tolls on slave life. Cholera, yellow fever, and other epidemics often terrorized Cubans, and people retired from the city to "country homes" to seek shelter from their ravages.[7] These were often the harbingers of great mortality. A cholera outbreak during the first half of the 1830s killed some 22,000 islanders, 3,000 of whom died in Matanzas. Slaves were the most affected, comprising the great majority of the dead. Medical attempts to find cures for these ills were not fruitful.[8] The period during which Santa Lutgarda was assailed by cholera must have been tremendously difficult, given that documentation of the losses did not take place until December 15 of that year.[9]

One case was especially interesting, not only because it clearly indicates clandestine introduction but also because of the large number of adolescents involved: in April, 1857, Don Mateo Quintero baptized nine newly imported Africans, children by modern standards but considered adults by the slavers. In the 1840s, priests began estimating and registering the approximate age of the new slaves, a totally subjective process that was strictly based on appearance.[10] Sadly, the documentation was very haphazard, and an approximate age was not recorded for the majority of those noted in

the registers. During the years before the British abolition movement, planters preferred an adult slave over a child because of the latter's inability to perform all the requisite harsh duties. This preference most definitely subsided toward the end of the trade when those seeking slave labor could not be so choosy.[11] Many of the baptized during the latter years of the trade were adolescents. The youngest of the children christened for Quintero on that fateful day was recorded as being 10 years old, and seven of the nine were under 15 years of age.[12]

In Regla's baptismal ledgers, of the 399 entries in which the age of the newly arrived Africans was estimated, 136 of them were identified as 18 years old or younger. Of this total, 113 were aged 15 or under. San Carlos's figures were staggering when considering the age of the enslaved. Some 825 African children, all classified as adults, were baptized in the cathedral, 506 of whom were under the age of 15.[13] As these figures propose, anxiety may have been extensive. The data suggest that slavers were quite aware that the trade would soon come to an end. Fearing British legislation and the increasing pressure exerted by the island's resident British councils, an increase in the imports of younger slaves could have been a way of ensuring that the plantations' *dotaciones* (work gangs) would continue to flourish.[14]

Those few times when the ledgers took note of an individual's destination, sometimes indirectly, were also suggestive of other matters. At the end of the eighteenth and almost throughout the first 40 years of the nineteenth century, the destination for most slaves baptized in Matanzas was either a coffee estate or a sugar plantation. Tobacco *vegas* (farms) were not very prevalent. The annotations that detailed the christened person's destination appear to agree with what historians have generally said

about the initial role of coffee and the encroaching usurpation of land by sugar production.[15] Unfortunately, only a handful of estates were identified, and only for the first 14 years of the nineteenth century. Even when the limited evidence makes the observation more of a generality, it still seems to support what is already an established fact in the literature about coffee and sugar production in Cuba.

Christened slaves destined for coffee estates were usually not numerous on any given day or related with any specific owner. Estate owners identified in the ledgers for the first 15 years of the nineteenth century generally brought less than a handful of slaves to the font at a time. The two most noteworthy of all these estates were the Cafetal San Rafael and the Cafetal San José, both of which belonged to Judge Francisco Figueras. He most likely founded at least one of these estates in 1808, the year in which he christened the great majority of the slaves attributed to him in the ledgers. Between May 1808 and May 1811, Judge Figueras baptized 77 slaves: 65 in 1808 (33 in June, 13 in July and 19 in November), 6 in 1809, 3 in 1810, and 3 in 1811.[16]

The other plantation that stood out as significant was the Cafetal Santísima Trinidad. Its owner was Francisco de Paula Castro, who was an active captain in the Spanish Royal Navy, and resided in Spain. On September 4, 1814, Castro (or his representative in Cuba) brought 13 Africans to San Carlos for christening.[17] Other estates did not seem to be as active at the baptismal font, though. Retired Navy Lieutenant Félix Llanos baptized 5 slaves destined for his Cafetal Buen Retiro in June 1811. Francisco de Laguardia, owner of a coffee plantation in Canímar, and Catone, Labane y Compañía, owners of the Cafetal San Juan, were the only other estates identified in the ledgers. Each one brought only a single slave to San Carlos during those years.[18]

Nevertheless, the ledgers from the early nineteenth century hint at what appeared to be an increasing competition between coffee and sugar, as the number of sugar plantations began to increase. It is arguable that the number of baptisms of African slaves belonging to an individual owner on any single should have always been greater if they were destined for sugar mills. Given the large difference in the labor demands of the two products, that sugar plantations was their final destination is not surprising.[19] The fact that it was already a noticeable tendency in the first decade of the nineteenth century surely implies something about the gradual spread of sugar as coffee's most threatening competitor. Though coffee was king at the time, the evidence suggests that sugar, the king's successor, was already making headway.

Francisco Domínguez, Matanzas's *alcalde ordinario* (mayor) in 1807, baptized 9 slaves on November 7 of that year who were heading to his Ingenio San Francisco de Paula. About two months later, he was back at San Carlos christening 8 more. Between the months of January and May of 1808, he brought 9 more slaves to the church's font. In all, between November 1807 and May 1808, Domínguez christened 39 Africans, primarily Gangás and Mandingas. The vast majority of those being christened were male.[20] Apparently, the *ingenio* continued to prosper. In January of 1810, Domínguez returned to San Carlos' baptismal chamber with fourteen more, all African and male.[21]

Emancipados

Approximately 230 people were registered as *emancipados* in Matanzas. The earliest such entry was dated April 22, 1829, and the last was recorded on March 29, 1868. Of this total, 172 were Africans (130 males and 42 females). The remaining 58

were born in Matanzas and were evenly split in terms of gender, with 29 males and 29 females. Starting with the first *emancipado* who was baptized in 1829, as noted in the San Carlos Cathedral, the registers often documented noteworthy details about them and their voyage to the island. A few entries referred to children who were born to emancipated mothers during the journey or shortly after arriving in Cuba. Of special significance are their ethnic identities, the name of the ships that brought them and of the vessel that rescued them, the person who was given charge of the individual during the period of "apprenticeship," and the *emancipado's* subsequent destination.

Beginning in 1834, the *emancipados* in Matanzas were assigned to public works projects. A group of 72, arriving between August and December of 1834 were given over to the Ayuntamiento de Matanzas (City Council), and assigned to varios projects. Sadly, the entries were not insightful about their origin. All of these men were identified as *de nación* or simply as "Africans," without any other indicator of their ethnicity. In October and November of that same year, 15 Lucumís were placed under the care of Simón Oñativia, a sugar baron and owner of Oñativia y Compañía. Economic historian Antonio Florencia Puntas referred to him as "*el indiano más dinámico desde el punto de vista empresarial*" (…the most dynamic person from the Indies, from a commercial point of view…).[22] The *emancipados* placed in Oñativia's care were probably far removed from legitimate emancipation.

Of the 179 *emancipados* recorded in Regla's ledgers, 128 were African (98 males and 30 females), and 51 (31 males and 20 females) were born in Regla to emancipated parents. The first emancipated African appeared in the town's parish records on November 30, 1826, three years before any were recorded in Matanzas's ledgers.

Amazingly, as late as 1872, there were African *emancipados* recorded in the ledgers, which suggests that even after the Free Wombs Law of 1870, Africans were still being smuggled into the island.[23] The greatest number of *emancipados* consigned to any one individual or organization at a time went to the Segunda Compañía de Vapores de la Bahía, the steamship-manufacturing company. At the time, the Segunda Compañía was directed by James Lawton, an Irish *hacendado* (landowner), owner of the Mercedita Plantation in Lagunillas and the Hernaní coffee estate in Coliseo, both in Matanzas. Lawton had been one of the founders of the Almacenes de Regla and owned the nail factory visited by Richard Dana in 1859.[24] It is quite probable that the lot of 33 emancipated Congos would fare no different from any of the slaves on Lawton's plantation or estate. Many historians have compared the treatment of slaves and *emancipados* and concluded that the latter received the same treatment as the chattel.[25]

Some children, emancipated and otherwise, were "*libre de pila*" (liberated at the baptismal font), freed by their mothers's owner in appreciation for "services rendered."[26] In some of these cases, the "services" provided were not necessarily voluntary: the child's freedom may have been motivated by the possibility that the owner or one of his kin may have been the baby's father.[27] Other children were purchased before birth, either by the father, the parents' free relatives, or other affinal or fictive kin. Purchase before birth was preferable, because the price of freedom generally increased once the child was born.[28]

A few entries were remarkable. On the day that Juana Josefa Dolores Vidaubigue was baptized, her mother's "owner" liberated her at the font. Even though the mother was an *emancipada*, in the entry she was registered as if she and her daughter were the

property of Pía Agustina Valiente, apparently a person of color, given that she was not identified as "*doña*." Not only was the baby liberated, but she was also declared white. Apparently, Juana Josefa was a legitimate offspring, as both parents were identified in the ledger. Her white father, Don Antonio Vidaubigue, was a native of Matanzas—*matancero*—and her mother was Gangá. Given the mother's ethnic designation, it is impossible that Juana Josefa was truly "white." The child was legitimized by the father's recognition, but the records do not clarify whether the parents were indeed married. The baby's liberty was the result of her mother's "good services," which no doubt was a way of saying that there had been a romantic connection or brief sexual encounter between the parents, even if the exact nature of their relationship was not specified.[29]

On the Verge of Death, the Soul, and Personhood

Saving the soul was of utmost importance, even if the body was mistreated and subjected to abuse. Parish records described slaves to whom the baptismal sacrament was administered in *articulus mortis*—on the verge of death. Sometimes, the baptized recuperated from their injuries, and the ritual was deemed as a miraculous remedy. Much like their Spanish ancestors, to this day many Cubans (and Latin Americans in general) firmly believe that baptism has important curative properties. When unable to officially christen a newborn who may be threatened by a health condition, many resort to what is variously known as *agua de socorro* (emergency water) or *echar agua* (pouring holy water [over the child]), a palliative pre-baptismal rite that functions as a provisional recourse until the formal christening can take place. Similarly, in cases of serious illness where an unbaptized person is threatened by death, the family may request that a priest

visit the home or hospital to administer an initial baptismal rite that will be eventually followed by an official christening in the church if the individual survives.[30]

The entries for baptized or deceased Africans occasionally indicated the manner of arrival to the island, and especially in those cases where *bozales* were baptized *in articulus mortis*. The voyage to the Caribbean was distressing and very dangerous for those enchained in the ship's bowels. Some were fortunate enough to survive the ordeal unscathed; however, many arrived to the island in considerably weakened states, stalked by death, and not infrequently left to divine intercession because medicine could do little to save them. Cirilo Ortega, a Lucumí, received an emergency baptism—*agua por necesidad*—before his official christening in the church, hoping that he would recover from the emaciated state in which he arrived to Regla.[31] The Congo José de Jesús Belén Sala was not as fortunate. He received the emergency baptism on January 21, 1838, but succumbed sometime after. José congo's body was interred in the church's cemetery.[32] Africans probably perceived the baptismal rite through their own cultural lenses. Even Ortiz recognized this possibility, though from a slanted viewpoint. When he suggested that Africans "surely believed" that the Catholic baptismal rite was an "exorcism carried out by the white *babalá*" (he probably meant *babalawo*).[33]

Africans, many of whom practiced similar birth rites, attributed spiritual and mystical properties to the baptismal ceremony as well. Among many African ethnies, an individual is not considered a full person until the naming ceremony has taken place. For most Africans, names are of great significance. Historian Samuel Johnson wrote about the importance of names for the Yoruba and the various types of names given to a child at the naming ceremony. *Amutorunwá* (that which we bring from heaven) is the category

of names that describe specific circumstance's surrounding a child's birth (born in a caul, wrapped in the umbilical cord, twins, and so on). *Abisó* names recognize the conditions of the family or household when the child is born (for example, Ayódelé—Joy enters the house; Shangó Bunmí—Given to me by Shangó). Those children whose parents had numerous stillbirths or children who died soon after birth are given *abikú* (born to die) names. Finally, *orikí* are those cognomens or praise names acquired through time based on deeds an individual performs in his or her lifetime or other particulars.[34] To the present day, for a vast majority of traditional African peoples, a name welcomes a person into the world and recognizes their humanity.

In Cuba, assigning an African name was intrinsic to achieving communal integration. In addition, names were acquired through rituals, especially religious ordinations, and were associated with particular statuses or hierarchies within religious traditions. Some African naming rites, particularly those of the Yoruba, follow ritual processes that are very similar to the Christian baptismal ceremony.[35] Catholic baptisms also use specific substances with which Africans could easily relate. Some West Africans, for example, could have seen significant similarities in the use of salt, oil, and water at the baptismal font and compared this with their own use of these same items in African naming ceremonies performed for a child.[36] If these Yoruba rites existed in the nineteenth century in the current form, perhaps the similarities between the two religious rites influenced the abandonment of the traditional naming ceremony, at least publicly, and the adoption of the Catholic baptism.

As an essential component of a person's character and identity, names held a great deal of importance for both Spaniards and Africans.[37] In the Old and New Worlds, the

name chosen for a child could indicate that the parents recognized the intercession of a saint or placed the child under its protection.[38] Many Africans believed (and continue to do so) that names were essential components of the mystical associations shared between deities and human beings. Often those names given to children linked them to an ancestor or deity or their intercession in the family's life or the child's birth.[39] For Africans, names were not only designations by which to identify someone: they were associated with mundane as well as spiritual individualities. Imposition of Christian names and the obliteration of African names were mechanisms that may have been used by Europeans to intentionally inflict "violence [on] a crucial part of African culture."[40] The retention of an African name from the homeland or the application of African names to children born in captivity were form of resisting acculturation and retaining essential "African cultural understandings" that no doubt influenced the consciousness of Cuban people of color.[41]

The lack of a parent's surname mattered little so long as the individual was given a name; one that was made known to God and the society. Names made the individual into a person. In essence, a name was necessary, even if the conditions that led to its origin were not the most honorable. A number of cases turned up in which children were identified as *exposítos*—abandoned babies. Sadly, these newborns, for reasons that can only be surmised, were forsaken by their mothers and left in a church's doorway. María Inés del Rosario was one of these cases. Possibly deserted by her mother, she was baptized in Matanzas's church by her godmother, Maria Antonia Lucumí. It is feasible that her godmother eventually raised María as if she were her own daughter, something that was not uncommon in Cuba.[42] To honor Bishop Gerónimo Valdés y Sierra (1646—1729), founder of Cuba's orphanage Casa de Beneficencia (House of Beneficence),

Valdes (without the customary accent on the *e* [Valdés]) was established as the official last name for all children abandoned at birth.[43]

Retaining an African name was the most definitive statement any African could make, a sure way of clinging on to whatever remnants of their African-ness, humanity and past life had survived the Middle Passage. By all means, an African name empowered the individual. It was one of many forms of resistance used by a disenfranchised people, regardless of its degree. Empowerment through the use of African names provided support for some of the numerous nineteenth-century insurrections.[44] Although the church ledgers do not generally mention the original African birth names of the emancipated, some were officially registered. In Regla, Manuano was christened Leonicio congo, *emancipado* 1591, and assigned to work in the Almacenes de Santa Catalina de Sena in Regla. Nicanor congo, *emancipado* 1579, had been Changula in his homeland.[45] Caná, identified as a Lucumí, was baptized in San Carlos Cathedral and renamed Dominga Jáureguí, *emancipada* 57. Her name is not a typical Lucumí one, though, which may indicate a common case of ethnic misclassification.[46]

Slave owners, however, had a different perspective on the names they chose for their chattel. In reality, they did not care much. Short names were preferable, as a matter of pragmatism, but any name could suit them.[47] Based on Catholic theology, the Christian rite of passage was a rebirth, the doorway to a new form of existence. For the African, though, it became the pathway to a type of anomie as thereafter the slave's life was, in most respects, no longer his or her own to control.[48] As Orlando Patterson argued, renaming a slave indubitably marked the onset of the individual's "social death."[49]

Indeed, what most concerned the slave owner at the time was compliance with colonial and canon laws that mandated a Christian baptism for all Africans.

In all probability, most of the faithful—Spaniards, Cubans, Africans, free or enslaved—did not literally understand the ritual in which they were participating because it was conducted in Latin. To complicate matters further, the vast majority of the islanders shared a great indifference to religion.[50] Despite the establishment of Catholicism as the official religion of the Spanish Crown and its dominions, this apathy traveled to Cuba on the same ships that brought colonists from the Iberian Peninsula.[51] It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that some members of Cuba's clergy began to take an active interest in countering the islander's religious apathy, attempting to bring a halt to the popular indifference to official Catholicism.[52]

There was great divergence in nineteenth-century Cuba, however. Beliefs were inseparable from status and class. The beliefs of the common people, of the masses, were not necessarily those of the upper echelons of the society. Cuba's lower classes were deeply involved in the practices of popular Catholicism, which seemed to enjoy the support and tolerance of some clergy, despite the Church's official disapproval. Popular religiosity was a vital factor in the promotion of the pejorative term *santería* and its application to Lucumí religion, sanctioned by Catholic priests who saw no harm in the growing tendencies to parallel saints with orishas.[53] The island's elite, though, had mixed feelings. While on one level they condemned popular and African practices as fanaticism and superstition, they were often described as indifferent to religion altogether. Orlando Espín, a respected theologian and religious scholar, has suggested that fearing possible

fallout from the Enlightenment, the Cuban clergy saw an ally in popular Catholicism against the “anti-Church zeal” of the European paradigm shift away from religion.[54]

Cuba and religion were at a major crossroads during the nineteenth century. Given the state of religious controversy engulfing the island during these years, no doubt the slave owner’s primary objective was not spiritual. Besides fulfilling an obligation that some would have preferred to bypass, the baptismal rite supported their greater intention. Baptism undermined personality and annihilated the original persona and, in so doing, created a new, subservient object: one with no allegiance to any other identity but that of slave.[55] Baptism and the European naming ceremony were, as historian Michael Zeuske argued, “an attempt to make the slaves function like machinery and kill them socially and culturally.” Consciously or not, Europeans imposed a new Christian name upon the slave as a means to break all ties with who and what they had been in Africa.[56]

Last names were also challenging. The ethnic label that followed the person’s new Christian name, often fulfilling the functions of a surname, was not an appellation per se but rather a qualitative or generic adjective.[57] Imparting the owner’s surname to the slave was not always mandatory. In most cases, the clergy, or the clerks who documented the baptisms, did not register a surname for the slave. Eventually, many came to be known by their first name and either the name of the plantation or estate to which they would be sent or their ethnic label written in lowercase letters.

Hence, while for Europeans baptism and the imposed name was a rebirth into a new life, ideally through Christ, Africans were interpreting the experience from a totally different viewpoint. Indisputably, time demonstrated the flawed character of the European attempt to deculturate their chattel. Cuba in particular and the Americas in

general are primary examples that serve to buttress the idea that culture cannot be eradicated by a simple ritual or a foreign imposition. In fact, one thing that the African experience in the Americas successfully proved is that under moments of extreme pressure, culture makes the greatest use of flexibility and resilience, outwardly appearing to cooperate with foreign impositions but all the while accommodating them to suit its own purposes. Beyond doubt, this is culture's primary means of endurance. Spanish names did nothing for Africans except provide a new designation by which others could identify them. If nothing else, the one thing that did result from baptism was allowing Africans to gain a greater understanding of the many cultural universals they shared with Europeans, setting the stage for their eventual reinterpretation of these concepts as observed through African lenses.

In view of the religious penchants involved in selecting a name, José, María, Jesús, and compound names preceded or followed by one of these appellations, were exceptionally abundant in the ledgers. Jesús was more common among women (268) than it was among men (221), and when used for a female, it was generally compounded with another name (e.g. Juana de Jesús). There were 871 Josés, Josefs, or Josephs in Regla and 1,562 in Matanzas. Josefa was fairly common for women but in no way as much as María. Regla had 868 women whose name was María or was preceded or followed by María. Matanzas had an amazing 3,133: 44 percent of Matanzas's 7,127 women of color were named after *la madre de Dios* (the mother of God)! Of these Marías, there were hundreds whose name was María de Jesús or María de José or some combination thereof.

Christening and the Baptized

Most of the baptized had only one godparent. It was not until 1917 that canon law began requiring two godparents at baptism, usually a man and a woman.[58] The entries concerning children born to African parents presented meaningful particulars, and not just about the children. Much may be inferred about parents and the world they lived in by analyzing the christening of their children. In many cases, the records revealed the parents' ethnicity or African origin, the status of the parents and the child, and sometimes their domicile. If the father's name was noted, the entry suggested that the child's parents were married and that, in the eyes of the Church, the birth was legitimate. Any child born out of wedlock was deemed a bastard. In such case, the ledger stressed that he was an *hijo natural* (natural child). Sometimes, children were legitimized by a sworn witness who would attest to the identity of the child's father, possibly as a means of saving a white father the embarrassment associated with his identification in public.[59] At other times, the mother was listed as *reservada*, thus saving face for the father, as in most of these cases the father was white and the child illegitimate.[60]

Twin births were not frequent. There were only 10 identifiable cases in Regla's ledgers and 48 in San Carlos's. Of the twin births in Regla, Carabalí and Gangá mothers had three pairs of twins each, two pairs were born to Congo mothers, and an Arará and a Mandinga woman gave birth to a pair of twins each. In only one case was the father identified, and he was a Carabalí, married to the one Mandinga mother of twins recorded in the town's ledgers.

Matanzas differed slightly. Of the 48 identifiable twin births in the ledgers, the vast majority were born to Gangá women (15). The other mothers were identified as

Arará (1), Bibí (1), Carabalí (10), Congo (8), Lucumí (6), Mandinga (2), Mina (2), Mozambique (1) and "*de nación*" (1). What is intriguing about this particular data is the historically recognized high incidence of twin births among the Yoruba (Lucumí) people, a phenomenon not reflected in the number of baptisms in either of the two locales.[61] One researcher has suggested a possible connection to yams (*Dioscorea alata*), a staple food for the Yoruba and other West African peoples since time immemorial. By peeling the yam or consuming its skin, some researchers claim, certain chemicals in its skin can enter a woman's bloodstream, producing an inordinate amount of eggs, and thus leading to the greater probability of twin births.[62]

The reasons for the decreased presence of twin births among nineteenth-century Lucumís and their descendants in Cuba may be several. Reflecting on the low fertility and high child mortality rates that prevailed among the island's slaves, Moreno-Fraginals argued that these were in part due to decisions made by women. He stressed that many slave women resorted to "rigid birth control, reviving and generating among themselves all kinds of Malthusian practices and abortions."[63] Even if planters had vested interests in their captives' reproduction, surely most slaves preferred to spare their children from the conditions of servitude.[64]

Since the early years of the trade, slavers realized the importance of the white yam among the dietary staples of many Africans.[65] Yam became required cargo on a slave ship.[66] Each ship had to store at least 200 yams for every slave on the vessel.[67] Subsequently, yams were cultivated in Cuba and used to feed the island's slave population, along with other local tubers and fruits.[68] Thus, in Cuba, yam consumption

does not seem to have had any bearing on the decreased twin birth rate. The data do suggest, however, that there may have been other issues at hand.

It is conceivable that African and Afro-Cuban women used contraception as a way to counter slavery and spare their children from a life of drudgery and pain, a practice that was not exclusive to the island. Brazilian slaves also resorted to numerous techniques to keep from bringing children into a world in which they would have such a harsh life.[69] Cuban slave mothers possibly resorted to infanticide as well, as suggested by the recurrent punishments, including floggings, administered to mothers who lost children frequently. Slave owners believed that mothers had a tendency to commit infanticide and as a rule attributed it to “African savagery.”[70] Enslaved women made use of various natural contraceptives. Papaya leaves and fruit may have been one of those. Cuban historian Moreno-Fraginals suggested that its usage as a contraceptive was the reason for the Cuban vernacular use of the term *papaya* to refer to the vulva. He wrote that slave women resorted to potions made with the fruit and inserted papaya leaves into their vaginas as a means of inhibiting pregnancy.[71]

Ethnicity did not seem to have been important for some clerks and priests. It is likely that during specific periods—especially the era of the clandestine trade, when thousands of slaves were smuggled into the island—owners either cared little about their slaves’ African origins or had little or no time to obtain the necessary information from the slave traders. The treaties reached by Spain and Great Britain to end the slave trade were continuously mocked, either by the Spanish government, its Cuban representatives, or the island’s slave oligarchy.

The Cuban slave population initially diminished as a consequence of the repression associated with the Escalera Conspiracy of 1844.[72] Nonetheless, the clandestine importations to Cuba continued for several decades more. Though quite a few slavers were arrested, including Julián Zulueta, one of the island's most notorious traders, for the most part these arrests did little to daunt the illegal trafficking.[73] The last slave ship is reputed to have landed in Cuba in 1870, although Cuban historian José Luciano Franco claimed to have interviewed a woman who declared that she was brought to the island illegally in 1878.[74] Given the pressures of the time and fearing arrest, slavers had vested interests in unloading their cargo as soon as possible. Accuracy of documentation was expendable, well depicted in Rachel Moore's description of the 1860s landing and dispatching of a clandestine shipment "in the course of an hour or two."[75] Urgency and expediency were required to keep from losing the cargo and suffering the resulting financial setback.[76] For the most part, though, even when there are lacunae in the data for some periods, ethnicity, when known, was documented as a rule.

Ethnies, Social Class, and the Parish Records

Every so often the priests or clerks took note of the ethnic origin of African godparents. These particular data had some interesting implications, especially as they pertained to certain African groups. A curious pattern arose based on the godchild's and godparents' ethnic affiliation, suggesting that the choice of godparent was intrinsically connected either to increasing cohesion among specific ethnic groups or to limiting its development. There was a distinct difference between Regla and Matanzas in the choice of a godparent for the newly arrived African. In the former, the godparent was far more likely to be of

the same ethnicity as the newly arrived African, whereas in Matanzas, the opposite seemed to be the case (Table 1).

Over the years, historians have hypothesized about planters' tendency to separate ethnic groups in the fields and plantations. Using rivalries stemming from Africa and promoting new ones in the Diaspora was deemed an effective means to control the enslaved. In so doing, the dominant class believed that they could hinder the development of class consciousness and thus prevent a rebellion.[77] It is plausible that in the province of Matanzas, where slaves were destined to work on estates or plantations in larger numbers and in closer proximity, control over the subjected masses was a pressing issue. Any and all possible links that could lead to the formation of allegiances and thereby the possibility of conspiracies and eventual revolt against the ruling classes had to be curtailed.[78]

Table 1. African Ethnies and Their Godparents' Ethnicities, Regla and Matanzas (1782–1886)[35]

Ethnie	Total baptized, Regla	Godparent w/ same ethnie	%	Total baptized, Matanzas	Godparent w/ same ethnie	%
Carabalí	256	36	14.1	1618	194	12
Congo	405	51	12.6	2,255	238	10.6
Ganga	345	45	13.0	3,481	285	8.2
Lucumí	281	97	34.5	1,393	78	5.1
Totals	**1,287**	**229**	**17.8**	**8,747**	**795**	**9.1**

In Regla, however, the evidence suggests that less attention was given to controlling interaction between members of the same ethnic group. Since agriculture was not the town's primary concern, the possibility of insurrection was less significant. If, as seems to be the case, Regla's slave community primarily consisted of domestics and

[35] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos."; Catedral de San Carlos, Matanzas, Cuba, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos."

others occupied in entrepreneurial activities—sales or as slaves for hire (day laborers)—ethnic cohesiveness could have proven beneficial in helping to transmit specific work ethics and conduct.[79] Ethnic interconnection is especially noticeable among the Lucumís; approximately 35 percent of their new arrivals were baptized by "seasoned" Lucumís who had been in Cuba slightly longer. The associations born out of these relationships were essential in positioning the foundations for the advancement of the Lucumís' enclave in the town.

Baptism and social status were connected. Whites, emancipated people of color and slaves, even some Africans, served as godparents. In Regla a small community of people of color in Regla had ascended the socioeconomic ladder. Several of them were slave owners themselves and were often found baptizing the children of other people of color. Social status was a definite factor in the choice of a godparent, but a higher position on the social ladder deepened the distinctions between free people of color and slaves.[80] Elite free people of color would seldom baptize the children of slaves. In most cases when they did, those being baptized were usually recent arrivals, their own slaves, or the children of their domestics. Petrona Gaytán's only godchild in Regla was Juan Bruno Fabré, born to the free Mandinga Ana Fabré.[81] Gaytán was a free, upwardly mobile *parda* and a native of Saint-Domingue. While she did distinguish herself as a godparent in Regla, before her death in March 1844 she had achieved considerable standing in the town. She was probably a small-scale entrepreneur; the ledgers revealed that she owned nine slaves. Gaytán had nine children of her own and one other child that she raised after his mother's death. At the time of her demise, she had five grandchildren, who were declared the inheritors of her estate. Apparently, Gaytán had a good

relationship with her ex-daughter-in-law, María de Jesús Alvear, the mother of four of her grandchildren, because she was named as guardian over the estate until the grandchildren became of age.[82]

Another *afro-reglano* with clout was Blas Flaquer, a free black. It is possible that he may have had some ties with the Battalones de Pardos y Morenos (The Colored Militias). Members of the Batallones were an elite class unto themselves, enjoying extensive prestige in the society. In addition, members of the militia, along with the free colored community of good standing, enjoyed numerous other benefits because of their rank.[83] Flaquer owned five female slaves, all identified as African (1 Arará, 1 Lucumí, 1 Mina, 1 Gangá, and 1 Macuá). All five women bore children, a total of six, and all were baptized in Regla between 1805 and 1816. María Francisca, the Arará, gave birth to two twin boys, named José and Juan de la Cruz. María de los Dolores, the Mina, had a boy, Yldefonso. Zeferina lucumí gave birth to María Secundina, and Zeferina gangá had a girl named María Urbana. María Lorenza macuá was purchased by Flaquer in June 1806 when she was approximately 15 years old. The ledgers do not indicate whether she had any children. Though speculative, it is possible that some or all of the women had a sexual relationship with Flaquer and that the children were his own. Only two of the baptized were given the Flaquer surname, but none of them were identified as his legitimate children. In all cases, the father was noted as *desconocido* (unknown).[84]

At some point, Flaquer married Ana Josefa Bendical, a Lucumí. When she died in July 1851 at 84 years of age, Flaquer was identified as her second husband. Secundina Flaquer, possibly their daughter, was the sole heiress of Bendical's estate.[85] Flaquer's station in Regla may have made him a prime choice as a godparent. He came up

regularly, sponsoring the baptism of at least 10 Africans and creole children in the town. The ledgers did not provide any further details about Flaquer after 1846 when he christened Sebastiana González, the daughter of Luís González Carabalí and Ysabel Bolaño mina, both free blacks.[86] His last appearance was in the 1851 entry documenting Ana Josefa Bendical's death. Given that he was not identified as her heir, it is probable that he passed away before she did, and in all likelihood, he did not die in Regla. It is just as possible that his death is documented on one of the blurry or illegible pages, but otherwise, there is no record of his passing in the ledgers.

Lucumí Dynasties in the Parish Records

The African founders of Lucumí religion's major lineages were not many. In fact, evidence suggests that today's Orisha lineages descend from approximately a dozen or so people. David Brown's research on Ifá lineages seems to suggest that only five Lucumís are responsible for the priesthood's development in Cuba.[87] Regla's ledgers point to the development among the Lucumí of important networks with long-term ramifications, starting in the second half of the nineteenth century. Historian Soledad Otero pointed to what she called the Yoruba "penchant for establishing religious networks." Brown stressed that there was a need to go beyond Bastide's claim about the importance of the *cabildo* and focus more on the individual *olorishas* and *babalawos* that founded and advanced the religion's cause.[88] The Yoruba "penchant" continued in Cuba, and many of the newly forged interconnections, and especially those forged in Regla, were the initial catalyst for the subsequent expansion of Lucumí religion.[89]

A case in point was Matilde Zayas, Bawení (Lagüení). Immortalized by Ortiz as one of Regla's most famous Egbado-Lucumí priestesses of the nineteenth century, Bawení often appeared in the town's ledgers.[90] Soon after obtaining her freedom, she moved to Regla, where she found other Lucumís like herself, particularly Ña Ynés Zayas García, Yeyé T'Olokún, who by most accounts was her "mother." Yeyé T'Olokún was an Egbado-Lucumí priestess of Olokún, orisha of the seas, who had already laid the groundwork for the worship of this deity in the town before Bawení's arrival. They did share the Zayas surname, which could mean that they had been members of the same *dotación*, but the question of motherhood is ambiguous. Bawení soon became a person of influence in the community, possibly because of her relationship with Yeyé T'Olokún, a bulwark of Egbado-Lucumí culture and religion. Though oral tradition is silent on the issue of her financial status, it seems that her position and renown afforded her a degree of comfort. She became a widow in 1867, after the death of her husband Sisto de Cárdenas, a Lucumí, who passed away on February 27 of that year.[91] She herself passed on October 1, 1884, almost on the eve of Cuba's emancipation of slavery.

Like many of her Lucumí contemporaries, Bawení's financial status had grown, and she owned several slaves. Of these, Amalia Zayas was Lucumí like her owner, and her two children, Francisca and Miguel Alcangel [sic] de Zallas [sic], were born during their mother's servitude in Bawení's house. María Matías and her daughter Felipa Cáceres were already slaves of Baweni's when Francisca del Pino, a creole, joined her household in December 1869.[92]

Even if the Lucumí population in Regla was not as big as that of other Africans in, the ledgers support their cohesiveness and influence as a community. Sturdy liaisons

existed between specific members of the Lucumí priesthood living in Regla. Most of them lived in the town's third barrio. For example, the *babalawo* and drum maker Filomeno García, Atandá (henceforth referred to as Atandá), and Bawení were the godparents for Pedro Fermín Billalonga (as identified in the ledgers—his surname's proper spelling is Villalonga). Atandá, the godfather, was one of a handful of Lucumí *abegí*—carvers and drum-makers. He was one of two carvers credited with having made numerous drums for Lucumí celebrations and rituals.[93] Pedro Fermín's older brother, José de la Asunción Villalonga, Ogundá'masá, would come to be one of the most influential babalawos of the twentieth century.[94] Most *olorishas* remember him as simply "Asunción," typically a female name. Francisco Villalonga, Ifá Bí—Pedro and José's father—was one of a small group of nineteenth- century babalawos who were influential in introducing of the Ifá oracle to Cuba.

There is no entry in the registers for a José de la Asunción Villalonga, though there were two entries for similarly-named *reglanos*. Neither were "Billalongas" (or Villalongas). The first, born on September 12, 1837, was José de la Asunción Lugones, son of Gregorio gangá and María Leandra Lugones from Guamutas, in Havana Province. The second's surname was González, born on May 16, 1842, to Antonio González lucumí and Feliciana Valdes carabalí. The father was a slave, the property of Don Guillermo González; the mother was free. It is possible that Francisco Villalonga, Ifá Bí, may have raised the second Asunción, who was also of Lucumí descent, but there is no evidence to support this.

All of these paradoxes may indicate one of several possibilities, which are not far-removed from what were the typical complexities of daily life for all people of color in

nineteenth-century Cuba. Firstly, it is possible that José de la Asunción Villalonga, Ogundá'masá, may have been born elsewhere, perhaps in neighboring Guanabacoa or Casablanca. It is also possible that he may not have been registered as a "Billalonga." Secondly, his birth name may have not been José de la Asunción. To the present day, in Cuba many people are known by a name other than the legal name, a practice that is extremely common among practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions. Some devotees fear that enemies may attempt to use ritual magic against them; keeping their birth name secret and using a pseudonym or a nickname is a popular defense mechanism against sorcery. Finally, it is conceivable that Ogundá'masá may have been deemed illegitimate and registered without a last name. There are no other legible entries in which the name Billalonga or Villalonga appear, nor are there any other annotations in which a person named Francisco Billalonga (or Villalonga) is recorded. Pedro Fermín was the last-born child of Francisco Villalonga, Ifá Bí, who died in 1875, shortly after his son's birth and baptism.[95] It is highly probable that Ifá Bí did not die in Regla, as there is no entry for his death in the town's ledgers. His absence in the town's death registries may support the probability that Ogundá'masá was born elsewhere.

The emergent relationships among these people who would eventually become the progenitors of Lucumí religion in Regla were vital in the overall dissemination of the faith. The bond between Filomeno García, Atandá, and Matilde Zayas, Bawení, was a strong one. Before baptizing Pedro Fermín, they had shared another christening; they were already *compadres*. In 1863, Bawení had baptized Atandá's son, Marcos García, who would eventually be ordained to Ifá and become one of the most notable creole *babalawos*, Babá Ejiogbé.[96] The bonds that were developing amongst these people

encompassed two distinct yet similar religious traditions and worldviews, as they were all linked by Lucumí religion and Catholicism.[97]

The ledgers noted that Babá Ejiogbé's mother was María de Jesús Hernández, but 10 years later, Atanda's wife is identified as María de Jesús Herrera. In April 1875, Atandá buried a daughter, Victoria García, who had been born two years earlier; she perished from small pox. These entries pinpoint where the issues with the mother's name arise and some of the ledgers' lacunae become apparent. In the death registry, Victoria is documented as the legitimate daughter of Filomeno García and María de Jesús Herrera, both Lucumís.[98] Though it could have been a clerical error, the baptismal ledgers make matters even more complex. If the child is the same Victoria García whose name appears in Regla's ledgers as having been christened on June 8, 1873, then there is most definitely a larger conflict. In the baptismal ledger, Victoria is registered to an unknown father and a Marcelina García, Arará. Despite the coincidences, it may just be that this Victoria was not Atandá's daughter; however, she was the only Victoría García that appeared in the parish records. On the other hand, it is impossible to accurately determine if Marcelina García, María de Jesús Hernández, and María de Jesús Herrera were the same person. The names could have been the products of simple clerical mistakes or maybe disguise for a greater sin. Ultimately, there is no sure way of knowing, but the case is a prime example of the complexities that are intrinsic this type of research.

Bawení and Atandá's "mother," Ña Ynés Zayas García, Yeyé T'Olokún, introduced and presided over the rituals associated with the worship of Olokún (orisha of the seas) in Regla, a tradition that was passed down to Marcos García, Babá Ejiogbé, after his grandmother's death.[99] It is very likely that Atandá and Bawení were "siblings,"

probably cared for by their “mother” Yeyé T’Olokún, one of the strongest links in the emerging network, who may have raised them as her own children in the absence of their birth mothers. It is possible that both Atandá and Bawení were brought to Cuba as adolescents. On the other hand, the greater likelihood is this: Yeyé T’Olokún was their religious mother. When devotees are ordained in Lucumí religion, the people who initiate them are known as their godparents, a title clearly borrowed from Catholicism. In Lucumí, the term is *iyálorisha* or *babálorisha*—mother or father in orisha. Hence, the godparents of Lucumí priests and priestesses are, symbolically, their parents in the new life as ordained devotees. This case exemplifies additional levels of complexity, typical of studies dealing with Afro-Cubans and followers of Cuba’s African religions. If the researcher ignores these, a misreading of the accounts may ensue.

Even though little is known about her, Ña Ynés Zayas García, Yeyé T’Olokún, was another Lucumí driving force, remembered by modern-day members of the Lucumí priesthood as an important founder of the religion. It is probable that she moved to Regla from elsewhere sometime before the mid-1860s, during which time she and Monserrate González, Obá Tero, ordained Josefa Herrera, Eshú’bí, to the cult of Elegbá, orisha of the crossroads. Her name did not emerge in Regla’s baptismal ledgers, but an Ynés Zayas García did turn up in the death registers. This Ynés was married to a Lucumí named Luís García who succumbed to tuberculosis at age 53, on May 26, 1885. The couple lived at 87 Morales Street, though it is not clear if they had any children together. Orisha scholar John Mason wrote that the street was “Moraiz,” a possible transcription error. Nonetheless, Mason’s mention seems to confirm that this Ynés was the same Ña Ynés, Yeyé T’Olokún.[100]

Further evidence is available in Luís García's will. Escolástico García y Zayas was named in the will as Luís's only heir; the entry went on to state that his parents were married and that Escolástico was a legitimate product of their marriage: "*casado con la morena Lucumí Ynés Zayas de cuyo matrimonio deja de suceción un hijo*."[101] The baptismal registers show an entry from May 15, 1869, for an Escolástico Sotero Guillermo Garcíá that is almost certainly Luís's son, even though the details are a bit sketchy. Like the case with the names of the mothers of Atandá's children, the records indicated that the child's mother was María Liberata Zayas and identified both parents under the generic category of "Africans" without providing an exact ethnic identity.[102]

To the present, Yeyé T'Olokún's personal details are perplexing. While clarifying some particulars, the church records may also complicate others about this enigmatic character. At the time of the 1881 census, no one named Ynés was listed among the five residents of 87 Morales Street, who were listed as Luís Pastrana, Juan Palmira, José María Romero, Luís García Lecú, and Librada Zayas.[103] If the last two are the same Luís and Ynés who reside in the house in which Luís García would die in in 1885, several questions arise. First, what was Yeyé T'Olokún's given Spanish name? Was she Ynés Zayas García, María Liberata Zayas, or Librada Zayas? The constant is the Zayas surname, and María is of no surprise, but what about the names Liberata and Librada? Could these have resulted from an error made by the census taker? Second, where was Escolástico, the son whom Luís brought to the font for baptism in 1869? By this time, he was around 12 years old. Had he moved elsewhere, or was he not in the home on the day that the census was taken? It is possible that Ynés lived beyond Luis's death, as the ledgers end after the final emancipation of the slaves in 1886, but at this stage everything

is subject to speculation unless further evidence is found. Oral sources have not delivered any additional details.

Adeshina—Cultural and Religious Ambassador

Remigio Herrera, Adeshina, was one of the most prominent members of the Lucumí community whose name appeared in the ledgers with great frequency. Though it is unknown if he was of royal descent, he clearly was "royalty" as Brown wrote, given his influential role as cultural ambassador for Orisha and Ifá.[104] Adeshina moved to Regla from Simpson in the latter 1850s or early 1860s, and in a relatively short time, became the godfather of at least thirteen children born to Lucumí parents and their first generation.[105] If specific Lucumís can be directly credited for the dissemination of Lucumí religion throughout the island, Adeshina was one of them. As shall be seen, his prominence and his influence were not limited to the small town. Adeshina was intrinsically connected to the growth of Lucumí Orisha and Ifá in Regla, Havana, Simpson and its environs, and possibly Palmira as well. When Adeshina passed in 1905, well over 100 years old, he was the honorary president of the Cabildo Africano Lucumí, Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos Bajo la Advocación de Santa Bárbara (SSB). The SSB would be pivotal in the contentions that arose in the twentieth century between Lucumí religion and the Cuban legal system.

Oral sources maintained that Adeshina arrived from Africa around the latter 1820s. One 10 year-old boy named *Adechina* was rescued by British patrols from a vessel named Julita and emancipated in Havana in 1835, but oral history has never referred to Remigio Adeshina as an *emancipado*.[106] The accounts of his arrival to Cuba vary, though.

As is often the case with oral history, descriptions of his origin and activities in Cuba are multiple and sometimes even contradictory.[107] Pedro Cosme, the director of Regla's museum, and Luís Alberto Pedroso, one of the museum's senior historians, suggested that Adeshina was initially sent to work on a plantation in Havana Province. They provided a baptismal certificate for a Remigio lucumí, baptized in Nueva Paz, a small town in Havana Province, in 1833. His owner was Miguel Antonio Herrera.[108] Brown also mentioned Adeshina's link to Havana and saw the birth certificate as well.[109] While no proof exists that would definitively link the baptismal certificate to Adeshina, there is at least a record of a Remigio lucumí, whose last name was Herrera, being baptized in Havana Province.

Another version stressed that he entered Cuba through Matanzas and established very strong ties in the region, bonds that later proved advantageous to what appears to be a conscious effort on his part to expand Lucumí religion to other parts of the island.[110] Esther Piedra, the widow of Rolando Cartaya, one of Adeshina's grandchildren who was born and raised in Matanzas, stated that her husband often told her that Adeshina was taken to work on a plantation in Matanzas. One day, she said, several of his countrymen recognized him, possibly because of his facial marks, three perpendicular lines on each cheek. According to Piedra, they recognized his religious standing and collected the funds to purchase his freedom. Once manumitted, Piedra stated, he moved to the town of Simpson where he eventually became the director of the Cabildo Lucumí Santa Bárbara, located at 175 Daoiz Street.[111] Piedra's account could have ties to a version collected by Brown that asserted that Adeshina's freedom was purchased by Ño Carlos, Adebí, a

babalawo who was by then living in Regla. Piedra's and Brown's versions contain numerous points of agreement.[112]

It is highly probable is that by the 1840s, Adeshina was living in Matanzas with Cartaya's grandmother Manuela.[113] Perhaps his definitive move to Regla in the 1860s was triggered by his union with Francisca Bulé (Buzlet, Bulet, Budele), who baptized Prudencio Vidal Sassibien (Salcibien, Salcebien, Sassebien, Sassivie, [Sagebien]) on August 12, 1856 and on February 12, 1859, baptized Damiana Guadalupe Sassibien, both born from her union with Julio Sassibien.[114] The last name suggests that he may have been linked to Don Julio Sagebien, the French engineer that worked on the construction of several Cuban railroads.[115] Both Sassibien and Bulé were free *morenos*: Francisca was Lucumí, and Julio may have been so as well. Because the children were classified as legitimate, it is highly probable that Julio and Francisca were legally married, but they probably separated after 1859. Adeshina and she were not married, though, as in 1881, he was listed on the census as a widower.[116] There is no other mention of Julio in the Matanzas parish records after Damiana Guadalupe's baptism. Conceivably, after Adeshina's first wife passed, a romantic fling ensued that precipitated his and Francisca Bulé's escape to the neutrality offered by the small Havana town where he seemed to have already established connections.

Controversy surrounds Adeshina's African origin as well. While all sources agree that he was Lucumí, some of his descendants believed he was from Oyo, while others related him to Ijesháland (*Yesá* or *Iyesá* in Cuba). Piedra repeatedly said he was Oyo and claimed her husband told her so many times. The Ijeshá association is based on his facial scars, but according to Samuel Johnson, the first historian of the Yoruba, tribal marks

were not common among the Ijeshá.[117] Additionally, based on the available photographs of Adeshina, the marks on his face seem to be more in line with those from the regions of Egba and Ijebú.[118] If indeed these marks are Egba or Ijebú in origin, Adeshina's Oyo connection seems more likely, given the expansion of Oyo into that region in the eighteenth century.[119] It would also explain his strong connections with Egbado Lucumís in Regla and Matanzas.

All the same, Adeshina did seem to have certain contacts with the Ijeshá in Matanzas. Cartaya, Adeshina's grandson, and his wife were both active members of the Ijeshá Cabildo de San Juan Bautista, founded in 1848 by two brothers, Pablo and Cayetano García. There was no Pablo García registered in the baptismal ledgers, but a Cayetano García was christened in June 1828. He was registered as Lucumí and belonged to the estate of Don Lorenzo García. Perhaps Cayetano or Pablo was the person to whom Esther Piedra referred when she claimed that she and her husband were both linked to the *cabildo* by their ancestry and declared herself one of the last living descendants of its founders.[120] Hypothetically, Adeshina's connection may have resulted from his relationship with Manuela Cartaya who could have been Ijeshá. In March 2001, Piedra's health was very frail, and a hacking cough ended the interview abruptly. Shortly thereafter, she passed away, surely taking significant historical information to her grave. Piedra's family *cabildo*, however, remains in Simpson, on Salamanca Street, and is still active today. Sadly, its current directors are not as well versed on the organization's history.[121]

It seems probable that Adeshina traveled often to Havana. Brown suggested that he may have been a "favored" slave and given licenses to travel outside the plantation.[122]

His ability to travel could support the idea for Adeshina's possible encounters with other Lucumís in Havana and Matanzas. Archival evidence indicates that he had established a presence in Regla sometime in the 1850s or possibly earlier, as is suggested by ledger entries in which he appeared as the godfather. On February 23, 1851, he christened María Telesfora Gómez, child of the Lucumí María de Regla Gómez, and that same year, on July 19, he baptized María Enrique y Camila Garro, daughter of Ma Juana Garro, also Lucumí. These baptisms suggest that it is very probable that by 1851, Adeshina was commuting between Regla and Matanzas, in all likelihood taking advantage of the expanding railroad system that connected both regions.[123] As a *babalawo* and director of a *cabildo* in Matanzas, religion was surely a motivating factor.

Once established in Regla, Adeshina established the Cabildo Yemayá, possibly during the first half of the 1860s. The cabildo was a joint venture between Adeshina and the *abegís* (drum makers) Atandá, and Ño Juan el cojo, Añabí, credited by Ortiz with being the sculptors who created the first Cuban set of traditional Oyo batá drums.[124] For the *cabildo's* inauguration, the carvers made a new set of drums, which they named *Voz de Oro* (Voice of Gold). These drums were carved from an exquisite piece of mahogany and were often compared in appearance and sound to a "beautiful woman."[125] Adeshina's daughter, Josefa Herrera Buzlet (Bulé), Eshú'bí, more commonly known as "Pepa," was born in 1863. Shortly thereafter, several cases of smallpox occurred in Regla. She was ordained for reasons associated with her health, in the second half of the 1860s, while still a young child. The *cabildo* was definitely active when she was ordained and subsequently presented before the *Voz de Oro* drums and the community in the ritual

known as *la presentación al tambor* (the presentation before the drum), which every novice must undergo after ordination.[126]

Josefa's mother was Francisca Bulé, whose orisha name was Atibolá. Prior to her relationship with Adeshina, Atibolá had at least three children with Julio Sassibien (Salcibien, Salcebien, Sassebien, Sassivie, Sagebien): Francisco, Prudencio Vidal, and Dámasa Guadalupe. Their presence in Regla is documented on several occasions. While living with her then common-law husband, Adeshina, at 31 San Ciprián Street in Regla, Atibolá's son Francisco died after a bout with what was diagnosed and recorded as gastroenteritis.[127] Francisco was a mason like Adeshina, and he was residing in a rented room in the interior of the house where his mother lived with her new husband. A Rosa Abrante was also a resident there, but it is not clear if she was living with Francisco or if she was another renter.[128] Adeshina, who had several children with other women, also lost a son by another marriage, Nazario Herrera, who passed away in March 1877 at the age of 33.[129]

Atibolá and Adeshina were not legally married until after their children were born. In the 1881 census, she is identified as "single," and Adeshina was registered as a "widower." His earlier spouse's name remains unknown. Teodoro, a son from one of his first relationships, also lived at the same residence with his wife, Rita Buzlet. The last name suggests that she may have been connected to Francisca. There is one Rita Bulé noted in the death registers who died in February 1883. The fact that Rita was buried in the church's cemetery *de limosna*—insolvent—casts some doubt as to her connection with Teodoro, as it is unlikely that Adeshina or Atibolá would not have assisted with her interment.[130]

In October 1875, the couple lost a son named Faustino. Like Atandá's daughter, he also perished to smallpox, complicated with "malign putrid fever."[131] Oddly enough there were problems with the child's documentation in the baptismal ledgers as well. For unknown reasons, on May 10, 1874, the day that his baptism was registered in Regla's ledger, Julio Salcebien was noted as the father, and the boy was given the Salcebien surname.[132] In addition, both Julio and Atibolá were identified as Lucumí, a first and only occurrence.[133] This is puzzling because in the death registry, Faustino is listed as a one-year-old boy, and Adeshina—native of Africa—and Atibolá—nationality not stated—are noted as his parents.[134]

Even though he was already at an advanced age, Adeshina had another child with Francisca, Marcelino Herrera y Bulé, who was baptized on June 6, 1876. He was at a very advanced age when he finally married Atibolá, probably to legitimize their children. Brown was told by the Museo de Regla's researchers that they married on October 26, 1891.[135] Many of the parish records included annotations in the margins about marriages that took place years after the christening had occurred, thus recognizing the child's birth as legitimate. Adeshina died in Regla on January 27, 1905, and several sources have stated that he was at least 100 years old. The Cementerio de Regla's books also noted that he and Atibolá were legally married. He was documented as 98 years of age.[136] If Marcelino was born in 1876, Adeshina had to have been close to 70 at the time of his last son's birth. Atibolá could not have been all that young either, though information about her passing was not found.

In Regla, Adeshina became an affluent man. Owning several properties in the town, this upwardly mobile person of color developed many significant interactions.[137]

The possible relationship between him and the high-ranking Andrés de Fonseca, captain of a Spanish war frigate and Military Commander of Havana, suggests that this was one of these relationships. On June 18, 1855, Herrera became the godfather of Sabino Lucumí, *emancipado* 13, who was consigned to Fonseca. As previously mentioned, Adeshina was a mason by profession.[138] It is possible that he had done some cement work for Fonseca. Brown noted that his marriage to Atibolá was witnessed by a "Regla businessman, a magistrate, a pharmacist, and a housewife."[139] Could Fonseca have been one of the men witnessing his marriage? More scandalous yet would be the idea that perchance, at one point, Fonseca could have sought Adeshina's assistance in other ways, maybe for religious guidance. It would not be totally unheard of as already by the 1850s, whites and blacks were beginning to exchange religious ideologies almost openly.[140] Even though he was Lucumí, Adeshina had also joined the Abakuá society, and as an African he enjoyed a high degree of respect amongst the members of the fraternity in Regla, Havana, and Matanzas.[141] Since the first official Abakuá society was founded in Regla and the first white society of Abakuás was founded in 1857, one hypothetical scenario of his friendship with Fonseca could involve an Abakuá connection.[142]

Simón Judas Tadeo Somodevilla, Oní Olá, was one of the more notable names listed among the children Adeshina christened in Regla. It is probable that he was the director of the SSB in 1900: an Isidoro Somodevilla was listed as director on the fraternity's regulations manual.[143] Oní Olá, who was a drummer and priest of Aganjú, would come to be the father of Miguel Somodevilla, Shangó Larí, one of the greatest Lucumí carvers and drummers of the twentieth century. He was a disciple of Adofó, a Lucumí drummer and carver whom Ortiz called the "first carver of the republican era."[144]

In his later years, Somodevilla was one of Fernando Ortiz's most important collaborators and one of two *reglanos* who provided him with the oral history of Lucumí traditions in the town, including the history of batá drums in Cuba.[145]

According to Ortiz, and surely Somodevilla as well, the first batá drums in Cuba were carved in 1830. One study has contested the 1830 date, but its author did not present any evidence proving otherwise.[146] Based on Henry Lovejoy's recent findings that support a previous Lucumí (and Oyo) presence in Cuba as early as the eighteenth century, it is quite possible that batá drums, or at least a prototype batá ensemble, were playing in Havana before the 1830 date.[147] Despite arguments to the contrary, the relationship between Oyo and batá drums is undeniable.

As oral history suggests and fieldwork continues to demonstrate, even in the presence of other Lucumí ethnies in Cuba, Oyo and Egbado cultural influences were dominant in Havana and Matanzas, the two regions that dispute the honor of being the birthplace of batá drums in Cuba. In other areas of Cuba where Lucumí practices were strong, batá drums were absent until the 1940s: bembé drums are the most common percussion instruments in *cabildos* throughout the Cuban countryside.[148] In both Havana and Matanzas, Oyo, Shangó, and batá drums are considered inseparable. Anyone even marginally familiar with Lucumí religious practices will immediately recognize the significance of Shangó in the ordination ceremonies as well as other religious rituals. Shangó was the patron orisha of Oyo, generally credited with the introduction of batá drums to the Oyo region, and/or as one of the few orishas that have ownership over these drums.[149] Clearly, there was a connection.

While it is puzzling that batá drums may be absent elsewhere in the Yoruba Diaspora where Oyo culture was just as or even more dominant, their absence does not invalidate the possibility that Cuban batá drums are derived from Oyo influence on the island.[150] Additionally, Lovejoy's study suggests that the 1830 date as documented by Ortiz is not at all that improbable, given the increasing presence of Lucumís in Cuba starting in the early 1800s and the growth in the number of Oyo casualties after the Hausa jihad reached Ilorin in 1817 increased the presence in the Americas of Oyo-Lucumí slaves.[151]

Adeshina was most definitely a principal catalyst for the networks that were created linking Havana, Regla, and Matanzas initially and later, further inland, Palmira and Cruces. In the late 1870s or early 1880s, he took his *comadre* Monserrate González, Obá Tero, to Matanzas and installed her as the new director of the Cabildo Santa Bárbara, then located at 184 Daoiz Street.[152] Obá Tero does not appear in any of the ledgers, possibly because she was not from Regla or Matanzas, and probably did not baptize anyone in Simpson. Ortiz linked her to a *cabildo* in Guanabacoa.[153] Additionally, Obá Tero is believed to have died around 1907, thus beyond the scope of the death registers examined for the present study. Nevertheless, she did leave documentary traces, especially in Matanzas. Documents in the Archivo Histórico Provincial attest to her presence in the town and involvement in the *cabildo's* affairs. In addition, oral history about this powerful woman abounds in the city. The house on Daoiz Street, where she initially lived, was later purchased by Dora García Oliva's mother. García Oliva still lives in the house.[154] By all means, Obá Tero was a significant actor in the evolution of Lucumí history and culture in Cuba.

Adeshina's relations were numerous. In the late1800s, he introduced the Ifá priesthood to Matanzas with the initiation of Ño Blas Cárdenas, Obánkole, an *olorisha* of Obatalá and respected herbalist who was associated with the Cabildo Santa Teresa, which is still active.[155] Cárdenas was well known in Matanzas in the 1880s, though at one point he was not cast in very favorable light. He gained notoriety in 1896 when he was arrested after being accused of attempting to poison a white woman. The case dragged on for two months, during which time Cárdenas sat in jail. Eventually, Cárdenas was freed and forced to pay a fine for illegally practicing medicine, but his reputation suffered as a result.[156] Sources stated that in Obá Tero's latter years, possibly when Adeshina himself was already too old to move around as he had earlier, Cárdenas was the *babalawo* who performed the sacrifices for her rituals. In the twentieth century, Cárdenas possibly joined his Ifá siblings in Palmira, in Cienfuegos Province, where he may have had godchildren of his own.[157]

In Palmira, Adeshina may be credited with the introduction of the region's Ifá lineages through his godchildren and his creole associates. Eulogio Rodríguez Gaytán (Gaitán), Ogundá'fún, better known as Tata Gaytán, is credited founder of Ifá worship in Palmira. Gaytán ordained the first *babalawo* in that town, Vicente Goytizolo.[158] Blas Cárdenas is another of the region's pioneers, but there may be some controversy in identifying him. It is possible that the Blas Cárdenas whom Adeshina ordained in Matanzas may not be the same Blas Cárdenas who is connected to Palmira. The former's Lucumí name was Obankolé, while the latter was known in Palmira as Abiawo.[159] Some *olorishas* from Palmira and vicinity are troubled by this enigma.[160] Interviews and fieldwork in Matanzas confirmed that Obankolé was ordained to Ifá by Adeshina.

Correspondence with David Brown stressed this as well. In fact, Brown stated that his sources revealed that after Gaytán was ordained, his godfather Olugere Kokó, Oyekún Mejí, sent him to Matanzas to study divination under Obankolé.[161] Abiawo, the Blas Cárdenas who is remembered in Palmira, is credited with the ordination of one of the area's Orisha pioneers. In Lucumí tradition, *babalawos* cannot ordain *olorishas* to the cult of their tutelary deities: they may only ordain other men into the cult of Ifá. At present, the most that can be asserted is that a Blas Cárdenas is credited to be a pioneer of Lucumí religion in Palmira, but two things are unclear: were there two men named Blas Cárdenas? If so, which Blas Cárdenas introduced what tradition?

Adeshina's daughter, Josefa Herrera Buzlet, Eshú'bí, performed the first Havana-style *asiento*—(literally "seating"; ordination)—of an olorisha in that town when she introduced Felicia Fernández (Ma Fea), Oloyomí, to the priesthood of Yemojá sometime around the turn of the century.[162] Eshú'bí followed her father's expansionist initiative, travelling often to Palmira for other ceremonies. Her absence from Matanzas is perplexing, given her strong links to the region. No one in Matanzas can recall any visits to the city by Eshú'bí. Regla was another story, though. There Eshú'bí became one of the town's most cherished Lucumí priestesses.[163] Like her father, she, too, christened a number of children, mostly descendants of Lucumís. Her death in 1947 caused great grief in the town and in Havana as well and was considered a loss of national importance, so much so that Ortiz attended her *etutú*—the Lucumí rituals performed upon the death of an *olorisha*—and her viewing; Bohemia magazine covered her funeral and burial.[164] Eshú'bí was the last great connection to Cuba's African past.

Expanding the Network—Matanzas and Contested Rituals

Matanzas was not all that different from Regla; based on the evidence, important networks were evolving there as well. Not surprisingly, Adeshina was at the heart of some of these, as advancing Lucumí religion was one of his primary concerns.[165] Yet, although he was one of the primary agents, Adeshina was not alone. Also crucial in the development of these networks was the legendary Monserrate González, Obá Tero, whom Adeshina had installed in the leadership position in the *cabildo* that he had previously directed in Simpson.[166] Many of the tales recounted by modern-day residents of Simpson about her activities and her stern character have all the trappings of a great epic. Obá Tero's legends in Simpson are a primary example of what Brown called "Stories of Diaspora," as they clearly elucidate narratives about "agency, struggle, [continuity and] discontinuity, and heroic achievement."[167] Even more, Obá Tero's struggles in Simpson are clear indicators of the many devices used by the Lucumís to resist Spanish acculturation by defending their culture and religion, ensuring their continuity, and extending hegemonic control over other Africans and African faiths in Cuba.

According to some accounts, sometime during the mid- to late-1870s, after a series of scuffles with rival Lucumí priestesses, Obá Tero departed Havana and relocated in Simpson. Oral tradition asserts that she refused to accept ritual alterations and innovations that were becoming popular in Havana under the leadership of the Oyo-Egbado priestesses Timotea "Latuán" Albear, Ajayí Lewú, and the renowned Ña Rosalía Abreu, Efunshé Warikondó, who, like Obá Tero, was from Egbado. These two priestesses argued that adaptation to their new home was necessary and change was

inevitable. Obstinately, Obá Tero would not concede, and the gossip, slander, and ritual magic that assailed her thereafter led to her leaving Havana. Possibly Obá Tero hoped to find greater support in Simpson, which until that time had not been affected by what she deemed were the unacceptable "inventions" of Efunshé and Latuán.[168]

Antagonism appears to have followed Obá Tero to Simpson. Three actions taken by this priestess during her years in Simpson, which were considered accomplishments by some and detriments by others, helped to establish her legacy. Depending on who tells the story, the timing of these events varies considerably, so it is difficult to definitively conclude in which order they transpired. All accounts, however, contain a constant degree of detail that supports them as reliable versions of actual events that transformed the nature of Lucumí religion in the town. There are significant junctions within the divergent narratives at which most sources are in agreement, enough to piece together a coherent approximation of what really happened. In addition, Obá Tero's undertakings also had important repercussions in fostering improved relationships between the Lucumís and other ethnies in the town, primarily the Ararás. By all accounts, Obá Tero was possibly one of the most influential women in nineteenth-century Simpson: she was certainly the founder of what would eventually become one of the most extensive Lucumí lineages in Cuba.

Obá Tero and Osha'bí

Interviews from the 1990s suggested that shortly after her arrival, the first of these three defining events occurred when Obá Tero decided to *arreglar*—repair—and "correct" the ordination rites of María Fermina del Pilar Goméz Pastrana, Osha'bí. Her first ordination

ceremony had been directed by Ño José, Ikúdaisí (Ikúdayisí), whom oral tradition maintains was Osha'bí's uncle. Unfortunately, his last name has been lost; so the legitimacy of their relationship cannot be confirmed. José Gómez Pastrana, a Lucumí, was baptized in San Carlos on March 30, 1828, but it cannot be categorically confirmed that he was Ikúdaisí.[169] Even when her actions created great conflict with Ikúdaisí—an "all-out war" that included *brujería* (ritual magic)—Osha'bí's ceremonial "repairs" provided Obá Tero with an opportunity to establish a reputation as a Lucumí ritual expert. The battle with Ikúdaisí, and the alleged recourse to *brujería*, was an unfortunate but necessary development in the larger scheme of things. It helped Obá Tero to further entrench the ironclad reputation that grew out of her clash with Shangó'bí.[170]

Obá Tero and Shangó'bí

Solid evidence has come forth suggesting that even before the controversies regarding Osha'bí, Obá Tero had an encounter with Aracelia "Arabia" Oviedo, Shangó'bí.[171] This, too, is a legend of epic proportions. Her descendants do not agree about exactly when the episode occurred. Both Obá Tero's and Shangó'bí's religious descendants stressed that the former's clash with the latter preceded the reparation of Osha'bí's ordination. In fact, some insisted that as a gesture of good will, Obá Tero made Shangó'bí the *ojigbona* (literally "eyes that guide me on the road [to ordination]"; the second godparent) for Osha'bí. Others denied this connection, countering that her *ojigbona* was Ateborá, an *africana de nación* (African-born woman).[172] It now seems clear that the initial accounts published in 2000 and 2003 were incorrect.[173] Clearly, risks of this sort illustrate some of the possible setbacks scholars may encounter when working with oral history. The

accuracy of this recounting of the events associated with the specific time frame during which they took place may have other ramifications. If the time frame for the Shangó'bí controversy is correct, it may mean that Obá Tero did not arrive to Simpson until the 1880s, possibly countering the oral testimonies that placed her there by at least the second half of the 1870s.

Several sources said that when Shangó'bí moved to Simpson from the neighboring town of Sabanilla del Encomendador, Obá Tero became apprehensive. Oral traditions suggested several possibilities. The most popular view stressed that Obá Tero's reaction was a strategically defensive move that resulted from her fears about losing her local authority in the town to the new contender. The less Machiavellian version contends that Obá Tero's response was proper so as to ensure that Shangó'bí's claim of priesthood was valid. At the time, the priestly legitimacy of the people who migrated from the countryside to the city was a constant source of controversy. Established *olorishas* in Matanzas and Havana often demanded that those asserting their priesthood provide irrefutable proof of their status or submit to ordination.[174]

Like Obá Tero, Shangó'bí was a priestess of Shangó, ordained by Ma Paula Alfonso, Adékolá, who had been a slave on a plantation called La Antonia in Limonar. In the 1850s, Julián Luís Alfonso Soler was the plantation's owner.[175] Alfonso Soler was also linked to the Triunvirato, the plantation that erupted in November 1843, inciting the era of the Escalera repression.[176] Shangó'bí was a creole, and her mother, Natividad Oviedo, is said to have been either Lucumí-born or descended. Based on their last names, they were probably linked to Esteban Santa Cruz de Oviedo, the sugar baron associated with the initial discovery of the alleged Escalera plot.[177] Given the proximity of all these

plantations, and her last name that may link her to Alfonso Soler, perhaps Adékolá witnessed one of the most famous slave insurrections in Matanzas, the 1843 Triunvirato uprising.[178]

Though little is known about the particulars, Adékolá ordained Shangó'bí in Sabanillas, sometime in the 1880s. One source stressed that Shangó'bí's *ojigbona*—second godparent—was Ma'delé (Omó Delé), an alleged sister of Latuán, estranged from her since their arrival in Cuba. Latuán stayed in Havana and Ma'delé was supposedly taken to a plantation in Matanzas.[179] Shangó'bí, sources said, was the first person ordained in Lucumí religion in Sabanilla, where a growing community of *olorishas* and *babalawos* had been living and practicing minor rituals since before abolition. The vast majority of these people shared Alfonso as a surname, suggesting that they were all linked to one of the sugar baron's estates.[180] Shangó'bí may have been the only person ordained by Adékolá, who passed away in 1899 while living on the San Cayetano estate in Santa Ana de Cidra, a short distance from the city of Matanzas. Germana Alfonso, an ex-slave of Congo descent on that plantation, had purchased the estate, and after abolition she allowed Adékolá to live there until her death.[181]

Exactly when Shangó'bí arrived to Simpson is unclear, but it must have been in the first half of the 1880s because, based on more recent interviews, it now seems highly probable that Osha'bí's ordination took place after 1886.[182] If Shangó'bí was Osha'bí's *ojigbona*, her encounter with Obá Tero had to have occurred before 1886. The religious link between the two women also places Obá Tero in the barrio by at least 1880, though probably preceding Shangó'bí's arrival. One source stressed that when Shangó'bí arrived,

Obá Tero had already begun making waves in Simpson—*ya estaba de todopoderosa santera en Matanzas* (she was already an *all-powerful* priestess in Matanzas).[183]

The dates for these events fluctuate with the source. Jorge Renier Brito, a *babalawo* from Puerto Nuevo who descends from Shangó'bí's lineage, believes that Osha'bí's ordination was later, in 1900, which would make Obá Tero close to 100 years old when it took place, as sources stress that she was over 100 when she died. What is certain is that all of these events had to have transpired within the approximately 25-year time frame during which Obá Tero lived in Simpson. Obá Tero died in 1907.

Sources were unsure if Shangó'bí already lived in Simpson or if she was there frequently because she had established a relationship with someone in the barrio, but whatever the case, her priestly status made her stand out. When Obá Tero learned of the presence of another woman claiming to be a Lucumí priestess in the town, she became very curious. Her interest peaked when she learned that Shangó'bí was preparing to ordain someone from Simpson, the creole Felipa Calderón, the daughter of Dolores Calderón, Oronké, who was Lucumí by birth.

Oral history has embellished many aspects of the legend, though most sources coincide on several key points. Most agree that Obá Tero was extremely upset. The grapevine and/or emissaries sent out on reconnaissance missions reported that Shangó'bí claimed to have been ordained in an *asiento* ceremony directed by a Lucumí priestess somewhere in *el campo*, even though Sabanilla was next door, so to speak. Felipa would become Shangó'bí's first *omórisha*. Although it is possible that she had participated in a few ordinations in Sabanilla, Shangó'bí had never "crowned" anyone herself. Astounding as the news was, Obá Tero's shock must have been exponential when she learned that

Shangó'bí claimed that her godmother, Adékolá, and her ordination tradition were *ará Oyo*—from the land of Oyo. If Omó Delé truly was Shangó'bí's *ojigbona*, Obá Tero's uneasiness may have been greater: she was allegedly the sister of her arch-rival in Havana, Latuán.

Adeshina, Atandá, and Añabí may have visited San Cayetano in 1874 to consecrate a set of batá drums for the growing Lucumí community in the area, adding another level of complexity to the legend. If Adeshina and Obá Tero were as close as oral history claims, he could have vouched for Shangó'bí's status. The oral archive is silent. Perhaps because she felt her authority being threatened, perhaps out of jealousy, or perhaps both, Obá Tero confronted Shangó'bí and questioned her legitimacy. Obá Tero demanded that if Shangó'bí intended to function as a priestess in Simpson, she would have to submit to (re)ordination. At this point, the accounts of the versions of the story diverge. Ultimately, though, most concur that Shangó'bí agreed to Obá Tero's exigencies. Two variants confirmed that Shangó himself eventually interceded in the feud. The first account reports that on the day that the new ordination ceremony was scheduled to take place, while all the *olorishas* were in the preparatory stages, Shangó'bí (in the back of the house) and Obá Tero (in the front of the house) were each possessed by Shangó at the same moment. "Mounted" by Shangó, each one ran toward the other, meeting in the center of the house, where they embraced. According to Alfredo Calvo, Obá Tolá, this was the official recognition that Shangó'bí needed to be granted permission to function in Simpson, and it did not come from Obá Tero. It came from Shangó himself.[184]

Despite the popularity of the account, Obá Tolá's story may have been a little hazy. He had a number of lapses, even in his better days. During an interview with Obá Tolá, he claimed that Osha'bí had ordained him, something that was later confirmed as inaccurate. His godmother was Osha'bí's stepdaughter Concepción "Concha" Gómez, Okofúnlorún.[185] In all fairness, though, Obá Tolá was the first to state that Shangó'bí had been Osha'bí's *ojigbona*. There is another rendition that differs from Obá Tolá's, however, and it is not only interesting but may be more accurate as well. The second account also involved possession, and is more in line with descriptions of Obá Tero's typical demeanor.

Allegedly, after the clash with Obá Tero and her agreement to the other priestess' demands, Shangó interceded, but not as Obá Tolá stated. As they were preparing the ceremony, a Yemojá priest who is remembered only by his first name, Tomián, began the ceremony when, unexpectedly, he was caught off guard and possessed by Yemojá. Tomián was an *Obá Oriaté*—(literally "king"; master of ceremonies for initiation rituals)—and Obá Tero and he were great friends, as he often helped her to perform ceremonies.[186] Obá Tero is said to have remained quiet and motionless when the orisha took hold of Tomián. Yemojá approached Obá Tero and swiftly stuck her hand inside the pocket of her apron from where she removed a lightning stone, allegedly wrapped in string and strips of cloth. Enraged by the priestess's dishonest behavior, Yemojá smashed the stone on the ground. That was the moment of the unraveling. Obá Tero was using *brujería* to control and "tie" Shangó'bí. When the stone was smashed on the ground, both Obá Tero and Shangó'bí were possessed by Shangó at the same time. Ultimately, it was

through Yemojá and Shangó's mediation that Obá Tero was forced to recognize Shangó'bí as a legitimate priestess, and the two women arrived at a truce.[187]

Eventually, Shangó'bí went ahead with her plans, and, maybe to Obá Tero's chagrin, ordained not one but two women in Simpson on the same day: Felipa Calderón, Bangboshé, and Alejandra Mestre, Oshún Bunmí. Thereafter, Shangó'bí's legacy grew in Simpson, where she eventually settled in a home she purchased on Velarde Street. She and Obá Tero, sources say, maintained an amicable relationship until the latter's death in 1907. Shangó'bí's *omórisha* were also known for their many godchildren, most notably Bangboshé; Bonifacia Alfonso, Oshún Gadé; and Adela Alonso, Odú'anlá. She passed away at the relatively young age of 50 in 1920.[188] A raging fire brought her life to a tragic end. It is rumored that she lit herself on fire while in a bout of serious depression she suffered after her lover abandoned her. While some of her descendants vehemently deny the legend, the rumors insist that the fire was Shangó's punishment. Her death was caused by her disobedience, pursuing a relationship with a man that Shangó had warned would bring her so much pain and sorrow.[189]

Obá Tero's apprehensions about Havana and Oyo's incursion into her region became reality after her death. Had she lived long enough, she would have surely had another major bout with Shangó'bí's *omórisha*, Adela Alonso, Odu'anlá. After the passing of her godmother in 1920, an orphaned Odú'anlá sought someone to continue mentoring her in the religin. Soon enough, she established a relationship with a *matancero* who resided in Havana, José Urquiola, Eshú'bí. He had been ordained in Havana by Julia Guerra ("*la china [de] Silvestre*"), Oshún Miwá, the wife of Silvestre Erice, Salakó, the director of a Havana *cabildo* that was part of the contestations of the

1900s.[190] Odú'anlá underwent the ritual known as *pinadú*—a rite of passage that establishes an *olorisha's* hierarchy as an independent elder and sanctions the creation of a new Orisha ilé, or house. Hence, Eshú'bí became her new godfather. There was one glitch in Odú'anlá's new relationship, though, that surely had Obá Tero rolling in her grave. Eshú'bí's practice of the religion, even when his lineage was originally Egbado, had acclimated to the Oyo-centric innovations introduced by Efunshé and Latuán. Once Odú'anlá returned to Matanzas and began officiating in the Havana-centric style, she brought to the region those same exact *inventos* that Obá Tero had resisted and fought so ardently against in Havana. Surely, from the spiritual realm, Latuán and Efunshé, with Shangó'bí by their side, were now convinced that they had been the true victors in *La División de la Habana*.[191]

Expanding the Network Further—Obá Tero and the Ararás

Whatever maliciousness may have marred Obá Tero's character from the other two events was made up for by the third and final one, a gallant act indeed. After the Osha'bí and Shangó'bí events, Obá Tero became involved in another process that in some ways may have healed old African wounds. Like the Lucumís, Ewe-Fon groups from Dahomey and the Yoruba enclaves west of Dahomey, known in Cuba as the Ararás, were not a numerically strong group during the nineteenth century. They were fairly active in Matanzas, however, especially in the town of Simpson and in other areas of the province. There were also some minor pockets of Ararás in Regla, Guanabacoa, Pogolotti, and other areas in Havana Province.

Sometime around the 1850s, one group founded the Cabildo Arará, but it cannot be confirmed as the Cabildo Arará Sabalú del Espíritu Santo with which Obá Tero eventually joined forces. This early Cabildo Arará was definitely active by at least 1857, when it appeared on a list of similar associations requesting permits to hold *bailes al estilo de su nación* (dances in the style of their nation). At the time, they were on under the direction of Narciso Jiménez.[192] Dos de Mayo was one of the two streets where the Cabildo Arará was said to be located—the other was Daoiz Street, which was where Adeshina founded his Cabildo Santa Bárbara.[193] Milagros Palma Zequeira, Kashe'enjué, has always known Daoiz as:

> *…la calle de los cabildos…*"*mira que habían cabildos aquí", decía mi mamá…mira…mira…allá atrás estaba el cabildo de los congos, en el patio…al fondo….allá atrás, y allá al lado, en la casa de Dora, estaba el de Monserrate [Obá Tero]. Los carabalís estaban a medianía de cuadra y en Velarde también, y había otro por allí…por allí…aquí cerquita, que era de congos también. Dicen que una vez, el de nosotros [Arará Sabalú del Espirítu Santo] estaba allá abajo…en la esquina…"* (…the street of the cabildos…"Were there ever cabildos here," my mother used to say…. Look…look…back there [signaling toward the back of the *solar*, or tenement, where she lives] was the Congos' *cabildos*, in the yard…in the back…back there, and next door [actually three houses down], in Dora's house, was Monserrate's [Obá Tero]. The Carabalís were halfway down the block and on Velarde, too, and there was another one over there…[signaling north toward the sea]…around there…right close by, which was

Congo also…. They say that at one time, ours [Arará Sabalú del Espirítu Santo] was down there…on the corner….” [The “corner” she referred to was actually two blocks down, Dos de Mayo Street.])[194]

To the east of Daoiz Street were Velarde, Salamanca, and Santa Isabel, all of which also had active *cabildos*. Evidently, Obá Tero was living in the hub of the barrio’s African effervescence, and possibly the city’s as well. Most of Simpson’s streets vibrated so much to the sounds of Africa that whites frequently expressed their displeasure. In July 1843, practically on the eve of La Escalera, several neighbors lodged complaints with the chief of police regarding the noise stemming from the *cabildos* in the barrio and the “*escándalo que causan los tambores y demás fiestas en estos*” (and the scandal caused by the drums and other feasts in these). “Given the growth of the population”—by which the writer surely meant “given the expansion of whites into other areas of the town”—he boldly reasoned that the “*cabildos* are now in the very center of the town.”[195]

The *cabildos* caused major controversies in the neighborhood. On July 11, 1855, José Urbano de Arredondo submitted a formal complaint against the Cabildo Arará and its directors. Arredondo lived on Daoiz Street, apparently on the same corner as the home in which the *cabildo* was located.[196] Citing Article 87 of the *Bando de Gobernación y Policía*, Arredondo claimed that the *cabildo* was improperly situated, as the law required that they all had to be located on the outskirts of the city.[197] Legislation of the sort became very strict after the Escalera repression.[198] The *cabildo’s* directors argued that they should not be penalized because the city had grown to incorporate areas that were once part of the outskirts, when the town was still an *arrabal* (slum). Two days later, the

mayor's office ordered that the *cabildo* move from its current location to a more appropriate area of the city and gave them two months in which to do so.

The governor's office acted more judiciously. They issued an order requesting that the police go to the neighborhood and ask the neighbors about the *cabildo* and Arredondo's complaint. The reports were very favorable, perhaps because the majority of the neighbors were Afro-Cubans. The report stated that the *cabildo's* directors had been renting the house from Don Antonio Guerrero for about three years, and during said time, "never has there been any disorder that required police intervention or complaints from any neighbor." In light of the news, it is possible that the Ararás were confident that they could win the debate and so refused to acquiesce. Almost a year into the conflict, on February 3, 1856, while the dispute was still being contested, Arredondo sent a note to a Mr. Morales, informing him that the Ararás were adamant about celebrating on that day and that they had received permission to do so from the police. Apparently, they were planning to observe the Catholic celebration of Our Lady of Candlemas, equated with Adañé, the Arará equivalent of Oyá, the Lucumí orisha of the winds and storms. Our Lady of Candlemas's feast day is February 2.[199]

In the days that followed the celebration, Felipe de la Cruz, the *cabildo's* director, was pleading with the governor's office. On February 23, he wrote a letter stating that the *cabildo* had been at that location for at least five years and was technically outside the city limits. He stressed that his was not the only *cabildo* in the area, and that Arredondo apparently had a personal vendetta with theirs because he was constantly harassing them. Interestingly, he may have written the letter himself, as the document does not state that

anyone else had written it, a practice commonly observed in cases in which a letter's author was illiterate.

According to de la Cruz, this had not been Arrendondo's first attempt to bring legal action against them: "with his verbosity and natural ignorance," he had attempted to do this on other occasions but had always lost. On March 8, the governor ruled that the *cabildo* could continue to celebrate its activities in the home. He specifically requested that the chief of police refrain from "presenting any opposition whatsoever to the *cabildo's* functions in the said location."[200] Arrendondo was not going out without a fight, however. On the May 13, he once again wrote, this time directly to the governor, discussing the particulars of the case from his point of view. The letter gave the impression that by now Arredondo was desperate and willing to go to whatever means might be necessary to accomplish his goal.

In the letter, Arredondo protested that despite the orders that had been handed down by the mayor's office, the Ararás repeatedly mocked this judgment and continued celebrating activities in the *cabildo*. He claimed to have complained to Mr. Foxa, the chief of police, who at one point accompanied him to the *cabildos* to request that they refrain from the drumming that was keeping his family awake at nights and obstructing the "repose of white families." Despite the police's orders, he alleged, the next morning the Ararás returned "with the greatest scandal to play their loud uproar, thus demonstrating their most complete mockery of what was decreed previously." The Arará's contempt, he argued, "deserved that they be made a public example and most seriously chastised." He demanded that the governor respect the rights of the "cultured

Matanzas…the second population of the island," referring once again to Article 87 and claiming that the *cabildos* were in violation of the law.[201]

His final appeal apparently met with the governor's disapproval. On May 16, the governor reissued his initial order in favor of the *cabildos* and sent it to the chief of police so that he could personally inform Arredondo. In addition, he asked that the neighborhood's watchmen ensure that there were no "scandals." Arredondo arrogantly replied that he would stand by his rights as a citizen.[202] Thereafter, the archives are mute. It is not known if Arredondo acceded or moved elsewhere, but regardless, the Arará *cabildo* remained in the contested location. What was extremely curious about this case was the governor's defense of the Ararás.[203] Is it possible that someone in the *cabildo* had "connections" in the governor's office? One scholar suggested that such relationships existed at times.[204] The complaints from others never ceased, though. As late as the 1890s, Matanzas's Afro-Cuban population had to contend with unremitting harassment from whites about African religious celebrations.[205]

In the 1870s, there was an Arará *cabildo* on Dos de Mayo Street, one of Daoiz's cross streets. It was surely active when Obá Tero resettled in Simpson. Documentary sources referred to it as the Cabildo Arará del Espirítu Santo, with Jacinto Rey as its director.[206] His last name suggests that he had been a Royal slave. Probably, like the vast majority of Simpson's people of color, he relocated to the city from somewhere else, which would explain his absence in the baptismal registers. While it cannot be definitively established that the 1850s Cabildo Arará that argued with Arredondo was this same fraternity, beyond doubt, Rey's *cabildo* was definitely the one with which Obá Tero established another significant alliance.[207]

When Obá Tero relocated to Daoiz Street, home to many African *cabildos*, she was just one of the many priestesses of the various African religious traditions that were active in the region. She was surrounded by Congos, Carabalís, Ararás, Mandingas, Gangás, and others. All of them were "good, christened Catholics" who frequently held dances *al estilo de su nación*—in their nation's style—as described in many requests for permits to hold these dances that the cabildo's directors submitted to the local authorities before any such activities. Clearly, more than dancing was going on. Soon enough, Obá Tero's shrewd and dogged nature, her stern character, and her unyielding personality attracted the attention of other Africans in the neighborhood. Dora Oliva, who resides in a house that once belonged to Obá Tero, stressed, "*Mi mamá decía que era muy seria; hablaba poco…era como todos esos viejos de antes que no hablaban, pero '¡hun, ten cuidao'!*" (My mother used to say that she was very serious; spoke little…she was like all of those old people from years ago that did not speak, but, "hmm, be careful!").[208] Add to this the reputation that spread all over the town after her "witchcraft" and Shangó's justice devastated Ikúdaisí's life following the squabble over Osha'bí.[209] *Olorishas* who still recall Obá Tero or have heard stories about her continue to associate her temperament with that of her tutelary deity, Shangó, the orisha of thunder and lightning and one of the most turbulent and tempestuous personalities of the Lucumí pantheon.

Some Ararás possibly shared rancorous memories of the Lucumís. Their close proximity to Yoruba/Lucumí territory in Africa, bred frequent interchanges between the two groups, and especially with their Egbado neighbors. Additionally, a Yoruba enclave in Dahomey, known as the Ajá region also contributed to the diffusion of Yoruba cultural elements.[210] The Egbado, who were subjects of the Oyo Empire, may have been in Cuba

before the Oyo as the result of increasing Dahomean raids into Oyo territory in the latter eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth. Oyo may have also transported Egbado men and women captured in their own eighteenth-century incursions into the region and sold them into slavery.[211]

Captured Egbado probably arrived in Cuba in the latter 1700s when Regla and Matanzas were in their infancy. Many of their traditions were dominant in Regla when the Oyo became a significant presence, and their hold on religious practice continued.[212] Obá Tero's move to Simpson helped extend Egbado conventions to the region, and in so doing, brought her into closer contact with her Arará cousins. Proximity was important in defining the many ritual and cultural similarities that they would come to share. In contrast to some of the ethnic tensions and disputes between *cabildos* that existed in Havana, for the most part, their relationship in Simpson was harmonious.[213]

Like the Lucumís, and the vast majority of Cuba's slaves for that matter, Ararás began arriving in the latter 1700s, but evidence suggests that they were never a sizeable population. Moreno-Fraginals found only 168 Ararás documented in the plantation records he studied covering the years 1760 through 1870.[214] Bergard, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia's study of the sale of ethnic groups in Cuba listed no Ararás at all.[215] The Ararás were not numerous in Matanzas, though they left traces in several Matanzas towns such as Jovellanos and Perico.[216] In part, their small numbers may have proven vital for developing greater relations with their Lucumí "cousins." Only 87 adult Ararás were baptized in San Carlos, and 83 children born to Arará parents were christened there; however, on only 8 occasions were the fathers of the baptized identified as Arará too—the rest were recorded as *desconocido* (unknown). Regla was no different. Of all the

Africans baptized in the town, 39 Ararás came to the church's font for baptism, and only 30 children were born to Arará mothers, all registered with a *padre desconocido*.

Though the Arará populations in Simpson and Regla were demonstrably small, unions and friendship between Ararás and Lucumís in Cuba were not uncommon. In fact, they may have been advantageous, given that their worldviews were so often intertwined. Many members of the creole generations were linked to one or the other ethnicity either through descent or religious affiliation. In nineteenth-century Matanzas, Obá Tero built an important bridge linking these two ethnic communities. Inseparable from the process as well were two women who were connected to the Arará by direct descent and religious traditions. One was a native Arará, María Merced Domínguez, Aliyiyá. The other was Flora Heredia, Afoare, a creole of mixed Lucumí and Arará descent.

Aliyiyá had been in Simpson for a number of years when Obá Tero arrived. They were contemporaries, as they were both in their late 60s or early 70s at the time.[217] A woman named Merced Domínguez is registered in 1844 as having baptized the newly arrived María de la Caridad arará, owned by Don Bruno Domíguez. If this is the same Merced Domínguez whom Obá Tero met, she had been in the city since at least the mid-1840s. The Merced in the parish record probably belonged to Don Bruno as well, though this cannot be confirmed from the information in the ledger.[218] It was a generally accepted trend, however, for new slaves to be baptized by either whites or "seasoned" Africans who had already been in Cuba for a while and proven their worth. These godparents usually belonged to the same owner as the person being christened. Colonial legislation favored this practice as well.[219]

It is not clear if the Merced Domínguez appearing in 1844 was the same person that is documented in the ledgers on several later occasions, which oral sources confirmed was the person with whom Obá Tero dealt when she arrived to Simpson.[220] The second Merced may have lived in a common union with a man named José Carmen, whose last name is not documented. Together, José and Merced had a daughter, Micaela Domínguez, who by 1861 appeared in the ledgers as a free black. Micaela became the wife of Mauricio Piloto, who may have been the same Mauricio Pilto, Abiawó, who was a priest of Shangó and a well-known drummer.[221] This second Mauricio Piloto was the grandfather of Felipe García Villamil, Ogún Deí, who, like his grandfather, also became a celebrated drummer.[222] Abiawó and Micaela had several children, including two sets of twins. All the children were baptized in San Carlos. José Laureano Piloto, their oldest son, was christened on November 1, 1853. He was followed by Julián, in 1860; Simón and Simona, the first twins, in 1861; Lucía and Luciano, the other set of twins, christened separately in 1867 and 1868; and José Agustín in 1872. Apparently, when the second set of twins was born, the boy, Luciano, did not fare well, as his baptism was delayed until January 1868.[223]

Aliyiyá was an Arará Savalú, from a region located north of Abomey, Dahomey's capital, and could have been sold to Cuban traders as a casualty of several battles between Dahomey and Oyo. In addition, Dahomean kings often sold politically troublesome people into slavery. Among these were numerous women, some of whom were palace residents or wives.[224] During the eighteenth century, Oyo and Dahomey had several military scuffles. By the first quarter of that century, Oyo was already involved in the export of slaves for sale to the traders at the coast. Dahomey had begun its territorial

expansion during these years, ravaging the coasts and provoking great turbulence in the region. Oyo's enterprise with the Europeans was threatened by Dahomey's push. Between 1724 and 1727, several Dahomean invasions of coastal ports brought Oyo's might to bear upon them, and by 1730, Oyo had conquered Dahomey and made it a tributary state.[225] The Dahomean kings attempted to shake off Oyo's yoke on several occasions during the century, resulting in further military skirmishes.[226] These battles undoubtedly produced numerous captives that both states subsequently exported to the Americas.

Egbado was no stranger to Oyo's military campaigns. The Oyo presence in the region possibly had its beginnings in the seventeenth century; however, formal Oyo dominion over the territory may have been established later, during the eighteenth century. It is very likely that Egbado war captives were sold as slaves. Though these campaigns started around the second quarter of the eighteenth century, these events coincided with the British seizure of Havana and the consequent growth of the Cuban slave trade.[227] During the remaining years of the eighteenth century and well into the early nineteenth, Oyo expanded into the Egbado region and establishing new towns. Oyo historian Robin Law has suggested that in some cases, they also conquered existing towns to impose Oyo dominion in strategic locations. This conquest would indeed suggest that the Egbado were an early Lucumí group, present among the population of slaves shipped to Cuba in the eighteenth century.[228]

Oral evidence and published sources may reinforce this claim. One Cuban Orisha lineage recalls two enigmatic founders whose Spanish names are not known. Historically, the lineage's descendants have always stressed their Egbado ancestry. The enigmatic

founders are known as "Malaké la grande" (the big one) and "Malaké la Chiquita" (the small one). The Lucumí names attributed to these hypothetical founders may have been derived from the Yoruba *Amala* or *Omala*, the name given to the ruler of the Imala, an Egbado subgroup, conquered by Oyo sometime after 1754.[229] Mounting evidence suggests that Malaké was not the name of any particular person per se. Instead, *Malaké* was an African designation derived from the words *Amala* and *ké*, the Lucumí/Yoruba term for "small." This was the appellation given to an eighteenth-century Lucumí *cabildo* by its affiliates. It is more likely that "Malaké la grande" was the name used to refer to the *cabildo* or to the lineage itself. Conceivably, "Malaké la chiquita" was applied either to the successor of the initial founder(s) or a group that split off from the original *cabildo*.

Alfredo Fernández, Bangboshé Awapitikó, is two generations removed from an early twentieth-century Lucumí priestess of Egbado origin, Abelina Ponce de León, Shangó Ladé. He learned of her through the teachings of his godmother, Francisca Estervina Saenz Estrada, Adékolá. Bangboshé grew up hearing his *iyálorisha's* accounts of the past and is a virtual walking encyclopedia of his godmother's renditions of Lucumí oral history. Based on those discussions, he believes that Malaké was the ethnicity of a woman known as "Sofi [Sofía] amalaqué, Changó de Chakuta."[230] Bangboshé averred that his godmother continuously brought up Sofi's name whenever they discussed their Orisha lineage. In addition, Adékolá told him that Sofi originally lived in Matanzas and came to Havana in the latter nineteenth century.[231] Bangboshé's testimony, despite its third-hand origin, provides further weight to arguments for the existence of an Egbado *cabildo*, and not a person, called Malaké and therefore to the argument for an early Egbado presence in Cuba as well.

But yet more evidence supports the theory of Egbado's earlier presence. Ortiz's account of the Egbado influence in Regla and the importance of specific women, such as Ynés Zayas García, Yeyé T'Olokún, Matilde Zayas, Bawení, and Josefa Herrera, Eshú'bí, in later years, should not be dismissed. In his writings, Ortiz concluded that the original roots of Regla's Lucumí traditions were laid down by the Egbado. Ortiz's assertion is significant. Despite the town's founding in the late eighteenth century, historical evidence clearly points to its growth in the nineteenth in direct relationship to Havana's advance.[232] Its African population was minor during the town's fledging years, but as the nineteenth century unfolded, many Africans made Regla their home. People like Yeyé T'Olokún, Atandá, Añabí, and others are believed to have been in the town possibly as early as the 1830s. Oral evidence stresses that they were all Egbado.[233] Most definitely, and regardless of their numbers, Arará and Egbado-Lucumí people of color established a presence in Cuba during the latter eighteenth century, no doubt sold into servitude by Oyo and Dahomey.

Sociologists and oral traditions also argue in favor of the greater significance of women in the transfer of cultural values and religious ideologies to the subsequent generations.[234] The number of women exported from Africa never exceeded the enslaved male population; however, their importance is colossal regardless of their lesser numbers. Women, as the principal socializing agents, played the greater role in the transmission of African culture to their descendants. In most measures, African women were also influential in passing down some of their religious beliefs and worldviews to whites as well.[235] When reference is made to the endurance of Lucumí religion in Cuba, there is no doubt that women laid the foundations. While men were continuously active as *cabildo*

capataces (overseers), the evidence is clear that Arará and especially Lucumí women were the ones directing the ritual action for these two traditions in Matanzas and Havana as well.[236]

The Lucumís are a prime example of socialization and its relationship to proximity. An article in the *Antislavery Reporter* commented that "the Lucomi . . . are said to be the most docile and industrious of all the negroes that are imported [to Cuba]."[237] Fredrika Bremer, the Swiss traveler, also remarked about the Lucumís' character when she wrote: "Luccomees . . . appear to be among the noblest tribes of Africa."[238] Surely, based on the number of rebellions that the Lucumí incited, Bremer's was not necessarily the most accurate perception. Nonetheless, her opinion, which was shared by many at the time, may have had its advantages, for many Lucumí women worked as domestics, thereby giving them more access to the master class.[239] The interaction with the master's home and potential influence over his children through the nurturing relationships that ensued, served as an important vessel for hybridity.

On the whole, the Lucumí could not have been the only ones exerting influence, as is clear from an interview with Bárbaro Cansino, whose mother was Afoare's *hija de crianza* (raised as if she were Afoare's own child). Cansino, who grew up in Afoare's home, considers himself her grandson, even if they shared no genuine kinship.

> *Todas ellas eran cocineras, sirvientas…trabajaban en casa de los blancos…de los ricos… cocinaban y limpiaban y atendían a los muchachos…hasta comadronas… muchas ayudaban a las blancas a parir… La mamá de Milagritos [Milagros Palma Zequeira]…esa mujer*

> *cocinaba que ¡se acabó! Milagros aprendió a cocinar con ella. Ah, mira. Milagros también cocinaba en casa de unos blancos, pero eso ya es más pa'cá [para acá]* (All of them were cooks, servants…. They worked in the homes of the whites…of the rich ones…. They cooked and cleaned and took care of the children…even midwives…. Many helped the white women to give birth…. Milagritos' [Milagros Palma Zequeira's] mother…that woman cooked [so well that the world came to an end]! Milagros learned to cook with her. Ah, look. Milagros also cooked in the home of some white people, but that is more this way [closer in time]).[240]

The presence of women among the enslaved populations on board New World bound ships was generally lower than that of males.[241] In many West African regions, women were more integrated into the social fabric and thus were sold less often than men.[242] The only exception to the rule seems to have been among the Igbo, the progenitors of Cuba's Carabalís.[243] According to Paul Lovejoy, more Igbo women were shipped to the Americas than those of any other ethnic group.[244] In Dahomey, women generally exerted a considerable degree of power.[245] Female labor provided the infrastructure that allowed Ouidah to thrive. Perhaps Dahomey's most notorious port, where men controlled the slave trade and many other aspects of life, Ouidah was known for its female porters. They outnumbered the male porters; they also controlled the markets, tended and harvested the fields, and performed several important social functions essential to the coastal town's harmonious functioning.[246] It is highly probable that the Ararás never had a strong presence in Cuba, so Arará women were necessarily

few.[247] The distance between the inland Savalú (Sabalú) territory and the coast could be another reason for the group's diminished presence in Cuba.

The parish records suggest that in Regla and Matanzas, the Lucumí female population was much greater than that of the Ararás. In Matanzas, Lucumí women in represented about 31 percent (434 of 1,393) of the total figures for their ethnie; in Regla, they were approximately 21 percent (60 0f 281). Although the sample from the ledgers is too small and limited to only two Cuban towns, the evidence indicated that among the Ararás, the number of women was not greatly superior to that of the men. Of the 87 Ararás who appeared in San Carlos's baptismal registers, 46 (53 percent) were female. The number of women who were recorded in the death registries was significantly lower: 29 (41 percent) out of a total of 71. Regla's figures were even lower. There, the male Ará population registered in the ledgers was greater than that of the females: 24 males to 16 females baptized, and of the 57 that appeared in the interment registers, 25 (44 percent) were females.

Ararás, Lucumís, and the Continuity of Rituals and Traditions

Any *olorisha* familiar with the current Ará ordination ritual will find an unmistakable Lucumí influence that derives from Cuba and not Africa. The Egbado Obá Tero and the Savalú Aliyiyá joined forces in Simpson to reform Ará religious practices in the town. Consciously or not, they were making history. Oral accounts relate various versions of the events that transpired in Simpson, some of which are exceedingly mythologized.[248] Like small towns the world over, Simpson is a hotbed of established fact mixed with myths and fables, compounded by intrigues born from rumors and gossip. As the saying

goes, *pueblo chico, infierno grande* (small town, large inferno). Varying accounts exist of the events by which these women became allies. While the Lucumí tend to tell the story "like it is," the Ararás embellish it somewhat, a defensive mechanism to preserve their legitimacy and dignity. In all cases, the narratives indicate that the actions of these two women were guided by human ingenuity and the recognition that there was power in unity.

When Obá Tero moved to Matanzas, she introduced several practices that were until then altogether unknown or were the purview of a limited and powerful group. With Osha'bí's "reparation" ritual, Obá Tero established the *asiento* tradition in the city, which might not have been practiced there before her arrival. This tradition is referred to as a "seating" because during the ritual process, the devotee's tutelary orisha is literally placed on the person's head, the pinnacle of human existence. The *iyawó*, or novice, is thus "crowned" with the orisha that was seated on the head. For reasons that remain muddled, the *asiento* tradition prevailed mostly in Havana and its immediate surroundings. Beyond question, in the Matanzas countryside and other areas of the island, the more popular tradition was the *santo parado* (standing saint) or *santo de dotación* (work gang's saint). In Cuba, the *parado* system apparently has strong links with the Ijeshá. All the *parado cabildos* in Jovellanos and Cárdenas that practice this tradition claim to be Ijeshá.

In the *parado* traditions, orishas were consecrated for the community and housed in a *cabildo* or temple, reminiscent of the Yoruba compound or household practices. Through inheritance, possession, consultation with the oracles, or some other means, a person was chosen from amongst the members of the immediate family to administer the

needs of the *cabildo*, the community, and most important the worship of the temple's orishas. Some *cabildo* leaders received the "call" to worship from the orishas, either through dreams, revelations, or as a consequence of a favor that was granted by a deity, which they in turn reciprocated by establishing a *cabildo*. The selected caretaker, or the temple's founder, submitted to a series of ceremonies that established his or her status as the principal *olorisha* of the *cabildo*. After being so empowered, this individual could perform cleansing rituals, divination, offerings, sacrifices, and other rites for the compound or community, ceremonies that elsewhere were typically performed by an ordained *olorisha*—an *asentado*.

Possession also conferred an important status on the individual, and it was inseparable from the office. All *santo parado olorishas* were "mounted" by their orisha, and sometimes by more than one. Havana *olorishas*, who arrogantly contend that *la universidad [de la religion] está en La Habana* (the [religion's] university is in Havana), mock the *parado* tradition and the "horses" of multiple orishas.[249] *Havaneros* refer to anyone possessed by more than one orisha as a *cabeza de vaca*—literally a cow's head, but more akin to the English "mad cow." Even when the community considered this person as an olorisha because he or she attended to the temple's deities, by the tenets of the *asiento* tradition, the person was not duly ordained into the priesthood—he or she was not "crowned."[250]

Sometime after introducing what she unreservedly believed was *the* orthodox Lucumí ordination ceremony, several sources concur that Obá Tero shared the rituals with Aliyiyá and her followers. Precisely what motivated the exchange of ritual protocol between the two women is unclear. Surely, their ethnicity and "national" origins were

factors, as both had grounds to resent Oyo influences. Exchanges of this type had occurred before, in Africa. The Lucumís and the Ararás, who, after all, were "cousins," had traded rites and deities many times before in their homelands, with women usually playing a principal role in the transfer as priestesses.[251] Oyo had imposed the cult of Shangó, Obá Tero's orisha, in Egbadoland when they established their political control over the region.[252] Surely, both women were aware of the history, and especially Obá Tero, who was the priestess of an orisha that arrived to her birthplace less than five or six generations before she was born.

Traditionally, most sources stressed that the Arará were not ordaining people in nineteenth-century Simpson: "*solo lavaban cabeza y presentaban al tambor*" (they only washed [a person's] head and presented [the person] before the drums).[253]

"Washing" a person's head was a ceremony analogous to the Catholic baptism in that it marks the devotee's initial entry into the faith, without submitting to a full priestly ordination. This approach is not unique to Cuba. Hatian Vodou, which has been considerably influenced by the Ewe-Fon peoples, and to a lesser degree by the Yoruba, observes a similar practice known by an identical designation, *lave tet*.[254] The Arará head-washing ceremony, as practiced before Obá Tero's intercession, functioned as a basic introduction to "Arará-ness," a way of retaining a unique cultural identity in a remote land. Washing the head, and even more so the presentation of the individual before the drums, served a number of purposes. Besides welcoming a new member to the religious family, it also provided a temporary release from the pressures of life for an Afro-Cuban in the nineteenth century. Drumming communicated to God, the ancestors,

and the deities that another Arará had been born in Diaspora, but not a new *asiyó*—recently ordained priest/ess.

In 1872, Flora Heredia, Afoare went through the Arará head-washing ceremony, but her official ordination—her *asiento*—did not take place until 1896, something that the Arará passionately deny because they feel that it undermines their legitimacy.[255] Despite the Arará's discomfiture, this was a historic moment, as it marked the establishment of the strongest bonds that Lucumís and Ararás ever had on Cuban soil. Once again, the accounts vary. Osvaldo Villamil's 1999 version staged the story with all the trappings of an epic myth.[256] The most popular variant contends that Obá Tero ordained Afoare in the Lucumí tradition and then, for unspecified reasons, "turned her over" to the Ararás so that she could then begin ordaining others in the Arará tradition under a Lucumí-derived rite.[257]

Most versions reiterate various elements that are consistent and sensible in light of the final outcome. By far, all accounts coincide on the role played by two deities: Oshún, the Venus of the Lucumí, and the Arará fodún (alternate spelling of *vodún*, or deity) Towossi, equated with the Lucumí Yewá, divinity of femininity, innocence, and death. Similarly, all renditions agree that Obá Tero, Aliyiyá, and Afoare were the key individuals. Finally, even when some Ararás refrain from acknowledging it, everyone familiar with the incident understands that there was an exchange between Obá Tero and Aliyiyá and that as a result the Arará began ordaining others into the priesthood of the *fodúns*. The specific details associated with the case are of little consequence when confronted with the obvious result of the arrangement: the Arará priesthood could now prosper.

Before Obá Tero, the Ararás, for reasons that will probably remain unknown, could not ordain anyone into the priesthood. Maybe Aliyiyá was not familiar with all the requirements to perform the Arará rites. For sure, there were few known Arará priestesses in Simpson. Sources mention only two from the days before Obá Tero: Aliyiyá and María Josefa Libero, Odanowá. Eventually she and Aliyiyá became *comadres* when they ordained Micaela Ruíz Arzuaga, Melofo, sometime after Afoare's *asiento*. It seems that if these ladies truly were two of a possible handful of ordained Ararás at most, once all the African priestesses expired, the Arará priesthood would presumably die with them. What the Afoare affair clearly confirms is that by sharing the secrets of the Egbado-Lucumí initiation rite with these priestesses, Obá Tero facilitated the continuity of the Arará religious tradition in Cuba by giving birth to the Ewe-Egbadó system that is still followed today.

Even if neither woman was consciously redressing past wrongs that originated in Africa, their association suggests that their shared, unpleasant experience, suffered in the homeland at the hands of the Oyo, made their Cuban initiative a reactive one. It is just as plausible that Obá Tero's alliance with Aliyiyá and the Savalús was a way of ensuring that Havana and the new Oyo-centric "inventions" arising there would not eventually encroach on Simpson.

Although layers of intricacies surfaced through the review of these ledgers, they revealed details about several famous Lucumís that elucidate some of the processes that transplanted cultures traverse in their transcultural journey. These details, when coupled with evidence from oral traditions, bolster the scholarship with clearer indicators of the interconnectivity that existed between these communities. In addition, they uncover the

many layers of complexities that the members of these communities had to contend with as they excavated their own niches on foreign soil. In retaining their identity through their religiosity and their hegemonic grip over their faith and its practices, the Lucumís, Ararás, and many other African groups became Afro-Cubans and adjusted their ancestral religions to the island's setting. As these people were transformed and amalgamated, so, too, were their cultures and philosophies, both becoming Cuban in the process. Numerical dominance had little to do with their ability to persevere.

The ledgers helped to recount many stories and confirmed significant details that reaffirmed the many legends recounted by Lucumí oral traditions in Regla and Matanzas. The evidence suggested that even when the Lucumí community was not preponderant in Cuba, they were steadfast in their intentions to retain their identity as a people. Furthermore, consciously or not, they ensured that it reached future generations. The webs that connected all of these people through related religious traditions, and in several regions of the island, certainly served as mediums for the transmission of their cultural legacy. As supported by Eshú'bí's status in twentieth-century Regla and the respect that is still elicited by the mention of the names of people such as Yeyé T'Olokún, Obá Tero, and Adeshina, these Lucumís ensured that their legacy would survive, even if it had to contend with another religion that it eventually grew to respect and adopt, even if superficially, because of the various experiences that the two faiths had come to share in Cuba. Certainly, there can be no doubt that regardless of their numbers, the Lucumí were a potent force in the retention of African culture and the development of Afro-Cuban identity.

Notes

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[87] David H. Brown, *Santería Enthroned: Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 76.

[88] Roger Bastide, *The African Religions of Brazil—Toward a Sociology of the Interpretation of Civilizations*, trans. Helen Sebba (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) 96; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 74.

[89] Otero, *Afro-Cuban Diasporas*, 66; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash,* 21.

[90] Fernando Ortiz, *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1981), 452-53; John Mason, *Olookun: Owner of Rivers and Seas* (Brooklyn: Yoruba Theological Archministry, 1996), 19.

[91] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886. DSCN5414.

[92] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 6, 1860-1874. DSCN4560, 4561, 4596, 4616, and 4662.

[93] Fernando Ortiz, *Los tambores batá de los yorubas* (La Habana: Publicigraf, 1994), 145-53; Miguel Ramos, "The Empire Beats On: Oyo, Batá Drums and Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," (master's thesis, Florida International University, 2000), 142-47.

[94] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 6, 1860-1874, DSCN4662 and 63, 13 August 13, 1873; Ángel de León Matéu, Oloyadé, interview with author, Regla, Habana, Cuba, September 24, 1999; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 82.

[95] I appreciate Dr. David H. Brown's input on this topic, which he has researched for a number of years. He graciously exchanged ideas with me about the Villalongas and provided some details on Francisco Villalonga. David H. Brown, email correspondence with the author, May 17, 2013.

[96] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 6, 1860-1874, DSCN4498, February 15, 1863; Ángel de León Matéu, Oloyadé, interview with the author, Regla, Habana, Cuba, September 24, 1999; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 81.

[97] Ortiz, *Los tambores batá*, 145-53; Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 142-47.

[98] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886, DSCN5541, April 10, 1875.

[99] Recording of a conversation with *Obá Oriaté* Rodolfo "Cuco" Dominguez, *Igbín Koladé*, Havana, Cuba, 1977. This recording is owned by *olorisha* Ángel Riaño, Talabí, now residing in Miami, who shared it with the author. It is unclear if Ña Ynés was Filomeno's actual birth mother or "mother" in a figurative sense, possibly because of having raised him or ordained him into the priesthood.

[100] Mason, *Olookun*, 18.

[101] "Married with the black Lucumí Ynés Zayas, from which marriage [he] leaves a son as [his] successor…"

[102] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886. DSCN5713; ESSSS, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 6, 1860-1874, DSCN4606.

[103] MR, Censo de Regla, 1881, Tomo II.

[104] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 73.

[105] It was suggested that he left Matanzas after the 1844 Escalera ordeal fearing his participation in the conspiracy would be discovered.

[106] African Origins: Portal to Africans Liberated from Transatlantic Slave Vessels, accessed July 23, 2013, http://african-origins.org/african-data/detail/76644.

[107] See Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 322n53; Mason, *Olookun*, 18.

[108] Pedro Cosme, historian and director of the Museo de Regla, interview with the author, Regla, Habana, Cuba, September 30, 1999; Luís Alberto Pedroso, researcher, Museo de Regla, conversation with the author, Regla, Havana, Cuba, September 30, 1999.

[109] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 65, 317n2.

[110] Pedro Cosme, historian and director of the Museo de Regla, interview with the author, September 30, 1999; Esther Piedra, widow of Herrera's grandson, Rolando Cartaya, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000; MR, Archival collection, Regla, Habana, Cuba, consulted June 15, 1998, September 30, 1999, and March 17, 2008. Also, on Adeshina's expansionist campaign, see Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 278.

[111] Esther Piedra, widow of Herrera's grandson, Rolando Cartaya, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000; I have been at the location of Adeshina's *cabildo*, first on October 5, 1999, and numerous times thereafter in the years that followed.

[112] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 317–18n4.

[113] Ibid., 322n53. Though there were several people with the Cartaya or Cartalla last name, among them some Lucumís, there was no one named Manuela Cartaya noted in the baptismal records or in the death registries.

[114] ESSSS, Catedral de San Carlos, Matanzas, Cuba, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 23, 1853-1857, August 12, 1856, and libro 24, 1857-63, February 12, 1859; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 322n53.

[115] Óscar Zanetti Lecuona and A. García Alvarez, *Sugar & Railroads: A Cuban History, 1837-1959* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 115.

[116] AHC, Fondo de Gobierno General, leg. 268, no. 13545, "Padrón de Contribución Extraordinaria para

Subsidio de Guerra…Correspondiente al Pueblo de Regla, 1872-1873"; MR, Censo de Regla, 1881, Tomo II; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 322n53.

[117] Johnson, *History of the Yorubas*, 108.

[118] Ibid.; R.C. Abraham, *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba* (London: University of London Press, 1958), 300-01; Mason, *Olookun*, 18; *Babalawo* Alexander Rodríguez, Osá Mejí, conversation with the author, Miami, Florida, November 3, 2008.

[119] Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire c. 1600-c. 1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 2nd editor (Brookfield: Gegg Revivals, 1991), 92-933.

[120] Esther Piedra, widow of Herrera's grandson, Rolando Cartaya, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000 and March 19, 2001.

[121] José García, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, June 29, 2010.

[122] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 78.

[123] Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, 167.

[124] Fernando Ortiz, *Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana*, [1952] 2 vols. Reprint (Madrid and La Habana: Editorial Música Mundana Masqueda S.L. and Fundación Fernando Ortiz, 1996), 2: 221-24.

[125] Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Música Cubana (henceforth CIDMUC), *Instrumentos de la Música Folclórico—Popular de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1997), 2:339.

[126] Josefa Herrera died in 1947. CR, libro de defunciones, consulted September 1999 and March 2008. Ángel de León Matéu, Oloyadé, interview with the author, Regla, Habana, Cuba, September 24, 1999; Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 98; Lázaro Torregoza, Mayodunmí, interview with the author, El Cerro, Habana, Cuba, December 30, 2004, and March 31, 2008.

[127] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886. DSCN5736, June 30, 1886; Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 155.

[128] MR, Censo de Regla, 1881, Tomo II.

[129] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886, DSCN5577, March 14, 1877.

[130] AHC, Fondo de Gobierno General, leg. 268, no. 13545, "Padrón de Contribución Extraordinaria para Subsidio de Guerra…Correspondiente al Pueblo de Regla, 1872-1873"; MR, Censo de Regla, 1881, Tomo II; ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886, DSCN5673; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 322n53.

[131] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 7, 1874-1887. DSCN5551, October 17, 1875.

[132] This was the spelling of the name used at that time in the death registry.

[133] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 7, 1874-1887, DSCN4676, May 10, 1874.

[134] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Defunciones de Pardos y Morenos," libro 5, 1866-1886, DSCN5551, October 17, 1875.

[135] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 78, 317-18n4, 322n54.

[136] CR, libro de defunciones, consulted September 25, 1999, and March 19, 2008.

[137] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 78, 317-18n4.

[138] AHC, Fondo de Gobierno General, leg. 268, no. 13545; "Padrón de Contribución Extraordinaria para Subsidio de Guerra…Correspondiente al Pueblo de Regla, 1872-1873"; MR, Censo de Regla, 1881, Tomo II. Adeshina, living at San Ciprián #31, was documented as a 70-year-old widower and masonry worker.

[139] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 78, 317-18n4, 322n54.

[140] Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, *Cultura Afrocubana—El Negro en Cuba, 1492-1844* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1988), 1:213.

[141] Esther Piedra, widow of Herrera's grandson, Rolando Cartaya, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000.

[142] Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 75; Enrique Sosa Rodríguez, *Los ñañigos en Cuba*, 2nd ed. (La Habana: Casa de las Americas, 1982), 118; Castellanos and Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana* 3:213-14; Shubi L. Ishemo, "From Africa to Cuba: An Historical Analysis of the Sociedad Secreta Abakuá (Ñañiguismo)," *Review of African Political Economy* 29, no. 92, Africa, the African Diaspora and Development (Special Issue, June 2002); Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 10; David H. Brown, *The Light Inside—Abakuá Society Arts and Cuban Cultural History* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 14; Ramón Torres Zayas, *Relación barrio-juego abakuá en Ciudad de La Habana*, (La Habana: Fundación Fernando Ortiz, 2010), 3.

[143] Reglamento de la Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos bajo la Advocación de Santa Bárbara (La Habana: Imprenta La Biblioteca, 1900).

[144] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 7, 1874-1887, DSCN4797, December 13, 1879; Ortiz, *Los instrumentos*, 2:223; Ramos, *The Empire Beats on*, 160.

[145] *Babalawo* and Drummer Pipo Peña, Ogbé'yonú, interview with the author, Miami, Florida, February 6, 2000; Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 160.

[146] Amanda Vincent, *Bata conversations: guardianship and entitlement narratives about the bata in Nigeria and Cuba* (PhD dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2006), 123-33.

[147] Henry B. Lovejoy, *Old Oyo Influences on the Transformation of Lucumí Identity in Colonial Cuba* (PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2012), 163-72.

[148] Julio Fantomas, Ewimoyó, interview with the author, Versailles, Matanzas, Cuba, October 6, 1999; Francisca Sotomayor, Osha Inle, interview with the author, Jovellanos, Matanzas, Cuba, August 14, 2000; Félix "Cheo" González, Oshún Yumí, interview with the author, Cárdenas, Matanzas, Cuba, August 14, 2000; Agustín Hernandez, Ogún Funshó, interview with the author, Palmira, Cienfuegos, Cuba, March 23, 2001; Aldo Sotomayor, Omó Ogún, interview with the author, Jovellanos, Matanzas, Cuba, August 11, 2002; Enrique de León, Jundesí, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 11, 2002; Jorge Reiner Brito, "Raíces Lucumies de La Antonia y San Cayetano" (unpublished manuscript), 8.

[149] Darius L. Thieme, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Yoruba Musical Instruments* (Phd. dissertation, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, 1969) 175; Ayo **Error! Main Document Only.**Bankole, Judith Bush, and Sadek H. Samaan, "The Yoruba Master Drummer," *African Arts* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1975): 55; Pierre Fatumbi Verger, *Orisha: Les Dieux Yorouba en Afrique et au Nouveau Monde* (Paris: Éditions A.M. Métaillé, 1982), 132; Judith

Gleason, *Oya—In Praise of the Goddess* (Boston: Shambhala, 1987), 300; Ademola Adegbite, "The Drum and its Role in Yoruba Religion," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 18, no. 1 (1988): 20.

[150] Vincent, *Bata conversations*, 102-3.

[151] Lovejoy, *Old Oyo*, 168.

[152] Ramos, "La División de La Habana: Territorial Conflict and Cultural Hegemony in the Followers of Oyo Lukumi Religion, 1850s-1920s," *Cuban Studies* 34, (2003): 45.

[153] Ortiz, *Los tambores batá*, 147

[154] Dora García Oliva, Alonamí, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 15, 2000.

[155] While members of his *cabildo* in Matanzas, as well as some of his religious descendants, referred to Cárdenas' Orisha name as Obánkole, in Palmira there is a Blas Cárdenas named Abiawo. It is not yet confirmed if it is the same person. Osvaldo Cárdenas Villamil, priest of Babalúayé, interview with the author, La Marina, Matanzas, Cuba, October 6, 1999; Esther Piedra, widow of Herrera's grandson, Rolando Cartaya, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 19, 2000; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 76; Agustín Hernandez, Ogún Funshó, interview with the author, Palmira, Cienfuegos, Cuba, March 23, 2001.

[156] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 774, leg. 7, "Solicitud a la Gefatura de policía de Distrito Norte contra el moreno Blas Cárdenas (a), Ño Blas."

[157] Agustín Hernandez, Ogún Funshó, interview with the author, Palmira, Cienfuegos, Cuba, March 23, 2001.

[158] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 76; David Brown, email correspondence with the author, September 30, 2013.

[159] Osvaldo Cárdenas Villamil, priest of Babalúayé, interview with the author, La Marina, Matanzas, Cuba, October 6, 1999; Agustín Hernandez, Ogún Funshó, interview with the author, Palmira, Cienfuegos, Cuba, March 23, 2001.

[160] Hugo Cárdenas, Eshú Miwá, *Obá Oriaté*, Facebook correspondence with the author, September 29 and 30, 2013.

[161] David Brown, email correspondence with the author, September 29, 2013.

[162] Mason, *Olookun*, 27; Agustín Hernández, Ogún Funshó, interview with the author, Palmira, Cienfuegos, Cuba, March 23, 2001; Brown, *Santería Enthroned,* 107.

[163] ESSSS, Nuestra Señora de Regla, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 7, 1874-1887, DSCN4841, 4854, 4864, 4886, 4895, and 4909.

[164] Herminia Del Portal, "Echubi Ha Muerto," *Bohemia* 39, no. 30 (July 27, 1947): 38-39, 65-66 and 72.

[165] Pedro Cosme, historian and director of the Museo de Regla, interview with the author, September 30, 1999; Brown, *Santería Enthroned,* 278.

[166] Ramos, "La División," 46.

[167] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 77.

[168] Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 146.

[169] ESSSS, Catedral de San Carlos, Matanzas, Cuba, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 13, 1826-1830, March 30, 1828.

[170] Ibid., 146; Ramos, "La División," 56-58.

[171] Alfredo Calvo, Obá Tolá, personal conversation with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, May 28, 2005; Pedro Galup, Obá Tolá, personal conversation with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, December 23, 2006 and July 2, 2010, telephone conversation, August 18, 2013; Jorge Renier Brito Santana, interviews with the author, Pueblo Nuevo, Matanzas, Cuba, March 31, 2008, May 1, 2009, and December 24, 2009, also email correspondence with the author, August 29, 2008, and June 1, 2013; Cristina Alfonso, Modeya, interview with the author, La Marina, Matanzas, Cuba, May 9, 2009; María Galván Herrera, email correspondence with the author, August 16, 2013; September 1, 2013.

[172] María Galván Herrera, Oshún Yumí, personal conversation with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 12, 2013. At the author's behest, Oshún Yumí consulted several sources in Simpson to confirm what others had already said. Given that this version countered details reported by this author in 2000, it was absolutely necessary to clarify the issue. While most sources maintained that the encounter with Shangó'bí indeed occurred first, two unnamed sources denied it. Ironically, one of the sources was Alfredo Calvo's son, Alberto Calvo, the first person whom Oshún Yumí asked because the house of the late Alfredo Calvo is across the street from where Oshún Yumí lives.

[173] Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*; Ramos, *La División*.

[174] Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 105-06.

[175] Alberto Perret Ballester, *El azúcar en Matanzas y sus dueños en La* Habana (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2007), 391; Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 110.

[176] Paquette, *Sugar Is Made with Blood*, 209; Pérez Jr., *Winds of Change*, 110; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash,* 48.

[177] Ángel César Pinto Albiol, "La Falsa Conspiración de la Escalera," in *El Pensamiento filosófico de José Martí y la revolución cubana y otros ensayos* (La Habana: Editorial Jaidy, 1946), 146; Paquette, *Sugar Is Made with Blood*, 10-11; Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection*, 96-7 ; Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash,* 6.

[178] José Luciano Franco, *La gesta heroíca del triunvirato* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978).

[179] Leonardo González, Omó Oyó Obá, interview with the author, Cárdenas, Cuba, August 15, 2000; Jorge Renier Brito Santana to author, email correspondence with the author, June 1, 2013.

[180] Jorge Renier Brito Santana, *El Curumaguey* (unpublished manuscript), and interviews with the author, Pueblo Nuevo, Matanzas, Cuba, March 31, 2008, May 1, 2009, and December 24, 2009, also, email correspondence with the author, August 29, 2008.

[181] Jorge Elías Brito, interviews with the author, Pueblo Nuevo, Matanzas, Cuba, March 31, 2008, May 1, 2009, and December 24, 2009, also, email correspondence with the author, June 1, 2013.

[182] Obá Oriaté Héctor Hernández, personal conversation with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, May 6, 2009. Hernández said that Flora Heredia claimed that Fermina Gómez, Osha'bí, had been ordained 10 years before her. Heredia was ordained in 1896, so Hernández asserted that Osha'bí had to have been ordained in 1886. It was imperative to confirm this information before finalizing this chapter. At the

author's behest, María Galván Herrera, Oshún Yumí, spoke with Hernández to confirm the information, and he responded as he had in 2009. María Galván Herrera, Oshún Yumí, email correspondence with the author, September 12, 2013.

[183] Jorge Renier Brito Santana, email correspondence with the author, August 29, 2008.

[184] Alfredo Calvo, Obá Tolá, personal conversation with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, May 28, 2005.

[185] Though most in Simpson believe that Okofúnlorún was Osha'bí's daughter by birth, in reality she was not. She was the daughter of Joaquina Gómez, Osha'bí's sister. Her baptismal registry, dated June 7, 1886, confirmed this. ESSSS, Catedral de San Carlos. Matanzas, Cuba, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 29, 1884-1887. For unknown reasons, Okofúnlorún was raised by Oshabí as if she were her own daughter.

[186] Antonio "El Chino" Pérez, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 16, 2000.

[187] Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 13, 2002; Milagros Palma Zequeira, Kashe'enjué, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, April 26, 2009; Cristina Alfonso, Modeya, interview with the author, La Marina, Matanzas, Cuba, May 9, 2009; Teresa Alfonso, Eshú Miwá, interview with the author, Matanzas, Cuba, May 2, 2009.

[188] Registro Civil de la Provincia de Matanzas, Acta de Defunción, Aracelia Oviedo, natural de Sabanilla, de 50 años de edad.

[189] Jorge Elías Brito, interview with the author, Pueblo Nuevo, Matanzas, Cuba, March 31, 2008; Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, November 5, 2010.

[190] Julia Guerra is better known among *olorishas* by her nickname "La China Silvestre," Jorge Luís Sánchez, email correspondence with the author, September 4, 2013 and September 5, 2013; see Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists—Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Brown, *Santería Enthroned*; Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality—Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Reinaldo L. Román, *Governing Spirits—Religion, Miracles, and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[191] See Ramos, *La División*.

[192] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Religiones Africanas, exp. 10, leg. 1, "Relaciones de cabildos existentes en la ciudad de Matanzas (1857-1878),"

[193] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 2082, leg. 21, f. 13, "Comunicaciones sobre el desalojo de la casa que ocupaba el cabildo arará."

[194] Milagros Palma Zequeira, Kashe'enjué, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 5, 1999.

[195] AHPM, Religiones Africanas, leg. 1, sig. 8, "Carta al Sr. Brigadier Gobernador de Esta Ciudad."

[196] There is some discrepancy in the documentation. It is possible that the *cabildo* was on Daoiz Street or on Dos de Mayo between Daoiz and Velarde. Both are given as locations for the *cabildo* in the document.

[197] Fernando Ortiz, *Los cabildos y la fiesta afrocubana del día de Reyes* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1992), 8; Philip A. Howard, *Changing History—Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in*

the Nineteenth Century (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 54-56.
[198] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 36, 51, 74, 127.

[199] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 2082, leg. 21, f. 13, "Carta de Urbano Arredondo al Sr. Morales," February 2, 1856.

[200] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 2082, leg. 21, f. 13, "Carta del jefe de policía al celador de San Francisco," May 8, 1856.

[201] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 2082, leg. 21, f. 13, "Carta de José Urbano de Arredondo al gobernador," May 13, 1856.

[202] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 2082, leg. 21, f. 13, "Carta del gobernador al jefe de policía," May 16, 1856.

[203] Martha Silvia Escalona, *Los cabildos de africanos y sus descendientes en Matanzas—Siglo XIX y primera década del XX* (Matanzas: Ediciones Matanzas, 2008), 47.

[204] Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 114.

[205] AHPM, Religiones Africanas, leg. 1, sig. 8, "Comunicaciones referentes a quejas sobre diferentes cabildos."

[206] AHPM, Gobierno Provincial, Negociado de Orden Pública y Policía, exp. 8228, leg. 70, f. 4.

[207] David H. Brown suggested a later date, 1880-95. Documentation and the name of the *cabildo's* director and its presence in later documents linked to the *cabildo*, support this earlier date. Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 74.

[208] Dora García Oliva, Alonamí, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 15, 2000.

[209] Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 146; Ramos, "La División," 56-58.

[210] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 151.

[211] Johnson, *History of the Yorubas*, 226-27; Law, *Oyo Empire*, 92-95; 113-17; A.I. A«iwaju and Robin Law, "From the Volta to the Niger, c. 1600-1800," in *History of Africa*, ed. J. F. Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1985) 1:422.

[212] Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 452-53; Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 145.

[213] Matt Childs, "Pathways to African Ethnicity in the Americas: African National Associations in Cuba During Slavery," in *Sources and Methods in African History: Spoken, Written, Unearthed*, ed. Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 126; Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos*, 80, 112.

[214] Moreno-Fraginals, *El ingenio*, 2:9; Moreno-Fraginals, *Africa in Cuba*, 190-91.

[215] Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market,* 72.

[216] Maximiliano Baró, interview with the author, Jovellanos, Matanzas, Cuba, August 14, 2000; Iraida Zulueta, interview with the author, Cárdenas, Matanzas, Cuba, April 30, 2009; Reynaldo Zulueta, director of the Casa de Odu *cabildo*, interview with the author, Perico, Matanzas, Cuba, April 30, 2009; Sociedad de Santa Bárbara, Arará Magino, fieldwork, April 30, 2009.

[217] Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, August 13, 2002.

[218] ESSSS, Catedral de San Carlos, Matanzas, Cuba, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libro 19, 1841-1844, DSCN2009, August 31, 1844.

[219] Perera Díaz and Meriño Fuentes, *Esclavitud*, 45, 52.

[220] Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, November 5, 2010.

[221] John Mason documented his Lucumí name as Abiawó Oshabilawo. My sources could not confirm this second name. Mason, *Olookun*, 27.

[222] María Teresa Vélez, *Drumming for the Gods–The Life and Times of Felipe García Villamil, Santero, Palero, and Abakuá* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).

[223] ESSSS, Catedral de San Carlos, Matanzas, Cuba, "Bautismos de Pardos y Morenos," libros 23 (1853-1857), 24 (1857-1863), 25 (1863-1869), 26 (1869-1876), DSCO6659, DSCN1578, DSCN1656, DSCN7738, DSCN7739, DSCN7744, and P1030758.

[224] Edna G. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard—Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 48.

[225] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 158-59.

[226] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 162-65.

[227] Sherry Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 39.

[228] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 92-93.

[229] Ibid., 93; Emmanuel Adeniyi, "FG not fair to us over LG — Omala," *Sunday Tribune*. Nigeria, April 13, 2012, http://www.tribune.com.ng/sun/royalty-a-festivities/7266-fg-not-fair-to-us-over-lg-omala.

[230] The term *chakuta* is in all probability a corruption of Jakutá, the stone thrower, another name for Shangó.

[231] Alfredo Fernández, Bangboshé Awapitikó, Facebook conversation with the author, February 6, 2013.

[232] Johnson, *Social Transformation*, 69.

[233] Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 452-53; Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 145; Ángel de León Matéu, interview with the author, Regla, Habana, Cuba, September 24, 1999.

[234] For examples, see Grazyna Kochanska, "Mutually Responsive Orientation between Mothers and Their Young Children: Implications for Early Socialization," *Child Development* 68, no. 1 (February 1997): 94-112; Amy Kennedy Root and Cynthia Stifter, "Temperament and Maternal Emotion Socialization Beliefs as Predictors of Early Childhood Social Behavior in the Laboratory and Classroom," *Parenting: Science and Practice* 10, no. 4 (2010): 241-257.

[235] I must recognize the value of the discussions I have had over the years with sociologist Teresita Pedraza. It was through her definition and understanding of this phenomenon that I initially grew to appreciate the

significance of this process in the transmission of African religion in Cuba.
[236] Matt D. Childs, "'The Defects of Being a Black Creole': The Degrees of African Identity in the Cuban Cabildos de Nación, 1790-1820," in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives—Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Jane Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 223; Barcia Zequeira, *La otra familia*, 137.

[237] "Eighteen Cuban Slaves," *Antislavery Reporter* 3, no. 2 (October 2, 1854): 234-39, in *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies*, ed. John W. Blassingame (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 319-20.

[238] Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World: Impressions of America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1853), 2:332.

[239] Blassingame, "Eighteen Cuban Slaves," 319-20; Rafael Duharte Jiménez, *El negro en la sociedad colonial* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 1988), 26; Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market,* 84.

[240] Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, November 5, 2010.

[241] Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550-1750—The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on African Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 167-68; David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 105.

[242] Hilary McD. Beckles, "Female Enslavement in the Caribbean and Gender Ideologies," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2009), 165.

[243] Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities,* 126, 142.

[244] Paul E. Lovejoy, "Identifying Enslaved Africans in the African Diaspora," in *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2009), 23.

[245] Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 5.

[246] Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving Port, 1727-1892* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004), 76-77.

[247] Gabino La Rosa Corzo, *Los cimarrones de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1988), 130; Rafael L. López Valdés, *Africanos de Cuba* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, 2004), 159.

[248] Obá Oriaté Héctor Hernández, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 5, 1999; Milagros Palma Zequeira, Kashe'enjué, interview the with author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 4, 1999, and August 19, 2000; Ramos, La "División," 59-60.

[249] In most traditions in which this phenomenon occurs, possession is referred to as a "mounting," similar to the manner in which a jockey climbs and sits upon a horse. The person that is possessed is considered a "mount" or "horse" for the deity.

[250] Adelfa Teran, Igbín Koladé, interview with the author, Miami, Florida, December 26, 1999; Francisca Sotomayor, Osha Inle, interview with the author, Jovellanos, Cuba, August 14, 2000 (Sotomayor was the granddaughter of Inés Sotomayor, one of Lydia Cabrera's principal informants in Jovellanos who was an *olorisha* of *santo parado*); Armando Cabrera, Eshú Tolú, interview with the author, Cárdenas, Cuba, August 14, 2000; Felix "Cheo" Gonzalez, Oshún Yumí, interview with the author, Cárdenas, Cuba, August

15, 2000; Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, November 5, 2010.

[251] Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 186-87; 190.

[252] Law, *Oyo Empire*, 104; 139-40.

[253] Milagros Palma Zequeira, Kashe'enjué, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 4, 1999, August 19, 2000, and December 21, 2004; Francisca "Panchita Chamalapo" Rodríguez García, Franlejo, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, October 5, 1999; Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, November 5, 2010, December 21 and 22, 2004.

[254] See Melville J. Herskovits, *Dahomey: An Ancient West African Kingdom*, 2 vols. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967); Karen McCarthy Brown, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 76, 271-72; Leslie G. Desmangles, *The Faces of the Gods: Vodou and Roman Catholicism in Haiti* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 87.

[255] Bárbaro Cansino, Julenso, Arará priest of Hebiosso, interview with the author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, December 20, 2004 and May 5, 2009; Obá Oriaté Héctor Hernández, personal conversation with author, Simpson, Matanzas, Cuba, May 6, 2009; María Galván Herrera, Oshún Yumí, email correspondence with the author, September 12, 2013.

[256] Ramos, "La División," 60.

[257] Leonardo González, Omó Oyó Obá, interviews with the author, Cárdenas, Cuba, August 15, 2000, and April 17, 2002.

Chapter IX: Identity, Culture, and Religion in Twentieth-Century Cuba

Africa in the Americas

Over a 500-year period, Africa has spread beyond the continent's physical boundaries. The slave trade, though horrendous, was one of the most influential processes in the history of Africa's expansion across the Atlantic to the so-called New World. It impacted both the original Africa and the emerging diasporic Africa. Like all diasporas, Africans carried centuries of practical and cultural sapience to many areas of the world. Nowhere has African knowhow been more influential than in the Americas, on the other side of the Atlantic, an ocean that borders several continents and separates two hemispheres. Without Africa, the New World could not have flourished, and the Old World would not be what it is today. The inverse is just as applicable, as undeniably, both regions impacted each other. Africa is as present in the Old World and the New as these are present in Africa. As Ivor Miller emphasized, African contributions were "foundational" components for American societies. The study of these components through the eyes of Africans and their New World descendants is intrinsic to developing a better understanding of Africa's history in the Americas.[1]

As Africans were stripped naked, bound, and forcibly carried off to new lands, the only elements that could not be taken from them were their culture and their identity: that accumulated wisdom of time. Africa resisted slavery, accommodated acculturative pressures on its own terms and to its own dictates, and ensured that its identity was not obliterated. Brazil, Haiti, and Cuba provide demonstrable evidence of African resilience. Brazilian Candomblé, Haitian Vodou, and the various African religious complexes of

Cuba all attest to the refusal of a people to abandon their identity.[2] The Lucumís would say that *un viejo amigo no se abandona por un nuevo conocido*—(one does not abandon an old friend for a new acquaintance).

James Sweet's thought-provoking study of culture, kinship, and religion in the Afro-Portuguese world is just as relative to other areas of the Americas where Africans were enslaved. Sweet studied the impact that Africans and African culture had in the Portuguese colonies, particularly Brazil, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For him, culture provided Africans with a "prism through which to interpret and understand their condition as slaves and as freed peoples."[3] Sweet's model is fitting for studying nineteenth-century Cuba, which shares a comparable history and many of the same ethnic contributors with Brazil. Africans in Cuba also resorted to their cultural "prisms" to interpret, understand, and reformulate their world. In so doing, they influenced and transformed the society that surrounded them, in the process imparting it with a distinctly African flavor.

Census statistics, the Voyages database, prior research on rural populations, parish records, and even the data from the Mixed Commission court confirmed what was basically a given: the Lucumís were not the most dominant ethnie in nineteenth-century Cuba. As was probably the case all over the Americas, it seems that in Cuba, the Congos were one of the two most represented ethnies, alongside the Gangás, who were more numerous in Cuba and possibly Puerto Rico than elsewhere. The data from the Regla and Matanzas parishes provided a fairly clear impression of their populations, and the figures resemble earlier studies. The cultural silence of the Gangás, the ethnie that competed with the Congos for numerical dominance, is a great enigma. Despite having been statistically

preponderant, they were not a culturally significant group. Referring to the Lucumí, Brown emphasized that "numbers [did] not guarantee enduring cultural influence.[4] The Gangás are a perfect example. In Cuba, Gangás left very few traces of their culture, a void that seems to have been present since the early to mid-twentieth century. Like the Congos, the relative presence of the Carabalís and Lucumís also appears to have fluctuated, especially after the 1830s. Based on the parish ledgers, in Cuba the Lucumís are contesting the Carabalís for third place.

The cultural evidence as well as the oral history gathered through fieldwork, interviews, and personal experience, however, paints a very different picture. Regardless of their numbers, the Lucumí exercised cultural dominance in Cuba and especially in Havana and Matanzas. The ethnies' cultural prevalence is so extensive that all the other African religious complexes have appropriated Lucumí elements and incorporated them into their own traditions. In addition, Lucumí religion has influenced non-African traditions as well. It is not difficult to perceive the increased association of Cuba's patron saint, Our Lady of Charity, with the color yellow, which recently has become the preferred hue for the virgin's attire, replacing the older blue and white depicted in images and lithographs.

The Lucumí influence on Catholicism is best depicted in the image of Saint Barbara on horseback. The Christian martyr is represented in her customary red and white attire with gold trimming, wearing a gold crown and seated on a white horse. In one hand she holds a chalice, and in the other, a sword. In times of turmoil, devotees invert the sword so that it points upward into the sky as if the martyr were at war. The belief is that she will help the devotee overcome impending afflictions. At the horse's

feet lay a stalk of green bananas and a basket of red apples. On the ground beside the horse, a white or red rooster raises its head to crow, and in some lithographs, a lamb is depicted in the background. The image's creator is unknown.

These symbols are definite indicators of the transformative processes that took place in Cuba when the Lucumís and their descendants Africanized Catholicism. Just as they had been subjected to Catholicism, many openly embracing it, Africans also influenced Catholic beliefs and iconography. Possibly due to their common relationship with lightning, storms, and artillery, and despite their gender differences, Shangó, the patron orisha of the Oyo Empire, was paralleled with Saint Barbara, a relationship that is noticeable since at least the last decades of the eighteenth century. All of the elements present in the image or lithograph of the martyr on horseback are directly linked to Shangó. The most foreign element to the Lucumís is the basket of apples; however, the color red, traditionally used for the saint's robes as well, is the ritual color of Shangó. Additionally, in Cuba, apples were appropriated by the orisha, becoming one of the most common fruits offered by devotees.[5] Instead of curtailing African "heathenism," Catholicism and its saints were reinterpreted, introduced in the Lucumí *habitus*, and often metamorphosed, becoming new Lucumí-Cuban expressions. Most significantly, it is arguable that African ideologies, iconography, and world views were imposed upon the Catholic ones, and not the other way around.

The religious rituals retained by the Lucumís in Cuba, in Pierre Bourdieu's conception, were of practical necessity and generally remained faithful to their African roots in the wake of their Cuban renaissance. Sometimes the functions these rituals fulfilled for the Lucumís were moderately redefined, making them amenable to other

Africans, as well as whites and even Chinese immigrants, but never losing sight of their basic form and origin. At other times, impractical or untenable religious elements or practices were allowed to dissipate, and aspects of the dominant culture deemed useful were reinterpreted, transfigured if necessary, and embraced to suit the needs of the new land. It is important to note that some of the interchanges between the two worldviews were predictable given the numerous similarities that both Lucumí and Catholic religions share.[6] In Cuba, all Africans' lives were "dominated by constant anxiety" and entangled in an unchanging and "uncertain struggle against uncertainty."[7] Lucumí ritual practices expressed the wishes or supplications of collective African distress on the island. As such, other African ethnies could easily identify with them. So, too, did it resonate with *el pueblo*, the common people whose bloodline was not pure and whose ancestors were neither noble nor *hidalgos* (nobles).[8] Surely, as Brown reasoned, there is not one but rather numerous currents underlying the ascent of Lucumí culture and religion and its transmission into the twentieth (and now twenty-first) century.[9]

Erecting the Pyramid—Fernando Ortiz

Don Fernando Ortiz's "godly" popularity among Cuban academics is only surpassed by that of José Martí, the island's *apóstol*. Lawyer, ethnographer, anthropologist, and historian, Ortiz was probably the most prolific Cuban scholar to date. Much has been written on Ortiz and his role in the formation of Cuban identity after the release of his first publication in Cuba, *Los negros brujos*.[10] Since his death in the 1960s, his work has been assessed by several, primarily non-Cuban, scholars and especially critiqued for the effects that the Lombrosian School had on his early thinking.[11] Cesare Lombroso, the

father of positivist criminology, authored the "prologue-letter" to Ortiz's 1906 book, and he wrote that he found Ortiz's ideas about the atavistic nature of *brujería's* (ritual magic) to be very well founded. He encouraged Ortiz to continue his studies of criminal ethnography and to acquire data on "cranial anomalies, physiognomy and the tactile sensibilities of delinquents and *brujos*, as well as in an equal number of *normal negroes* [emphasis mine]."[12] On July 11, 1906, *La Discusión*, one of the newspapers that was provoking an island-wide frenzy over witchcraft, reiterated Lombroso's position. The book was "at the forefront of a moment of true glimmer for our scientific world."[13] Ortiz became Lombroso's first Cuban protégé.

The 1973 edition of the book fared no better in its subjectivity. Echoing Lombroso's 1906 rationale, Alberto N. Pamies's prologue to this edition reflected some of the prejudices that were still entrenched in the minds of many Cubans of the era, many of whom were now exiled in Miami. A staunch defender of Ortiz's folklorization campaigns, Pamies had other opinions about African religions and culture. He wrote that the "black truth" had its realities, truths that were fortified by its roots. To "extirpate the damaging roots and fortify the healthy ones," scholars had to dig deep, which was what Ortiz had done in his book. Pamies recapped his support of Ortiz's central theme: African religions were atavistic and kept Cuba's blacks in a backward state, unable to achieve the "true freedom: mental liberty."[14] Sadly, almost 70 years had transpired!

Ortiz truly believed that *la mala vida cubana* (the bad life Cubans led) was a disease that could be remedied.[15] According to his initial theory, there were three major "races" in Cuba: whites, blacks, and "yellows," all of whom shared the island and contributed to *la mala vida*, with the black race transmitting the worst social disease of

all—“its superstitions, its sensuality, its impulsivity, in all, its African psyche.” Blacks were primarily responsible for Cuba’s *mala vida* because they “communicated” to the whites “their superstitions, their organizations, their languages, their dances, etc., and *brujería* and *ñáñiguismo,* their legitimate offspring, which have such significance in Cuba’s underworld.”[16] Certainly, Ortiz was influenced by his era, but undoubtedly more than just “influence” was at work here. It would seem that Ortiz genuinely supported these ideas.

Despite his highly condemnatory opening narrative, Ortiz was already demonstrating an understanding for other concepts that would bloom later in his career. His discussion of miscegenation is very explicit in accepting that interchanges between whites and blacks were influenced by the “extensive contact,” which by its very nature was “intimate … at the same time.” The black woman had been the catalyst by which the “black race” acquired the “impulse to progress, each time with greater development, which allowed it to awaken…and partly abandon the degraded social foundations in which her lack of culture detained her.”[17] Though the observation is as condescending as most of what Ortiz had to say in *Los negros brujos*, it does reveal some fundamental recognition, even if it at its most developmental level, of Ortiz’s later ideas about transculturation and the mulatto nature of Cuban culture and identity, espoused in his 1940 *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar*.[18]

The young and inexperienced Ortiz the lawyer, recently arrived from studying in Europe, was in the initial phases of becoming Ortiz the ethnographer, but some time had to pass for the transformation to be complete. Like those “polluted” whites he criticized for the adoption of “retarding black social vices,” Ortiz’s philosophies and thought

processes were also to be affected by his Afro-Cuban entourage, but he was not yet aware. By the 1930s, Ortiz had experienced a total paradigm shift—so much so that in some ways he apologized for his inappropriate use of the term *brujo*.[19] Ortiz became extremely Lucumí-centric and stoically accepted criticism for his past errors. At one point, he was called to task by his own student, Rómulo Lachatañeré, who criticized Ortiz for his "speculations in the field where…[anthropology]…studies criminology, failing in the selection of appropriate methods to discuss other aspects of the life of the Afro-Cuban."[20]

The Cuba that Ortiz that found in the early 1900s was not the island he left when traveling to Europe to study. Like most migrants, his memory of Cuba was idealized and did not reflect the actual state of affairs in his homeland. Despite his nostalgia, the island's realities could be understood only by first-hand experience and not as described in the newspapers and travelers' accounts that he avidly read. When he finally came home, Ortiz encountered a new Cuba suffering from social and political unrest and strained by racial tensions: an island in the midst of an identity crisis, exacerbated by its recent liberation from Spain and the challenges of establishing its individuality under a new imperial power. The impact of these changes must have unsettled him.

That particular facet of Cuba's history has been considerably reviewed in the scholarship.[21] Likewise, the interaction between Ortiz's newfound Cuba and the island's masses, primarily the Afro-Cuban community, has received recent scholarly attention.[22] Only one of the U.S. scholars who have studied these processes recently is an ordained Lucumí priest. Thus, in the literature, the interpretations of the subaltern's class's struggles with Cuban society and its legal system during the early twentieth century are

essentially based on an outsider's perceptions, that is, from an etic perspective. The emic approach—the insider's point of view—which focuses on the viewpoint of those people who were for long deemed to lack a history, will hopefully complement and bring a greater balance to the scholarship. This chapter focuses on the Cuba to which Ortiz returned but that he did not initially recognize for what it truly was.

Ortiz's pursuit of evidence to corroborate Lombrosian criminology's tenets transformed both his vocation and avocation. In the course of his legal career, Ortiz also doubled as an ethnographer and anthropologist, studying ritual paraphernalia that was confiscated by Havana's police during their many raids on *brujos* and *Ñáñigos*.[23] Eventually, he came to conduct fieldwork in Havana, in the midst of what he referred to as *el hampa* (the underworld), primarily among practitioners of Lucumí religion. A few months after the publication of *Los negros brujos*, Ortiz replaced the retiring prosecutor Benito Celorio.[24] His new appointment kept him abreast of the arrests and confiscations that were occurring continuously, granting him free access to inspect and attain greater familiarity with the items that were seized, actions that modern followers of these complexes believe he may have encouraged.[25] Ortiz's book advocated for stronger legislation, even capital punishment if necessary, to exterminate the *brujos*.[26] Ortiz's unsympathetic opinion placed him in the midst of the many legal proceedings against the "witches" brought before Havana's magistrates, who were surely frustrated by the increasing number of undeserved arrests after the Zoila incident. Just as exasperating were the court's efforts to pursue the generalized anti-witchcraft and de-Africanization campaigns in the face of the island's constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion.[27]

The Media

Beginning with the persecution of the Abakuás in the nineteenth century and continuing throughout the first quarter of the twentieth, African religions were continuously hounded by Cuban authorities, the media, and even the post-independence, interim U.S. governments. These campaigns continued well into the republican era, and though *el campo* was not spared, they were especially prevalent in Havana. Over and over again, *brujería* was the subject of small briefs in the press. "Tribunales y Policía" (Courts and Police) was a daily column in *La Discusión* that repeatedly included reports of witchcraft. "La Brujería en La Habana" and "El Ñáñiguismo en La Habana" were two daily features in *El Mundo*, often changing the name of the area to Cárdenas, Jovellanos, Matanzas, or anywhere accusations of witchcraft arose. "Policía," "El crimen de anoche" (Last Night's Crime), "Crónica de tribunales," "Sucesos" (Occurrences), and "La bestia humana" (The Human Beast), were also regularly featured in *La Discusión* and *El Mundo*. "La bestia humana" gave special attention to black-on-white crimes, such as the murder of Celia at the hands of Tin Tan, or cases of rape such as that of the young *morena* (black) María Suárez, attacked by the "beast" Anacleto Hernández, a Lucumí.[28] Allegedly, Hernández lured the girl to his room and abused her sexually. María, the brief stated, "experienced some disorders," perhaps psychological, and was of *constitución débil*—a weak constitution. While it cannot be affirmed categorically, it was quite possible to "read between the lines" at the likely insinuations.[29]

Even before Zoila, news about witchcraft- and *ñáñiguismo*-related arrests appeared alongside reports of mysterious disappearances, missing or murdered children, strange findings such as human bones and headless bodies, stolen chickens, and other

reports reflecting Cuba's *mala vida*, and especially the "bad lifestyles" of Cuban blacks. "White witchcraft" was not deemed all that much better, but the media seldom expanded on the topic, even though palmists, card readers, spiritualists, hypnotists, astrologists, and psychics advertised daily in the island's newspapers. Ironically, many of their advertisements often appeared on the same pages as reports of *brujería* and subsequent arrests.[30]

The world of medicine was also competing with popular cures, elixirs, revitalizing wines, pomades, pills, magical soaps, healers, and witchcraft. There was even an early "Viagra."[31] Though modern doctors increasingly considered these unorthodox and unscientific, magical and popular religious folk medicine had a long history of use in Europe, Africa, and Latin America. The competition of folk medicine with science was considered a threat to the latter's primacy in the modern world.[32] Cuba was not alone. Since the nineteenth century, Brazil had also been at the junction between traditional healing practices and modern medicine. The Brazilian Penal Code of 1890 criminalized spirit possession, love magic, and herbal folk healing as illegal practices of medicine.[33] Like Cuba, Brazil also had a large population of Africans and people of color, in addition to its indigenous population, many of whom had great understandings of herbs and their applications.

The many parallels that existed between these two countries are striking. Both had a large share of Congos and Nagôs (as they were called in Brazil) or Lucumís (their name in Cuba), two African ethnies that were well versed in the uses of herbs and roots that thrived in tropical forests.[34] Quacks, healers, and *brujos* were frequent fixtures in Brazil's and Cuba's newspapers, competing for readership alongside the advances of science and

modern medicine. *Curanderismo* or folk medicine, and healing through *brujería* were savage threats that had to be eliminated. Surely, Cuban medicine supported its persecution, if not its outright illegalization. Many of the articles that appeared in the newspapers played on these ideas.

On September 30, 1904, an article in *La Discusión* reported on the growing concern over grave robberies and the beheading of corpses for use in witchcraft.[35] Further down on the page, an article titled "Una curación que se presta á reflexiones" ("A Healing That Lends Itself to Reflections"), extolled the virtue of Alquitrán Guyot, an elixir that was promised to heal numerous health conditions for pennies a day.[36] The same page on which Doctor Taquechel advertised his "modern" pharmacy and drug store also featured a news story about a fugitive black chicken thief carrying a sack in which he hid the evidence of the purported act.[37] An announcement in bold red letters appeared at the bottom of *La Discusión's* front page on October 12, 1904: "Attention: The People's Health is the Supreme Law!" It repeated information from another journal, the "well reputed, scientific and beneficent newspaper *El Problema de la Tuberculosis*!" Right above that announcement, "Los grandes crímenes del día" described the disappearance of Bernardino Álvarez, a young boy who had spoken out "a band of men of color who were planting fear among the honest workers and modest businessmen" in the area of Quivicán and Güira de Melena, in Havana Province. Apparently, the men were involved in several crimes, including cattle theft and assault.[38] The boy's vanishing, the paper implied, was linked to the band's leader, "*el chino O'Reilly*," a mulatto with possible Chinese ancestry accused in the proceedings.[39] The article's startling character came through in the first paragraph, which made very clear insinuations about a recent wave of crimes involving

children. Following the death of Celia several cases had involved dead or missing children. Even when on the following day Bernardino's father, who had a prior criminal history, became the primary suspect, the injury that the writer's suppositions provoked could not be undone. The reporter exacerbated the already existing strains in Havana over the "dangerous" relationship of *brujería*, Afro-Cubans, and children.[40]

By linking the criminal activities to "the band of soulless men" from Quivicán, the author made a grander statement about the nature of these crimes—the majority of the accused in those cases were all people of color. (Interestingly, Zoila, the young girl whose death eventually outraged Cuban society against *brujería*, lived in El Gabriel, in *los campos* of Güira de Melena.[41]) Perhaps the newspaper and the writer were both pursuing a greater agenda, spreading the fear of blacks and *brujería* that was already impacting public opinion. Still, the role of the media in the creation of these opinions is only one facet.

The search for Bernardino went on for days. Finally, on August 22, a story reporting his "capture" appeared in the inside pages of *La Discusión*, after the situation had garnered headline spaced for days. Bernardino turned up in Limonar, in Matanzas Province.[42] He had been touring the country with an unnamed "negrito," visiting Havana where he remained for three days, then traveling to Unión de Reyes, Jovellanos, and finally Limonar. Initially, Bernardino said that he left his house not because of the "soulless men," but because his father gave him a "bad life."[43] The following day however, Bernardino reversed his story and said that he ran away because he feared that O'Reilly was going to hurt him. The curious thing is that he admitted to having followed all the reports that appeared in *La Discusión*. If he truly had, then, Bernardino surely read

the story about the execution of O'Reilly and his band. As was customary, La Discusión provided very explicit details about their last day of life.[44] So why did he continue his tour through the countryside? In an interview on August 23, the story changed once again: he had not read the newspaper reports, although he was aware that the suspects were dead.[45] A pattern developed that most reporters followed, especially after Zoila. If the affected child was white, blacks and/or *brujería* were generally held suspect—however, the inverse was seldom, if ever, the case.[46] Surprisingly, and possibly because it preceded Zoila's death, Bernardino's case was not specifically linked to witchcraft.

The Haitian Connection

The association of witchcraft with the disappearance, murder, and cannibalism of white children had Caribbean antecedents that began in Haiti, not Cuba. The Cuban statesman and historian José Antonio Saco wrote about the alleged dangers posed by *obia* during an era in which fear of insurrection akin to the Haitian revolution worried some Cubans. Commentaries of the sort surely drifted all over the Caribbean.[47] Living in the shadow of Haiti for over 100 years, Cuba modeled its campaign against *brujería* after the one on its neighboring island, a template that was already being used in the United States as well. In the 1880s, Spenser St. John published *Hayti or the Black Republic*, a book that like *Los negros brujos* provided macabre hyperbole about Vodou.[48] St. John had been the British consul-general in Haiti for more than 20 years, and from the very first pages of the book, his agenda was clear. His discourse about "fetish worship and cannibalism" in the island's rural districts justified the abandonment of the countryside by the "civilized inhabitants" who fled the region during the civil war that threatened to separate northern

and southern Haiti between 1868 and 1869.[49] The "mass of negroes of Hayti" lived out in the country, away from cities, where few "civilized people" ever visited, including clergy, except for a "few Christian priests" apparently stationed there "to give them a notion of true religion." There were no "superior local officers to prevent them practicing their worst fetish ceremonies."[50]

St. John stated that the most difficult chapter for him to write was the one on "Vaudoux Worship and Cannibalism…[including] the testimony of many experienced residents…[describing] rites at which dozens of human victims were sacrificed at a time." "At present," St. John stressed, "cannibalism is more rampant than ever."[51] The chapter on Vodou is ghastly.[52] To accounts about serpent cults, consumption of corpses, and the stealing and cannibalizing of children, he added a description of the alleged sacrifice of the "goat without horns," a young child, hung from the ceiling by her feet, whose throat was supposedly slit by a "Vaudoux" priest. The story was supposedly recounted by the archbishop of Port-au-Prince at a dinner function attended by St. John. According to the archbishop, the witness had been a French priest who, unable to prevent the sacrifice, reported it to the "indifferent" local authorities. Instead of seeking out the people responsible, they relocated the priest to the city for fear that his life would be at risk.[53]

The "goat without horns" sacrifice became a recurrent theme, appearing in U.S. journals in what also seemed to be media manipulation against Voodoo in the southern United States.[54] Reflecting St. John's work, these reports also spoke of serpent cults, "cannibalism and human sacrifice," and of course, a white girl strung from a rope whose head was cut off by a swift blow from a machete and whose blood was ritually

consumed.[55] Reports of African cannibalism and human sacrifices in the Caribbean were unremitting. Haiti, the island, was often described as a "City of Horrors" or associated with savagery and backwardness.[56]

In 1875, a *New York Times* article about Caribbean affairs described a *loup-garon* (werewolf) woman who was arrested at the very moment she was about to suck the life-blood out of a child.[57] In another, two ladies from Brooklyn, "elites" according to the writer, were detained on suspicion of smuggling weapons into the island. While they waited for the authorities to inspect the vessel, they stayed at the home of a Mr. Lowenstein. The ladies were interviewed by a reporter once they left Haiti. While their exact words are unknown, the writer's description was incredibly prejudiced: "Haiti is a little section of Central Africa within four days' sail of New York…. Voodooism flourishes, the darkest superstition is rampant, cases of cannibalism with infants and young children as the victims are becoming more and more frequent." No one unfamiliar with the "bestial brutality and utter disregard for all shame or decency that characterizes the Haytian negro" would understand what the two women felt while detained in Haiti.[58]

American "Voodoo" had a Haitian connection. After the onset of the strife in Haiti, many French citizens moved to Louisiana with their slaves, not a few of whom were Vodou practitioners. "Voodoo abomination of the colored men and women" was alarming the state of Louisiana."[59] *Working Roots* portrayed "indecent rites practiced by the negroes…of America…on a greater scale in New Orleans…where orgies" were regularly reported.[60] On June 24, one report claimed, "southern negroes propitiate the spirit of evil." The alleged discovery of remnants of an annual meeting in a forest where the skull, tibia, pelvic bones, and fibula of a child had been found intensified the hype.[61]

To the present day, the U.S. media, including Hollywood, mischaracterize and sensationalize Voodoo.

Some U.S. newspapers also reported Cuban events associated with the Abakuás, cannibalism, and *brujería*. The *New York Times* described the arrest of 153 Ñáñigos who had been caught performing a ritual that involved "freshly killed cock, with signs of its blood having been drunk, as is customary on such occasions."[62] Another discussed the "Nanigoes of Cuba," with rites based on those of the "African savages," whose followers had "retrograded, until, in truth, they themselves became little better than those savages." In addition to practicing barbaric rituals, the author stressed, the "nanigoes" were cannibals as well.[63] One article was significantly revealing, signaling the U.S. government's desire to eradicate the Abakuá tradition and indeed all African religions. Another report criticized Spain for sending exiled political prisoners to Cuba's Isle of Pines (today's Isla de la Juventud); though many of them were in reality agitating against the Spanish government, they had been accused of *ñáñiguismo*. The author ardently reproached Spain's proposed release of the prisoners as an opportunity to take revenge on the Americans in Cuba. He called for the "segregation" of the "Nanigoes," who were a "swarm of cut-throats, house burners and sneak thieves," and argued that force should be used against them, if necessary, to keep them from provoking havoc in Cuba by "plundering houses and plantations."[64]

Cultural, Political, and Ideological Collisions

The U.S. campaign against Afro-Cubans continued beyond the interim administrations. In 1910, one reporter compared the "American negro" to the Cuban. The latter was a

"different negro" because he was not like the "southern negroes" who had learned to "imitate the manners and customs of their white masters, forgot practically all of their barbaric customs…and…readjusted the remnants of their savage religions." Blacks in the United States became Baptists and Methodists and thus, the writer argued, "the American negro is civilized."[65] One important element in many U.S. reports was the oft-repeated description of Voodoo as a religion and not just as "savage" *brujería*. Some writers even recognized the association of African religions with Christianity.[66] Clearly, however, the vast majority of these articles were following very specific agendas with particular interests.

When the reprisals against *brujería* and the Ñáñigos increased owing to U.S. pressure in the early 1900s, the Abakuás, Congos, and Lucumís adopted different strategies to counter these attacks against their culture and religion. The Abakuás resorted to deception; the Lucumís became defiant, and both groups confronted their assailants with force and determination. Interestingly, the Congo's response was the least discernible of them all, which leads some to question their motives or rationale. A commentary made by a Miami-based *tata nganga* in 1993 may suggest the possible position adopted by the Congos in the early 1900s. During the historic trial that brought Ernesto Pichardo, Obá Irawo, and Lucumí religion before the U.S. Supreme Court over the issue of animal sacrifices, a group of *olorishas* was gathered at a religious function in Miami.[67] Everyone present was concerned that the court's ruling would make it illegal to offer sacrifices. The opinions went back and forth. In the midst of the interchange, one *olorisha* who was also a Tata Nganga, descended from a long line of practitioners, responded that if the court forbade animal sacrifices, "they"—and by "they" he meant the

paleros (priests of the Bantú religion)—would proceed as they had "cuando el lío de la niña Zoila" (during the mess [created by the death of] la niña Zoila). If the court did not find in favor of the Lucumís sacrifice ritual, thereafter, whenever a ceremony was to take place, they would use ritual magic to "close off the corners" (so that the police would not discover them) and "*taparle la vista*" (cover their eyes).[68] In retrospect, his statement was surely related to the strategy adopted by the Congos during the 1900s. The *palero* confirmed that while the Abakuá and the Lucumís contested the de-Africanization campaigns, the Congos resorted to using that which all three groups were being accused of: *brujería*.

Cuba's Bantú religion, usually called Palo Mayombe or simply Palo, is reputed to be primarily focused on magic, which practitioners and the lay alike generally refer to as *brujería*, mostly devoid of any pejorative meanings. The term predates Christianity, and its original significance lacked the more modern malefic connotations. After the advent of Christianity, *brujería* was identified as a heretical practice and gradually associated with Satan. The Spanish Inquisition aggravated the already entrenched biases against its practice, despite the popularity of healers, visionaries, and other "miracle-workers."[69] Religio-magical practices permeated medieval Spanish society, despite official condemnation.[70] Publications about magic and satanic pacts had abounded in Spain since medieval times. Banned by the Inquisition, the most renowned of these books was probably *El Libro de San Cipriano*, which contained a plethora of magical formulae.[71] Many of these beliefs, and fears associated with them, crossed the ocean in all directions. In Cuba, the Congos' reputation as powerful *brujos* grew in the nineteenth century, but

witchcraft was not a new phenomenon for the Spanish. The novelty was its alleged agents.

Africans from Mexico, Peru, and Brazil were tried by the Inquisition for numerous offenses. Herman L. Bennett wrote that at least 50 percent of over 1,533 volumes of Inquisition documents in Mexico involved accusations levied against persons of African descent."[72] After 1600, most of the cases associated with witchcraft, palmistry, and superstitious practices that were brought before the inquisitor in Lima involved people of color as well, but over the course of more than two centuries (1570-1820), actual accusations of witchcraft made up a mere 12 percent of the total. Inquisitors were relatively lenient with these cases, as they did not find them neither threatening nor worth the trouble of prosecution; however, though it was prevalent, witchcraft was not officially condoned.[73]

Many of the Mexican Inquisition cases—as was probably the case in Peru as well—were associated with Congos.[74] Scholars disagree as to the types of cases that attracted inquisitorial review, but most of the proceedings in the eighteenth century were related with healing or magical rites, love potions, and sexual bewitchment.[75] The link between Congos and powerful magico-religious practices, as well as their vast knowledge of traditional herblore, has been discussed often.[76] African magic, and particularly Congo *brujería*, were certainly not unknown in the Americas.

In Cuba, Congos and ritual magic have always been inextricably linked, regardless of the magic's character. "Beneficial *brujería*," according to Helg, was usually distinguished from African witchcraft. Initially, Congos and Lucumís were not spurned as *brujos* because they helped treat disease. The greater foe was Ñáñiguismo, but

Abakuás were not necessarily despised as *brujos*: they were mostly considered criminals. Whites in the nineteenth century were more concerned with the alleged existence of Canary Island witches than they were with African sorcery. In fact, like their Iberian predecessors, many sought the services of *brujos* to solve personal problems.[77] During the independence wars, Afro-Cuban healers assisted many insurrectionists as well. Presumably, a good number of these healers were Congos. For the most part, healer and African priests were synonymous.

As applied currently by Abakuás, spiritualists, and practitioners of Lucumí and Congo religions, the term *brujería* is definitely a vestige of the turn of the century and before. Like Ortiz and numerous other writers before him, Cabrera was still using the term *el brujo* to refer to Congo priests, despite scholarly arguments against its usage, as late as the 1950s.[78] In her view, all Cuban blacks were *brujos*. In later years, Helg suggested that the prevailing belief was that a "dormant brujo" lay inside every Afro-Cuban.[79] Generally, magic and other African rites were intended to produce the well-being of the society, but at times, Cabrera wrote, the actuality was "*brujo en provecho personal y detrimento del prójimo*" (*brujo* for personal gain but detrimental to his fellows).[80]

According to Stephan Palmie, by the beginning of the twentieth century, these stigmas about *brujos* had coalesced and "taken up a life of [their] own." The ideas that Ortiz spread in his book conjured a "phantasm of the African wizard" and led to the belief that discovering perpetrators of witchcraft was a means to an end—an efficient way to recognize and eradicate it.[81] Congos and Lucumís endured the same conditions and cruelties under slavery. Throughout the nineteenth century, their shared experience

was vital in uniting the two groups. Though we cannot know the exact details of the practices that were in place in the nineteenth century, modern Congo religion exhibits considerable Lucumí influence. The Congo spirits—the *nkisis*—are mostly known by Lucumí-cized Spanish names: Nsasi, Shangó's Congo parallel, is better known as Siete Rayos (Seven Lightning Bolts); Kalunga, the equivalent of Yemojá, is Madre de Agua (Mother of Water); the Congo equivalent of the tempestuous Oyá is Centella Ndokí (Streak of Lightning [that is] Good). The most fascinating of all is Pata 'e Llaga (Leg with Sores), which seems to fuse the Congo Kobayende, his Lucumí equivalent Babalú Ayé (orisha of disease), and the Christian Lazarus, traditionally represented with sores all over his body and a dog by his side licking his wounds.

Slavery brought all Africans together against their common adversary.[82] Several scholars have written that slave owners promoted distance between ethnic groups on plantations to limit the possibility of revolts, but this assertion is not necessarily supported by documentary evidence from the Cuban parish records and the era of insurrections.[83] Neither were these divisions notable in urban settings. *Cabildo* activities were often shared, with many ethnic groups participating in the religious or social functions of the others. Significant ritual exchanges occurred between all Africans, as is the case with Lucumís and Congos. Most Afro-Cuban traditions are inclusive. Cabrera, who recognized African's inclusivistic penchant, stressed that Cuba's "*negros*" were not sectarian because their religiosity "accepts all creeds."[84] In nineteenth-century Cuba, it became acceptable for a person to belong to an Abakuá fraternity and be a *palero* and an *olorisha*, all the while practicing popular and orthodox Catholicism, without seeing any inherent contradictions. When Kardecian spiritualism arrived to Cuba in the last half of

the nineteenth century, many found it alluring as well, and especially the Congos, who in adopting the Franco-European belief system, also adjusted it to their own cultural dictates. Modern Cuban spiritualism shows clears signs of its fusion with Congo tenets.[85] Realistically, Ortiz was both unsettled and enthralled by these notions, but they were not new by any means.

The evidence speaks for itself. Possible Lucumí and Congo ritual paraphernalia were found among the many items seized by the colonial authorities when José Nepomuceno Prieto was arrested in 1835, among them Yoruba-type carvings and Congo elements, including human bones.[86] Like the Lucumís and Carabalís, Congos were no strangers to insurrections.[87] A Congo chant still used today remembers a revolt in Matanzas on the Canimar bridge: *Puente Canimá', 'nlango va 'corré* ([Like the] Canimar bridge [where blood] runs like water). Though the Congos were not as numerous as the Lucumís and Carabalís during the *Escalera* investigations, 29 of the interrogated Africans associated with the use of *brujería* were Congo. The evidence suggesting both the role of ritual magic and white apprehension about it during *la Escalera* is overwhelming. Congo-related practices were especially noticeable.

Federico gangá, interestingly enough, was apparently practicing Congo religion. He was one of the leaders of the revolt and had prepared magical amulets to protect the conspirators from the Cafetal Recompensa in Batabanó on the day that the insurrection was supposed to take place. Federico's religious name was Siete Rayos, which implies that by the 1840s, there was already a link between Congo and Lucumí practices. The items he used to prepare his amulets, powders, and other magical objects, as well as the chant that all the insurrectionists were to call out at the onset of the insurrection, had

many elements that are commonly used in Congo religion: gunpowder, herbs, sticks, human bones. The chant alleged that *minga* (properly menga, "blood") and whites would run: *Llanllá saramingá yumbá há! Branco corá*. His translation of the chant inferred bloodshed: "Take up a machete against the whites."[88]

The conspirators planned to make special herbal poisons with which they would kill their master. Antonio congo was going to provide the herbs.[89] Fernando criollo described an oath administered by Miguel de Las Piedras, a free black, who was apparently the son of a Congo named Cucullero. Miguel's oath called on Santo Tomás to witness the pledge and used a "bag full of *brujerías* covered with cloth that they called *mayumbero*."[90] The oath also called upon Sambia (Nsambi), the Congo term for the Supreme Being.[91] Novices undergoing Palo ordinations swear thus: *Santo Tomás, ver para creer* (Saint Thomas, see to believe [doubting Thomas, be assured]). The term *mayumbe* is probably derived from Mayombe, a region in Southern Kongo, and is used to refer to the religion in the term *Palo Mayombe*. Similar to *palero*, the term *mayombero* is a Hispanicized term used to refer to a Congo Tata Nganga.[92] Quisinganga (Kisinganga) was the Congo name of the *mayombero* who lived in Bernardo Gallol's *ingenio*.

A Congo *cabildo* in Matanzas was also implicated. There, Guadalupe carabalí was alleged to have held a meeting seeking support, recruiting the Cabildo Mandinga, the Cabildo Gangá Mongaba, the Gangá Maní, and another Gangá *cabildo*.[93] The *cabildos* would collect money to buy weapons and gunpowder from "Santo Domingo" that would be stored on their premises, and from each *nación* (i.e., *cabildo*) a *capataz* (foreman or leader) was named to direct his "nation" during the insurrection.[94]

Surely, the Congos were not alone in their fight against slavery, nor were they the only Africans using ritual magic, but *brujería* is a recurrent theme in the archival evidence. Most of the deponents during the Escalera investigations belonged to several different ethnies, and the majority of them were associated with Federico gangá's and Miguel criollo's magical rites. While these cases may well support Stephan Palmie's theory about the Congo and Lucumí religions both emerging from the same crude realities of enslavement, the issue needs to be examined from numerous viewpoints, as no single explanation can account for the diversity that emerges from archival documents and oral history.[95] Conflicts between Congos and Lucumís certainly took place on estates and plantations, and these could be considered examples of tensions between these two groups; however, most of these were probably personal clashes and were not necessarily associated with ethnicity or religious beliefs.

In 1836, a brawl over a bottle of wine in an estate in a wax-producing estate in El Horcón provoked an uprising that involved a Congo named Domingo and a group of five Lucumís—Agustín, Federico, Francisco, Luís, and Francisco de Paula. Agustín lucumí had been placed in charge of the wine, some of which had apparently been drunk. Domingo congo was blamed, but according to Agustín's declaration, he then accused the Lucumís of having done so. The overseer decided to punish Domingo with a *boca'bajo* (literally "mouth down," or facedown), a severe lashing administered as the slave was held face down (as implied by the punishment's name) or bound, sometimes onto a ladder, and placed over a hole believing that this position would assuage the blows and their effects on the organs.[96]

Sebastián Pages, who administered Juan Echarte's estate, claimed that when he sent another participant, Federico lucumí, to bring a ladder to administer the punishment, he refused. Pages struck him with a *chucho* (a switch, usually made from a hardwood) and Federico rebelled. The two men began fighting. Federico took a stick and hit Pages, who returned the blow with another stick. The fear now was that all of them would receive a *boca'bajo*. Then yet another participant, Francisco lucumí, came to Federico's assistance with a machete in hand and began delivering blows to Page. Yet another, Luís lucumí, ran toward them with machete in hand, too. Seeing his life was in danger, Pages ran inside the house and picked up a saber, but then the brawl came to a temporary halt. Other slaves had apparently convinced the Lucumís to end the conflict, insisting that Pages would pardon them, and they stopeed fighting but did not drop their weapons. Pages was still scared for his life, and he sent for Echarte.

Pages then went to Havana to bring the authorities, who immediately sent forces to the estate. Echarte came as well. When the Lucumís were gathered before the judge sent from Havana to investigate the event, they became so agitated that the judge sent for more support from the city. The men, still carrying their machetes, took control of a stable; they then entered the main house, where they gathered more weapons, including a gun with which they wounded Echarte. They attempted to set fire to the estate but ended up damaging only the fence. Eventually, other slaves joined the fight, but in support of their owner, and they overcame the Lucumís. Federico, Francisco, and Luís died in the fighting; the two others involved in the uprising, Agustín and Francisco de Paula were wounded but survived. Fearing his lot, Francisco de Paula threw himself down the estate's well, but he was rescued from drowning by the authorities.[97] He and Agustín

were arrested and later tried for their rebellion. The brawl on the wax-producing estate in El Horcón testifies to the nature of interethnic relations on some estates, but it says even more about the nature of Lucumí unity and refusal to acquiesce before perceived abuses. When asked if the insurrection was planned beforehand, Antonio congo, interrogated as a witness, declared that the Lucumís were "very reserved" and seldom communicated their plans to anyone.[98]

It is plausible that Congo *brujería* served as a form of resistance against slavery on the plantation, uniting the various ethnic populations and planting the seeds of fear, but some evidence suggests that interethnic conflict was not very prevalent. Most Africans, despite possible rivalries stemming from their homeland, were interrelating, either by force or by choice, both on the plantations and, most important, in the cities. Even before the Escalera, documentary evidence suggests that religious interchanges were occurring. Prieto's case, previously mentioned, serves as a prime example. Some oral history suggests that in Cuba, the Congos and Lucumís little, if any animosity at all.

Milagros Palma Zequeira, a resident of Simpson, remembered stories her mother told her about the Lucumí and Congo *cabildos* next to her residence on Daoiz Street, where Palma Zequeira still lives. When both *cabildos* had events on the same day, members freely crossed from one event to the other. "*¡No, no, no! ¿Pero quién dijo eso? ¡Qué va! Los Congos y los Lucumíses siempre se llevaron*" (No, no, no! But who said that? No way! The Congos and the Lucumís always got along).[99] Another Matanzas native suggested otherwise. Felipe García Villamil, from La Marina, Simpson's neighbor, expressed that his father opposed his family's involvement in Lucumí religion. Benigno García y García, Felipe's father was a *palero* and Bantú religion was his family's

tradition, even though his wife was descended from Lucumís and an *olorisha*. Benigno, like many other Afro-Cubans in the early 1900s, was secretive. He shared the era's common apprehensions about teaching religion to children for fear of being betrayed by the child's loose lips. His father's reluctance, García Villamil said, "was very common among the descendants of Congos."[100] García Villamil was also an Abakuá, but he was silent about his father's perception of Ñáñigos.[101]

Tata Nkisi Jorge Cuadra insisted that although no animosity existed between Congos and Lucumís, there were several methodological debates over practice. Additionally, Congos and Lucumís debated over different approaches to ritual knowledge and especially over ritual power. Magic was the key to the power that Congos claimed as their greatest strength. In that arena, the Lucumís conceded and took many lessons from the Congos. Cuadra reiterates some of the implications of Palmie's theory about the origin of Congo and Lucumí religion in Cuba.[102] He stated: "Today's Palo is a Cuban creation based on Bantú traditions, but it was born in Cuba. It is a Cuban phenomenon with African hues."[103]

Still, uneasiness with Congo religious practices permeates the island, primarily because of their reputed use of sorcery, and this fear still exists today among the Lucumís. Cuadra stressed that in the past, *paleros* were not as receptive to ordination in Lucumí and vice versa. The Lucumís (and whites) "*siempre han tenido al palo como una cosa que inspira respeto, que da miedo. ¡No hay tal cosa! ¡Eso es un cuento!*" (have always considered Palo as something that inspires respect, that provokes fear. There is no such thing! That is a story [a fairy tale]![104] Even though many Lucumís, then and now, practice both traditions, many still see Congo religion as less civilized, less "religious,"

than Lucumí Orisha worship.[105] The Lucumís claim to have the superior practice, so much so that they maintain that initiation to any of the other traditions must take place before the Orisha ordination. "*Osha es mayor y nada puede ir por encima del santo*" (Osha [abbreviated form of orisha] is older [read: superior] and nothing is above the saint. The idea often provokes heated contentions between devotees.[106] Still, modern Lucumís, some of whom disparage Congo religion publicly, often resort to the *tata nganga* when they need an outcome that cannot be found at the feet of the orishas.

Clashes between the Congos and the Lucumís over the latter's haughtiness, though, seem to have been more prevalent. On the island's eastern end, where the Lucumí were a much smaller community, the tension between the two groups was greater. Writing about carnivals in nineteenth-century Santiago de Cuba, Ernesto Buch López described the two weeks of preparations that preceded the event. The city's blacks, he wrote, gathered on the Santa Ines esplanade or on Carnicería and Providencia streets to rehearse. They would sometimes visit the *cabildos* to speak with the kings or *cabildo* leaders "who this year were going to demonstrate that the Congos knew more about these things than the haughty Lucumís."[107] During the carnival procession, the king of the Congos marched with his entourage down one street, while the Lucumís paraded through another: "*Nunca se encuentran*" (They [the kings] never meet).[108] Then again, many of Santiago's Congos may have been related to the Congos Reales (Royal slaves), possibly feeling superior to other Africans by virtue of their connection to royalty.[109] The disputes between the two groups were not exclusive to Cuba. Rosalyn Howard found evidence of these clashes in Trinidad and the Bahamas where each perceived the other as being arrogantly disdainful.[110] These ideas still lingered in 1950s Cuba. One of Cabrera's

Havana informants told her that "*lucumí era lo mejor de África*" (Lucumí was the best of Africa). Cabrera herself believed that the Lucumís' exalted concept of themselves, "with reason…vividly upset the Congos, and does so to [their] current descendants."[111]

Palmie's assessment of the evolving division between the two ethnies suggested that the *brujos'* manipulation of the *nganga*, the ritual vehicle that houses the energy of the *nkisí*, speaks to other social ills of the slave society. For him, Congo and Lucumí were "two variants of a single African tradition." When *paleros* applied the *nganga's* energy to "projects of slave resistance…the powers condensed in these objects increasingly became harnessed to purposes of combating perceived evil by similarly amoral means."[112] Maybe, as Palmie argued, Lucumí and Congo religions were departures of two historical processes that brought them into close contact in a new geographical location, but surely each tradition perceived the other as starkly different, as they still do. In any case, even if initially there were mutual recognitions of each other's value (because a common foe united them) and subsequent polarizations, the greater probability is that Lucumí tradition embraced the Congo beliefs under its veil, as evidenced by the extension of the former's façade onto the Congo *nkisís*.

Distinctions that eventually placed both systems in binary opposition, which in turn polarized their devotees, were defensive strategies adopted by the Lucumís, probably at the turn of the century or shortly thereafter. Palmie suggested that the Lucumís assimilated the Congo *ngangá*, and "the violent imagery surrounding its practices of dealing with spirits of the dead," and its magical practices into their "conceptual universe." Assigning to the *nganga* and the *palero* a rigorous, mercenary character, they created a complementary dichotomy that ideologically sanitized Lucumí religious

practices by expunging any ideas of moral ambiguity from Lucumí religion. In so doing, he wrote, the two systems merged, becoming a greater complex that shared coinciding ideologies and ritual processes.[113]

While in essence Palme's argument sounds viable, the mere fact that the two systems co-existed through the nineteenth century on what appear to have been amicable terms; that the priest of one tradition could easily partake of, and undergo initiation (before the Lucumí ordination) to any of the other traditions without controversy; and that the devotees of one system participated in the celebrations of the other without causing any major polemics, indicates that there were other processes at work. Additional forces had to have been influential in the eventual estrangement between the Lucumís and the Congos, which the present investigation proposes were in direct response to the debates and conflicts over *brujería* of the early 1900s. The evidence may lie in the pyramidal hierarchy that categorized the Afro-Cuban cultural and religious traditions, a hierarchy that evolved in the early twentieth century, directed by Fernando Ortiz and indirectly provoked by Fernando Guerra. Lucumís were placed at the pinnacle, and the Congos occupied the bottom strata, with the Abakuá in the center.

For years, sociologists, anthropologists, and historians have studied and documented the importance of these socio-cultural polemics of the twentieth century; however, the role of Afro-Cuban responses as less perceivable forms of resistance to the era's contestations needs greater analysis.[114] Sociologist Roger Bastide may have been one of the first to consider these matters. Referring to enslaved Africans, Roger Bastide wrote that culture was significant as a form of resistance, which the African used in his "endeavor not to let vital values inherited from his ancestors perish but to reestablish

them."[115] In early twentieth-century Cuba, members of specific African cultures manipulated the circumstances and reversed the politically and "scientifically-inspired" de-Africanization campaign. Culture was the key, and both factions attempted to suit their own purposes, all the while indirectly opening the doors to the growth of *cubanidad.* Though the Lucumís were not alone in so doing, the evidence suggests that their manipulations of these specific issues were just as cunning as those of the intellectuals and political elites who sought to eradicate them.

The Building Blocks of the Pyramid—Resistance, Adaptation, and Defiance

In 1906, as he discussed the murder of Zoila, Ortiz considered whether Shangó and Elegbá (orisha of the crossroads) had received Zoila's entrails as offerings: "*la verosimilitud del hecho de haber sido ofrendados los miembros de la infeliz niña ante las imágenes de Santa Bárbara y del Ánima Sola, de Shangó y de Eleguá*" (the likelihood of having offered the unfortunate girl's organs before images of Saint Barbara and the Lost Soul of Purgatory, of Shangó and Eleguá).[116] On March 12, 1911, Ortiz was named honorary president of the Sociedad de Protección Mutua y Recreo del Culto Africano Lucumí Santa Bárbara (SSB).[117] The nomination was not only ironic but also highly suggestive. In the span of five years, in the midst of one of the most oppressive campaigns to eradicate *brujería* and African cultures and religions from Cuba, what forces could have led to the appointment of one of the most ardent opponents of *brujos* and those "primitive…fetishistic aberrations…that cause great repugnancy in our society" to the office of honorary president of an association whose very nature he expressly claimed to repudiate?[118]

Several enigmas surround Ortiz's sudden "epiphany." Some recent scholarship examined most of these issues extensively. Palmie, Brown, Bronfman, Román, and others have analyzed how those persecuted sectors of Afro-Cuban society perceived and responded to these struggles. The value of their work is incalculable, and their contributions toward advancing the era's history are laudable. While ample archival documentation and other primary sources are available for study, the "oral archives" and the emic perspective are essential tools for examining some of the events of that era—yet they have barely been used. Including the subaltern voices of slaves and freed blacks enriches the archive with a strength and voice of character that is not available through any other method. Arguably, this methodological approach will complement the scholarship and promote greater understanding of experiences that are often too convoluted to examine under a single lens.

The present investigation proposes to supplement aspects of the earlier research by applying an emic perspective. Using the traditional historical method and the anthropological method, the current study asks similar questions about the twentieth-century Cuban "witch hunts," but examines them through a different lens. While the current exploration will not pretend to provide answers for all the questions that may arise, some issues associated with this era can benefit from other viewpoints. Like Palmie's study, the current examination may also pose questions that scholars need to investigate further and indicate issues that require greater attention.[119]

Los negros brujos benefited largely from earlier publications, and much of the research that went into it was compiled outside Cuba.[120] Ortiz frequently cited T.J. Bowen's *Grammar and Dictionary of the Yoruba Language* and A.B. Ellis's *The Yoruba*

Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa.[121] Bowen was a member of the Southern Baptist Missionary Society who lived in Yorubaland during the mid-nineteenth century. His dictionary was derived from the first Yoruba vocabularies published by Samuel Ajayí Crowther, an Oyo native who was rescued from slavery by a British patrol and repatriated to Sierra Leone.[122] Ellis had been a lieutenant colonel with the British West India Regiment and had also lived in West Africa.

More influential, however, were the work and ideologies of the Brazilian Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, another student of Lombrosian positivism. Ortiz's book strikingly reflected Rodrigues's work and his thoughts about Afro-Brazilian cultures and religion.[123] Without a doubt, Rodrigues was a significant role model for Ortiz and was cited throughout the book. In the late 1890s, Rodrigues studied criminology, insanity, and the effects of racial miscegenation in Brazil. By the turn of the century, Rodrigues took greater interest in the country's African religions and linked them to crime and mental illness.[124] To date, no conclusive evidence exists that establishes a direct connection between the two men, but it is probable that their common scholarly interests and ideological pursuits led them to exchange letters at some point. As another of Lombroso's disciples, it is also possible that Ortiz may have seen work sent by Rodrigues to Lombroso in Europe. Despite their shortcomings, however, Rodrigues and Ortiz are recognized as the fathers of Afro-Diasporic studies. Any study of African culture in the Americas that does not refer to these two men begins on very weak foundations.

De-Africanization in Cuba began when the first African arrived. As early as the 1800s, Humboldt expressed concerns about the detrimental effects of miscegenation.[125] Nevertheless, the greatest conflicts over African cultures and religious systems began

during the second half of the 1800s with the anti-Ñáñigo crusades. Devotees of Congo and Lucumí religion, also shunned during the nineteenth century, were just as targeted by these movements as the Carabalí-descended Ñáñigos. The encounters of the three ethnies with the colonial authorities were especially noticeable after the increase in slave revolts and conspiracies that has been associated with the arrival of the Oyo-Lucumí.[126] Still, the earlier crusades against their cultural practices were not necessarily directly related to stamping out *brujería*. Rather, evidence of religious practice and ritual magic was discovered in the process of searching the homes of alleged conspirators. These findings, in turn, led to the discovery and seizure of ritual items. The cases of José Antonio Aponte, Juan Nepomuceno Prieto, and the Escalera deponents clearly support this idea. While there was apprehension about African *brujería*, many whites also sought African healers and priests to assist them with health matters and other problems.[127] Prior to the 1840s, then, *brujería* was not the major obsession of the colonial authorities: insurrection was.

Carabalís, the ethnie that introduced the Abakuá societies to Cuba, were one of the four most numerous African ethnic groups brought to the island. Their presence dates to the latter years of the eighteenth century, and they continued arriving well into the mid-nineteenth. Many resided in the cities of Havana and Matanzas and their immediate surroundings. Regla and Simpson were especially known for their Carabalí communities. The first Abakuá *potencia*, or lodge, Efík Obutóng, was established in Regla in 1836, and by 1862, Matanzas followed suit with the Potencia Uriabón Efí.[128] In time, Abakuá would become open to Africans of all ethnic groups, creoles, and after some initial controversies, eventually whites.

Three years after the founding of the first *potencia*, a raid of an Abakuá meeting in Jesús María, a neighborhood in Havana, uncovered documents that led the authorities to suspect that the group was contriving to promote an insurrection. The owner of the house was Margarito Blanco, a dockworker who was the *mocongo* (title holder or lodge leader) of a Carabalí *cabildo*.[129] Their alarm was greater when they discovered among the participants men who had been associated with the Aponte conspiracy. Among the seized documents was a petition to other Abakuá groups to establish a new lodge, which authorities may have misconstrued as a call to insurrection. More distressing were the two members of the black militias. One was a decorated officer, and the other was a sub-lieutenant and founder of the Cabildo of Nuestra Señora de Belén who had been exiled in 1812 for his subversive ideas.[130]

That a stevedore was among the detainees is not surprising. The Carabalís stood out in Havana's ports and wharfs, where many "amassed small fortunes."[131] Evidence suggests that the Carabalís, and, once the lodges were founded, Abakuá *ekobios* (brothers), dominated the wharfs in Havana starting no later than the early 1800s.[132] Besides the economic benefits, stevedores stayed abreast of international affairs and often received accounts of their homelands from other blacks who worked on vessels that docked at the port. Retaining control over the industry had multiple advantages, and in some respects the rigid nature of the Abakuá fraternity helped to ensure order and control. Their hegemony at the wharves lasted well into the mid-twentieth century.[133] Besides controlling the ports, toward the end of the century, Abakuás also maintained a considerable presence among cigar workers, in slaughterhouses, as butchers, and in the city's markets.[134] It is plausible that the economic clout they shared as a group may have

provided important connections and opportunities, contributing to the growth of the fraternity as well.

In the investigation that followed the 1839 raid, four more officers, as well as several other titled Abakuás, were discovered. The authorities were shocked to find literature in their homes that suggested a conspiracy in the making. The greatest shock, and possibly what worried the colonial government most, was the presence of creoles in the fraternity. If before 1839 they had not taken notice of the expanding demographic scope of the Abakuá society, from this time onward the authorities were closely and cautiously monitoring the Ñáñigos. Hoping to extirpate the malady before it continued to spread, the 1839 detainees were all banished to the Iberian Peninsula.[135]

The raid on Margarito Blanco's house makes it clear that Carabalís/Abakuás had been suspect since the beginning of the century, starting with the Aponte rebellion. The threat of a possible insurrection, the familiarity that some detainees, as militia members, had with weapons and military tactics, and their social and economic clout were all reasons to worry and surely prompted greater scrutiny of their affairs. It is quite possible that this was part of the hysteria that grew in the era preceding the *Escalera* conspiracy. Conditions worsened for the Abakuás with the revolutionary movements that began undermining Spanish rule starting as early as the middle of the century.[136] Although the issue was political, racial factors were manipulated to spread fear. Lillian Guerra has shown that Spanish authorities made clear use of racial issues as a tactic in their desperate attempts to avoid losing the most important of their last two bastions in the Americas. The image of the Afro-Cuban was purposely manipulated, presenting distorted renditions of their behaviors and portraying them as backward and uncivilized. They were purposely

sensationalized as cannibals and accused of sacrificing children for *brujería*.[137] Drawn by the promise of emancipation, many Afro-Cubans joined the ranks of the insurgency during the Ten-Years War (1868-1878).[138] During these years, *brujería* was the least thing that worried the authorities. In fact, their smear campaign was one of the strongest coercive mechanisms used by the colonial authorities to justify their strong-arm tactics that were in reality intending to undermine the threat of insurrection.

By 1875, colonial authorities banned the Abakuá fraternities, fearing a possible association between Abakuás and the Mambís, the Cuban rebel army, which by now had a large black contingency. Besides the political issues, there was also a connection between the ban and the establishment of the first white Abakuá fraternity, which Miller linked to a greater movement in the Americas criminalizing black-white cooperation.[139] Whites had been initiated into the fraternity before the 1870s, though, and several Chinese men, too, as well as members of other African ethnies who had joined the Abakuás since the founding of the first lodge in 1836.[140] Oral history maintains that two of the most celebrated Afro-Cuban heroes of the independence wars, Antonio Maceo and Quintín Banderas, were also Abakuás.[141]

During the island's two wars of independence, Abakuás and insurgents were arrested indiscriminately, and Ñáñigo or not, hundreds were sentenced to prisons off the coast of Africa, on the islands of Fernando Poo and Ceuta.[142] Most certainly, the anti-Ñáñigo campaign had ulterior motives, and accusations of *brujería* and *Ñáñiguismo* were clearly a means to a greater end. Eliminating all possible insurgents improved Spain's chances of retaining control over the island.

The nineteenth and twentieth century literature continuously took the Abakuá initiation oath out of context. Most sources were adamant that the significance of the oath was purposely distorted to suit the anti-Abakuá and racist agendas of the police and the Abakuás' many detractors.[143] Courage and the idea of masculinity in Latin America—*machismo*—is expressed in many different ways, however, and society as well as the context in which these are manifested will be the ones to define it as positive or negative.[144]

On the whole, it is highly probable that Abakuás were often involved in street brawls and other illicit activities, but surely they were not alone. Cuba was not a utopian society by any means.[145] Like any major city, Havana had its crime sprees, yet the perpetrators of these acts came from all walks of life.[146] Because all Afro-Cubans were potential insurrectionists, including the Ñáñigos and *brujos*, they were prone to greater suspicion and supervision than whites. Much as with today's "racial profiling," Afro-Cubans of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century experienced a disproportionally greater number of detentions and arrests. The suspicions about the possible involvement of Abakuás in the wars of independence worsened their plight, but it served numerous purposes. While colonial authorities used *ñáñiguismo* as a convenient excuse to eliminate possible revolutionaries, the arrests also reinforced mid-nineteenth century ideas that promoted elimination of Africans from the island, even if that meant absorption by miscegenation.[147]

The Abakuá were threatening to Spain on numerous grounds. As a group, they were organized and economically powerful. Abakuás wielded control and motivated the populations of color to further activity, as their hegemony over the wharves suggests.

Many blacks were joining the society to ensure their livelihoods, and they were extending their dominion to include creoles, mulattoes, Chinese, and eventually, even whites. Membership in *cabildos* provided ethnic cohesion and inter-group solidarity. Additionally, many militias, active and retired, including officers, had been sworn into the fraternity and some were directing *cabildos*. These men were worrisome, for they were not only familiar with arms but were also aware of war tactics and were probably capable of devising offensive military strategies. Toward the end of the century, fulfilling Spain's fears, they became active participants in the wars of independence, fighting alongside other Africans and whites to achieve the island's autonomy from the Crown. On all fronts, the Abakuás were an impressive structure: Spain's fears were not ill-founded.

Abakuá power increased more in the final two decades of the nineteenth century with the induction of political figures and war heroes. While it has not been proven, several sources stressed that Antonio Maceo and Quintín Banderas were both *paleros* and Abakuás.[148] It is quite likely that those who wrote about Ñáñigos in the nineteenth century surreptitiously penetrated the fraternities by being sworn into its ranks. Rafael Salillas, José Trujillo y Monagas, and Rafael Roche y Monteagudo were probably *ekobios*. Most important, though, was the introduction of men who were either involved in Cuban politics or soon to be nominated to specific offices. In the original 1952 publication of Ortiz's *Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana*, he mentioned two men who were crucial in overcoming some of the disputes of the latter 1800s. Criticized heavily by Abakuás, the mulatto Andrés Facundo Cristo de los Dolores Petit is credited with having "sold" the secret of Abakuá to whites. According to Ortiz, a group of

"*muchachitos de la acera del Louvre*" (from the Louvre side of the street), young men, members of Havana's "most prominent families," and other "*blanquitos*" (pejorative diminutive, akin to the English "whiteys") from the city's underworld, convinced Petit via several ounces of gold.[149] *Ahí se estropeó y se salvó el ñáñiguismo*" (There and then, ñáñiguismo was spoiled and saved), said one of Cabrera's informants.[150] In time, the black Abakuás went to war with the white *ekobios*, unleashing bloody contretemps between the two factions.[151]

Carlos Rodríguez Batista, a *reglano* who was eventually elected governor of Havana, was also reputed to have connections with the Abakuás. Allegedly, he was responsible for an ingenious ruse that negotiated a peace settlement between the authorities and the *ekobios*. Through his intercession and "confidential dealings," the governor is said to have convinced various *potencias* to dissolve their lodges and deliver their paraphernalia to the authorities. The Abakuás maintain that in reality, they simply duplicated their ritual attributes, gave the replicas to the authorities, and hid the real ones. The seized attire, drums, and attributes were sent to Spain, where they became part of the Museo de Ultramar's collection.[152] To the present day, there seems to be an unresolved debate over the story's veracity and especially over Rodríguez Batista's role in the affair because he was no longer governor when this event occurred.[153] Abakuás emphatically denounce it and insist that the *ekobios* reached an understanding with Rodríguez Batista, who was also initiated into the fraternity.[154]

Writing in 1910, Irene Wright, a journalist who lived in Cuba for 10 years, openly cast doubt on the accord. Critical of the governor's attempt, as well as a later U.S. administration's effort, she "ventured" to say that the Ñáñigos were still very active in

Cuba and suggested that "if ever there is a negro uprising in Cuba they will play their prominent part."[155] According to Ortiz, Rodríguez Batista had been sworn in the first white *potencia*.[156] Impressions recorded by Cabrera during the 1950s are also revealing. One Abakuá who had been initiated into the fraternity in 1897 said that while he could not verify that Rodríguez Batista was an *ekobio*, he understood the Abakuás (and Petit as well) were attempting to change the dominant, despotic image of the brotherhood by creating one that was the exact opposite of what the authorities had propagated.[157] The eradication of Abakuá seems to have been an "intentional farce."[158]

Political connections for Africans and *brujos* were not new. During the wars of independence, maroons and African ritual specialists often assisted military leaders and soldiers. They provided intelligence reports and performed rituals to ensure the insurgents' victory.[159] Surely, some of these favors were not forgotten. During the campaigns of the 1880s and 1890s, both the Acera de Louvre whites and Rodríguez Batista were arguably important political connections for the *ekobios*, even if the latter's Abakuá membership is speculative. If the former were members of elite *havanero* families, certainly some among them were well connected on various levels. Likewise, even if Rodríguez Batista was not an *ekobio*, he may have simply felt allegiance to the brotherhood because of familiarity by association or proximity or possibly through friends or family members who could have been Abakuás, all of which was highly probable given his hometown. The legend suggests that he was influential in the mediations with the government. For the most part, though, after 1900, the Abakuás were not as overtly evident as the Lucumí in confronting the media and government campaigns, other than the reports about their frequent arrests for illegal association.

Possibly due to the Rodríguez Batista ruse, it is likely that when the new campaigns arose in the 1900s, they chose to remain discreet, believing that this campaign was a phase like those of earlier years and that it would soon pass. Just as plausible is the notion that Abakuás continued to enjoy the benefits of their political connections. By the 1920s, politicians were courting the Abakuás for their votes.[160]

Congos, on the other hand, were totally silent. Other than some of the mockery that appeared in the media—specifically letters in *bozal*, allegedly written by Afro-Cubans—there were seldom any mentions of Congos at all aside from those associating them with witchcraft.[161] During the wars of independence, the Congos had been instrumental in assisting the insurgents, especially as healers. Once the wars ended, their image may have changed, as they were possibly the most harshly affected by the anti-*brujería* campaigns. In the 1890s, Governor Manuel Salamanca was caricatured in the press as *Quindembo I Pata de Jamón* (Kindembo I, Leg of Ham). The governor supposedly had good relations with African *cabildos*.[162] The Spanish term *pata*, is a colloquial expression that literally refers to the legs of an animal. When used for a person, it infers that the individual is as lacking of intelligence as an animal. To the present, many Cubans joke about the alleged "brutality" of the Congos. The image of the "dumb" Congo is a recurring theme in the twentieth century.

There were other, more intimidating issues, though, and they had little to do with aptitude. Because of the religion's dependency on ancestors and spirits, human bones are an indispensable component of the Congo nganga, the vessels where the *tata* consecrates the energy of the *nkisis*. While Congos were not directly named, it is possible that the knowledge of their usage of human remains spread.[163] Newspaper briefs often reported

human skulls and bones discovered by the police during searches of *brujos'* homes and on city streets.[164] While the Congos were not directly named in these reports, it is possible that the knowledge of their usage of human remains had spread.[165] The presence of human bones in a person's home was not necessarily unheard of in Cuba. The dead were exhumed three years after their burial, and storing a dead relative's bones in an ossuary is still a common practice. Nonetheless, reports about ceremonies in cemeteries and grave robberies often made the headlines. In October 1904, two *brujos* in Abreus were sentenced for stealing bones from a grave.[166] When the news was initially broken the month before, the town was in a state of frenzy because rumors alleged that there had been several unreported grave desecrations.[167] It is also arguable that the Zoila case and the constant association of the group's religion with the disappearance and death of children drove them underground and silenced them. Beginning with the case of Tin Tan and the death of Celia, and Zoila's death shortly thereafter, the media scandals over vanished or dead children always hinted at possible black involvement and stressed the possible role of *brujería*, regardless of the circumstances surrounding these occurrences.

Eduardo Varela Zequeira, one of the most disturbing of the era's several yellow journalists, horrified the island with constant reports about missing children and *brujería*. Varela Zequeira ascended to notoriety after Zoila's death and the execution of her alleged murderers. He wrote for *El Mundo* and possibly other Havana newspapers and seemingly established a working relationship with Fernando Ortiz. Ostensibly, both men collaborated and surely encountered each other in the field regularly.[168] Varela Zequeira's next big case after Zoila was the 1908 death of Luisa Valdés, a young girl from the countryside, but he shocked the island with several other reports of missing children

during those years. Even when the evidence surrounding *la niña Luisa's* death suggested that her death may have been accidental, Varela Zequeira pounded the story for three months with daily front-page articles in *El Mundo*. When Varela Zequeria set out to investigate a story during these years, he seemed to be predisposed from the first moment. He typically hounded the accused looking for evidence, often finding circumstantial details that he habitually pieced (and sometimes forced) together. Chasing witchcraft was his obsession, and he openly admitted it on various occasions. Writing about Luisa Valdés' death, he stated: "The first thing we proposed to investigate about the disappearance…was if there were *brujos* in Alacranes."[169]

Bronfman suggested that Varela Zequeira was not necessarily motivated by racial issues as much as by a sense of injustice.[170] For him, *brujería* was a social ill that affected the underpinnings of society, and it had to be eradicated at all costs. Still, even if accepting that race was not his primary concern, it was undeniably a factor as well because it was impossible to detach the idea of race from the association that the Cuban authorities had established between witchcraft and people of African descent. While it may have been an accepted practice for the era, it is noteworthy that Varela Zequeira and others only identified an individual's race only when he or she was a person of color but never referred to any whites as *el blanco* or *la blanca*. His reporting surely intimidated Afro-Cubans and especially those practicing African religions, who were constantly under the threat that similar accusations could one day come knocking on their door. The vast majority of whites were of one misconstrued mind when it came to recognizing African religiosity.[171]

Much of his writing included excruciating details about the horrid crimes, which served to distress his readers. Román wondered if his persistence on these topics was actually intentional or in response to his readership's requests.[172] Clearly, Varela Zequeira's precise attention to details preyed on and manipulated the racial tension that was prevalent during the era. In 1906 he admitted as much when, writing about an interview with Bocourt, one of the two men who were wrongly executed for Zoila's murder, he altered the man's words.[173] Perhaps Varela Zequeira eventually upset someone, drawing the attention of an unknown enemy. In January 1905, he allegedly found *brujería* in front of his house. From the description of the packet's contents, the enemy may have been a prankster, for the items do not seem to follow any traditional forms of ritual magic.[174]

Cuban historian Ernesto Chávez Álvarez reported that between 1904 and 1923 eight mysterious deaths of children occurred in which blacks and *brujería* were accused. Three of the eight were later discovered to have been crimes committed by whites who purposely mutilated the bodies so that *brujería* would be blamed. One death was a possible rape, a second one was committed by the child's mother, and a third was accidental. The remaining five were never fully proven to have been perpetrated by the people who were arrested. With the exception of Zoila's case, the blacks who were accused in these deaths—most of whom practiced African religions—were released for lack of evidence, absolving them and their religions as well.[175] Palmie stated that three times as many deaths would have been a more realistic figure.[176] His suspicions are not far removed. A preliminary scan of *El Mundo*, *La Discusión*, *La Lucha*, and other newspapers of the era uncovered at least 20 cases. Given the numerous articles about

missing and dead children that appeared in Cuban newspapers during the years preceding Zoila's death, Palmie himself may have understated the figure.

According to Varela Zequeira, the death of children in the countryside was a common occurrence that mostly passed unreported. The *brujos* in the rural areas, he wrote, were "real savages," and the people of the countryside feared their magic and reprisal. Children were supposedly snatched by the *brujo* on horseback who coveted their organs to cure sterility. Once seized, the child was placed in a large basket and covered with a sack. Then the kidnapper speedily galloped away to avoid capture. As quickly as possible, the *brujo* suffocated the child to keep him or her from screaming.[177] The idea of a black man racing on horseback through the Cuban countryside during the 1900s carrying a child inside a basket, surely kicking, crying, and screaming, is as preposterous as was Ortiz's support of Varela Zequeira's hyperbolic melodrama. What is more probable, as Chávez Álvarez suggested, is that many of those children who died in the countryside perished accidentally, and their parents, fearful of the legal repercussions, preferred to scapegoat blacks and *brujos*.[178] Clearly, child mortality was a problem during the first decades of the 1900s, but it is highly improbable that *brujería* had anything to do with these deaths. Nonetheless, the media's fervor may have done greater harm than expected.

The U.S. presence in Cuba may have been influential in aggravating the already existing tensions surrounding *ñáñiguismo* and *brujería*. Louis Pérez Jr. wrote that U.S. intervention in Cuba's war of independence transformed the island's struggle into a "U.S. war of conquest," and that North Americans were expecting "more than credit" for their assistance to Cuba in curtailing Spain's control of the island.[179] On January 1, 1899, the

United States took formal possession of Cuba and established a military administration under the leadership of Leonard Wood, who governed Cuba until 1902. Wood's administration oversaw the creation of Cuba's first constitution and the election of Tomás Estrada Palma as her first president, to whom they grudgingly transferred power, and then then the Americans departed, leaving the islanders to direct their own affairs. Controversial as it was, though, the United States forced Cubans to accept an amendment that guaranteed Americans the right to interfere in the island's affairs if they deemed their interests were at risk. Under the dictates of the notorious Platt Amendment, the United States did just that in 1906, when a second interim government extended direct U.S. control over Cuba until 1909. The U.S. presence during these two periods pressured the islanders in numerous ways. The country's leaders did not want the island perceived as uncivilized and incapable of self-government, a sentiment that had loomed over Cuba and worried the Americans since 1899.[180] Afro-Cubans were especially affected by U.S. segregationist ideas that spread throughout the island and they noticed the increased presence of this racist ideology after the 1904 death of Zoila, the 1906 publication of *Los negros brujos*, and the subsequent intensification of the anti-*brujería* campaign, even though the Americans had officially left after a certain point. As Palmie observed, however, U.S. interests were key in the anti-*brujería* campaigns.[181]

The burgeoning presence of Afro-Cuban socio-political power was a source of concern for U.S. authorities, just as the U.S. administration represented new challenges for Cuba's people of color. Unfounded reports of race riots and black insurrections surfaced on several occasions. In May 1900, a letter from the town of Remedios requested troops to come to the region to counter an offensive supposedly under the

direction of Quintín Banderas. A report from “an intelligent man” stated that there were “persistent rumors of a rising of the negros” scheduled for that month. Lieutenant Coronel Lincoln, who wrote the letter, expressed his doubts but preferred that the governor take preventive measures just in case.[182] On May 6, a wire from Remedios reported that the alarm had no basis in truth. There was no insurrection: “Only two incidents, horse theft and firearms theft, at the Imaguayabo Plantation,” stated the telegram. A candidate for mayor of Remedios may have created the problem to cause alarm. The media’s involvement seems to have been an issue as well. The telegram claimed that an unnamed correspondent from *La Lucha* may have been implicated. The “negroes of standing” offered their assistance, if needed, to maintain peace in the region.[183]

Understandably, the interim government was interested in *brujería*. It was a worrisome force because of its perceived links with insurgents and criminals. Haiti was a constant reminder of African religions’ effects on people of color, and the United States was surely worried about the possibility of another unstable black colony in the Caribbean.[184] The presence of Voodoo in the American South, and especially Louisiana, was already a matter of distress for the United States because of its potentially explosive potential as well. African religions’ presence in Cuba, though considered superstition and inclined to criminality, was certainly distressing. As with the Spanish, Americans may have also thought they saw the potential *brujo* that lay dormant inside every black person.[185] They had witnessed the influence blacks had in Cuba during the wars of independence, with the large Afro-Cuban columns fighting alongside whites and Americans, and the reverence for black military leaders such as Maceo and Banderas.

There was still a large native African population in Cuba in 1900. The 1899 census recorded almost 13,000.[186] Universal suffrage added another dimension to the quandary, something the U.S. vehemently opposed.[187] Cuba was a keg of explosive "black" powder, and African religions could very well be the spark that could light the fuse.

To this degree, the chief of the Bureau of the Havana Detective Agency ordered an investigation of *brujería* in Cuba at the behest of the interim government's officials.[188] The report described a distorted version of what appears to be a Lucumí Ifá divination ceremony and a cleansing ritual. Thereafter, the investigator discussed spiritualism, with a small closing paragraph about cartomancy. Notably, the report reflected concerns about the alleged therapeutic practices of the *brujos*, something that was conceivably just as problematic in Cuba as it was in Brazil.[189] Reports about Cubans frequenting African healers had circulated since the nineteenth century, a matter that surely troubled most sectors of the growing medical field.[190]

Most interesting is the fact that Abakuás/Ñáñigos and Congos were not mentioned at all in the investigation. This specific point is noteworthy in several ways. Possibly, the Abakuás were observing the Rodríguez Batista accord, at least in appearance. Maybe they had gone so deeply underground that the investigation did not encounter them, or perhaps they simply found methods by which to stay out of the limelight. Just as plausible, their "connections" may have steered the investigation so that they would not surface or attract attention. There is no doubt that Abakuás were active in 1909. Irene Wright saw them parading through an area of the city during a street procession.[191] Mysteriously, the Congos were also totally absent. Not so much as an inference about the

group was made by the authorities, but based on court proceedings and newspaper accounts, they were still active in Havana and Matanzas.

The mounting pressures of the day may have provoked some people of color, particularly Congos, to advocate for a return to Africa. William George Emmanuel, of Congo descent, was born in the British Caribbean but at some point moved to Cuba. Emmanuel was an attorney and had a relationship with the Asociación de Congos Reales, an offshoot of the Cabildo de Congos Reales Rey Melchor, established in 1792.[192] In a letter of protest to President William McKinley and Secretary of War Elihu Root, Emmanuel argued that Africans in Cuba were being forced to adopt Cuban nationality against their will, "particularly where they are free people and are at will to choose...[having been]born in Africa… [where they] prefer to return…[given that] their native homes [are there], rather than be Cubans." Africans came to Cuba through "brute force" and were forced to remain by "force of necessity" because they lacked the means to leave. His letter was published in several of the island's newspapers, and perhaps some readers and Americans may have found relief in the idea that Congos wanted to return to Africa.[193] Emmanuel was seeking funding for the repatriation. That same year, he took his message to Brussels, where he expected to discuss his interests with the Belgian king and ask for his assistance. The *New York Times* reported that Emmanuel was the "delegate of eighteen thousand negroes of Congolese origin who were taken to Cuba as slaves…who now desire to return to the Congo."[194] Subsequently, Emmanuel was dubbed "El Rey de los Congos" (The king of the Congos).[195]

Nothing became of his petitions. Apparently the United States was not interested in the group's plan if they actually had one, much less in funding it. Cuba was already

costing the United States too much.[196] Brussels may not have heard his plea, either, for by March of the following year he was still trying to achieve his goal. He wrote to the U.S. secretary of justice asking for assistance. Complaining about "all the injustices and deprivations that Africans had endured in Cuba," Emmanuel once again proposed repatriation to Africa, where they could settle in their homelands. Apparently his plan was not well designed. The response from Washington was that he had to explain "in a concrete manner what he desires to obtain from the [U.S.] government. . .because. . .the object at which he aims has not been ascertained." He appealed once again. In May, the military government's legal division responded that "absolute naturalization" was only "imposed" on those Africans who had been slaves and *emancipados* in Cuba when Spain and England signed the treaty of 1835, but those to whom these provisions did not apply were free to go wherever they chose, unless they were "under sentence of a Cuban court."[197] In all likelihood, the 13,000 Africans who were still alive in Cuba were not seen as a significant pressure and did not represent a threat to the political climate or the government's interests. If they wanted to leave, they could, but they had to provide their own funding. Emmanuel's appeal in May was probably his last attempt, and conceivably led to his fall from grace with the Congos.

The *asociación* removed Emmanuel from its presidency, and he sued. On November 17, *La Discusión* reported that the court had ruled in favor of the *asociación* and Emmanuel's case was dismissed; however, he still retained some links with the group.[198] Thereafter, the relationship between the British Emmanuel and the group was tense, as is suggested by several other skirmishes in the city's courts. In 1903, Emmanuel was suing three ex-members who had parted ways with the association. Intergroup

conflicts had led some members to detach themselves from the organization and create another association. The three men may have taken money from the *cabildo's* coffers because the suit alleged that they had committed fraud. *La Discusión* mocked the process. The writer sarcastically exclaimed, "We will see if King Melchor…grants his protection." The preliminary hearing had been celebrated the day before, January 6, Three King's day.[199] It is interesting to note that during the eighteenth century, Doctor Henri Dumont had studied Cuba's African ethnic groups and developed stereotypical notions about the groups and their respective behaviors. Dumont's impression had been that Congos were strong but "given to insubordination and excessive slackening." They were "vagabonds by nature and lazy…inclined towards idleness."[200] It appears that these stigmas about the Congos that dated to the eighteenth century were still in vogue.

Evidently, the Rey Melchor *cabildo* was under financial stress, and the court ordered its dissolution. Emmanuel was to oversee the legal process. In 1904, he defended the association in a law suit brought by Samuel Arnold Brenner demanding liquidation of a $2,000 debt. Fortunately, the Congos Reales were spared by a law that sheltered insolvent associations from their creditors.[201] By 1905, the association was mortally wounded and desperate. Another decision by the court ordered the embargo and sale of the association's property, which they appealed in October of 1905. Emmanuel may have opposed the appeal for he filed to detach himself from the process.[202] Surely, Emmanuel's profession did not limit him to the Congos. As a black attorney, Emmanuel probably came into contact with several *cabildos* and *asociaciones*, and in the process it is possible that he established connections in the city. One can only speculate to the many layers that were involved in these interactions.

Palancas—Connections and Manipulations

Similar to the Abakuás and Congos, the Lucumís may have had upper-level *palancas* (literally "levers"; connections) in Havana. Oral history supports this idea. Sources that recalled the era or remembered remarks made by those who lived throughout the *anti-brujería* campaigns, suggested that several Lucumí *olorishas* and *babalawos* were lawyers and politicians, but given the era's prejudices, they never made their religious status known.[203] Oral historians stress that some of the men associated with the SSB and the Sociedad de Santa Rita de Cacia y San Lázaro (hereafter SSR) may have been involved in Cuban politics or connected to people of high rank.[204] The 1900 regulations for the SSB listed the names of several *babalawos* (diviner-priests of the Ifá oracle) of renown from the latter 1800s and early 1900s among the organization's directors. Arguably, some of those *babalawos* were also politically connected.[205]

The SSR, established in El Cerro, was probably derived from the Sociedad Nuestra Señora del Cobre y San Lázaro. The Cabildo Africano Lucumí, which Ortiz stated was reorganized on January 6, 1891, by Joaquín Cadiz, may have been the original parent organization of SSB. Brown's sources agreed that Cadiz, the Cabildo Africano Lucumí's founder, was the *babalawo* Ifá Omí, Ogundá'teturá, forefather of one of Cuba's five Ifá lineages that Brown identified.[206] It was located on 49 Jesús Peregrino Street, in Jesús María, a predominantly black section of Havana, where the legendary Cabildo Changó Tedún—they were possibly one and the same—was located as well.[207] SSR, founded in 1893, was established in El Cerro. *Cabildos* were reorganized in following a royal decree in 1884 that required all *cabildos* to register as associations, transforming their character, but only semantically. Internally, and among the populace, they were

generally still referred to as *cabildos*.[208] SSB may have experienced several transformations over the years.[209] Brown and Lovejoy related a flag that belonged to the 1820 Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos Santa Bárbara to Changó Tedún and SSB. The 1910 statutes of the SSB as well as a letter written in 1910 by Fernando Guerra (discussed ahead) is further evidence of the connection between the two organizations.[210]

Lovejoy linked the flag to Juan Nepomuceno Prieto, the militia officer and cabildo director who was implicated in the 1835 uprising and sentenced to death.[211] He reasoned that after Prieto's execution, the *cabildo* may have been renamed or transformed into the Changó Tedún that has been mentioned so often in the literature since Ortiz first discussed it. Ortiz alleged to have visited Changó Tedún, "the popular and rich Lucumí cabildo in Havana…ironically known as Alakisá [raggedy one]." Furthermore, Ortiz wrote that in 1914, during a raid on Changó Tedún, the police confiscated a set of batá drums that were later placed in a case in the library of the Sociedad Ecónomica de Amigos del País.[212] Parts of the Fernando Ortiz Collection's documents are currently housed in the Sociedad's building on Carlos III Avenue in Havana. Confidently, the Changó Tedún of yore was the progenitor of SSB. For unknown reasons, Ortiz persisted in calling SSB by the older name, perhaps learned through his developing relationship with SSB.[213] The society's statutes confirmed that SSB was derived from an 1820 *cabildo* with the same name as that discussed in Lovejoy's study.

By now, Fernando Guerra is a well-known figure with academics; however, Guerra the man is a total enigma. Palmie, Bronfman, Brown, and possibly others have reviewed his battles defending the rights of the Lucumís in the early 1900s. He left a considerable legacy in the form of archival documents, personal writings, publications,

and numerous mentions in newspapers. Perplexingly, he left no religious traces whatsoever. The present research compiled numerous genealogies that trace the religious descent of thousands of Lucumí *olorishas*. Devotees of Lucumí religion—as well as most of the other Afro-Cuban religious traditions—must memorize the African and Spanish names of their forebears. During ceremonial functions, Lucumís recite a *mojuba* (from the Yoruba "I salute"), a ritual salutation that reverences their progenitors. These *mojubas* are a significant resource for the historian because they establish the person's line of descent that by tradition must extend all the way back to the African progenitor of the Cuban branch. Transmitted orally, these genealogies have seldom been documented and studied, but their value is enormous. Guerra, astonishingly enough, does not appear in any, which invites the question: who exactly was Fernando Guerra?

Like Fredrika Bremer, the U.S. journalist Irene Wright visited SSR sometime circa 1909. She claimed that she was taken there by a well-known mulatto musician from Havana who was also an "officer in the organization."[214] Prior researchers suspect that Guerra was the "mulatto" who accompanied Wright that day.[215] On the basis of her description of the homage the man received when he arrived, there is no doubt that the "mulatto" who brought Wright to the *cabildo* was an *olorisha*. Wright described a traditional salutation known as *yinká*, performed by those that are ordained to female orishas when they lay on the floor to pay homage to religious elders: the girl who "might have passed for white…[threw] herself prone on the floor before him, and turn[ed] from hip to hip.[216] Drumming prohibitions stemming from the colonial era were extended by the U.S. administration in 1900.[217] The legislation is possibly why the activity that Wright attended was an *agbé* or *güiro* (gourd), named after the primary instrument that is

used for the celebration, the "rattle of gourds shaken up and down inside a beaded net."[218] Though drums were forbidden, the *cabildo's* musicians were beating a "tom-tom" of some sort, possibly a *cajón* (box beaten as a drum).[219]

Guerra's predecessor, Silvestre Erice, Salakó, priest of Obatalá was the director of the SSR when Wright visited. He, too, was just as prominent as Guerra in the era's disputes. His incendiary battles with Ortiz's associate, Israel Castellanos, were memorable.[220] Erice would have his own encounter with the legal system in 1914 over the use of *panderetas* (tambourines), an ingenious novelty created to circumvent the anti-drumming legislation.[221]

If Guerra was the musician whom Wright mentioned, it is possible to entertain the idea that he was a drummer, but she made no reference to support that. In addition, when Ortiz described "*Papá Silvestre's panderetas*" in his *Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana*, he named their creator, "Lencho," and the three drummers who played them: Tomás Erice, Emilio Estrada, and Luis Pocker.[222] Guerra was not named. Ortiz's memorable discussion of Pablo Roche, Okilakpá, and his importance as one of Havana's most celebrated drummers, failed to mention that Roche was not ordained: he was not an *olorisha*, just a drummer. Roche's wife, Amelia Ortega, Eñí Osun, did not catch Ortiz's interest even though she was a priestess. Regardless, Roche's name is still reverenced in *mojubas*, even though he was not ordained. So, too, are Erice; his wife, Julia (also known as Luisa) "La china [de] Silvestre" Guerra, Oshún Miwá; and her godmother, Belén González, Oshún Laibó (also known as Apotó), all active in SSR and SSB. In fact, Oshún Laibó was listed as the second councilor in SSB's 1900 regulations manual and is one of the *olorishas* who signed a letter that Guerra wrote to the island's president in 1910.[223]

Oral tradition and Palmie confirmed that Guerra was Erice's father-in-law.[224] While perhaps the absence in the *mojubas* is due to the possibility that Guerra left no religious descendants (that he did not ordain anyone), neither did Roche, for that matter, because he was not a priest, yet his name is still recalled. It is bewildering that Guerra is not evoked at all in Lucumí *mojubas*.

Many questions come to the fore in light of the relationship between the SSR and the SSB and Ortiz that may cast doubt on Ortiz's initial dealings with the SSB and his sincerity; at minimum they suggest that he may have known much more than he was sharing with Fernando Guerra. Though Ortiz's true rationale will never be known, there are enough indicators to suggest that his encounters with these two societies, and his budding relationship with Guerra, had little to do with affording African religion its due place in Cuban national identity. In fact, the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that Ortiz never truly abandoned his anti-African biases. What is also clear is that both he and Guerra made the best use possible of their evolving relationship, each pursuing very different interests. Guerra was not naïve, and in all probability, he distrusted Ortiz; however, he—or his *advisors*—realized that this was the better of two evils. Either he dealt with Ortiz at the expense of incurring some losses, or he succumbed to the pressures from the authorities and Cuban society. Surrounded by numerous *palancas*, political and religious, assuredly Guerra used all the resources that were at his disposition to guide his outright defiance in defense of Lucumí religion. Ortiz was just one of these *palancas*.

Though some scholars may dismiss this aspect as teleological, uncontestably Guerra and his associates sought counsel for their plight. *Olorishas* of the 1900s did not differ from modern devotees: when confronting crisis or before embarking on any major

project or before making any serious life-altering decision, *olorishas* will consult one of the two major Lucumí oracles for guidance. In addition, when the predicament presents options that require decisions, these are generally resolved by asking the *orishas* through divination. On the whole, *olorishas* will not proceed in any endeavor unless it has been sanctioned by the orishas and ancestors. The figures that come up in divination and subsequent questioning of the oracle will prescribe the best path to follow and determine any sacrifices or rituals to perform before proceeding with the activity to ensure its success. Certainly, Guerra was not acting alone: he was motivated by the advice of numerous benefactors, human and divine, who revealed the strategies he would use in his battles. As Palmie argued, divination, deities, and divine intercession are among those "dimensions of the unexplorable" that are "beyond historiographic recovery."[225]

In a very strategic move, on March 12, 1911, Ortiz was named honorary president of SSB.[226] Though he visited the *cabildo* before that time, Ortiz's nomination marks the beginning of a closer and certainly more opportune relationship between the two men.[227] On October 15 of that same year, Guerra, by now president of the SSB, wrote his forceful protest, "*Basta de Calumnias: La voz de los humildes al pueblo y á las autoridades*" (Enough calumnies: The voice of the humble [calling] to the people and to the authorities), which may have benefited from Ortiz's input. Undoubtedly, Guerra and SSB consulted the oracle before taking this step.

Besides audacity, Guerra's complaint suggests numerous things. The clearest supposition from a secular perspective is that Guerra, an educated man, was either well versed in legal terminology or meticulously advised, possibly by Ortiz—the lawyer who was very familiar with the era's affairs. Guerra's letters and penmanship attest to his

literacy and aptitudes, but the document's structure suggests that he did not write it by himself. Ortiz's disciple, Israel Castellanos, was impressed by the "notable improvement" in Guerra's use of language when compared to the "deficient mental prowess" of most Afro-Cubans.[228] It is possible he was insinuating that Ortiz was behind Guerra's writings. What seems certain is that Guerra was well counseled.

Guerra may have had important networks guiding his actions even before his relationship with Ortiz began.[229] Sometime in the early 1900s, Agustina Riser, Koralí, ordained Belén Madán, Oyé'yeí. Riser's brother was Francisco Hilario Riser, better known as Panchito Riset, a Cuban singer whose career took off in the latter 1920s. The Risers were from Atarés, close neighbor of Jesús María, the district where SSB was located. Koralí and Oshún Laibó, who was Guerra's daughter's godmother, were from the same Orisha lineage: the Malakés. They all probably knew each other well, given the community's smaller size at the time. Oyé'yeí's husband, oral sources maintain, was a senator. It is said that she often visited her godmother covertly, as it would have been political suicide for her husband if she did otherwise. Possibly, Oyé'yeí represented another ally in powerful places, operating quietly and interceding with her husband to help Guerra and her Orisha family.[230]

In the *Basta* document, Guerra powerfully invoked his constitutional rights in light of the continuous abuses SSB was suffering at the hands of the Cuban police. He had made other bold attempts before this one, especially his 1910 letter to Cuba's president José Miguel Gómez in which he raised objections to police abuse, raids, and the seizure of the society's religious paraphernalia, which was published in the newspapers.[231] That year, the SSB had been accused of celebrating illegal meetings to

plan a rebellion and was subjected to a police raid. Guerra was the SSB's secretary at the time.[232] Apparently, nothing changed because in 1914 Guerra was again protesting the ongoing conflict with Havana's police and the confiscation of *cabildo* attributes. Inflexibly stressing his love of country and his *cubanidad*, the 1914 document reiterated that he was a veteran of the wars of independence who had fought alongside some of the great revolutionaries, naming Máximo Gómez and Guillermo Moncada, among others. Guerra also reproved political leaders, reminding them that those who played drums and sang African chants had also fought in the war.[233] He was as Cuban as any other, and as such, he had rights. *Basta ya*—I am fed up! Pleading in the name of justice, civil liberties, and freedom of conscience, Guerra demanded his rights, guaranteed by the new Cuban republic and its constitution.

Lucumís were not Ñáñigos, nor were they *brujos*. They professed "Christian Lucumí morals" and had not detached themselves from Catholicism, a religion that had given many Lucumís "consoling inspirations with faith always placed on God."[234] Oral tradition recalls the seizure of SSB's drums, but Lucumí drummers maintain that the police never took the "true" drums. In fact, they stress that on the day that the 1914 search took place, someone who worked with the police had forewarned them. An officer who was connected with the raids during these years was Estanislao Massip, whom sources believe may have been related to Basilia Massip, Omí Dina, a Yemojá priestess ordained in Havana in the 1910s.[235] Akin to the Abakuá legend about turning over fake drums to the authorities, sources said SSB did the same. The question now is to what degree, if at all, was Ortiz involved?

A year later, on September 30, 1915, Guerra, now president of SSR, in a document that he titled a "manifesto," boldly declared that the Lucumís were a religious people, not atheists. While never denying that the SSB "professed" Lucumí religion, Guerra repeatedly stressed the Christian theme.[236] Moreover, the manifesto also addressed the press's mockery, especially that of *La Discusión* and an unnamed writer who had been "inspired by rancid obsessions of the worst kind…trying to inhibit our African Lucumí celebrations," in total disregard for the guarantees the constitution provided for all citizens.[237] Guerra's audacity surely earned him enemies in high places, and his vocal defense of his religion and his right to profess it earned him more. Nevertheless, Guerra was unrelenting. He also lashed out against *La Marina*, another of the era's newspapers, for an offensive article published after the passing of Silvestre Erice, SSR's founder. The manifesto announced that the following Sunday the society's mourning ended, beginning a cycle of weekly celebrations. The mayor and Chief of Police Plácido Hernández were made aware.[238] Guerra was not asking for permission to hold his activity: he was brazenly announcing that he would! Is it possible that Ortiz's hand was her as well?

Many followers of Afro-Cuban religions had reservations about Ortiz that lasted into the post-1959 era. One source recounted overhearing elders discuss Ortiz and his visits to the homes of Lucumí priests under the pretext of conducting research, and he related a story he heard as he was growing up. His father Eugenio Díaz, Ogbé'até, was a *babalawo* who had been ordained to Obatalá (orisha of purity) in Changó Tedún sometime in the 1890s. It was rumored that whenever Ortiz visited an *olorisha's* home, some days or weeks later the police raided it; detained the owners, accusing them of

sacrificing children for *brujería*; and impounded their religious items.[239] Similar accounts were reported by several sources.[240] While the story may be part of an urban legend, these narratives are "stories of Diaspora," as Brown has called them, which enclose deeper meanings that structure religious traditions, practice, and devotion.[241] Generally, myths have a basis in fact and intertwine the fictional and the factual; mythological and historical occurrences come together in an intricate web.[242] Undeniably, myths are "a form of history, philosophy, theology, or science."[243]

Was Ortiz collaborating with the police, suggesting places to raid and seize paraphernalia to curate for the University's anthropology museum or the Amigos del País's library? On the other hand, could he have been the tipster who warned Guerra and the SSB that the police was planning to raid them? It is possible: in fact, in 1944, he may have hinted at this. Ortiz wrote that when he began studying Afro-Cuban history and culture, "it was dangerous even to speak in public about the Negro and this could be done only on the sly and under cover."[244] At present no one can categorically confirm or deny these theories.

What is certain is that despite his newfound friendship with Guerra, Ortiz had not yet experienced his paradigm shift, though his presence in the *cabildo* was becoming more noticeable. Varela Zequeira eventually caught on and sensationalized it. An article that appeared in *El Mundo* mocked Ortiz's involvement in a *bembé* (drumming ceremony) making several inferences about his association with the cabildo and his personal life as well.[245] Varela Zequeira is probably the same reporter to whom Guerra referred in 1914. Though he never openly discussed his liaison with Guerra and the *cabildos*, it was no secret. Given the era and the social construct, the topic was simply

one of those themes that were not up for discussion for fear that it could be misconstrued, as Varela Zequeira had done.[246] Perhaps the reason for Ortiz's repeated usage of the name Changó Tedún and not SSB was to disguise his relationship with the now infamous organization. Still, while Ortiz's dealings with the *cabildo* are not in doubt, some of his actions and writings suggest that his commitment to the cause of Afro-Cuban religions was. In his 1916 *Los negros esclavos*, Ortiz continued to demonstrate a heavily biased opinion about Afro-Cubans and their *mala vida*. In all fairness, though, he criticized whites and Chinese just as harshly.[247]

Over time, Guerra's strategic maneuvers were resourceful. As Bronfman pointed out, outspoken as he was, Guerra made efficient use of Cuba's constitution to support his cause.[248] Article 26 established Catholicism as the island's official creed, but it also sanctioned freedom of religion so long as these beliefs observed "Christian morals." In his rebuttals, Guerra consistently focused on the clause to support SSB's and his religion's legal standing. In his letter to President Gómez, Guerra stressed that he and the members of SSB had proven and "could prove as many times as required that its cult was not contrary to Christian morality, nor did it attempt against public order, the only requirements stipulated by article 26."[249] Making use of terminology that would resonate with Catholics, Guerra stressed the Lucumí coexistence with Catholicism. He made reference to a recent search, complaining that the police had seized the "African image" of the society's "Santa Bárbara" and other religious items, "sacred relics" that were ancestral legacies belonging to their forebears. His use of the terms "sacred relics" could very easily have been intentional, evoking the notion that relics were also essential in Catholic churches.

Unlike the SSB's 1900 booklet, the 1910 edition featured a crucifix on the cover.[250] The latter version's third article stressed the society's Christian morality; article 22 stipulated that SSB would succor those members who died and did not have the funds for a proper "Christian burial in the Catholic Cemetery."[251] Article 58 spoke of the obligation of all SSB members to "protect all fellows with the love of charity."[252] References to Lucumí religion, Catholicism, and "Christian morality" had not been explicitly mentioned in the society's earlier dealings with the leadership of the interim U.S. administration.[253]

Just as curious, Guerra's letter to President José Miguel Gómez failed to mention the president's name. Discreet metaphors in Guerra's discourse and the SSB statutes leave room for considerable speculation as to the possible implications of what was truly being said in much of his writings. His letter to the "Honorable Sr. Presidente" was indicative of Guerra's manipulation of a greater theme that was prevalent at the time. Gómez was one of several politicians who were alleged to have ties with the *brujos*.[254] Although it resolved very little, it is probable that Guerra's complaint to the president was promulgated by his possible knowledge of Gómez's links to African religions.

The SSB's and Guerra's compliance with article 26 may have had additional and perhaps unintended repercussions. The *cabildo's* regulations stipulated that since 1820, those who professed the Lucumí religiosity had been "obligated…morally and socially" to place themselves under the banner of Saint Barbara. This was a loaded comment. While accepting that the saint was a "member" of the society since the nineteenth century, he also implied that the association was not voluntary because, from Guerra's apparent perspective, coercive mechanisms may have been involved. He may have been

referring to the eighteenth-century edicts of Bishop Pedro Agustín Morel de Santa Cruz. In his attempt to educate and evangelize Africans, he decreed that all *cabildos* had to be under the tutelage of a Catholic saint. The bishop personally visited the *cabildos* and installed an image of a saint under whose protection the society would thereafter operate.[255]

The relationship with Saint Barbara and the Lucumís is noteworthy. Many Lucumí *cabildos*, in Havana and Matanzas, held her as their patron saint. As early as 1904, with Zoila's murder, Cuban newspapers began disseminating the relationship between Saint Barbara, Africans, and the Lucumís. Ritual sacrifices, blood consumption, and cannibalism ultimately became an additional level of the discourse in the complex disputes of the era. *Brujos* and *los adoradores de Santa Bárbara* (Saint Barbara's worshippers) were now synonymous.[256] As late as 1933, *Time* magazine in the United States associated the disappearance of children with the saint: "a crude altar of stones and seashells, a hideous statue of the Goddess Chango, and 28 half-crazed Negroes, two of them with bloody robes and blunt stone axes… Chango has been demanding white blood lest a curse be cast upon us."[257] These myths grew so much that even now, some Cubans worry that on December 4, the saint's feast day, their children will be kidnapped and sacrificed.[258]

There were other subtleties in the statutes booklet. Section 1 of SSB's article 58 was quite explicit in what it did not say; however, its inferences were very clear. All members had to adjust their exercise of Lucumí worship so that it was harmonious with modern society, but at the same time section seven emphasized that they also had to "defend with truths…[the] logic of Lucumí faith."[259] Section 11 dictated that members

had to respect the law of the land and ensure that others did so as well. Although many interpretations are possible, these sections suggest that Guerra and SSB were implying that they would adhere to Cuban legal dictates and social mores but that they were not necessarily willing to alter their religious practice or devotion in any significant way. In some respects, like the Spaniards who often acknowledged the Crown's orders but failed to obey them—*acato pero no obedezco*—Guerra, strengthened by his belief in the promises of the Cuban constitution, exhibited just much resistance as his nineteenth-century forebears: adaptation, but with limits. In some ways, Guerra and SSB were reconciling the nineteenth-century covert resistance of his ancestors with this new attempt, which unlike the earlier endeavor, was now public, outspoken, and even more unswerving.

The fact that SSB recognized that it was no longer solely an organization of Lucumí peoples corroborates the idea of resistance as well. Descendants of other Africans were openly accepted in the organization and the religion so long as they, too, followed Lucumí tenets and did not attempt to alter them. His letter to President Gómez was just as significant in its defense of the Lucumí resolve. He told the president that there had been an increase in the number of Lucumí associations, and that other than SSB, Erice's SSR, and the "San Pedro" *cabildo*, "formed by a Lucumí lady" who remained nameless, he could not vouch for the legitimacy of the others.[260]

After 1915, it seems like Guerra's encounters diminished. As he was no longer a young man, it is possible that he died. To date, no mention of his death has turned up in any documentary sources, and since he is not remembered, oral history is also mute. By 1918, in another encounter with the authorities, the president of the SSB was documented

as Isidoro Sandrino. They had been accused of illegal association and plotting against the government. Given the lack of evidence, SSB was exonerated of the charges.[261]

The *cabildo* may once again have been reorganized or transformed in 1926, following the ascent of the Gerardo Machado regime.[262] In March of that year, Bernardo Rojas, Irete'ntedí, who had been ordained by Adeshina, registered the Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos, Instrucción, Recreo y Culto Lucumí "Hijos de Santa Bárbara." Irete'ntedí's "cabildo" was established in Pogolotti, a district of Marianao, an affluent section of Havana.[263] Pogolotti was also known for its significant Lucumí, Abakuá, and Congo practices. Cabrera did much of her fieldwork in Havana in the region of Marianao, in the *barrios* of El Palenque, Los Pocitos, and Pogolotti.[264] Irete'ntedí's *cabildo's* roster included some of SSB's old members, including the celebrated Tata Gaitán, Ogundá'fún, who was Adeshina's godson as well. Other *babalawos* and *olorishas* of the era were also active in the association.

Like SSB, Irete'ntedí's group also came under government scrutiny. In July, the association's leadership wrote a letter to the governor's office clarifying that they did not practice *brujería*. Once again, the Lucumís were in conflict with the authorities, this time Gerardo Machado's secret police, who had ordered an investigation of the association. The report insisted that the association was a front for "curing by using *brujería* or *espitismo*" (spiritualism). They had two addresses, the report continued, one of which was a clandestine operation for *curandería*.[265] Clearly, the secret police and the government were aware of the association's true nature. The detective who conducted the operation wrote that Irete'ntedí and another well-known babalawo of the era, Guillermo Castro, Ogbé'shé, were *santero[s] de profesión* and performed readings and healing

ceremonies. Apparently, nothing became of the investigation, for the association continued functioning into the 1950s, when it was finally closed owing to inactivity.

The Pyramid is Entrenched—Paradigm Shifts and Reassessed Approaches

1916 was an election year. *La Noche* acknowledged receipt of an invitation to SSR's weekly celebrations, and its director, Fernando Ortiz, replied, promising to attend the *simpáticas fiestas* (pleasant celebrations), which deserved the support of all "people with good faith."[266] Ortiz's public acceptance was significant, for it marked a clear shift in policy that was already evident at other levels as well. Perhaps to Guerra's credit, politicians, too, eventually recognized the importance of *cabildos* and societies such as SSR and SSB and the power these could wield. Eventually, their biases started giving way to their political interests, as by the end of the decade, many candidates for office began courting Afro-Cuban associations.[267] Nonetheless, the confrontations had not yet finished.

The first two decades of the twentieth century provided Ortiz with the foundations for his subsequent transformation. A habitual reader, Ortiz was well informed and current with the literature. His ongoing relationship with Guerra and the *cabildo* opened other doors for him in the Afro-Cuban religious universe. Ortiz's own transculturative process occurred in stages. Surely, Guerra and the Lucumís had a profound role in its progression. Early indications of the interchanges between them appear in Ortiz's 1919 *Steps in the Evolution of Religion*, possibly the earliest evidence for his hierarchization of African religions.[268]

Riding on the tails of the Bolshevik Revolution and World War I, Ortiz expressed his concern over the current global state of affairs. Though his commentaries were generalized, they may have been intended for his northern neighbor: "these times through which the world is passing, in the gestation of a new age that will assure for ever [sic] the triumph of liberty over tyranny."[269]

At a gathering of spiritualists in Havana, Ortiz "set forth…his ideas" about the "religious position occupied by African superstitions" in Cuba and their relationship with other, "more moral" religions, such as spiritualism. He categorically stated that he was not a spiritualist, a Catholic, or a "witch, using the word now like our people, improperly, and including in it all the African superstitions that survive in Cuba." Spiritualism was, for Ortiz and his audience, "a strong stimulus for the betterment of humanity." It was in the process of delivering the speech that Ortiz clearly delineated the position of Cuba's three African traditions, giving rise to the social pyramid that placed the Lucumí religion at the pinnacle of his theoretical framework. That day, he barely used the term *brujería* when referring to Lucumí religion. The preferred word was "fetishism." His studies of Lucumí religion, "vulgarly known as *witch-craft,*" had brought him to different conclusions, akin to his perception of spiritualism. Religions were subject to transformative stages, and all progressed through time. There were three stages to religion: the unmoral religion, moral religion, and unreligious morality with science as its primary deity. "Fetishism is an unmoral religion; Catholicism is a moral religion; spiritualism is unreligious morality, without dogmas, rites or idols or priests."[270]

Of all the religions that came from Africa, "one survived, the Lucumí, because it was the most advanced."[271] The religion's success was due, he argued, to the presence of

Catholicism, itself no stranger to adoptions and adaptations to ensure its survival. For Ortiz, the fusion of these two traditions was so thorough that all over Havana, on December 4, Saint Barbara's day, "Catholic honors" were celebrated to homage "the idol of the saint brought from the witch temple, where it represents the god of thunder and blood, the terrible Shangó."[272] Despite his mutable opinions, there is no doubt that different ideas were reverberating in Ortiz's mind, but the speech did make one thing clear: there were irrefutable likenesses between Catholic and Lucumí dogma. Arguably, Ortiz was laying the foundations for the popularization of the syncretic process that began in Kongo in the fifteenth century and was reinforced in Cuba in 1755 by Morel de Santa Cruz. Declaring a connection between the two religions was a way of "whitening" Lucumí religion so as to gradually make it more palatable to Cuban society, thus including the African element in the development of *cubanidad*.

Despite his rhetoric about the misapplication of the term *witchcraft*—though he himself was still using it—Ortiz's opinion had varied little, although he was increasingly becoming more and more Lucumí-centric. The apparently greater acceptance of the Lucumí could have been a façade for a larger agenda. After Varela Zequeira's criticism some years before, Ortiz may have preferred to appear distant from the Afro-Cuban factions and more supportive of the greater, long-term nationalistic design. Maybe, deep inside, he, too, accepted the idea of "modernity." However, with Gerardo Machado soon to ascend to power and the era's political instability, it is probable that greater problems disturbed the lawyer-ethnographer in 1919 than the religious practices of Cubans.

If it is possible to state that Guerra's strategy paid off, it is necessary to ask at what expense? After 1918, it seems as if the great conflicts came to an end, at least in

Havana, but in reality very little changed, at least in the perceptions of the society at large. By catapulting one group to the zenith, Ortiz slighted the others. Surely, that afternoon in Havana, even when he somewhat exempted the Lucumís from criticism, Ortiz disparaged all Afro-Cuban traditions. The positioning of the Abakuás and Congos on the levels that they came to occupy on the still-evolving social pyramid had probably been as gradual as Ortiz's apparent transformation. Despite their nineteenth-century conflicts with Spanish authorities, Abakuás enjoyed greater leverage, especially given the possibility that politicians were initiated in the fraternity. The Rodríguez Batista affair may have garnished them some additional clout. In 1918, an article in *El Día* criticized the connections between politicians and the *brujos*, surely meaning Abakuás. Cubans had to bring an end to those who supported the *brujos* if their hold over society was to end. There were politicians, senators, and even an ex-president who were suspected *brujos*. An individual known only by the sobriquet Bejuco, was the "strong brujo and the amorous godfather…of the honorable…ex-president of the republic."[273] These ideas were not new. Similar accusations appeared in *La Lucha* as early as 1904.[274] By the 1920s, though, around the time that Ortiz "set forth" his evolving ideas about religion's stages, times were changing, and politicians habitually courted African associations and the Ñáñigos for support.[275]

The Congos, whom Ortiz continued to call *brujos* throughout most of his life, were presented as if being at a lower stage of evolution; thus below the stage of Lucumí "morality." It is difficult to gauge his true intentions, but a perceptible bias against the Congos in Ortiz's writing reflects the prejudices that are still dominant amongst the Lucumís and Cubans in general. As Robin Moore stressed, much of Ortiz's writing was

filled with “troublesome ideological implications.”[276] While in later years he wrote extensively about Congo religiosity, *tata ngangas* in *La africanía* and *Los instrumentos* are always linked with the words *brujería*, *hechizo* (sorcery), and/or *conjuros* (conjuring). Congo practices were *conguería*, using the trivializing diminutive.[277] On the other hand, the treatment he gave to the Lucumís was quite the opposite. In fact, Ortiz became more and more Lucumí-centric. He appeared to be presenting that the Congo cults were not as advanced as the Lucumí religion, which was “more elevated than the magic of the Congos.”[278] Lucumí music was more rhythmic than any other African music in Cuba. And most notably, he had not found any “conjures” like those used by the Congos in Lucumí religious practices.”[279]

Regardless of his intention, the images he “conjured” kept Congo religiosity under a somber light, supporting the general tendency exhibited by the media since Zoila’s death. In Ortiz’s view, the Congos may have been the epitome of the unmoral stages of religion, with the Lucumís just some steps above.[280] Arguably, the Congos never successfully overcame the damage caused by the Zoila case. Their status was relegated to the lowest ranks, mostly because of the repeated media distortions relating them to cannibalism, vanished children, and grave robberies. Even if the majority of white Cuban society was not aware of the associations between the Congos and these practices, most of which were unfounded, the Afro-Cuban religious communities certainly knew of them. In keeping with Ortiz’s classifications, the Congos were placed at the bottom of the pyramid, by both Ortiz and the Lucumís.

The island’s struggles with *brujería* were not over, however. In 1919, the same year Ortiz presented *Steps in the Evolution of Religion*, Eduardo Nuñez y Nuñez’s

discourse on the legal measures that should be taken to outlaw *brujería* was well received. Nuñez y Nuñez's ideas prompted the creation of a commission to study possible legislation to ban *brujería*, a fruitless endeavor akin to the foiled 1913 effort directed by Senator Godinez, ironically published on December 4—*el día de Santa Bárbara* (Saint Barbara's feast day). Ortiz was named secretary for the 1919 commission.[281]

In 1922, President Alfredo Zayas's anti-*brujería* decree forbade African ritual celebrations.[282] During the Machado regime, legislation once again banned the use of African drums. "A civilized nation such as ours should not permit, because the authorization or tolerance would attempt against its culture, that public manifestations composed of individuals that to the beat of drums or instruments that produce such noises, circulate the streets of our cities and towns committing these indignant acts."[283] Police raids were perpetrated by Cuba's republican administrations as late as the 1950s. During Batista's second term, the police were still using *brujería* as a pretext to invade the homes of possible opponents of the regime, much like the Spaniards in the 1870s.[284] Even Batista, the reputed *olorisha* of Shangó, condoned these violations of the island's constitution that Guerra had vehemently contested.

In 1923, a group of white intellectuals of the era founded the Sociedad del Folklore Cubano. Among the notables were Enrique José Varona, president of the society and one of the journalists whose exaggerated writings attacked Afro-Cubans during the Zoila scandal. Also participating were Ortiz, Israel Castellanos, and several others, but their version of Cuban folklore looked exclusively to the Iberian Peninsula, despite the growing influence of creole, and primarily African-influenced, cultural and musical forms. Some members of the group expressed concern about this exclusivism. Most

musicians were uneasy over the growing popularity of American musical forms in Cuba and worried about their possible damaging influences.[285] Ortiz was among them, as is evident in his critique of the Machado regime, when he wrote that to preserve culture was "to preserve liberty."[286] Ortiz was providing an indication of his continuing metamorphosis; however, his feelings about Afro-Cuban religions had not changed much, as is evident in his discussion in his 1924 *La religion en la poesía mulata*. As he had in 1906, Ortiz was still arguing that African religions would eventually evolve in response to "more purified impulses."[287] Bronfman and Palmie both agreed that at some point after beginning his interactions with Guerra, Ortiz stopped calling for the eradication of African religions, but this claim is problematic in light of his continuing discourse.[288] Plainly, while he may have toned down his rhetoric and become more reserved with his comments, Ortiz was still expressing his engrained belief about the backwardness of these religions and their destined extinction.

Still, Ortiz's association with Guerra was beneficial to both men, but more so to the former's developing folklorization campaign. No doubt through Guerra's intercession, Ortiz met other significant *olorishas* and important members of the Lucumí religious community. Like Ortiz, Remigio Herrera, Adeshina, had also been nominated honorary president of the SSB sometime before his death in 1905. His daughter, Josefa "Pepa" Herrera, Eshú'bí, carried on Adeshina's traditions in Regla. She inherited the Cabildo Yemayá, which paraded through the streets of the town until 1962. It is highly probable that Guerra kept a steady relationship with Eshú'bí and may have taken Ortiz to her home in Regla.

The bond between Ortiz and Eshú'bí, if oral historians are correct, was never a close one, though he benefited from the relationship in several ways. Eshú'bí is remembered as a very quiet, inexpressive woman, who would not speak unless it was necessary. Like her ancestors, she was just as mysterious and secretive about religious details and ritual knowledge. It is doubtful that she collaborated with Ortiz, as she seldom shared any information with her own godchildren.[289] Opportunistically, at Eshú'bí's funeral, Ortiz posed for a photograph before the casket, in front of a floral arrangement that he had sent. In addition, photos were taken of Eshú'bí in her casket, reminiscent of what his colleague Israel Castellanos had done when Silvestre Erice passed.[290] For the Lucumís, the pictures were very distasteful, but for Ortiz, these could have served various purposes, as it placed him in his role as ethnographer at the funeral of one of Cuba's last connections to Africa and the Lucumí ancestors.[291]

Ortiz also benefited from his relationship with a batá drummer who was born in the town, Miguel Somodevilla, Shangó Larí. He was one of Ortiz's principal sources for much of the historical information about batá drums in Cuba. Shangó Larí provided Ortiz with the details about the presence and rituals of the Egbado Lucumís that appeared in *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba* as well as the drawings of the *caretas de Olokún* (Olokún masks) or Geledé masks that are stored in the Ortiz Collection in Havana.[292] Shangó Larí may have also introduced Ortiz to Okilakpá, whom Ortiz revered, and other respected drummers, many of whom lived in Regla and neighboring Guanabacoa.[293]

In the process of his fieldwork in Havana and later Regla, Ortiz's nationalistic ideas continued evolving, even when his own biases had not changed. When it seemed

that Ortiz's greater purpose was just beginning to congeal, he was forced to abandon Cuba in 1931. During the years of the Gerardo Machado regime (1925-1933), his open condemnation of the regime precipitated his inevitable departure, resulting in his taking residence in the United States.[294] While in New York, frantically searching for a way to make a living, he wrote a letter to Melville Herskovits, the celebrated anthropologist, advising him of his arrival. Ortiz made it known that he had left Cuba because of the Machado regime's instability. He and Herskovits had enjoyed an amicable, long-distance relationship for some time, which eventually led Ortiz's disciple, Rómulo Lachatañeré, to travel to Illinois to study under Herskovits.[295] In his letter, Ortiz explained to Herskovits that the island was experiencing the most "terrible situation," the tyranny of "a paranoid president, surrounded by pseudo-political elements of the worst kind that resorted to murder as a means to an end, with the support, sometimes explicit, of the U.S."[296] Still, in another letter dated November 26, 1931, still exiled in the United States, and now residing in Washington, D.C., Ortiz expressed his wishes to remain in the United States where he could continue his research, specifically on matters associated with Latin America.

It is possible that Ortiz's exile in the United States may have affected his theoretical evolution. Much of Ortiz's *cubanidad* may have developed in response to clashes with U.S. racial categorizations that had been used to deride the island as inferior and backward since the war, and Ortiz was clearly upset by these.[297] The issue surely added insult to injury, given the disheartening conflict that Ortiz had in Madrid in 1928 over Spain's intended use of Catholicism and racial issues to advance a campaign to better her relations with her ex-colonies by reintroducing "religion" and "whiteness." He

claimed to have ardently criticized Spain for its intended racist policies, especially because the mother country was *uno de los pueblos más amestizados de la tierra* (one of the most mixed countries in the world).[298] Religion and especially race were not his primary concerns initially, but Ortiz had to have realized that these were inseparable from *cubanidad* because of the island's great Afro-Cuban population.[299] Also, he was offended by arrogant Cuban and U.S. dismissals of the island's developing creole musical forms as primitive and savage. Eventually, his Cuban pride was hurt, and this wound weighed on him more than his racial concerns, giving birth to what Alejandro de la Fuente called a "revalorization of black contributions to the formation of the Cuban nation."[300] After more than 20 years studying Afro-Cuban *brujos*, Ortiz's personal biases and philosophies, which never truly changed, gradually gave way to the more pressing nationalistic priorities. These inexorably included Afro-Cuban cultural influences, which, by this time, he had realized were unavoidable and surely necessary, even if they were unrefined.[301]

In 1936, about two years after his return to the island from the United States, Ortiz founded the Sociedad de Estudios Afrocubanos, supported by a large entourage of more forward-thinking individuals.[302] To some extent, Guerra may have been vindicated, but by 1936 Ortiz's folklorization strategy was also well on its way. His declaration that Obatalá, Shangó, and Ifá would "vanish in the cold light of rationality" reinforced that his personal biases had never dissipated. Even more so, Ortiz's remarks over the years continued to cast doubt on his motives for promoting and including Africanity in his construction of a national identity.[303] By all means, Ortiz's recognition of Afro-Cuban culture was Machiavellian, as surely he found it to be the better of two evils.

In 1937, Ortiz presented Lucumí batá drums—"the most praiseworthy of the Afro-Cuban instruments"—on stage in Havana, marking the first public appearance of these drums for nonreligious celebrations.[304] Batá drums had now been separated from their ritual context, appropriated as part of the national culture, and worst of all, *revestidos con elegancia*—elegantly redressed.[305] Ortiz ingeniously made Afro-Cuban musical genres more appealing to his primarily white and elite Cuban audience and inserted Afro-Cuban drums—Lucumí drums—into his evolving field of Cuban folklore. In every respect, regardless of his motives, Ortiz publicly—and arguably forcibly—recognized the *cubanidad* of Afro-Cuban music. By extension, in acknowledging batá drums as part of the island's identity, Ortiz validated Lucumí religion. At the same time, however, he also disparaged what he probably hoped was a disappearing trait—African backwardness. Like the appropriated batá drums, he reduced African religions in Cuba to the status of folklore. It may not be coincidental that during the same year, Brazil was hosting the country's second Afro-Brazilian congress: it is very hard to imagine that Ortiz was not aware of this event. Like Cuba, soon after Herskovits's disciple Gilberto Freyre published *Casa Grande e Senzala* (titled "The Masters and the Slaves" in English), Brazil also began its trajectory that culminated with the folklorization of Candomblé, Lucumí religion's South American sister.[306]

Arguably, Ortiz's two foreign experiences entrenched his *cubanidad* unlike any other experience in his life. Europe saw the birth of Ortiz the lawyer as well as the Lombrosian criminologist paradigm, culminating in the book *Los negros brujos*. The United States and Ortiz's love-hate relationship with it ushered in his final transformation: Ortiz the criminologist became Ortiz the folklorist, and in the process,

African culture in Cuba began a gradual ascent, though never truly losing the stigmas that have characterized it since it arrived on the slave ships. In the end, one can only wonder what went through Ortiz's mind while he was exiled in the United States that transformed the Cuban "inquisitor" into the father of Cuban folklore and, in so doing, placed one African religion at the pinnacle of a social pyramid he helped to erect.

Notes

[1] Ivor Miller, *Voice of the Leopard: African Secret Societies and Cuba* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 32.

[2] In the text, Voodoo will be used only to refer to the system that developed in the southern United States, while Vodou will reflect African and Haitian practices.

[3] James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa—Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 2.

[4] David H. Brown, *Santería Enthroned—Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 77.

[5] It is not uncommon to walk into a Cuban American home today and find apples on a plate before an image of Saint Barbara or on the floor in front of Shangó's shrine. It is not clear at what point in time the association was born. The same phenomenon has occurred with other Catholic saints. Many Catholics who claim no allegiance to Lucumí religion will often place Oshún-related offerings such as honey, pastries, and pumpkins before the image of Our Lady of Charity, practices that are clearly derived from Lucumí religion.

[6] Lydia Cabrera, *El monte* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1975), 17.

[7] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 97.

[8] The term is derived from the Spanish *hijo de algo*—child of something (someone of nobility).

[9] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 77.

[10] Fernando Ortiz, *Hampa afrocubana—Los negros brujos*, (1906; repr., Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1973).

[11] Among the most recent, Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists—Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Brown, *Santería Enthroned*; Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality—Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Reinaldo L. Román, *Governing Spirits—Religion, Miracles, and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Jorge Pavez Ojeda, "El retrato de los 'negros brujos'. Los archivos visuales de la antropología afrocubana (1900-1920)," *Aisthesis* 46 (2009).

[12] César Lombroso, “Carta-Prólogo (Juicio Crítico),” in Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros brujos* (Madrid: Librería de Fernando Fé, 1906), xi-xii.

[13] “El hampa afrocubana,” *La Discusión*, July 11, 1906.

[14] Alberto N. Pamies, “Prólogo,” in Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros brujos* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1973), viii.

[15] Ibid., 9.

[16] Ibid., 18-19.

[17] Ibid., 18.

[18] Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar (advertencia de sus contrastes agrarios, económicos, históricos y sociales, su etnografía y su transculturación* (La Habana: Jesús Montero, 1940).

[19] Fernando Ortiz, “Brujos o Santeros,” *Estudios Afrocubanos* 3, nos. 1-4 (1939): 86; Stephan Palmie and Elizabeth Pérez, “An All Too Present Absence: Fernando Ortiz’s Work on Abakuá in its Sociocultural Context,” *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 79 nos. 3 and 4 (2005), 223-24.

[20] Rómulo Lachatañeré, “La Creencias Religiosas de los Afrocubanos y la Falsa Aplicación del Término ‘Brujería’,” in *El Sistema Religioso de los Afrocubanos* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1992), 197.

[21] Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation for All—Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Lillian Guerra, *The Myth of José Martí—Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

[22] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*; Brown, *Santería Enthroned*; David Brown, *The Light Inside: Abakuá Society Arts and Cuban Cultural History* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003); Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*; Román, *Governing Spirits*.

[23] Ortiz, *Los negros brujos*, 246; Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 113; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 18.

[24] “El Dr. Fernando Ortiz,” *La Discusión*, July 17, 1906.

[25] Ortiz, *Negros brujos*, 246; Brown, *Light Inside*, 149-50; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 23-28; Norberto Díaz, Ejiogbé, personal conversation with the author, Regla, Havana, Cuba, March 24, 2001.

[26] Ortiz, *Los negros brujos*, 240-42.

[27] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 228; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 57-58.

[28] The term *morena* literally refers to a woman of Moorish origin. In colonial Latin America, it was applied to black women, usually creole (native to the area as opposed to African born), and *negra* was the more commonly used term to refer to an African woman. Nonetheless, the terms could be used interchangeably. Puerto Ricans and Dominicans still use *morena/o* in conversation when referring to blacks.

[29] “La bestia humana. En la Quinta de Los Molinos,” *La Discusión*, September 7, 1903.

[30] "La India Palmista" (The Indian Palm Reader) was a regular in *La Discusión* and *El Mundo*. *La Discusión*, September 5, 1905; *El Mundo*, November 11, 1906.

[31] "Píldoras Tónico Genitales," advertisement, *El Mundo*, June 21, 1908.

[32] de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 51.

[33] Gabriela Dos Reis Sampaio, *A História do feiticeiro Juca Rosa: Cultura e relações sociais no Rio de Janeiro Imperial* (PhD dissertation, Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas da Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2000), 9; Dain Borges, "Healing and Mischief: Witchcraft in Brazilian Law and Literature, 1890–1922," in *Crime and Punishment in Latin America—Law and Society since Late Colonial Times*, ed. Ricardo D. Salvatore, Carlos Aguirre, and Gilbert M. Joseph (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 181.

[34] See Cabrera, *El monte*; Robbert A. Voeks, *Sacred Leaves of Candomblé—African Magic, Medicine, and Religion in Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997); Pierre Fatumbi Verger, *Ewé: O uso das plantas na sociedade iorubá* (São Paulo: Editora Schwacrz, 1995).

[35] La brujería en Abreus. Salvajismo en acción," *La Discusión*, September 30, 1904.

[36] "Una curación que se presta á reflexiones," *La Discusión*, September 26, 1904.

[37] "Ladrón de Gallinas," *La Discusión*, July 20, 1903.

[38] "Los grandes crímenes del día," *La Discusión*, August 12, 1904.

[39] In Cuba, the term "chino/a" was often applied to mulattoes who had features that either revealed possible Chinese ancestry, or whose features and skin color resembled those of the Chinese.

[40] "Los grandes crímenes del día. Misteriosa desaparición de un niño," *La Discusión*, August 15, 1904.

[41] "Los grandes crímenes del día," *La Discusión*, August 12, 1904.

[42] "Captura del niño Bernardino Álvarez," *La Discusión*, August 22, 1904.

[43] "El niño Bernardino Álvarez. Noticia de su recorrido," *La Discusión*, August 22, 1904.

[44] "El garrote en La Habana. Los ajusticiados de hoy. Los últimos detalles," *La Discusión*, August 20, 1904.

[45] "El niño Bernardino Álvarez, visita a 'La Liscusión,' entrevista," *La Discusión*, August 23, 1904.

[46] de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 51.

[47] José Antonio Saco, *La supresión del tráfico de esclavos africanos en la isla de Cuba examinada con relación a su agricultura y a su seguridad* (Paris: Imprenta de Panckoucke, 1845), 15.

[48] Spenser St. John, *Hayti or the Black Republic* (London: Smith, Elder, 1884).

[49] Ibid., v-vi.

[50] Ibid., vii-viii.

[51] Ibid., viii-ix.

[52] Ibid., 182-228.

[53] Ibid., 192-94.

[54] "Haiti's Deplorable Decadence," *Deseret Evening News*, December 15, 1897; "Child as a Sacrifice," *The North American*, November 1, 1899; "Voodooism in the West Indies," *Los Angeles Herald*, May 14, 1905; "Facts about Santo Domingo," *The National Tribune*, March 15, 1906;

[55] "Voodoo's horrors break out again," *El Paso Herald*, March 14, 1912.

[56] "In a City of Horrors," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 29, 1888.

[57] "Cuban Affairs," *New York Times*, August 27, 1875.

[58] "Two Brooklyn ladies who had unpleasant experiences," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* November 26, 1888.

[59] "A voodoo tragedy," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 9, 1872.

[60] "Working roots," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* April 25, 1879.

[61] "Worshippers of the Voodoo," *New York Times*, June 25, 1893.

[62] "Cuba," *New York Times*, March 24, 1876.

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[117] ILL, Letter to Dr. Sr. Fernando Ortiz, from Fernando Guerra, secretary of the Sociedad de Protección Mutua y Recreo del Culto Africano Lucumí Santa Bárbara. I consulted the letter personally in 2008 and was allowed to photograph it. It was in a very bad state. At the time, the letter was not kept with the rest of his collection. Instead, it was in a separate folder in a file in the office of one of the collection's curators.

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[221] AHC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 418, exp. 12204, "Expediente de la Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos y Recreo Santa Rita de Casia y San Lázaro," July 1, 1914-September 30, 1915.

[222] Ortiz, *Los instrumentos*, 2: 230.

[223] Reglamento de la Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos bajo la Advocación de Santa Bárbara (La Habana: Imprenta La Biblioteca, 1900); ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, "Honorable Sr. Presidente de la República"

[224] Julia Guerra is better known among *olorishas* by her nickname "La china Silvestre." Jorge Luís Sánchez, email correspondence with the author, September 4, 2013 and September 5, 2013; Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 256.

[225] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 8-9.

[226] ILL, Letter to Dr. Sr. Fernando Ortiz, from Fernando Guerra, secretary of the Sociedad de Protección Mutua y Recreo del Culto Africano Lucumí Santa Bárbara.

[227] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 250-51.

[228] Israel Castellanos, *La brujería*, 56.

[229] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, "Honorable Sr. Presidente de la República de Cuba," letter from Fernando Guerra, November 16, 1910.

[230] Obá Oriaté Roque "Jimagüa" Duarte, Tinibú, oldest living *oriaté* today, personal friend, personal conversations with the author, Miami, Florida, October 13, 2000, May 23, 2002, and multiple others; Obá Oriaté Amador Aguilera, Omí Laí, interviews with the author, San Miguel del Padrón, Havana, Cuba, September 19, 1999, October 1, 1999, March 3, 2001, and many others.

[231] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, "Honorable Sr. Presidente de la República de Cuba," letter from Fernando Guerra, November 16, 1910.

[232] AHC, Audiencia de la Habana, leg. 228, no. 1, 1910, causa 321, Juzgado de Instrucción de la Sección Segunda, Conspiración para la Rebelión.

[233] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, Fernando Guerra, *Basta de Calumnias. La voz de los humildes al pueblo y á las autoridades*, October 15, 1914.

[234] Ibid.

[235] Magdalena Ruíz, Oyá Gadé, conversation with the author, Mantilla, Havana, Cuba, October 1 and 3, 1999. Massip's picture first appeared in Rafael Roche y Monteagudo, *La policía y sus misterios en Cuba* (La Habana: Imprenta La Prueba, 1908). Bronfman used it for the cover of her book.

[236] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 256-57.

[237] Ibid.

[238] AHC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 418, exp. 12204, "Expediente de la Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos y Recreo Santa Rita de Casia y San Lázaro," July 1, 1914—September 30, 1915.

[239] Norberto Díaz, Ejiogbé, personal conversation with the author, Regla, Havana, Cuba, March 24, 2001.

[240] José Gorordo, Ewín Ladé, personal conversation with the author, Jesús María, Havana, Cuba, April 12, 2008; Lázaro Torregoza, Mayodunmí, personal conversation with the author, El Cerro, Havana, Cuba, January 12, 2010.

[241] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 18, 77-83.

[242] Stephen C. Ausband, *Myth and Meaning, Myth and Order* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983), x-xi.

[243] David Adams Leeming, *The World of Myth* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 4.

[244] Fernando Ortiz, "The Relations Between Whites and Blacks in Cuba," *Phylon* 5, no. 1 (1st Qtr., 1944): 20.

[245] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 251.

[246] Ibid., 253.

[247] Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos*, 28-29.

[248] Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 23.

[249] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, "Honorable Sr. Presidente de la República."

[250] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 10, exp. 2, 74, 10-03, Reglamento de la Sociedad Santa Bárbara Protección Mutua y Recreo del Culto Africano Lucumí (La Habana: Imprenta Ángeles 19, 1910).

[251] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 10, exp. 2, 74; 10-03, "Reglamento," 7.

[252] Ibid., 19.

[253] USNA, Military Government of Cuba, Letters Received, 1899-1902, RG140, 1900, 6725 & one half "José Cornelio Delgado Requests Permission to Play Drums at Cabildo," December 31, 1900.

[254] José Rosario Valdez, "El Problema de la Brujería Tratado por los Hombres de Color," *El Día*, October 7, 1918; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 56.

[255] BN, MSS sig. 20142, "Relación de la visita eclesiástica de la ciudad de la Habana y su partido en la isla de Cuba hecha y remitida a SM por el Licenciado D. Pedro Agustín Morel de Santa Cruz, obispo de la iglesia catedral de Santiago de la misma isla," July 2, 1775: Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, *Cultura afrocubana—El negro en Cuba, 1492-1844* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1988), 1:98-99.

[256] "Curando por la brujería," *El Mundo*, December 27, 1904; "Como considera el problema de la brujería un 'brujo civilizado'," *El Día*, September 7, 1918.

[257] "Smiling Chango," *Time* 21, no. 15, April 10, 1933.

[258] José Gorordo, Ewín Ladé, personal conversation with the author, Jesús María, Havana, Cuba, April 12, 2008.

[259] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 10, exp. 2, 74, 10-03, "Reglamento," 19-20.

[260] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, "Honorable Sr. Presidente de la República,"

[261] AHC, Audiencia de La Habana, leg. 228, no. 1, causa #321, "Rollo de la causa seguida por asociación ilícita," April 25, 1918.

[262] According to oral tradition, Gerardo Machado was ordained to Ifá by Eulogio Rodríguez, Tata Gaytán, before his dictatorial ascent. See Brown, *Santería Enthroned,* 72.

[263] AHC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 374, no. 54, exp. 11335, "Hijos de Santa Bárbara, Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos," March 3, 1926.

[264] Cabrera, *El monte*, 25.

[265] "Traditional folk medicine," but in the context it was used at the time, the term was more akin to "quackery."

[266] "Santa Rita de Casia y San Lázaro. Esta sociedad hace un llamamiento a sus protectores," *La Noche*, March 11, 1916.

[267] de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 162.

[268] Fernando Ortiz, "Steps in the Evolution of Religion," *Inter-America* 3, no. 1 (1919)—the original was published in Spanish in Ortiz's *Revista bimestre cubana* (March-April 1919): 249-256.

[269] Ibid., 249.

[270] Ibid., 256.

[271] Ibid., 253.

[272] Ibid., 255.

[273] Rosario Valdés, "El Problema."

[274] "Brujería Prodigiosa," *La Lucha*, December 5, 1904.

[275] de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 162.

[276] Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 34.

[277] Ortiz, *La africanía*, 158.

[278] Fernando Ortiz, *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba,* 2nd ed. (La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1981), 170; Ortiz, *La Africanía*, 145.

[279] Ortiz, *La africanía*, 152, 155.

[280] Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 170.

[281] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 9, exp. 36, 9.112.04, "Contra la brujería," December 4, 1913; "Brujería," *Heraldo de Cuba*, July 4, 1919; Eduardo R. Nuñez y Nuñez, *El problema júridico-legal de la brujería* (La Habana: N.p., 1919).

[282] Decreto No. 1615, 01, "Legislación," *Gaceta de La Habana*, Noviembre 22, 1922; "Se Prohíben los bailes africanos," *El Mundo*, November 22, 1922.

[283] Decreto No. 2156, 01, "Legislación," *Gaceta de La Habana*, Octubre 22, 1925.

[284] "Sorprende la judicial centro de brujería. Detenido el santero y ocupados numerosos atributos de brujería," *El País*, December 10, 1954.

[285] Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 126-5-26.

[286] Ortiz, *La decadencia*, 6.

[287] Ortiz, "La religión en la poesía mulata," in *Estudios etnosociológicos*, ed. Isaac Barreal Fernández (1937, repr., La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1991), 169.

[288] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 252; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 95.

[289] Juana Manríquez, Omí Yinká, personal conversation with the author, Loiza Aldea, Puerto Rico, February, 1981; Ángel de León, Aboyadé, personal conversation with the author, Regla, Havana, Cuba, September 24, 1999, January 21, 2012; Lázaro Torregoza, Mayodunmí, personal conversation with the author, El Cerro, Havana, Cuba, January 21, 2012.

[290] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, exp. 1, 74; 08-02 #9, caja 5, 74; 01-17 #5, caja 6, 74; 02-05; Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 256-57.

[291] Ángel de León, Aboyadé, personal conversation with the author, Regla, Havana, Cuba, September 24, 1999, January 21, 2012; *babalawo* and drummer Pipo Peña, Ogbé'yonú, interview with the author, Miami, Florida, February 6, 2000.

[292] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, exp. 7, 74; 06-04; Ortiz, *Los bailes*, 451.

[293] Ortiz, *Los instrumentos*, 225.

[294] Ortiz, *La decadencia*, 16; de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 91.

[295] HPNW, Melville J. Herskovits Papers, Africana Manuscripts 6, Box 12, Folder 12, November 9, 1940, "Lachatañeré to Herskovits," January 9, 1941, "Herskovits to Lachatañeré," Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies; BNJM, Correspondencia de Fernando Ortiz, CM183, Ortiz—Correspondencia Varios L, "Ortiz to Herskovits," February 15, 1941.

[296] HPNW, Melville J. Herskovits Papers, Africana Manuscripts 6, Box 17, Folder 15, "Fernando Ortiz to Melville J. Herskovits," December 26, 1930, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies. I must express my appreciation to Dr. Kevin Yelvington for graciously sharing his files of exchanges between Herskovits and Ortiz.

[297] Ortiz, in de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 177, 380n3.

[298] Fernando Ortiz, *Etnia y sociedad* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1993), 140. First published as Fernando Ortiz, "Sin el negro Cuba no sería Cuba," fragment of a speech he delivered at Havana's Club Atenas on December 12, 1942; later published as "Por la integración cubana de blancos y negros," *Revista Bimestre Cubana* 51, no. 2 (March-April, 1943): 256-272, and *Estudios Afrocubanos* 5 (1945-1946): 216-229.

[299] de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 177.

[300] Ibid.

[301] Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 133.

[302] Ibid., 145; Bronfman, *Measures of Equality*, 168-69.

[303] Miguel Arnedo, "Arte Blanco con Motivos Negros: Fernando Ortiz's Concept of Cuban National Culture and Identity," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 20, no. 1 (2001): 91.

[304] ILL, Colección Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, exp. 4, 72; 02-03, photograph, "Luluyoukori, La música sagrada de los negros yoruba en Cuba," May 30, 1937; Ortiz*, Los Instrumentos*, 225.

[305] Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 135.

[306] Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and the Slaves—A Study in the Development Of Brazilian Civilization*, trans. Samuel Putnam (1933; repr., Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986); J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion—Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 158.

Chapter X: Conclusion

Lucumí Religious and Cultural Dominance in Cuba

The present study reflected on numerous aspects related to the cultural importance of the Lucumí people in Cuba in relationship to other, more numerically significant African ethnies on the island. Three major African peoples bequeathed identifiable cultural and religious legacies in Cuba. West Central Africans, generically classified as Congos, laid the roots of the Congo-Bantú religious tradition commonly referred to as Regla de Congos, Palo, or Palo Mayombe. The Carabalís were the progenitors of the Sociedad Secreta Abakuá, a fraternity with strong religious undertones. The Lucumí established the foundations of the Lucumí Orisha religion, often referred to as Regla de Ocha (or Osha) or Santería. In addition, the Lucumí contributed to the continuation of Arará religiosity by sharing religious rituals that ensured the continuance of Arará Fodún (Vodún) worship.

Although these three peoples made unquestionable contributions to Cuban identity in other ways, they are best known for their religious complexes. For the most part, during the first half of the nineteenth century, Spanish colonial authorities were probably aware of African religious practices on the island but may have turned a blind eye so long as the rites were not linked to rebellion. For example, during the 1836 interrogation of Agustín lucumí and Francisco de Paula lucumí following an attempted revolt, both men clearly told the investigator that they practiced the *religión de su país*—his country's religion. While the declaration was noted in the proceedings, no other mention of the fact came up during the subsequent investigations of the uprising.[1]

Likewise, María del Carmen Barcia cited a case in which a slave accused in an attempted uprising when asked about his religious beliefs declared to the judge that he believed in a Supreme God named Olorún (literally "owner of the sky," one of several Lucumí names for God). The judge allowed him to swear in the name of Olorún and heard his testimony.[2]

Surely, there was awareness that slaves practiced African religions, and this knowledge did not seem to occasion any major reactions. Nonetheless, as soon as the insurrectionary potential of these practices became apparent, colonial authorities began taking a greater interest in them and especially in any associated with *brujería* (witchcraft). The Aponte rebellion was probably the earliest indicator of this worrisome trend, providing evidence of possible Abakuá connections among the insurgents, but not until the late 1820s and 1830s did a greater awareness develop. The arrest of Juan Nepomuceno Prieto, highlighted by Henry Lovejoy, offered more support to the perception that African religions were a menace. The presence of militia officers among the alleged conspirators only worsened the predicament. By 1844 and the Escalera conspiracy, African religions were on trial along with all the defendants interrogated by the prosecutors assigned to investigate the failed insurrection. *Brujería* occupied center stage, as suspect after suspect was asked about witchcraft and its role in the alleged insurgency.

In the late 1860s, the fear of insurrection worsened because of the nascent insurgent movements that eventually provoked Cuba's first attempt at armed rebellion to win independence from Spain. The lingering dread of a Haitian-style uprising motivated the increased scrutiny of alleged revolutionaries, resulting in the scapegoating of the

Abakuás who, associated with the idea of insurrection, had already been under Spain's scope since the beginning of the century. *Ñáñiguismo* took precedence over *brujería* and the colonial authorities launched a determined campaign against possible insurgents, eventually banning and persecuting the Abakuás, many of whom were sentenced to time in prisons off the African coast.

The Anti-Brujería Campaigns of the Twentieth Century

By the turn of the century, the fear of insurgency gave way to embarrassment caused by what was perceived to be Africans' atavistic behavior and barbaric religious practices. Reminiscent of the Escalera aftermath, Afro-Cubans were once again assailed by unfounded allegations. The fear of insurrection gave way to a quest for modernity and civilizational advancement, often attempting to appease the judgments—or comply with the dictates—of the Cuban elite pressures and the hyperbole of the island's media, as well as stress incited by foreign influences.

During the first two decades of the 1900s, Abakuás were still associated with criminality, and Congos and Lucumís were increasingly linked to *brujería*, accusations that were eventually blown out of proportion and connected with the most heinous and reprehensible acts. Advocating modernity and the development of a uniquely Cuban civilization, a campaign was launched to incorporate Afro-Cubans into the new society by endorsing the idea of cultural advancement. The practice of African religions—and the apparently growing presence of whites among their ranks—was atavistic and anachronistic and had to be eradicated because it was contrary to the country's new direction. However, the 1902 constitution guaranteed freedom of religion. To oppose the

practice of African religions contradicted the constitution and the rights that it promised to all of the island's citizens.

Brujería provided the perfect justification to garner support for the de-Africanization campaign. Subsequently, African religions were portrayed as barbaric, backward, and most of all, inconsistent with the "modern" nation's interests. Eventually, fears of insurgency were expanded to include allegations of human sacrifice—especially the ritual murder of white children—cannibalism, and kidnapping, all under the banner of *brujería*. The island's media continually used these themes to terrorize society, and in the process, they advanced the careers of several journalists whose reputations as stalwart defenders of Eurocentric culture and ideologies helped them to obtain considerable clout.[3]

Ironically, when the new repressive era began, Spain was not the oppressor. Instead, another foreign power was partly responsible. The United States and its racial ideologies were worsening the plight of Afro-Cubans. U.S. concepts of race and segregation became intertwined with the new direction taken by the island's elites and intellectuals who sought to create *cubanidad*—Cuban national identity. Cuba's wars of independence generally disregarded racial and ethnic differences especially so after the rise of José Martí's tenets advocating inclusivity. Under the promise of "a nation for all," Afro-Cubans joined the 1896 insurgents and fought valiantly for the island's independence. By 1900, however, Cubans had largely left behind José Martí's dream of a raceless Cuba.[4] Scapegoating Afro-Cubans with accusations of infanticide, cannibalism, and the practice of *brujería* was a viable way of ostracizing a population

that was perceived as a hindrance for the ensuing nation-building and identity-creating projects.

The Lucumís in the Archives and in the Collective Memory

To examine the evolution of these processes from their pre-nineteenth-century origins, the present investigation considered the presence of African ethnic groups in two Cuban cities by transcribing and analyzing baptismal and death records from the Church of Our Lady of Regla in the town of Regla and San Carlos Cathedral in Matanzas. These records proved to be extremely useful for obtaining demographic data about African ethnies in Cuba. Just as useful were Cuban and Spanish archival documents. To complement the information available in these sources, the study also reviewed past scholarship related to ethnies and population statistics, which were mostly associated with the island's rural areas. The data were also evaluated against information derived from Cuban censuses. In addition, the observations made by travelers, doctors, historians, and other writers of the era were as important as the oral evidence obtained through interviews and fieldwork in the towns.

The present study's findings concurred with the conclusions of previous research on specific ethnic groups and their presence in Cuba. By and large, the results agreed with earlier examinations of plantation records, especially the work of Manuel Moreno-Fraginals. His research indicated that the great majority of those Africans who were imported between 1760 and 1870 could be classified into fewer than 10 groups. He stated that the Congos, Gangás, Carabalís, Mandingas, Lucumís, Minas, and Ararás were the most noticeable ethnies on Cuban plantations during the nineteenth century.[5] The parish

records indicated that the prevalent groups in Regla and Matanzas were the Carabalís, Congos, Gangás, Lucumís, and Mandingas. The other ethnies that appeared in the church ledgers with greatest frequency—Macuás, Ararás, and Mozambiques—were not even remotely as numerically strong. With the exception of the Ararás, who because of a historical arrangement made with the Lucumí did leave an identifiable cultural trace, these groups were not culturally significant.

Likewise, the current investigation's conclusions about the overall size of the Lucumí, Congo, and Carabalí populations do not differ significantly from the findings of prior scholarship about their representation on the island.[6] The difference between this and previous studies, though, is its greater focus on the urban centers and on the presence of specific African ethnies within these areas. There is no evidence to suggest that the Lucumís were a statistically powerful ethnie in any of the two areas reviewed. Even when these findings might have seemed to be a deterrent, in reality they provided further support for the present study's greater argument: although significant in other ways, the Lucumí were not a preponderant population in Cuba. Thus, reflecting on the dynamics that promoted the cultural ascent of a group that was far from being the majoritarian population at the expense of other groups who were present in greater proportions became an absorbing historical quest.

The evidence revealed that in two Cuban towns, Regla and Simpson, the Lucumís were the most culturally influential despite their relatively smaller numbers. Their cultural dominance was apparent in other areas of the island as well. Surely, various forces were responsible for projecting the Lucumís to the elevated hierarchical position that they continue to enjoy. The Lucumís were a powerful group in West Africa, with a

strong monarchical tradition dating back several centuries. Although they may not have been initially united as a single nation but were instead divided into different subgroups related by culture and language, as a group they still possessed a profound sense of ethnic pride. In fact, many of their neighbors may have considered them haughty and arrogant.[7] Their pride and achievements may have inspired Leo Frobenius, the German traveler and historian, to compare the city of Ilé Ifé—which the Yoruba consider the cradle of civilization—to the lost city of Atlantis.[8]

In the nineteenth century, the evidence suggests, the Lucumís were a statistically powerful presence during a specific and very short time period, beginning around the early 1800s and lasting until the 1840s.[9] The burgeoning population of a specific ethnic subgroup, the Oyo, was one of several factors that influenced their cultural ascent in Cuba. In addition, the presence of previously established Lucumí community already in the cities and towns, especially Havana and Regla, proved beneficial for the seating of those Lucumí subgroups that arrived at later dates. As well, the Oyo's might and military experience became a significant factor. As many people from Oyo were war captives, the evidence convincingly suggests that they played a significant role in the numerous conspiracies and slave revolts that took place in the nineteenth century; the greater number of which historians maintain began around 1825, lasting well into the era of the 1844 Escalera conspiracy.[10] Their insurrectionary propensity was not limited to Cuba, as many Brazilian parallels also point to the predominance of the Nagôs (the Brzilian name for the Lucumís) in slave revolts, especially the 1835 Male Rebellion in Bahía.[11]

Though most Lucumís who arrived toward the end of the 1840s entered the island through clandestine slaving operations, a small number of them arrived as free men and

women, emancipated from slave ships by the Mixed Commission that was established in Havana after the 1820 Anglo-Spanish anti-slave trade treaty came into effect. As such, the *emancipados* gained access to a greater degree of liberty than their enslaved Lucumí brethren, with whom they shared religious knowledge, especially in the *cabildos*.[12] Ajayí Latuán and Efunshé Warikondó were two of probably several African women who used their relative freedom to resist acculturation and establish Lucumí religious foundations in Cuba's *cabildos* that carried the traditions into the twentieth century. Analysis of Lucumí genealogies, both Orisha and Ifá, suggest that the founders of Cuban lineages were not many.[13]

The cities were very significant in the process of laying the roots for Lucumí religion, especially Havana and Matanzas, where it seems that most Lucumís were concentrated. The enclaves in the Havana neighborhoods of Jesús María, Pogolotti, El Manglar, El Ángel, and others; the town of Regla and later, Guanabacoa; and the neighborhoods of Simpson and La Marina as well as the town of Pueblo Nuevo, in the city of Matanzas, were all important repositories for Lucumí and African religions and culture in general.[14] The present study focused on two areas, Regla and Simpson, with minor references to other towns. In both areas, the Lucumí were statistically a minor population. They were the third-largest ethnie of the nine dominant ethnic groups who were baptized in Regla's church and the fifth-largest ethnie of the same nine dominant ethnic groups among those who were baptized in San Carlos Cathedral in the city of Matanzas. In addition, among the dead, the Lucumís were the fourth most represented group in Regla and the fifth most dominant group in Matanzas. Clearly, their demographics had little to do with their cultural ascent. (See Chart 4, Chapter 6).

The Gangá and Lost Africanity

Interestingly, the data from the parish records identified one ethnie, the Gangás, as possibly the most numerically significant group during the nineteenth century. Gangás competed with the Congos for numerical dominance in Regla and Matanzas. Given their greater numbers, Congo and Gangá culture should have been more active, yet historical and cultural evidence, supplemented by oral traditions, suggests that they were not. Both groups' traditions seem to have been infused with Lucumí cultural elements. Though the Gangás are not one of the three groups that interest the current examination, the number of people registered with this ethnic label in the parish records was striking. This loosely classified ethnie, made up of several ethnic groups from the region of modern-day Sierra Leone, is perhaps the most puzzling of the African groups brought to Cuba because their cultural traces have been virtually lost. The Gangás are more noticeable in the archives than elsewhere. What makes the disappearance so perplexing is the Gangás' statistical dominance. In fact, in Regla and in Matanzas, the Gangás were represented more than any other group in the parish records.

The Voyages database also supports an increased Gangá presence in the Cuban slave trade, especially during the nineteenth century. Based on the database's records, almost 18,000 Gangás entered the island between 1826 and 1850.[15] There were also many Gangá *cabildos* scattered throughout Havana and the province of Matanzas, several of which were located in the city of Matanzas itself. Matanzas's Archivo Provincial contains documents that refer to the affairs of more than a dozen different Gangá *cabildos* in the city and its environs.[16] Curiously, although not entirely extinct, the Gangás left very little trace of their presence in Cuba. There are pockets of people who claim to be

Gangá descendants in areas of Matanzas, especially in the town of Perico. There, a Gangá Longoba *cabildo*, Casa de Yegbé, continues to observe ritual celebrations.[17] Another group is active in Cárdenas, but their practices have taken on such a heavy Lucumí veneer that it is difficult to distinguish where one tradition ends and the other begins.[18] Interviews of Gangá descendants in Cuba confirmed that their traditions now have a decidedly Lucumí flavor. In fact, two women of Gangá descent, Magdalena Mora Herrera, from Perico, and Justina Arriera Zulueta, a native of Cárdenas, were both ordained Lucumí priestesses. Only Mora, who inherited Casa de Yegbé from her mother, was active in the Gangá traditions in Perico. She admitted that less than a handful of people remembered anything significant about their specific African origins and cultural practices.[19] Recently, some of these people, among them Mora Herrera's nephew, traveled to Sierra Leone, where they reconnected with their ancestors' heritage.[20]

Unlike the Gangás, however, the Lucumís established and maintained important networks throughout the island that in some ways may have served as fronts for resistance. One of the most essential promoters of these networks was Adeshina. After his introduction to Regla sometime around the 1850s or possibly earlier, Adeshina began fomenting significant links between the town and Simpson. The growing availability of travel by rail surely facilitated his constant movement between the two regions. Eventually, he moved from Simpson to Regla but continued his expansionist campaign.

The Cultural Ambassadors

Adeshina's role in the diffusion of Ifá to Havana, Matanzas, and Palmira, which was vital for the growth of Lucumí worship in Cuba, was surely connected to his links to Regla.

Atandá, Añabí, and Ifá Bí were three of the *babalawos* he met in the town with whom he developed close associations, as confirmed by his kinship links with these men that appear in the parish records. Just as important was Obá Tero's arrival to Simpson. She was Adeshina's *comadre*, the second godmother for his daughter Eshú'bí. Whether the relationship was established through Christian baptism or Lucumí ordination, *compadrazgo*, the extended kinship ties that developed between parents and godparents, were often no different from actual sanguineal bonds. Obá Tero, thanks to Adeshina's assistance, was pivotal in the extension of Lucumí religious practice, especially the Egbado traditions, to Matanzas. Eshú'bí continued her father's expansionist campaign. Both father and daughter were significant in unifying the Lucumí community existent in Regla and establishing religious ties between that town and Simpson, which gave greater strength to Egbado traditions in Matanzas, threatened in Havana by growing Oyo-centric imposition. Eshú'bí's religious lineage laid one of the two strongest roots for Orisha worship in Palmira, as would Adeshina's godchildren, who eventually introduced Ifá. In part, some of these liaisons were also entrenched through Catholicism, as the town's parish records attest that both Adeshina and Eshú'bí served as godparents for the children of several of Regla's Lucumí powerhouses.

Adeshina's stature was recognized through the title given him by the Havana-based Cabildo Africano Lucumí, Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos bajo la Advocación de Santa Bárbara (SSB), in all probability the renowned Changó Tedún so often mentioned by Ortiz who claimed to have visited it during the 1910s.[21] Until his death in 1905, Adeshina was one of the *cabildo's* honorary presidents. Several of his godchildren and close associates, including the renowned Eulogio Rodríguez Gaytán, Ogundá'fún;

Bernardo Rojas, Ireten'tedí; and Bernabé Menocal, Ejiogbé, were active members of the association, and after their Adeshina's death, these men continued his campaign to expand Ifá in Cuba.[22] The SSB is the institution that in the twentieth century decried the racist de-Africanization campaigns that threatened Afro-Cuban religions and culture.

The Lucumís, Fernando Ortiz, and Defending the Cause at Others' Expense

The latter nineteenth century was difficult for Cuba's Abakuá societies, especially in the city of Havana. Encounters with Spanish colonial authorities led to the fraternity's members being branded as criminals and ostracized as part of the campaign to repress insurgency against Spanish rule. The early twentieth century, by contrast, was a turbulent era for all Afro-Cubans, regardless of their cultural inclinations and/or religious devotion; the previous century's persecutions of the Abakuás served as prologue for this new wave of oppression and misinformation. Interestingly, though the countryside was where most of the alleged, gruesome crimes attributed to Afro-Cubans took place, the cities played a more fundamental role in the de-Africanization campaigns. *Brujería* accusations were levied all across the island, but much of the fury behind the crusade and the ensuing struggles were directed by people who were based in Havana.

The unprecedented twentieth-century racist attack on African culture and the concerted effort to forcibly acculturate Afro-Cubans by de-Africanizing them had other significant repercussions, especially for the three ethnies discussed in the present study. While the reaction of the Abakuás has yet to be better evaluated further, the Lucumís were the most vociferous defenders of African religions. In an equal and opposite reaction to Cuban society's oppressive machinery, the Lucumís, in particular Fernando

Guerra, launched a counteroffensive that vigorously responded to the campaign's assaults. Guerra went so far as to send a bold letter to Cuban president José Miguel Gómez, which was also published in the press. Guerra protested before the authorities and often defied prohibitions he deemed unjust. He expressed his views in the press, published and distributed literature, and appealed to public opinion by inviting people of repute to visit their religious celebrations. These included Fernando Ortiz, who some years before had published his incendiary *Los negros brujos*, which added more fuel to the already ardent pyre that blazed against Africanity in Cuba.

Ortiz, initially biased by Cesare Lombrosos's Darwinian positivism, was an ardent opponent of African religions and culture. His initial position advocated the extirpation of the *brujos* and their savagery from the island.[23] In time, however, his relationship with Guerra caused his thoughts on the matter to gradually evolve. From complete intolerance and a call for an all-out crusade to stamp out African religions in Cuba, Ortiz became more willing to compromise even when he continued to express his own personal reserves and prejudices until the end of his career. While the present examinations can only speculate as to the interchanges that took place between these two men as suggested by archival sources, publications, and oral historians, it is clear that each influenced the other's thinking.

Guerra's and SSB's nomination of Ortiz as honorary president was significant. It drew Ortiz closer to the inner functions of the society and thus gained him greater exposure to some ritual practices. Ortiz's participation in the SSB's activities helped provide him with a better understanding of processes about which he had only read or heard second-hand descriptions. Perhaps Ortiz grew fond of Guerra, but possibly and

even more significant, he may have come to respect the man and his ideals. This idea is supported by Ortiz's legal experience and his apparent, though indirect, hand in the contestations that Guerra presented through his writings, the presence of which some of the young lawyer's contemporaries may have recognized.[24]

By the 1920s, possibly after Guerra's death, the onslaught against Africanity lost its vigor and grew less important, given the greater threat presented by the Gerardo Machado regime's political instability; Ortiz heavily and publicly criticized the political state of affairs on the island.[25] His 1931 exile in the United States, a country that he seems to have simultaneously reverenced and resented, may have helped Ortiz to affirm his decision to launch a strategy that he had been considering for years. Ortiz's nostalgia for his homeland, suffering under the injustices of what he felt was a brutal dictatorship, dealt the decisive blow. After his return to Cuba, Ortiz launched a full-scale folklorization campaign that was inclusive of Africa's contributions to Cuban culture and identity. His first public request for approval came in 1937, when he officially recognized Lucumí culture and religion by presenting batá drums on stage for a wider, secular audience.[26] Folklorization was problematic, to say the least.

While in some respects Ortiz's approval began creating greater inroads for the Lucumís, it also trivialized their religion by reducing it to folklore. Furthermore, his public recognition of batá drums and the Lucumís as valid components of *cubanidad* had other repercussions, which cannot be clearly established as intentional but are questionable nonetheless. By his show of public approval for Lucumí culture, Ortiz gave rise to an idea that was already present among practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions and cultures: he helped engrain an ethnic- and class-based stratification of African ethnies in

Cuba. Lucumís immediately rose to the pinnacle as the most celebrated group because Ortiz, increasingly Lucumí-centric, validated them as such. On the other hand, Congos were relegated to the bottom layer of the social pyramid he indirectly erected—or possibly enforced—where the media had already placed them earlier in the century. Through the first two decades of the 1900s, the Lucumís, who were probably as responsible as the media for the scapegoating, defended their image by distancing themselves from *brujería*.[27] Guerra adamantly argued that Lucumís did not practice *brujería*; they were religious people, observers of Christian morality—in fact very similar to Catholics, for whom they had great appreciation. By so doing, Guerra indirectly projected all the inexplicable and macabre occurrences that the press often reported as linked to African religions onto the Congos. As such, the Lucumís, through their primary spokesman Fernando Guerra—probably consciously, and seconded by Ortiz—ensured that their culture would be the most visible contribution of Africanity to the island's national identity.

Suffering Silently

Unfortunately, though somewhat understandably, the Congos remained silent. Surely, they reacted to fear and especially to the spectacle that was the Zoila case and the unjust sentencing and subsequent execution of the two men whom nearly all Afro-Cubans knew had been scapegoated for the girl's murder. In light of that incident and the other accusations that were levied against them throughout these years, Congo acquiescence was reasonable. To do otherwise would expose their religious practices and make them prone to possible profiling (as the Abakuás had been a century earlier) as well as

harassment and implication in other crimes or murders. Assuredly, by the 1900s many Lucumís were already practicing both religions and were also Abakuás. Adeshina is a primary example. Nonetheless, not a single Lucumí came out in defense of Congo religion. Forgotten also, or maybe hushed, were the ideas that heroes of the independence wars such as Antonio Maceo and Quintín Banderas were also connected with Congo religion. In the end, the Lucumís were able to largely overcome their opponents, but in the process they seem to have sacrificed the Congos, who to the present still suffer the stigma of this historic contest of wits.

Implications of the Present Study for Future Research

Nineteenth-Century Issues of African Ethnicity and the Modern World

Studies of ethnicity in the nineteenth century may seem trivial when compared to the more pressing issues of the twenty-first, but they are not. There is as much value in observing nineteenth-century human interaction as there is in examining current global issues because history repeats itself. Some of the confrontations that humankind is experiencing today in different areas of the globe, despite their more menacing nature, resonate with issues being discussed in the present study. Then as today, governments and society must continuously deal with problems that result from the interactions, not always by choice, between immigrants from different nations living in the same territory. Émigrés who were scarred by the hardships they experienced together or on opposing sides of the battlefield, or those who harbor historical enmities and are then faced with no other option but to share a geographical location with former foes, can threaten the social

order and well-being of other members of the community by pursuing revenge. Several of the processes highlighted in the current study suggest that culture is one of the most powerful weapons to appease these social threats. Reflecting on human commonalities may be more constructive than attempting to settle differences through aggression. Understanding the culture of the "other" is pivotal for promoting a better awareness of the modern era's challenges. The experiences gained from the era of slavery are one of the best available sources to test this notion.

The present investigation's focus on African ethnies and culture was obliged to consider the multiple and complex layers that fundamentally connected the populations under study throughout two centuries. The inevitable interaction between these ethnies forcibly or voluntarily promoted the growth of webs and networks that were beneficial for the long-term duration of all Africans and not just a single ethnic group. Historians and anthropologists, among others, would profit considerably from an increased understanding of these relations and how these people may have affected or responded to specific cultural, social, and economic developments of the era. Knowledge about ethnic groups and their numerical presence in Cuban cities and towns can also be useful to assess the various psychological factors that affected Africans on the island and prompted them to react in the ways they did. The understanding of these developments is also applicable to the modern world.

The exchanges between the Lucumís and Ararás in Simpson are an important example of the solutions that Africans sought through culture to respond to, and oppose, the social dynamics that oppressed them all regardless of ethnicity. Obá Tero's sharing of the Lucumí ordination ceremony with the Ararás accomplished several things. As a

result, the Lucumís and Ararás overcame possible tensions between them that had originated in Africa over territorial control and the slave trade. In addition, the Egbado-born Obá Tero guaranteed the perpetuation of Ará culture and religion by ensuring that its priesthood could be reproduced. Given the proximity between Egbadoland and Dahomey, the similarities in both groups' ritual practices were probably stronger that the differences.

Obá Tero overcame ethnic strife and established a significant network that fought acculturation through culture and religion. To the present, Lucumís and Ararás in Simpson maintain amicable relations, even when the Ararás, as a matter of pride, now deny the nineteenth-century exchanges. Regardless, the ability of two peoples to triumph over their shared historical tensions in light of a common foe is significant. While evidence of similar processes may be found all over the world, the Lucumí-cized Arará traditions of Simpson are an excellent example of the manner by which people can overcome longstanding enmities by focusing on their commonalities and those things that make them universal. Each group maintained its own cultural identity but realized that to do so, there was a need to acclimate and find acceptable solutions.

Issues of Power and Contestations and its Reflections on Modern Society

Adeshina, Obá Tero, Latuán, Shangó'bí—interestingly, all *omó* (children) of Shangó, the patron orisha of the Oyo Empire and its subject states—also provided lessons about the significance of power and control for a disenfranchised population as well as how such groups can maintain a sense of humanity and identity by establishing hegemonic domination. Obá Tero and Latuán may have provided the two most ardent examples of

the contestations that ensued in Cuba when members of the ethnic groups felt endangered by forces that threatened to alter their cultural traditions. In maintaining allegiance to individual cultural dictates and practices, these two women exerted religious control over Lucumí communities and ensured the continuation of their practices for future generations.[28]

Ethnic Populations in Nineteenth-Century Cuban Cities and their Contributions

Appreciating the size of particular ethnic populations in Cuban cities and towns in the nineteenth century can be meaningful for historians and other scholars. While the current study could not focus on all of these issues, it does suggest several topics for additional research. The role of urban areas as important centers for Africans and people of color in Cuba have been abundantly studied; however more research is necessary, especially given the growing academic access to Cuba and the availability of new technological modes that make scholars' work easier and more productive. More revealing microhistorical studies could provide a greater appreciation of one of the most vital components of Cuban history: its people of color and their daily lives, which incontestably contributed to the nation's evolution.

The parish records consulted for the current inquiry were revelatory in several ways. Not only did they uncover statistical data about the towns and people under scrutiny, but they also provided a clearer and demonstrable idea of their activities, their social status, and the great diversity of relationships that developed between members of different ethnic groups. Ethnic divisions were never more powerful than the social reality that all Africans were forced to contend with: slavery. Despite the scholarship's

continuous emphasis on the intentional separation of ethnic groups to avoid conflicts on estates and plantations, the parish records provided considerable evidence to suggest that there was more intergroup interaction than past research considered.[29]

Many of these records support that considerable work remains to be done in other areas of the island, especially in places that have yet to be reached by scholars and digitalization. Working directly with some of the documents available in Havana's and Matanzas's archives underscored the great need for the rapid salvaging and exploration of these records before the effects of time wreak greater damage and cause the plethora of historical information they contain to be lost forever. Examination of hundreds of these documents suggested that they can shed much light on topics that would be of interest to academia were they to be explored. In addition, given the reduced dimensions of most Cuban communities and the stable nature of most people, especially in the smaller towns and neighborhoods, some of the data that appear in these sources can be corroborated with living repositories. Descendants of the people who were registered in these records are still alive and for the most part, still living in those towns or else in contact with them and thereby easily traceable. While years have passed, the memories that some of these people hold about events in their family's past is remarkable.

The Significance of Oral History

Oral history was one of the present study's most rewarding methodologies. The importance of documenting oral history in Cuba cannot be stressed enough, especially as regards Afro-Cubans and the nineteenth century. During the 1930s, the American Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration documented the oral histories of

ex-slaves. The project provided an unparalleled opportunity for these people to recount narratives about their lives under the "peculiar institution," and to describe what it was like to be a slave in the United States.[30] Though no ex-slaves exist in Cuba any longer, some of their children and grandchildren are still alive, and many of them recall considerable details about their parent's and grandparent's histories.

Given that most of the components associated with the island's Africanity do not exist in archives and are not documented in history books, scholars need to act swiftly. There is a pressing need to rescue the history that is stored in the memory of the few living oral repositories remaining in Cuba and other areas of the African Diaspora. The people who were in direct contact with the Africans brought during the slave trade and their first descendants are rapidly dying out. To disregard this important history would be injurious and irresponsible.

To gather the best possible understanding about the convoluted history of the so-called New World, academia must encompass a larger terrain. As Africa is no longer solely limited to a geographical area, research that does not account for the continent's extension to the New World—and Europe for that matter—is seriously flawed. Disregarding the significance of the oral repositories that still exist would be a tremendous loss.

During the nineteenth century, many travelers wrote about the preferences some whites had for slaves of specific ethnies, especially for domestic service.[31] An understanding of the reasons for these preferences and their consequences would be vastly revealing. How many of the perceptions about the nature of people of African descent in the Americas are still influenced by the stereotypes that were created during

the seventeenth century and thereafter by the classifications of African slaves? The belief that Congos were lazy, Carabalís were cannibals, and Lucumís were bellicose had been around since the era of the Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval and his classification of slaves in seventeenth-century Colombia.[32] These ideas resurfaced in the work of medical professional Francisco Barrera y Domingo in the eighteenth century. Since early in the nineteenth century, publications about the island and its history, not to mention the accounts of many travelers, constantly repeated these stereotypes as well.[33] Conceivably, these archetypes influenced the controversies that would later surround the creation of a national identity. Interviews with Afro-Cubans conducted in the process of the investigation suggested that some of these stereotypes survive to the present.

Appropriations, Accommodation, and Syncretism as Resistance

Another possible topic for further research suggested by the present study is the analysis of those mechanisms that were employed by specific African ethnies to ensure the endurance and expansion of cultural identities and the accommodation of long-standing traditions within new or different cultural frameworks. Partly following the tenets of sociologist Roger Bastide, the current investigation has argued that Africans used religion as a covert mechanism of resistance. Countering the forced acculturation of their Spanish masters, Congos, Lucumís, and others adopted Catholic iconography and Africanized it by submitting images of the saints to African rituals. In so doing, these images joined the "community" of devotees by inclusion. The Africans, at least the Lucumís, Ararás, and Congos, did not become covert practitioners of African religion by hiding behind a Christian veil. On the contrary, they lifted the African veil and allowed specific Christian

symbols to enter African shrines by converting these symbols and images to African religion. The question now becomes one of appropriation versus syncretic blending, an eternal topic of debate in the literature. Leslie Desmangles examined the validity of the concept of syncretism in his research on Haitian Vodou and proposed that symbiosis and not syncretic mixing was the better interpretation of the parallelisms that occurred between Catholicism and Vodou.[34] The present study suggests that a similar process may have occurred in Cuba but also stresses that there was religious appropriation by transformation through ritual ordination and subsequent incorporation.

Amalgamation of religious ideologies and incorporation of foreign religious elements into their own practices were not novel occurrences exclusive to the African Diaspora. Humankind has historically been influenced by diffusion and forced acculturation. Cuba's Congos, already familiar with Catholicism since before their arrival to the island, even if superficially, were probably the first group to associate traditional Congo religion with Catholicism. In the fifteenth century, the Kingdom of Kongo became the first African state to convert to Catholicism. By the seventeenth century, the Kongo region provided direct evidence of these associations between distinct theologies with the case of Kimpa Vita.[35] In what is probably one of the earliest cases highlighting the existence of diffusion and religious amalgamation between European and African religions, the Kongolese *nganga*—priestess or ritual specialist—Kimpa Vita claimed to be receiving prophetic visions from God, Jesús, and Saint Anthony.[36] A near-death experience triggered these revelations. In additions, she asserted that Saint Anthony possessed her at times, and she also divined for her followers. Compounding the dilemma for the Catholic priests in Kongo were her sacrilegious utterances, which the outraged

clergy surely perceived as an even greater heresy: Kimpa Vita said Saint Anthony had revealed that Jesus was Kongolese and thus, black.[37]

Needless to say, Kimpa was finally arrested and accused of heresy. She was later sentenced to death and burned at the stake. Nonetheless, Kimpa's new ideology, and her connection to the development of a novel form of devotion and the understanding that arose through the encounter of two disparate societies, was very significant. There is little doubt that Kimpa scrutinized the Kongo and Catholic religions under African lenses and reinterpreted them in a manner that was more sensible to her particular cultural dictates, and thus attempted to make it more sensible to her Kongolese brethren as well.[38] Most definitely, Kimpa Vita's account is surely one of many cases highlighting the dialogues and interchanges that take place between resistance and accommodation once different cultures meet.

There is no doubt that there were many Kimpa Vitas in Cuba. The fact that African religions persist in the island and from there have diffused to other areas of the world is a testament to the resiliency of culture and faith. Contrary to what Ortiz predicted, Afro-Cuban religions, far from disappearing, continue to find ways by which to expand beyond their geographical limits and insert themselves into other regions by identifying with the cultural universals they meet along the way. The transformation and appropriation of these universals as they are encountered among other peoples are the religion's strongest weapon.

Notes

[1] AHC, Miscelánea de Expediente, leg. 731 A, "Declaración de Agustín lucumí, por medio de un intérprete, esc. De D Juan Echarte," July 18–July 30, 1836.

[2] María del Carmen Barcia, *Los ilustres apellidos: Negros en La Habana colonial* (La Habana: Ediciones Boloña, 2009), 170.

[3] Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists—Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 212; Alejandra Bronfman, *Measures of Equality—Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902—1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 21.

[4] Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation for All—Race, Inequality and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Lillian Guerra, *The Myth of José Martí—Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

[5] Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba" in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies*, ed. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (New York: The New York Academy Of Sciences, 1977), 190-91.

[6] Ibid.; Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market, 1790-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 72-73; David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 253.

[7] Ernesto Buch López, *Del Santiago colonial-Apuntes históricos de Santiago de Cuba, desde la coloización hasta el cese de la soberanía española (1514-1898)* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Ros, 1944), 151-52, 155; Rosalyn Howard, "Yoruba in the British Caribbean: A Comparative Perspective on Trinidad and the Bahamas," in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 168; Rosanne Marion Adderley, *"New Negroes from Africa"—Slave Trade, Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 123.

[8] Leo Frobenius, *The Voice of Africa Being an Account of the Travels of the German Inner African Exploration Expedition in the Years 1910-1912* (London: Hutchinson, 1913), 1: 345.

[9] Babatunde Sofela, *Emancipados—Slave Societies in Brazil and Cuba* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011), 107; Henry B. Lovejoy, *Old Oyo Influences on the Transformation of Lucumí Identity in Colonial Cuba* (PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2012), 34, 52.

[10] Miguel Ramos, *The Empire Beats on: Oyó, Batá Drums, and Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (master's thesis, Florida International University, 2000), 145-46; Lovejoy, *Old Oyo*, 163-72.

[11] See João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil—The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahía* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

[12] Lovejoy, *Old Oyo*, 22, 35.

[13] Ramos, *The Empire Beats On*, 95, 97, 146; Miguel W. Ramos, "La División de La Habana: Territorial Conflict and Cultural Hegemony in the Followers of Oyo Lukumi Religion, 1850s-1920s," *Cuban Studies* 34 (2003): 47-49.

[14] Miguel A. Bretos, *Matanzas—The Cuba Nobody Knows* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2010), 125, 155-56; Jorge Renier Brito Santana, *El Curumaguey* (unpublished manuscript).

[15] Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (henceforth TASTD), http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1790&yearTo=1866&mjbyptimp=60200&mjslptimp=31200.31300.

[16] AHPM. Fondo Gobierno Provincial, Religiones Africanas; Alessandra Basso Ortiz, *Los gangá en Cuba* (La Habana: Fundación Fernando Ortiz, 2005), 21.

[17] Personal interview with Magdalena Mora Herrera, Omí Yomí, Perico, Matanzas, Cuba, April 30, 2009. Basso, *Los gangá*, 51.

[18] Personal conversation with Justina "Mimí" Arriera Zulueta, Obánlaí, Jesús María, Habana, Cuba, September 19, 1999.

[19] Personal interview with Magdalena Mora Herrera, Omí Yomí, Perico, Matanzas, Cuba, April 30, 2009.

[20] Circles Robinson, "Cubans Visit their Ancestral Home in Africa," HavanaTimes.org, May 20, 2013, accessed June 13, 2013, http://www.havanatimes.org/?p=93326.

[21] ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 10, exp. 2, 74; 10-03, "Reglamento de la Sociedad Santa Bárbara Protección Mutua y Recreo del Culto Africano Lucumí" (La Habana: Imprenta Ángeles 19, 1910). ILL, Archivo Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, grupo 74, 10-03, "Honorable Sr. Presidente de la República de Cuba," letter from Fernando Guerra, November 16, 1910; Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 250; David H. Brown, Brown, *Santería Enthroned—Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 37-38; Lovejoy, *Old Oyo*, 155.

[22] Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 319n11.

[23] Fernando Ortiz, *Hampa afrocubana—Los negros brujos* (1906; repr. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1973), 230, 235.

[24] Israel Castellanos, *La brujería y el ñáñiguismo en Cuba desde el punto de vista médico-legal* (La Habana: Imprenta de Lloredo, 1916), 56.

[25] Fernando Ortiz, *La decadencia cubana* (La Habana: Imprenta y Papelería La Universal, 1924), 16; de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 91.

[26] ILL, Colección Fernando Ortiz, caja 2, exp. 4, 72; 02-03, photograph, "Luluyoukori, La música sagrada de los negros yoruba en Cuba," May 30, 1937; Fernando Ortiz, *Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana*, 2 vols. (Madrid and La Habana: Editorial Música Mundana Masqueda S.L. and Fundación Fernando Ortiz, 1996), 2:225

[27] Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists*, 190-93.

[28] Ramos, "La División," 38-70.

[29] Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century—The Social and Economic History of Monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 85.

[30] Norman R. Yetman, "An Introduction to the WPA Slave Narratives," *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writer's Project, 1936-1938*, Library of Congress website, accessed September 17, 2013, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snintro00.html.

[31] For example, Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World; Impressions of America* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1854).

[32] Alonso de Sandoval, *Naturaleza, Policia Sagrada i Profana, Costumbres i Ritos, Disciplina i Catecismo Evangelico de Todos los Etiopes* (Seville, 1627).

[33] Francisco Barrera y Domingo, "Reflexiones historico fisico naturales medico quirurgicas—Prácticos y

especulativos entretenimientos acerca de la vida, usos, costumbres, alimentos, bestidos, color, y enfermedades a que propenden los negros de África, venidos a las Americas" (originally published in 1798), *Revista latinoamericana de psicopatología fundamental* 11, no. 4 (December 2008); Abiel Abbot, *Letters Written in the Interior of Cuba, Between the Mountains of Arcana, to the East, and of Cusco, to the West, in the Months of February, March, April, and May, 1828* (Boston: Bowles and Dearborn, 1829); Henri Dumont, *Antropología y Patología Comparadas de los Negros Esclavos*, trans. Israel Castellanos (La Habana: Colección Cubana de Libros y Documentos Inéditos o Raros, vol. 2, 1922); Maturin Murray Ballou, *Due South; or, Cuba Past and Present* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1885); Fanny Hale Gardiner, "Palmy Days in Cuba," *Self Culture* 9 (1889): 166-70.

[34] Leslie G. Desmangles, *The Faces of the Gods: Vodou and Roman Catholicism in Haiti* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 4, 8.

[35] For clarity's sake, I will preserve the source's spelling of the nationality as Kongo, as opposed to the Spanish/Cuban spelling.

[36] See John Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony—Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[37] Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint*, 113-14.

[38] Ibid., 111-18.

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