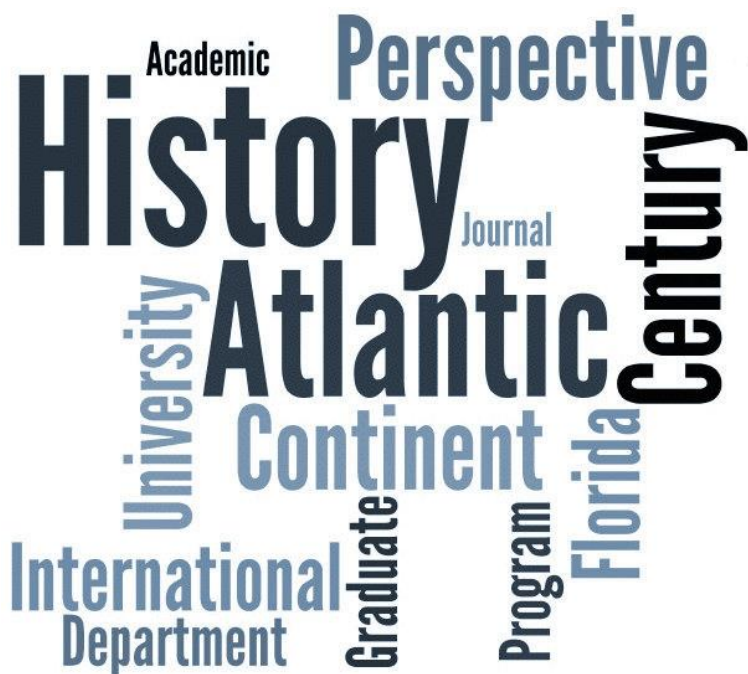


# The Atlantic Millennium

An Academic Journal on Atlantic Civilization

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## Editors' Note

For centuries, the Atlantic Ocean has served as the world's major corridor for the exchange of people, ideas, commodities, and technologies between the continents. Acknowledging the significance of transatlantic exchange for the study of human civilization, Florida International University's Department of History dedicated its doctoral program to the study of "Atlantic History." The Department of History Graduate Student Association (DOHGSA) is committed to contributing to the advancement and prestige of the program in multiple ways. Besides organizing a wide selection of professional events and hosting an annual graduate student conference, DOHGSA also publishes an annual academic journal. **The Atlantic Millennium** provides upcoming researchers an opportunity to present their original research to a wide scholarly audience, both online and in print.

Editing this issue was a rewarding experience. We thank those who submitted their material to us this year for their dedication to their work and support for our project. Our ambition is to making this journal a memorable starting point in the publishing career of our authors and reviewers.

We would like to thank the members of the Department of History Graduate Student Association at Florida International University (FIU) for their support throughout the academic year 2012-13. We also thank FIU's Council for Student Organizations, Department of Campus Life, and Activities & Services Business Office for funding this publication.

We would like to express a special thank you to Dr. Gwyn Davies, Faculty Advisor to DOHGSA, and Dr. Victor Uribe, the Department of History's Director of Graduate Studies, for their advice and support throughout the year.

Florida International University, Spring 2013

**Lindsey Maxwell**

**Sven Kube**

For the online version of this printed journal, please visit FIU's Department of History Graduate Student Association at:

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Citations must be made according to The Chicago Manual of Style (16<sup>th</sup> Edition and later).

Text files must be submitted as .doc, .docx, and .rtf file types.

All submissions to **The Atlantic Millennium** are carefully evaluated for content, analytical skill, and verbal style by an editorial board composed of senior graduate students with expertise in various content areas.

The Department of History Graduate Student Association disclaims responsibility for any statements made by contributors.

# The Atlantic Millennium

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“Prosperous Successes”: The Significance of English Colonist’s  
Enslavement of the Virginia Indian

In the spring of 1661, the Imperial Spanish colonial province of Guale, on the present day coast of Georgia, was attacked by “a nation of a great number of Indians who said they were Chichumeco<sup>1</sup> [and among] them some Englishmen with firearms.”<sup>2</sup> The indigenous people of Guale described these foreign invaders as cannibals, as they witnessed the surviving women and children being carried off, never to be seen again. Interrogating four captured Chichumeco, Spanish authorities were able to ascertain that the force originated in Jacán, a Spanish name for Virginia and were supplied and commanded by Virginia Indian traders to procure Indian slaves from Spanish dominions.<sup>3</sup> Thus was documented one of the first large scale, commercial slaving ventures by Virginians that would be followed the next decade by Carolinians and their Westo or Richahrecians allies upon the same area.

Historian Paul Kelton has stated, “the complete story of native slavery in Virginia has yet to be written.”<sup>4</sup> The primary reason for this is that the documentary trail of enslavement of the Virginia Indian is sparse and the sources that do still exist are often ambiguous about the societal status of the individual, slave or servant. Compounding this problem is the use of the term “slave” which in colonial Virginia could often be a common colloquialism, a term of derision.<sup>5</sup> But the fact that Virginia colonists did practice enslavement of the Indian is clear if one looks closely at the documents that reflect the mindset of the English leaders and “adventurers.” Although the population numbers of the indigenous peoples were never large enough for the Europeans to establish a labor force that resembled the institution of African servitude, the practice of enslaving indigenous people had major repercussions on European and American Indian relations, the way in which race was viewed on both sides, the land use policy of colonial settlement, and the development of a large scale Indian slave trade in the colony of South Carolina.

This essay examines the cultural attitudes that English settlers imported from Europe and how these attitudes evolved from an assertion of power in the fluid environment of early colonial Virginia to the commoditization of the

<sup>1</sup> Rechahecrians or Richahrcrcians: At present there seems to be a consensus that this migratory ingenious group was a displaced faction from the Eries, seeking refuge from the Beaver Wars. They seemed to show up in Virginia around the middle of the 1640s. It is further suggested by Maureen Meyers that the Richahrecians were given the name Westos, from a trade agreement between Stegge-Bryrd-Bland concerning the Indian trade. See Maureen Meyers, “From Refugees to Slave Traders: The Transformation of the Westo Indians,” in *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South*, eds. Robbie Ethridge and Sheri M. Shuck-Hall (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 95.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Governor Aranguiz y Cotes to Spanish Crown, 1661. In John E Worth, *The Struggle for the Georgia Coast: An 18th-Century Spanish Retrospective on Guale and Mocama*, The archaeology of Mission Santa Catalina de Guale IV (New York, NY: American Museum of Natural History, 1995), 15

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-18

<sup>4</sup> Paul Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492-1715*, Indians of the Southeast (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 125

<sup>5</sup> Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, “Origins of the Southern Labor System,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 7, no. 2, Third Series (April 1, 1950): 199-222.

Native American in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The transition of the English practice of enslavement from strategic concerns, subjugation, and the later commodification of indigenous peoples can be delineated by following the causality and outcomes of major events in early Virginia colonial history. In particular the proposed acquisition of indigenous children, the coups of 1622 and 1644, and the headrights system of land procurement each played a significant role in the ascendancy of English settlers to the leading polity in the mid-Atlantic. Further, this ascendancy involved an amassing of power that parallels the transition from subjugation to commodification of the Virginia Indian.

When the English established a colony on the peninsula that would become Jamestown, the position that they found themselves in was nothing less than tenuous. The location, selected for strategic considerations against possible Spanish predations offered a defensible position along the then Powhatan River,<sup>6</sup> the tidal James River. However, the site also proved to be an unlikely selection to start a colony as the drinking water was brackish and the ground was soggy. Jamestown's location within the territory of Powhatan polity added further difficulties.<sup>7</sup> This polity was a large territory consisting of a paramount chiefdom that was further made up of weroance or district chiefdoms, and smaller towns with their own chiefs.<sup>8</sup> Subsequently, the site chosen by the English thrust the colonists into the middle of political machinations of Paramount Chief Powhatan, who was expanding control over the other polities of central Virginia. As such, Paramount chief Powhatan of the polity located within the land called "Tsenacommacah,"<sup>9</sup> attempted to play the newly arrived English in his elaborate game of chess. Unwittingly, the 105 Englishmen that landed in 1607 walked into a political maelstrom, becoming yet another factor in the struggle for power over individuals, groups, and the land. Power was in short supply for the English during the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>10</sup>

Early in the history of the Virginia colony, English leaders looked to ally themselves with various indigenous groups on an ad hoc basis to further their own strategic position. This strategy's effectiveness was copied from other imperial colonial efforts, including the Spanish, who "made great use for his own ture of the quarrels and enmities that were amongst the Indians, as thoughly vnderstanding and following that Maxime of the Politician, *Diude & impera...*"<sup>11</sup> The strategy of dividing and conquering and the precarious position of the English colonists were reflected in the Virginia Company's

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<sup>6</sup> John Smith, *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va. by the University of North Carolina Press, 1986), Vol. I, 145.

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this essay the term "Powhatan Confederacy" will be replaced by the term "polity" in reference to the fact that Jamestown was within the "Powhatan Nation" as described in "A Guide to Writing about Virginia Indians and Virginia Indian History Approved by the Virginia Council on Indians-September 19, 2006" from <<http://Indians.vipnet.org>>; also see *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone*. 43. footnote 5.

<sup>8</sup> Helen C Rountree, *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture*, 1st ed., The Civilization of the American Indian series v. 193 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989). 117

<sup>9</sup> Frederic W Gleach, *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia: A Conflict of Cultures*, Studies in the anthropology of North American Indians (Lincoln, Neb: University of Nebraska Press, 1997). 207. See note 2.

<sup>10</sup> Defined here as the ability to project the wants and needs of one group over another.

<sup>11</sup> Susan Myra Kingsbury, ed., *Library of Congress, Records of the Virginia Company, 1606-26*, vol. III, Miscellaneous Records, Herschel H. Helm collection., The Jefferson Papers Series 8, <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mjtj.mtbib026605>>, Image 590.

orders and laws enacted from 1607 to 1646.<sup>12</sup> As a whole they were often were an attempt to keep some semblance of peace between the polities, especially those which limited contact between Europeans and indigenous peoples to prevent the violation of the status and territorial claims of Indians.<sup>13</sup> This legislation mirrored the apprehension of the early years of the Jamestown colonists to their correctly perceived tenuous strategic position on the continent.

Further complicating the clash between polities, the colonists imported cultural ideas and attitudes that often portrayed the indigenous people as “salvages,” thus denying their humanity and interpreted their way of life as culturally inferior.<sup>14</sup> Subsequently, as historian Gary Nash correctly points out, these preconceptions framed relations throughout and beyond the seventeenth century<sup>15</sup> and also legitimized the appropriation of indigenous lands.<sup>16</sup> By extension, these preconceptions and assertion of power came to define the moral and legal justification for the enslavement of the “Virginia Indian.”<sup>17</sup>

Prior to the arrival of the English at Jamestown two models of subjugation through enslavement were known to European culture. Reports by the French Jesuit missionaries documented the indigenous practice of enslavement by Indians of captives taken in hostilities between polities. Further, the growth of the political and economic power of imperial Spain attested to the success of the Spanish model of Christianization and enslavement. Like many indigenous peoples, Powhatans would often enslave women, children and rulers captured during hostilities.<sup>18</sup> The goals of capturing and enslaving these people were to increase power through prestige and to supplement the population of the polity through adoption. Male captives were not so lucky and often were killed outright or tortured to death.<sup>19</sup> Accounts describing these indigenous enslavement practices were communicated to Europe through French missionaries and early explorers of the New World.

The Spanish model was practiced for two hundred years previous to the landing at Jamestown and was well known throughout out the European community. Indigenous enslavement was practiced early in the history of Spanish colonization. The Spanish Crown formally forbade the enslavement of indigenous peoples in the “New Laws” of 1542, attempting to roll back the *encomienda* system of slave labor.<sup>20</sup> However, as a practicality, Spaniards in the new world circumvented the laws through different systems to classify forced labor while also practicing outright enslavement. Thus to the Spanish

<sup>12</sup> These orders and laws codified limiting contact, trade, and forbidding the taking of indigenous children for private use. More often than not they were ignored. For an example of orders to limit contact see The May 18, 1618 “Governor Argall Proclamations or Edicts.” *Ibid.* Image 117.

<sup>13</sup> For example see images 194 and 195 in Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, vol. III.

<sup>14</sup> Smith, *The Complete Works*, 143.

<sup>15</sup> Gary B. Nash, “The Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 29, no. 2, Third Series (April 1, 1972), 198.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* 210

<sup>17</sup> From “A Guide to Writing about Virginia Indians...” “VCI - Resources,” n.d., <<http://indians.vipnet.org/resources.cfm>>. 2

<sup>18</sup> An example of this can be found in the Jesuit narrative of an Inuit boy enslaved in 1645 as a captive because of hostilities between indigenous polities. “The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents Volume 30: Travels and Explorations of The Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791,” n.d., <[http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/relations\\_30.html](http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/relations_30.html)>. 132-133; Smith, *The Complete Works*, 166.

<sup>19</sup> Rountree, *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia*. 121

<sup>20</sup> These laws were repealed in 1546 by the Spanish Crown to satisfy restive colonists who depended on slave labor to support the colonial economy.

colonists, the concept of Christianization and the introduction of European civilization were intertwined in the enslavement of indigenous peoples.<sup>21</sup> In 1552 a Creole, Franciscan priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas, printed *Brief Relations of the Destruction of the Indies*.<sup>22</sup> The book described in detail the atrocities committed upon indigenous people of the West Indies. Las Casas' work was later translated and published as *The Spanish Colonie, or Brief Chronicle of the Actes and Gestes of the Spaniards in the West Indies* by William Brome in 1583.<sup>23</sup> Further translations and publications of the Spanish colonial experience disseminated a wealth creating and successful model for English colonial ventures, which were primarily concerned with profit over spreading Christianity.<sup>24</sup> Subsequently, this literature was popular with English colonial promoters, despite a professed distaste for Imperial Spanish methods.<sup>25</sup>

Inherent in this literature, was the concept that indigenous people of the new world were inferior to their European counterparts. Borrowing from the English translations, lawyer and colonial promoter Richard Hakluyt (The Elder) notes that the goal of colonization was "to plant Christian religion, to traffice, to conquer, or, to doe all three."<sup>26</sup> Hakluyt goes on to note the necessity of conversion to make the inhabitants Christian in order to have success at trade and conquest. He further notes that if the inhabitants didn't have objects of value, gold, silver and iron, then colonists should take the land and "train" the indigenous peoples to tend the crops for use of the English.<sup>27</sup> As historian Andrew Fitzmaurice asserts, literature viewing indigenous societies as "barbarous" provided justification for colonial ventures to dispossess the people from the land.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, writing in 1616, John Smith references the Spanish colonial experience as a "prentiship"<sup>29</sup> to the English venture at Jamestown. The dissemination of the Imperial Spanish colonization model in reference to methods of subjugation of indigenous peoples can be further exemplified in Smith's 1624 lament following the Powhatan uprising.<sup>30</sup> Writing the history, or a retrospective of the Jamestown Colony in 1624, Smith states:

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<sup>21</sup> David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, Yale Western Americana series (New Haven: Yale University, 1992), 127-128.

<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that Las Casas argued for the basic humanity of indigenous people and against colonial abuses such as enslavement and forced labor, however they were still viewed as inferior.

<sup>23</sup> The publication of this book and the lifting by Netherland's propagandists of its particularly gruesome passages of the Spanish treatment of enslaved Indians gave rise to "The Black Legend" or *la leyenda negra*. See *The Spanish Colonie, or Brief Chronicle of the Actes and Gestes of the Spaniards in the West Indies*. <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com.mutex.gmu.edu/works/search>>.

<sup>24</sup> Such as José de Acosta's, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* translated and published by Edward Grimestone in 1604 as *The Natural and Moral Historie of the East and West Indies* and Peter Martyr's *De Orbe Novo*, published in Paris in 1587 by Richard Hakluyt.

<sup>25</sup> For example see Richard Hakluyt (The Elder), "Inducements to the Liking of the Voyage Intended towards Virginia in 40. And 42. Degrees, 1585." In *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580-1640*, The Bedford Series in History and Culture (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995), 35-38.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 39.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Andrew Fitzmaurice, "Moral Uncertainty in the Dispossession of Native Americans" in *The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1550-1624*, Peter C. Mancall, ed., (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 403

<sup>29</sup> Smith, *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*. Vol. I, 327.

<sup>30</sup> There is considerable debate over the use of terms to denote the events of 1622 and 1644 against the English contemporary term "massacre" see Gleach, *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia*. 4



*The manner how to suppress them is so often related and approved, I omit it here: And you have twenty examples of the Spaniards how they got the West-indies, and forced the treacherous and rebellious Infidels to doe all manner of drudgery worke and slavery for them, themselves living like Souldiers upon the fruits of their labours. This will make us more circumspect, and be an example to posteritie: (but I say, this might as well been put into practice sixteene yeares agoe as now)*<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, historian Edmund Morgan interprets Smith's behavior towards the Powhatans and other indigenous peoples during Smith's early presence in the colonies as based on this model of subjugation, stating, "John Smith's idea of the proper role of the Virginia Indians in English Virginia was something close to slavery."<sup>32</sup> Other contemporary narratives also positively compare the English and Spanish models of colonization and reinforce the need for enslavement as a method of subjugation:

*But we chanced in a lande, even as God made it. Where we found only an idle, improvident, scattered people, ignorant of the knowledge of gold, or silver, or any commodities; and carelesse of anything but from hand to mouth, but for bables of no worth; nothing to encourage us but accidentally wee found nature afforded. Which ere we could bring to recompence our paines, defray our charges, and satisfie our adventurers; we were to discover the country, subdue the people, bring them to be tractable civil and industrious... which doubtless will be as commodious for England as the West indies for Spaine, if it be rightly managed.*<sup>33</sup>

In his exploration of the role of ideology in the role of English colonization in Ireland and the New World, historian Nicholas P. Canny puts forward the concept of "transhumance" or the seasonal migratory pattern of peoples following livestock to pasturage. Intrinsic in this concept is the fact that such nomadic social practices precluded the notion of land as property, private or state-owned. Subsequently, according to Canny, the English saw transhumance cultures as barbarous and worthy of subjugation and enslavement.<sup>34</sup> Transhumance and English cultural attitudes as to the best use of land can also be seen in the writings of Sir Humphrey Gilbert as he refers to the indigenous people being in "brutish ignorance" as to how the land should be "manured and employed."<sup>35</sup> This concept is explored in Edmund Morgan's interpretation of Thomas More's *Utopia*, as a model of colonization that concurred with the necessity of dispossessing "natives" who refused up to the standards of the

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<sup>31</sup> Smith, *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*. Vol. II, 299. For an interesting perspective of Captain John Smith's life see David S. Shield's "The Genius of Ancient Britain" *The Atlantic World and Virginia*, 489-509.

<sup>32</sup> Edmund Sears Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*, Francis Parkman Prize ed. (New York: History Book Club, 2005), 77.

<sup>33</sup> William Symonds, *The Proceedings of the English Colonie in Virginia since their first beginning from England in the Yeare of our Lord, 1606, till This Present 1612, with all Their Accidents That Befell them in the Journies and Discoveries* (Oxford, 1612, n.d.), 76-78.

<sup>34</sup> Nicholas P. Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 4, Third Series (October 1, 1973): 575-598.

<sup>35</sup> George Peckham, "A True Reporte of the Late Discoveries...by...Sir Humphrey Gilbert," *Envisioning America*, 64.

Utopians concerning land husbandry. Moreover, the seeming “incompetence” of the ‘natives, in regard to best land use, allowed for the Utopians a moral justification of forcing their labor for the benefit of a “superior” people.<sup>36</sup> In a latter passage, More’s *Utopia* gives further justification to the enslavement of recalcitrant indigenous peoples:

*They do not make slaves of prisoners of war, except those that are taken in battle, nor of the sons of their slaves, nor of those of other nations: the slaves among them are only such as are condemned to that state of life for the commission of some crime, or, which is more common, such as their merchants find condemned to die in those parts to which they trade, whom they sometimes redeem at low rates, and in other places have them for nothing. They are kept at perpetual labour, and are always chained, but with this difference, that their own natives are treated much worse than others: they are considered as more profligate than the rest, and since they could not be restrained by the advantages of so excellent an education, are judged worthy of harder usage. Another sort of slaves are the poor of the neighbouring countries, who offer of their own accord to come and serve them: they treat these better, and use them in all other respects as well as their own countrymen, except their imposing more labour upon them, which is no hard task to those that have been accustomed to it; and if any of these have a mind to go back to their own country, which, indeed, falls out but seldom, as they do not force them to stay, so they do not send them away empty-handed.<sup>37</sup>*

Subsequently, contemporary literature, such as *Utopia*, mirrored the English mindset to proper relations with the “inferior” indigenous peoples and the need for their subjugation, Christianization, and enslavement as a prerequisite to successful colonization.

### The English “Entrada”

The years between the founding of the colony at Jamestown and the uprising by Paramount Chief Opechancanough on April 18, 1644 should be seen as a period of time in which the English sought to consolidate their power over the neighboring indigenous polities. As such, relations between Virginia Indians and the settlers were marked by periods of relative tranquility and skirmishes in which both groups tested each other’s power and abilities.<sup>38</sup> However, the English never lost sight of the eventual need to subjugate their indigenous neighbors. Because of the Virginia Indian’s resistance to the adoption of the English culture, the strategic weakness of the English position, and the instability of the on and off relations between the two polities, the Virginia Company and colonists were hampered in the ability to create wealth from their new colony. In this period of time, the enslavement of the Virginia Indian was a strategic consideration rather than a source of profit from the land.

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<sup>36</sup> Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, 23.

<sup>37</sup> Sir Thomas More, *The Utopia of Sir Thomas More including Roper’s Life of More and Letters of More and His Daughter Margaret*, Classics Club Edition (New York: Walter J. Black, Inc. 1947), 143.

<sup>38</sup> For an excellent overview to the military history of the early days of the colony see J. Frederick Fausz, “An ‘Abundance of Blood Shed on Both Sides’: England’s First Indian War, 1609-1614,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* Vol. 98, no. 1 (January 1, 1990): 3-56.

Historian David Hall likened the importation of elements of European culture to America as “a river full of debris.”<sup>39</sup> Although he was using this simile to describe the transmission of European folklore to the settlers of New England, the comparison is appropriate to the examination of the early Virginians’ importation of colonizing ideology and enslavement of indigenous people.

From the onset of European settlement in Virginia, the over-riding ideology and major component of those “debris,” was the idea amongst the settlers to establish a fiefdom amongst the indigenous peoples. It was a uniquely English vision of the subjugated Virginia Indian as a loyal Christian subject to King James I and a forced laborer to toil on the fantasized plantations and imagined mines. However, this conceptualization of the Virginia Indian and the idealized fiefdom became problematic as new world realities subsumed English fantasy. As seen in the Virginia Company’s May 1609 instructions to Sir Thomas Gates, strategic instructions on how to proceed with the subjection contained two illusory elements that would frame English and Virginia Indian relations through the remainder of the seventeenth century:

*For Powhatan and his Weroances it is Clere even to reason beside our experience that he loued not our neigbourhood and therefore you may no way trust him, but if you finde it not best to make him yo<sup>r</sup> prisoner yet you must make him yo<sup>r</sup> tributary, and all other his weroances about him first to acknowledge no other Lord but Kinge James and so we shall free them all from the Tirrany of Powhatan uppon them... this tribute payd to you for w<sup>ch</sup> you shall deliuer them from the exeacons of Powhatan, w<sup>ch</sup> are now burdensome and ptect and defend them from all their enemies shall also be a meanes of Clearinge much ground of wood and reducing them to labour...<sup>40</sup>*

Within the same letter there is a more contentious tract relevant to conjoining enslavement with Christian conversion of the “Savages.” Before exhorting Gates to kill the diabolical, indigenous “Priestes,” the Virginia Company orders the kidnapping of Indian children to “...endeavour the conversion of the natiues to the knowledge and worship of the true §god§ of and their redeemer Christ Jesus...”<sup>41</sup> Within the mindset of the English, this may have been perceived as a reasonable course of action in relation to the intent of conquest. However to the indigenous peoples, in this case the Powhatans, such actions were reasonably construed to be an act of war. As John Smith would note in his work, *A Map of Virginia*, the Powhatans “love children verie dearly.”<sup>42</sup>

The taking of children from Powhatan’s polity and raising them in a Christian way became a central pillar in the English conquest of Virginia.<sup>43</sup> Indeed it can be considered one of the many causal factors of the 1622 coup. Throughout the accessible documentation of the Virginia Company between 1609 and 1622 various references are made as to funding, procuring land, and

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<sup>39</sup> David D Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Knopf, 1989), 11.

<sup>40</sup> Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Images 38 and 39.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* Image 34

<sup>42</sup> Smith, *The Complete Works*, 162.

<sup>43</sup> There was also a proposal for Sir Thomas West to kidnap Indigenous children and send them to England to be Christianized. See Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Image 47.

procuring indigenous children.<sup>44</sup> However, due to the precarious power position of the colony during these 12 years, outright kidnapping of a large number of children and the slaughter of indigenous priests was eschewed for bribery and statecraft to obtain the children.<sup>45</sup> A scheme was formulated to place the children at a young age on various plantations, such as Smith's Hundred, Martin's Hundred and Bartlett's Hundred, to determine which ones might be intellectually capable to be placed at the planned college. The children who were not considered suitable for the college would be taught trades useful to their English overseers.<sup>46</sup> Although observers such as the bereaved John Rofe indicated that the Powhatans would willingly part with their children, Paramount Chiefs Powhatan and his successor Opechancanough would continually put off English overtures to take the children, as they were aware of the fate that lay in store for these children: "feare of hard usage by the English."<sup>47</sup> To deflect unwanted English attention towards Powhatan children, Opechancanough offered in 1619 to ally his warriors with the English to raid a hostile polity to capture children as a substitute.<sup>48</sup> Although it is unclear from the record that this raid ever took place, the Council seemed to be receptive to this proposal as:

*Children taken in ther warre might in time serue as well for priuatte uses of pitular psons as to furnishe y<sup>e</sup> intended Collidge this beinge a fayer opprtunitye for the Aduancement of this blessed worke seinge those Indians [Powhatans] are in noe sort willinge to sell or by fayer meanes to part wth their Children...<sup>49</sup>*

Also notable in the proposal was to divide the territory taken in the raid between the English and the Powhatan.<sup>50</sup> Thus Opechancanough sought to entice the English as allies into the schemes of consolidating power over other polities by appealing to the settler's unquenchable thirst for land and their desire for Indian labor. The English, by entertaining this proposal, demonstrated their lack of potency to fulfill the mandate set down at the founding of the colony.

Although the catalyst for hostilities was the killing of the indigenous "invincible" warrior, Nemattanew, the uprising of 1622 was caused by a multitude of events, such as expansion of the colony into territory of the Powhatans, antagonistic relations between the Colonists and the Powhatans, mutual misunderstandings inherent in the clash between two different cultural views, and importantly, the proposed taking of Powhatan children. The latter's significance was exemplified in the symbolic selection by the Powhatans of the

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<sup>44</sup> "Letter from unknown person to the Virginia Company promising £500 to fund the college" *Ibid.*, Image 307.

<sup>45</sup> Susan Myra Kingsbury, ed., *Library of Congress, Records of the Virginia Company*, Vol. I: The Court Book Part A. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/mtj.mtjbib026603>, Image 317.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, Image 317.

<sup>47</sup> Letter from John Rofe to Sir Edwin Sandys, 1617, Vol. III: Miscellaneous Records. 71. See also: Letter from Sir George Yearly to Sir Edwin Sandys, 1621. *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>48</sup> According to Council Records, this alliance was proposed by Nemattanew or "Jack with Feathers," who figured prominently in the raid of 1611 upon Jamestown and whose killing in 1622 provided the catalyst for the beginning of the uprising. The target of the proposed raid was the Massawomeck. See Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Image 252.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

two targets that were instigators to the proposed taking of the children, George Thorpe and the leaders of Martin's Hundred.

George Thorpe, promoter of harmonious relations between the English and Virginia Indians, was also the lead proponent of the college in the colony. Tragically he was one of the first to die in the 1622 uprising as he "was so void of all suspicion and so full of confidence that they sooner killed him, then hee could or would beleue they meant any ill against him."<sup>51</sup> Two elements can be interpreted from the death of Thorpe. First, the colonists were oblivious to the threat presented by the taking of children. Secondly, the singling out and the manner in which Thorpe was killed—the first of the colonists to be killed in the uprising and his corpse was ritually mutilated—was symbolic of the animosity that the Powhatans held against the idea of placing their children into servitude. Further adding to the symbolic nature of the uprising was the attack on Martin's Hundred. As previously mentioned, this plantation was one singled out as a destination for the proposed Powhatan children. Martin's Hundred was also reputed to be one of the harsher plantations for laborers. In the uprising of 1622 it was the hardest hit.<sup>52</sup>

The uprising of 1622 and its aftermath is an important watershed event in the development of indigenous slavery in Virginia as Company and, later, imperial policy eschewed any peaceable relations with the Virginia Indian in favor of outright subjugation or extermination. Historian Alfred A. Cave argues that these unofficial policies amounted to "genocide" in accordance with modern and official definitions of the term.<sup>53</sup> If the term "genocide" is to be used within the context of colonial embracement of enslavement, then the uprising of 1622 provided the moral cover for officials in Virginia and England to enact policies that would eventually transform the act of enslavement from an assertion of power to a commercial enterprise that used strategic concerns as a pretext to creating profit from the traffic of human beings.

Previous to the event in March of 1622 the enslavement of indigenous people, other than the proposed kidnapping of Powhatan children, was a haphazard affair. Although documentation of enslaved Indians is sparse before the 1622 uprising, reference is made to Indian servants. Notably, one Virginia Indian slave<sup>54</sup> "belonging to one Perry,"<sup>55</sup> was credited for saving Jamestown during the uprising.<sup>56</sup> Also a census of the English survivors of the uprising lists at least two Virginia Indians, Choupouke and Thomas as surviving through 1623.<sup>57</sup> Although their status, free or enslaved, is unclear, it should be inferred from their inclusion on the census that their status was similar to the African-Americans listed on the same document.

<sup>51</sup> Edward Waterhouse, "A Declaration of The State of the Colony and ... A Relation of the Barbarous Massacre..." , *Ibid.*, Image 585.

<sup>52</sup> James Blain, "The Living and the Dead in Virginia on February 16, 1623." *Sumames.com*, July 14, 2008, <[http://research.sumames.com/virginial/1623\\_virginia\\_living\\_dead.htm](http://research.sumames.com/virginial/1623_virginia_living_dead.htm)>, 16-17.

<sup>53</sup> Alfred A Cave, *Lethal Encounters: Englishmen and Indians in Colonial Virginia* (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2011), x-xii.

<sup>54</sup> The servant's name was Chanco. See John Burk, *The History of Virginia: From Its First Settlement to the Present Day* (Petersburg, Virginia: Printed for the author by Dickson & Pescud, 1804), 242.

<sup>55</sup> Possibly belonging to a Mrs. Perry at Chaplain's Choise near Jamestown. See Blain, "The Living and the Dead in Virginia."

<sup>56</sup> Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Image 583.

<sup>57</sup> Blain, "The Living and the Dead in Virginia."

After the Virginia Company blamed the coup as a punishment by God for drinking and foppish dressing<sup>58</sup>, little consideration of the settlers' transgressions towards the Powhatans are manifested in public documentation. Indeed, the vision of the Virginia Indian as barbarous and treacherous was renewed in the protestations of the surviving colonists. Amid the furor calling for the extermination of the Virginia Indian, various voices arose arguing for the alternative of enslavement. According to these colonists this would bring the Virginia Indians into English subjugation, as well as provide much needed labor.

Two men in particular stand out as proponent for the enslavement of Virginia Indians. John Martin was known for his hostile attitude toward the Virginia Indian. Indeed he had been reprimanded on various occasions for his harsh treatment of the Virginia Indians previous to the 1622 coup.<sup>59</sup> Colonial officials fearing escalation of hostilities between Virginia Indians and the colonists pursued Martin in court for his treatment of Indigenous people. Following the 1622 coup, Martin offered advice to the Virginia Company on subjugating the Virginia Indian. Beginning with the request for an assembly of continual "200 souldiers on foote" and "10 Shallopps" to cut off Powhatan trade, burn their towns, take their "skynnes"<sup>60</sup> and destroy their food stocks, Martin goes on to address the need to enslave the indigenous people:

*Seacondly when as by the meanes before spoken of, they shalbe brought into subjection and shalbe made to deliver hostriges for theire obedience, into subjection and there is no doubt by gods grace but the saving of many of their souls. And then being natives are apter for worke then yet our English are, knowinge howe to attayne greate quantitie of silke, hемpe, and flax, and most exquisite in the dressing therof For our uses fitte for guides upon discoverye into other Countries adjacent to ours, fitt to rowe in Gallies and frigetts and many other uses too tedious to sett down...<sup>61</sup>*

Likewise Edward Waterhouse<sup>62</sup> called for an aggressive approach in dealing with the Virginia Indians. Citing the example of the Romans subjugating the ancient Britons, he states:

*Fiftly, Because the Indians, who before were used as friends, may now iustly be compelled to seruitude and drudgery, and supply the roome of men that labour, wherby euen the meanest of the Plantation may imploy themselues more entirely in their Arts and Occupations, which are more generous, whilst Sauages preforme their inferiour workes of digging in mynes, and the like, of whom also some may be sent for the seruice of the Sommer Ilands.<sup>63</sup>*

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<sup>58</sup> Treasurer and Council for Virginia. Letter to Governor and Council in Virginia. August 1, 1622. Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Image 702.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, Images 180 and 181.

<sup>60</sup> A Reference to deer skins which was the major commodity of trade between Virginia Indians and colonists, which in turn, was exported to England.

<sup>61</sup> Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Images 740-743.

<sup>62</sup> Secretary of the Virginia Company in London.

<sup>63</sup> Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Images 590-591.

In this passage Waterhouse seems to acknowledge the fact that cordial relations with the Virginia Indian were a pretense and that after the event of March 1622 said pretensions should be eschewed for a more vigorous course of action.

A May 7, 1623 the court assembled by the Virginia Company officially recognized the change in relationship between the colonists and the Virginia Indian. It was also at this point that the Virginia Company changed its tone from slow subjugation to outright belligerence. Within the proceedings of the 1623 court, the Virginia Indians and by extension all indigenous peoples, were deemed valuable only in enslavement as attempts at conversion had failed because of the Virginia Indian "...[was] descended of y<sup>e</sup> cursed race of Cham..."<sup>64</sup> Indeed, as a letter from then Governor Wyatt's father offering the younger Wyatt<sup>65</sup> advice and support states:

*Your Game are the wilde and fierce Savages hauntinge the Desartes and woods. Some are to be taken in Nets and Toiles alive, reserve to be made tame and searve to good purpose. The most bluddy to be rended to due reveng of blud and crueltie, to teach them that our kindness harmd are armed.*<sup>66</sup>

Colonists and the Virginia Company marked the two years following the uprising of 1622 by proposing various strategies to strengthen the colony. These included the establishment of a Pale at Martins Hundred in 1623, the building of a palisade at the middle plantation and scheming to assassinate or imprison Opechancanough.<sup>67</sup> <sup>68</sup> In 1624 the Virginia Company was dissolved and the colony reverted to the crown. However, the colony continued to expand to the disconcertion of the Powhatans, this resulted in a series of skirmishes instigated by Paramount Chief Opechancanough that intended to push the expanding colonists back to the land that Powhatan conceded to them.<sup>69</sup>

Fuelling this expansion of the English into Powhatan polity was the headright system. Established in 1618 a headright was essentially an incentive for immigration to the colony. Under the provisions of the *Orders and Constitutions* enacted by the Virginia Company a person who settled or paid for the transportation expenses of others was entitled to fifty acres of land per new settler. As this system was subject to abuse and fraud, large tracts of land were acquired by speculators and bought and sold, leading to a concentration of

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<sup>64</sup> Susan Myra Kingsbury, ed., *Records of The Virginia Company, 1606-26, Vol. II: The Court Book Part B*, <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mj/mjbib026604>> (accessed March 1-May 1, 2010), Image 403.

<sup>65</sup> Appointed Governor by The Virginia Company in 1621, he was Governor during the uprising and served until 1625 after Virginia reverted to the crown.

<sup>66</sup> J. Frederick Fausz and John Kukla, "A Letter of Advice to the Governor of Virginia, 1624," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 34, no. 1, Third Series (January 1, 1977): 104-129.

<sup>67</sup> The Middle Plantation later became Williamsburg; Kingsbury, *Records of the Virginia Company*, III, Image 483.; Philip Levy, "A New Look at an Old Wall. Indians, Englishmen, Landscape, and the 1634 Palisade at Middle Plantation," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 112, no. 3 (January 1, 2004): 226-265.

<sup>68</sup> The attempted assassination of Opechancanough took place on May 22 by a party of colonists led by Captain Tucker. The plot was to poison and put to the sword as many Powhatans as possible. Although they stated that they managed to kill 250, their assertion that they killed Opechancanough was premature as he lived until 1646. See "Lord Sackville's Papers Respecting Virginia, 1613-1631, I.," *The American Historical Review* 27, no. 3 (April 1, 1922): 493-538.

<sup>69</sup> Cave, *Lethal Encounters*, 133-134.

wealth in the hands of a few elite.<sup>70</sup> Servants and slaves were eligible for inclusion on the patents. Subsequently, records of the patents often included enslaved people, both African American and indigenous as their colonial owners attempted to secure larger amounts of land for free.<sup>71</sup> The importance of the headright system to the development of colonial Virginia and the enslavement of the Virginia Indian can be seen in the incentive this system provided towards the rapid acquisition of land by the English and by extension the acquisition of indigenous slaves to augment the patents. Although the practice of enslaving the Virginia Indian was as a source of labor, the fact that such individuals could be used to augment the land holdings of the owner should be taken into consideration. Indeed as historian Lorena Walsh notes the enslaved Virginia Indian often proved a poor choice for agricultural labor in the plantation system,<sup>72</sup> however their increased presence in patent applications denotes their importance in the expansion of English held land.<sup>73</sup>

The uprising of 1644 should be interpreted as a final attempt of the Powhatan polity to check the expansion of English colonial settlement. Launched on April 18, the Powhatans attacked the outlying areas of settlement. As anthropologist Frederic Gleach notes, the 1644 coup was symbolic in two ways; it was launched during the Christian Holy Season proceeding Easter and only the outer margins of the settlement were attacked. Subsequently, to Gleach, the uprising can be interpreted as, simultaneously, a deliberate insult to Virginian Christianity and a warning to curtail further settlement outside the prescribed area.<sup>74</sup> However the event's importance to the history of the colony lays in the retaliation by the colonists that finally broke the power of the Powhatan polity and led to the signing of the Treaty of Peace with Necotowance on October 5, 1646. Boundaries were set in the treaty that ceded the lands to the north of the York River to the Powhatans, and the English to have the land between the York River and the James up to falls of both rivers. Indigenous peoples were not to enter nor inhabit the territory set aside for the English on pain of death. Notably, the same provisions were not extended to the English if they encroached on the lands of the Virginia Indian. The last two articles of this treaty deal with indigenous slavery<sup>75</sup> and children less than twelve years of age. Here reference is made to the return of Indian servants running away to the Powhatans. Further, the treaty stipulates that the presence of children voluntarily given to the English will not constitute a breach of the peace.

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<sup>70</sup> Daphne Gentry, "Headrights (VA-NOTES)," Library of Virginia/ Guides, *Headrights (VA-NOTES)*, n.d., <[http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/va4\\_headrights.htm](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/va4_headrights.htm)> (accessed March 1-May 1, 2010).

<sup>71</sup> An example of the inclusion of both can be seen in the patent applied for by Peter Knight and Baker Cutt for 1850 Acres in 1653 in Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, 1623-1666*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co, 1963), 282.

<sup>72</sup> Lorena Seebach Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 20.

<sup>73</sup> The number of the indigenous enslaved listed in the applications for land patents increases as the century progresses. See Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, Vol. I and Vol. II.

<sup>74</sup> Gleach, *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia*, 175.

<sup>75</sup> At this point enslaved Virginia Indians were referred to as servants, or servants for life, reflective of the ambiguity of the term slave and servant in the colonial mind. It should be noted that that the term servant to slave was codified in Virginia Colonial Law in 1682 in relation to indigenous people. See William Waller Hening, "Hening's Statutes at Large," July 19, 2009,

<<http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-01.htm#bottom>>, (accessed March 1-May 1, 2010), 491.



Importantly, there is no reference to the use of such children and their fate as they reach maturity.<sup>76</sup>

### The English Ascendant

From the ending of hostilities between the English settlers and the Powhatan people in 1646 expansion of the colony grew at an exponential pace. Corresponding with this period of land acquisition was the ever-increasing need for labor. This labor shortage was caused by a fall off of people willing to immigrate to the colony as indentured servants. Because of the reputation of the colony's high mortality for the unseasoned European, harsh living conditions, and improvement of England's economy, people were more reluctant to become indentured in order to immigrate.<sup>77</sup> Subsequently, the acute need for labor forced the colonists to turn to other sources, including the Africans and indigenous peoples. Indeed, as historian Alexander Bruce notes, the economic considerations of slavery versus indenture in relation to capital expenditures would make slavery a more attractive and viable option to the labor hungry colonists.<sup>78</sup>

The 1646 treaty between the two polities for all intents and purposes solidified the power of the English over the Powhatans, subjugating them to the colonial government and by extension to the English crown. Also it should be seen as the beginning of the demise of Virginia Indian power within colonial Virginia as the English interpreted their success in the acquisition of power over the Virginia Indians to the steadfast adherence of their colonizing and subjugating strategy.

The rise of the Virginia colony as a dominant polity in the mid-Atlantic area in turn gave further impetus to the enslavement of indigenous people from 1646 to 1680. Although references to the enslavement of indigenous peoples are peppered throughout existing documentation such as wills<sup>79</sup> and complaint of runaway slaves,<sup>80</sup> the documentation concerning the commodification of indigenous people remains sparse. However, it is during this time period that the practice of enslavement transitioned from the strategic consideration of subjugation or extermination to the viewing of indigenous people as a commodity. No one facilitated this transition more than the Virginia Indian trader.

The Indian trader facilitated transfer of goods between the colonists and the indigenous people. Commodities easily available to indigenous people, such as skins corn, and slaves were bartered for goods of European origin, such as woolens, beads and firearms. As this trade evolved, firearms became the currency of choice to facilitate the indigenous slave trade. It is crucial to note the importance of the barter of firearms, upon the commodification of the

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<sup>76</sup> William Berkeley, *The Papers of Sir William Berkeley, 1605-1677*, ed. Warren M. Billings (Richmond, VA: Library of Virginia, 2007), 71-73.

<sup>77</sup> Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, 299.

<sup>78</sup> Philip Alexander Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century: an Inquiry into the Material Condition of the People, Based Upon Original and Contemporaneous Records* (New York: P. Smith, 1935), 60.

<sup>79</sup> W. Stitt Robinson, "The Legal Status of the Indian in Colonial Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 61, no. 3 (July 1, 1953): 247-259.

<sup>80</sup> William Montgomery Sweeny, "Some References to Indians in Colonial Virginia," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 16, no. 4, Second Series (October 1, 1936): 589-599.

indigenous people as well as destabilization of indigenous polities.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, Acts of Assembly of 1642 expressly forbade firearms trade to Virginia Indians in an attempt to reign in the Indian trade and stabilize the political situation.<sup>82</sup>

Important to the history of indigenous slave trade within the Virginia colony was the role that the Virginia Indian trader played in entrance of trade agreements with transient groups of indigenous people, which would facilitate the expansion of trade in indigenous slaves. For example, anthropologist Maurine Meyers notes an interesting connection between men intimately involved in the Indian trade and one of the principle enslaving indigenous enslaving groups. She suggests that the Blands, Thomas Stegge, and William Byrd I formed a consortium to negotiate with the Richahecrians to procure slaves for firearms. The consortium license would have made reference to the plantation of Westover, a plantation owned by Theodorick Bland and later purchased by Byrd. She further suggests that the name “Westo,” by which the Richahecrians became known, was probably taken from the license.<sup>83</sup> The Westo or Richahecrians in league with the Virginia traders played an important role in the collapse of Spanish governance in the province of Guale in present day Georgia.<sup>84</sup>

William Berkeley, Governor of the colony of Virginia from 1641 until 1677, is emblematic of the nature of indigenous enslavement, both culturally and legally during this period. Throughout the period of his governance he maintained a pugilistic stance towards the indigenous people of Virginia and what was termed “foreign” Indians.<sup>85</sup> Further he was a major principle in the Indian Trade. As such he was involved in human trafficking for personal profit.<sup>86</sup> Also, during the time of his governance, ambiguous and often contradictory laws were enacted concerning indigenous slavery. For example Act XII of March 1661 attempts to clarify terms of servitude were framed in if the individual came in by sea or by land. Also the terms of servitude were based on if the individual was Christian. As a result, the individual could petition to be set free if they desired baptism.<sup>87</sup> As a whole, the laws concerning indigenous enslaved people enacted between 1646 and 1670 can be interpreted as reactive response to the practice and an example of the commodification of the indigenous enslaved. Further, they can be seen as an attempt by Berkeley and his cronies to maintain his stranglehold on the Indian trade.

As a practical matter, attempting to make the practice illegal was about as effective as the legislation outlawing the sale of firearms to the indigenous peoples, considering the amount of profit made in either transaction. As a commodity, the trade in indigenous slaves was a profitable enterprise for the backcountry Indian trader who was often outside of the law’s reach. Moreover, the profitability of indigenous enslavement was a fact not lost on the colonial government. For example an act of 1660 allowed the Commissioners of

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<sup>81</sup> See M.L. Brown, *Firearms in Colonial America: the Impact on History and Technology, 1492-1792.* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980).

<sup>82</sup> “Hening’s Statutes at Large,” n.d., <<http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol01-10.htm>>, 256-257.

<sup>83</sup> Maurine Meyers, “From Refugees to Slave Traders,” 94-96.

<sup>84</sup> See Worth, *The Struggle for the Georgia Coast.*

<sup>85</sup> He terms both as “our perpetuall Enemies” See Berkeley, *The Papers of Sir William Berkeley*, 164.

<sup>86</sup> Indigenous Prisoners taken in 1645 expedition were sent by Berkeley to the “Western Island.” Berkeley’s own ship transported the prisoners for sale. See Clifford Lewis, “Some Recently Discovered Extracts from the List Minutes of the Virginia Council and General Court, 1642-1645,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 20, no. 1, Second Series (January 1, 1940): 62-78.

<sup>87</sup> “Hening’s Statutes at Large.” <<http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-hm>>. 155-156.

Northumberland County to apprehend a number of Indians to sell in a “fforaign country” to pay damages that were awarded to a John Powell.<sup>88</sup> Further this commodification extended to the idea of prisoners of war, usually women and children, as “booty.” In June of 1666 Berkeley proposed financing an expedition against foreign Indians through the sale of the women and children captured as a result of the raid.<sup>89</sup> In these instances indigenous people, through human trafficking, became commodities to provide revenue to the state.

In 1670 and throughout the remaining years of the decade, the status of indigenous servants was incrementally clarified through the codification of the status of servitude in the colony. As such the enactment of legislation to clarify the status and length of servitude of the indigenous enslaved should be interpreted as capitulation to the pernicious nature of the trade. Since the practice could not be controlled through previous legislation and the Governor William Berkeley and other leading men of the colony were profiting by the trade, the General Assembly passed laws making it legal. Also it should be noted that crown law did not expressly forbid the enslavement of indigenous people. Indeed as historian Almon W. Lauber points out, the trade in indigenous people was purely a colonial matter as the crown concerned itself with the transatlantic trade of Africans. Subsequently, the crown law that had no opinion on the matter would supersede any challenge to Virginia colonial law.<sup>90</sup>

One of the first attempts at clarification was the Act concerning the length of servitude required from indigenous peoples taken as prisoners of war or purchased from other indigenous peoples. This act was aimed at the African trade as it stipulated that non-Christian servants shipped in by sea were to be slaves for life. If the non-Christian was transported by land, the term of servitude was set at 30 years for children and twelve years for adults.<sup>91</sup> By the enactment of such terms of servitude, for all practical purposes, the indigenous enslaved were unofficially slaves for life. The next step in codification was making any slaves tithable upon birth within the colony.<sup>92</sup> Subsequent legislation, enacted 1672 dealing with runaway slaves assigned an official value on runaways with the indigenous slave being valued at “three thousand pounds of tobacco and a cask apiece.”<sup>93</sup> Such legislation further evolved in the so-called “Bacon Laws” of 1676, which legalized the lifelong enslavement of all indigenous captives.<sup>94</sup> The Bacon Laws were repealed in 1676.<sup>95</sup> However, provision was made to keep the indigenous enslaved.<sup>96</sup> This decade of legislation culminated in 1682 when the General Assembly, excepting “Moors and Turks in amity with his majesty,” defined Africans and indigenous peoples classified as servants to be reclassified as slaves and that Indian slave women above the age of sixteen to be tithable, repealing the ambiguous act of 1670<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>89</sup> Berkeley, *The Papers of Sir William Berkeley*, 284.

<sup>90</sup> Almon Wheeler Lauber, “Indian slavery in colonial times within the present limits of the United States,” PhD diss., Columbia University, 1913. In Internet Archive, <[www.archive.org/stream/indianslavery00laubrich\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/indianslavery00laubrich_djvu.txt)> (accessed March 1, 2010), 215.

<sup>91</sup> “Hening’s Statutes at Large.” Vol.II, 283.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* 296.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* 299.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* 345-346.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.* 381.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* 404.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

The interpretation of the significance and causes of Bacon's Rebellion has taken on many hues with various historians, each dependent on the outlook of the individual historian. As Berkeley scholar Warren M. Billings notes the end of Berkeley's tenure as governor was marked by a "credibility gap."<sup>98</sup> Although Billings references the economic, social, and political forces present during the decade of the 1670s, the idea of a "credibility gap" can be extended to Berkeley's involvement in the indigenous slave trade. As noted in preceding pages,<sup>99</sup> Berkeley was involved in human trafficking, Nathaniel Bacon, Berkeley's cousin, was also involved in the trade having received his license from Berkeley.<sup>100</sup> Implicit in "Bacon's Laws" was the right to take hostile indigenous people captive and sell as slaves, to provide profit and defray costs.<sup>101</sup> This is further backed up by the "Authorization to Raise Volunteers" where Bacon is commissioned to raise a militia:

*...to be raised there may probably offer themselves divers gentlemen and Soldiers as Reformades, Volunteers or Privateers, who will for the Service of the Country against the Common Enemy ...the Reward of all lawful plunder of Indian Enimies Captivated or other goods belonging to the said Indian Enimies, and with out any further Reward or Charge from or to the Country, or any part or people thereof, march out and endeavour to kill and Captivate the Common enimie.<sup>102</sup>*

Further, the laws would have allowed for Bacon to capture a significant share of the Indian trade. Subsequently, the two men would have been competitors, notwithstanding the threat that Bacon posed to the elderly Berkeley's authority. Reportedly, Bacon when testifying concerning his original foray against the Pamunkeys, Bacon stated that the quarrel between he and Berkeley was personal and that Berkeley's involvement in the Indian Trade was a "monopoly."<sup>103</sup> Following the collapse of the rebellion upon Bacon's death, Berkeley sold forty-five indigenous captives taken by Bacon and his forces. The sale was rescinded and all but five were allowed to return to their territory. It should be noted that the indigenous people that Bacon captured were tributary rather than "foreign" and as such the killing of men and capturing of women and children threatened to undermine the authority of the colony and disrupt Berkeley's interests in the Indian trade.

The quarrel over the "booty" had been rendered academic as the indigenous slave trade as a large-scale affair shifted from Virginia to South Carolina in the 1680s and 1690s. Indeed, after 1700, Virginia became an importer of indigenous slaves.<sup>104</sup> Notably, the Westos moved to an area along the Savannah River where they supplied the South Carolina market with

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<sup>98</sup> Warren M. Billings, "The Causes of Bacon's Rebellion: Some Suggestions," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 78, no. 4 (October 1, 1970): 409-435.

<sup>99</sup> See page 21 of this paper.

<sup>100</sup> C.S. Everett, "They Shall Be Slaves for Life." In Alan Gallay, *Indian Slavery in Colonial America* (University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 84.

<sup>101</sup> "Hening's Statutes at Large." Vol. II 342-352.

<sup>102</sup> Berkeley, *The Papers of Sir William Berkeley*, 534.

<sup>103</sup> *A Narrative of the Indian and Civil Wars in Virginia, in the Years 1675 and 1676* (Washington: P. Force, 1835), 15.

<sup>104</sup> Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, Vol. IV. (New York: Octagon Books, 1965), 175.

indigenous slaves. Charlestown became the market center for the sale and export of indigenous slaves for reasons of location and connections with the labor markets in the British Caribbean. Yet the traffic continued in Virginia, albeit on a smaller scale. Complaints by South Carolinian Indian traders acknowledge the presence of the Virginia trader in protests to the Commissioners of the Indian Trade. In 1712, a complaint was lodged against a Samuel Hilden by a Wenoya, “an Indian,” who claimed that the Virginia trader had forced him to part with an indigenous slave for 160 skins.<sup>105</sup> The competition of the Virginia trader on the South Carolina market is further seen in South Carolina regulations concerning trading without a license:

*And if att any Place you shoold mete with any Virginia Traders you are to make them sencible that their late Pretentions are groundless whilst they trade without a Licence from this Government which if they doe not observe, you are to put the Act in force of the 25th June, 1711 by seizing their Goods. And whereas the 19th Article of your last Instructions appears to us to bee ineffectuall by Reason that no Encouragement is given to the Persons that put in force your Warrants and other Orders, it is therefore agreed by this Board that you agree with the Person or Persons employed to bring down Offenders to Charles Town for such Sum or Sums as you think resonable and draw upon us for Payment.*<sup>106</sup>

However, disease and the pressures placed on the Virginia Indians due to slaving made the Virginia market untenable and the industry shifted to the colony of South Carolina for reasons of economic viability and logistics.<sup>107</sup>

In 1614 Ship’s Master Thomas Hunt took twenty-seven indigenous people from the coast of Massachusetts for eventual sale in Spain.<sup>108</sup> The incident was indicative of the contempt held by the English for the indigenous population of America. Although the settlers of the colony of Virginia manifested the same mindset, however, they, by the nature of their enterprise, did not have the luxury of sailing away to proffer their booty in the slave market of Spain. Instead, because of the tenuous position that they maintained within the Powhatan polity, the indigenous peoples that they took and the children that they contemplated taking was an assertion of power. As a contemplated method of subjugation, it would take the colonists of Virginia thirty-seven years to obtain enough power to make the transition from indigenous slavery as a strategic consideration to a commercial enterprise. Further, it would take them another seventeen years to affect alliances between transitory indigenous groups and Indian Traders to execute large scale slaving raids such as the one unleashed upon the Spanish province of Guale. During this evolution the enslavement of indigenous people had profound effects on how the colony was settled and the subsequent relations between Europeans and American native peoples.

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<sup>105</sup> South Carolina, *Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade: September 20, 1710-August 29, 1718*, Colonial records of South Carolina (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Dept, 1955), 23.

<sup>106</sup> “Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade 1710-1718,” n.d., <<http://amohkali.southeastertrading.com/sccommissioners1710-18.htm>>.

<sup>107</sup> For a comprehensive treatment of South Carolina’s role in the indigenous slave trade see Alan Galloway, *The Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670-1717* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

<sup>108</sup> Smith, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, 433.

*To Merchants, Commanders of Ships, and to all true  
Friends to Trade and Navigation...<sup>1</sup>*

Wilmington, North Carolina ironically shares many things with Hastings, Sussex County, England. They are historical commonalities forced apart nearly 300 years ago. Both reside on the sea and share a common maritime heritage. Both have seen activities like smuggling and privateers fighting the Spanish in the eighteenth century. Like colonial America, Englishmen remembered James Wimble of the *Revenge* privateer. He remained in American thought at least until the turn of the nineteenth century, another forgotten hero of another forgotten war. Still, Wilmington would not be here today if not for James Wimble nor without his bureaucratic connections to the sitting Southern Secretary of the American plantations. The duke of Newcastle aided his efforts nearly from the start.

Wimble did not originally come to America to help build Wilmington, but to pursue the life of a successful merchant. This attempted success, however, met too often with Spanish *guarda costas* who fought an undeclared war with English merchants in Caribbean waters. He repeatedly lost his ship and cargo and eventually turned privateer. Reputedly, that choice killed him.

Map historian William Cumming told the original tale of a heroic death of a privateer in service to his King, blasting at what remained of Spanish New World pride in the War of Jenkin's Ear. It seemed romantic and ideal, if brief. Few details remained of the extraordinary events when *Revenge*, wounded and damaged, chased down a final Spanish privateer near Cuba at the end of its career. A lone newspaper account, questionable at best, tells of that loss. North Carolina might have lost a maritime hero in the days before the American Revolution divided the British Empire. Americanized historiography since then did not include much in the way of British heroes. Still, James Wimble provided an historic tie to the earlier Atlantic community that then appreciated both. And, like that of Mark Twain's, the rumors of the end of Wimble's life as told by Cumming might have been an "exaggeration."<sup>2</sup>

Young James Wimble of Hastings dreamed of an exciting life in America. That life would impede his progress with hurricanes, Spanish privateers, and the careless bureaucracy of colonial officials. Still, he would eventually own property in Boston, Massachusetts, New Providence, Bahamas, and in North Carolina, both in Chowan Precinct and later in the Lower Cape Fear. He would also save the fledging town on the Cape Fear River that later became Wilmington, the most successful port known to North Carolina.

Since Wilmington served as the only valuable port and source of colonial income in North Carolina, Wimble, indeed, may have saved North Carolina as well. James Wimble's enormous contribution to North Carolina's history cannot be undone. Still, he meant a great deal more to the mother and siblings he left behind in Hastings. Moreover, his children remained in America and

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<sup>1</sup> John Griffin, *Proposals for the Relief and Support of Maimed, Aged, and Disabled Seamen, in the Merchants Service of Great Britain* (London, Eng.: Unknown Printer, 1745), 3.

<sup>2</sup> William P. Cumming, "The Turbulent Life of Captain James Wimble," *North Carolina Historical Review*, 46, January 1, 1969, 17-18; *Boston News-Letter* (Boston, MA), March 29, 1744; Issue: 2087; 2; *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* (London, England), Tuesday, July 14, 1741; Issue 2098.

further contributed to its history. Wimble's perseverance, strength, and sheer energy deserve some notice to modern readers of this state's history.

The excitement and opportunity of the West Indies trade beckoned to many young and adventurous spirits living on the shores of England. James Wimble, the eldest remaining male child of James and Ann Wimble of Hastings, constructed his first ship and left the Sussex coast in 1718 for greater adventures in America.<sup>3</sup> Soon, he discovered the value of Carolina naval products and began trading them amongst the islands in the Bahamas and Antigua.<sup>4</sup>

On November 22, 1721, Wimble left New Providence for Jamaica, carrying ballast in the sloop *Hard Times*, built 1719 in South Carolina. On July 23, 1722, he entered the Bahamas in the Bermuda-built sloop, *Bonetta* of Providence with "four [hogsheads] of Rum, Six barrels of Rice, two [barrels] of Tar, [and] One [barrel] of Bread Liver stock."<sup>5</sup> Wimble routinely hauled linseed oil, pork, earthenware, ambergris, iron pots and nails, orange peel, oysters, and passengers, all "lawfully imported," as he declared March 30, 1722.<sup>6</sup> Many of these products, in some way, involved the Carolina trade.

Wimble quickly expanded his trade from the Bahamas and purchased land in North Carolina by 1723. He applied for and obtained a grant for 640 acres on the "Scuppernong" River, in Tyrrell County, near present-day Columbia.<sup>7</sup> He purchased another 640 acres from Thomas Harvey that same year, obtained another grant of 530 acres in 1728, and 500 acres from John Porter in 1731. Wimble continued sailing between Boston, North and South Carolina, and the West Indies, carrying lumber and other naval stores to Charles Towne for overseas transfers.<sup>8</sup>

Boston held obvious attractions for merchant sea captain, James Wimble. While on one of many trips to that northern port, he fancied the daughter of a respectable Massachusetts weaver. Rebecca Waters, the daughter of William Waters and his second wife, Rebecca Worthylake, married Wimble on March 26, 1724.<sup>9</sup> Five days before Christmas in 1724, their son, James, was born, followed a year later by William. Family life inspired Wimble to make numerous profitable trips from Boston to North Carolina in the next three years.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>3</sup> "America and West Indies: April 1735," *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 41: 1734-1735* (1953), 402-412. <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>> (accessed: April 8, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Great Britain, Public Record Office, Naval office shipping lists for the West Indies (excluding Jamaica), 1678-1825 : [microform] in the Public Record Office, London (East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorkshire, England : EP Microform, [198-]).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> "Minutes of the North Carolina Governor's Council" (August 2, 1723), *Colonial Records*, 2: 494.

<sup>8</sup> Great Britain, Public Record Office, Naval Office shipping lists for South Carolina, 1716-1767: in the Public Record Office, London [microfilm: G798 Pu93] (East Ardsley, Eng.: Micro Methods, 1966), 5/508.

<sup>9</sup> Jordan Dodd, *Massachusetts Marriages, 1633-1850* (Provo, Utah: The Generations Network, Inc., 2005); Susan Augusta Smith, *Ancestors of Moses Belcher Bass : born in Boston, July 1735, died January 31, 1817 : also contains the ancestors of his two wives, Elizabeth Wimble and Margaret Sprague*. (Boston: unknown, 1896).

<sup>10</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, published as The Boston News-Letter (From Thursday January 13, to Thursday January 20, 1726; From Friday March 25, to Thursday March 31, 1726; From Thursday June 23, to Thursday June 30, 1726; From Thursday September 8, to Thursday September 15, 1726; From Thursday July 20, to Thursday July 27, 1727; From Thursday October 19, to Thursday October 26, 1727), Issue 1147: 2; Issue 1157: 4; Issue 1170: 2; Issue 1181: 2; Issue 30: 4; Issue 43: 2; *New-England Weekly Journal*, published as New England Weekly Journal (December 11, 1727), Issue XXXVIII: 2; *Boston*

The trouble began on a routine voyage to the West Indies. May 7, 1728, while bound for Jamaica “with produce of N. Carolina,” a Spanish privateer from Cuba wrested his ship and cargo off the island of Hispaniola. The governor of the Bahamas sent a man of war to demand reparations for fifteen different English vessels captured by the Spanish, one of which was Wimble’s. The Spanish governor refused to make reparations. Thomas Pelham-Holles, the duke of Newcastle argued his case to the Board that “Petitioner [James Wimble], who was born in Sussex [England] and lives at Boston” in 1728, lost a ship to the Spanish “off Hispaniola” and “is thus entirely ruined.”<sup>11</sup> They refused to help. Still, by 1730, the supposedly ailing mariner, James Wimble purchased another vessel and named it after his beloved wife, Rebecca. Newcastle often favored his Sussex free-holding constituents and probably helped Wimble financially.<sup>12</sup>

After Wimble gained the *Rebecca*, Woodes Rogers, governor of the Bahamas, allegedly commandeered his naval services to protect the salt mines at Exuma in 1732. A hurricane that August destroyed Wimble’s ship off Rum Key. James Wimble lost yet another ship on yet another government purpose for which Wimble desired compensation. Desiring to return to his family in Boston and without any resources, Wimble sold his slaves and Carolina lands to pay passage back to Rhode Island in August 1732.<sup>13</sup>

James Wimble again writes the duke of Newcastle, recently appointed to the position of Secretary of the Southern Department, administrator of the American colonies. True to his Sussex constituent, the duke of Newcastle repeatedly supported Wimble’s petitions and representations to the Board, who simply ignored the “illiterate” mariner. He did this despite the official refusal, discretely sidestepping Britain’s Board of Trade once again.<sup>14</sup>

Newcastle’s aid, of course, was politically-motivated. After Robert Walpole’s Excise Tax failure, the fellow Whig Newcastle needed the votes of freeholders like the Wimbles in his home county to win the Sussex Election of 1734.<sup>15</sup> Newcastle also needed James Wimble’s help in maintaining the future port of Wilmington in North Carolina, fighting for political survival against its rival, Brunswick Town across the Cape Fear River. Wimble’s arrival in April 1733 seemed fortuitous for all. James Wimble produced a preliminary map to advertise the new town by April 16, 1733 and sold his first Newton

*Gazette*, published as The Boston Gazette (From Monday March 28, to Monday April 4, 1726; From Monday September 26, to Monday October 3, 1726), Issue 331: 4; Issue 357: 2.

<sup>11</sup> “America and West Indies: August 1728, 1-15,” *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 36: 1728-1729* (1937), 166-184, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>> (accessed: March 13, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> “Journal, May 1738: Volume 47,” *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations, Volume 7: January 1735 - December 1741* (1930), 237-241, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>> (accessed: April 8, 2009); Ancestry.com. *Boston Births, 1700-1800* [database on-line] (Provo, UT: The Generations Network, Inc., 1997). Original data: Boston Registry Department. *Boston Births from A.D. 1700 to A.D. 1800* (Boston, MA: Rockwell & Churchill, 1894).

<sup>13</sup> Cumming, “Turbulent Life,” 9; “Minutes of the North Carolina Governor’s Council” (August 3, 1723), *Colonial Records of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina, 1972), 2: 494; “America and West Indies: August 1728, 1-15,” *Calendar of State Papers*.

<sup>14</sup> William P. Cumming, “The Turbulent Life of Captain James Wimble,” *North Carolina Historical Review*, 46, January 1, 1969, 9; “America and West Indies: August 1728, 1-15,” *Calendar of State Papers*; “Journal, May 1738: Volume 47,” *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations, Volume 7: January 1735 - December 1741* (1930), 237-241, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>> (accessed: April 8, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Basil Williams, “The Duke of Newcastle and the Election of 1734,” *English Historical Review*, Vol. 12, No. 47 (London, England: Oxford University Press, July 1897), 453.



(Wilmington) lot to mariner John Field of Great Britain the same day. Wimble arrived in the Cape Fear region, supported by Newcastle's mission, as a mariner without a ship. The sloop *Mulberry*, owned by Nathaniel Hall of Lewes, Delaware, did not become Wimble's charge until a week after Wimble made his map and acquired his Wilmington acreage. By May, Wimble arrived in Charles Towne harbor as master of the *Mulberry*, bound again for "Cape Fear."<sup>16</sup> The flamboyant Wimble sold town lots from his acreage while trading along the American and English coast as master of the *Mulberry*. Word traveled among merchants and mariners of the bustling new town and the opportunities newly available in the Lower Cape Fear. Immigration to North Carolina began to increase. Lot sales in the five years after 1734 wholly surpassed its rival, Brunswick Town's by 413 to 30. Wilmington became an unstoppable mercantile Mecca thanks to James Wimble.<sup>17</sup>

For James Wimble, however, Wilmington became a pyrrhic victory. His mother, Ann Wimble passed on May 23, 1734, just as her son's fortunes climaxed in North Carolina.<sup>18</sup> A weary James Wimble returned to his family in Boston. American shipping records do not record James Wimble's name for many years after her death. He briefly enjoyed the fruits of his town-building efforts, deriving a settled living as a distiller and owner of the Green Dragon Inn on Union Street.<sup>19</sup> He and Rebecca even entertained the wealthy father of a later revolutionary personality, Captain Benedict Arnold III.<sup>20</sup>

Thousands of miles away from his remaining family in Hastings, perhaps James Wimble longed for home. More so, legal battles with the Board of Trade continued over the loss of his ship *Rebecca* and required Wimble's active efforts lobbying the duke of Newcastle once again. He wrote to Newcastle, "[Y]e govennoor of N.o Carolina [Gabriel Johnston]...told me there being no place under his disposhall of profit therefore id rely on yr gracious favours.... [sic]"<sup>21</sup>

Wimble flattered Newcastle with his 1738 map of North Carolina. This map he dedicated to "His Grace Thomas Hollis Pelham Duke of Newcastle Principal Secretary of State and one of His Majesties most Honourable Privy Council," perhaps to encourage further aid.<sup>22</sup> Immediately, he voyaged to London to

<sup>16</sup> Great Britain, Naval Office shipping lists for South Carolina.

<sup>17</sup> Bradford Wood, *This Remote Part of the World: Regional Formation in Lower Cape Fear, North Carolina 1725-1775* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 20 and 69; Great Britain, Naval Office Shipping Lists for the West Indies; "America and West Indies: April 1735," *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 41: 1734-1735* (1953), 402-412, <<http://www.britisshistory.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=72782&strquery=wimble>> (Date accessed: April 8, 2009).

<sup>18</sup> Sussex Archaeological Society, *Sussex Archaeological Collections Relating to the History and Antiquities of the County Vol. XL* (Lewes, England: Farncombe and Company, Limited, 1896), 238.

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin Lynde, *The diaries of Benjamin Lynde and of Benjamin Lynde, Jr* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1880), 65.

<sup>20</sup> Report of the record commissioners of the city of Boston, Volume 13, Boston, MA Registry Department (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1885), 312.

<sup>21</sup> James Wimble, "Letter to duke of Newcastle" (July 10, 1736), quoted in: William P. Cumming, "Wimble's Maps and the Colonial Cartography of the North Carolina Coast," *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 46 (1969), 157-170.

<sup>22</sup> Boston Registry Department. *Boston Births from A.D. 1700 to A.D. 1800* (Boston, MA: Rockwell & Churchill, 1894); James Wimble, *Chart of his Majesties Province of North Carolina: To His Grace Thomas Hollis Pelham Duke of Newcastle Principal Secretary of State and one of His Majesties most Honourable Privy Council, &c. This Chart of his Majesties Province of North Carolina With a full & exact description of the Sea-coast, Latitudes, Capes, remarkable Inlets, Bars, Channels, Rivers, Creeks, Shoals, depth of Water, Ebbing & Flowing of the Tides, the generally Winds Setting of the Currents, Counties, Precints, Towns, Plantations, and leading Marks, with directions for all the navigable Inlets; are Carefully laid down and humbly dedicated, by Your Grace's most humble, most dutiful, & most Obedient Servant, James*

present his map and see Newcastle personally. Wimble needed to win Newcastle's favor, for the disposition of the Brigantine *Rebecca* still remained strong in Wimble's thoughts.<sup>23</sup>

Newcastle wrote letters of support for James Wimble, who made personal appearances in London while staying with Humphrey Jones at Red Lion Square.<sup>24</sup> Though Wimble officially fought until 1740, the Board had already made up their minds by 1738,

We have taken into our Consideration the Petition of James Wimble, late Master and principal Owner of the Rebecca Brigantine... We have attended frequently the said Master... he laid no evidence before us to show what share he had in the said brigantine [nor did it] appear to us from any Evidence or Papers produced by him that the Brigantine when lost, was upon your Majesty's Service.<sup>25</sup>

A flat refusal, however nicely phrased. Wimble lost a ship he named for his wife in government service yet could not convince the Board that he owned it. Still, Newcastle appears to have helped him despite the Board's decisions. Perhaps Wimble's lodging just around the corner from Newcastle's residence at Lincoln's Inn Fields further influenced the Southern Secretary.<sup>26</sup>

Assuredly, upon each refusal from the Board, Wimble somehow managed to get ahead. He acquired yet another ship, perhaps with his brother, Thomas' assistance as well. Soon, the brig *Penelope* "of London" belonged to James Wimble, who left Deal, Kent as her master on August 7, 1738. Wimble continued promoting and selling his North Carolina property while master of the *Penelope*. On October 19, 1739, he sold six lots on the east side of Cape Fear River to future planter William Lord, of St. Sepulchers, London.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, Britain's relations with Spain deteriorated since the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which gave England the right to sell or barter one shipload of African slaves to the Spanish West Indies annually. British ships had abused the privilege and smuggled regularly, to which Spain responded by sending out more *guardas costas* to intercept them. Due to growing hostilities between the two nations, these Spanish forces became overtly hostile, as in the case of another ship, *Rebecca* and her captain, Robert Jenkins in 1731. Jenkins lost an ear in that affair. Newcastle wrote to Benjamin Keene, ambassador to Spain, in 1733, "such enormities for the future... could not fail of bringing on a war...."<sup>28</sup>

Wimble - Published by William Mount and Thomas Page, 1738 (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Digital Collections, 2009), <<http://dc.lib.unc.edu>> (accessed January 17, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> William P. Cumming, "Wimble's Maps and the Colonial Cartography of the North Carolina Coast," *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 46 (1969), 157-170.

<sup>24</sup> James Wimble, "To the Rt Honorable, His Grace Duk New Castle" (October 28, 1737), Great Britain Public Record Office, National Archives, SP 36/43.

<sup>25</sup> Board of Trade and Plantations, "To the King's Most Excellent Majesty" (January 27, 1740), Great Britain Public Record Office, National Archives, SP 36/55.

<sup>26</sup> James Wimble, "To the Rt Honorable, His Grace Duk New Castle" (October 28, 1737), Great Britain Public Record Office, National Archives, SP 36/43.

<sup>27</sup> Admiralty, Secretary's Department. Miscellanea, "Pass number 2561 issued to brig PENELOPE of London [England], at Thames [River, England], seven (sic) tons, two guns, crew of 13, Jam[es] Wimble of London, master, for voyage to North Carolina." (ADM 7, selections, 1738), Box: Register of Passes. (ADM 7/82), Great Britain Public Record Office, National Archives; *Daily Post* (London, England), Wednesday, August 9, 1738; Issue 5901; "Carty vs. Lord" (1740), Records of Equity, Court of Chancery: Six Clerks Office: Pleadings 1714 to 1758; Diane Smith, compiler, *New Hanover Deeds: Books 'A & B', 1734-1741* (compiled October 1998), <<http://www.ncgenweb.us/newhanover/deeds/nhdeedab.htm>> (accessed October 17, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Pelham-Holles, quoted from *Cambridge Modern History*, A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero, and Stanley Leathes, eds. (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1909.), 65.

Neither nation deserved the blame more than the other, but when Jenkins presented his severed ear in a 1738 session of Parliament, it elicited volumes of outrage that precipitated Britain's involvement in that war.<sup>29</sup>

First, negotiations ensued, to which Spain made an uncharacteristic admission, that they owed Britain £95,000 for damages that Spanish vessels inflicted on theirs. The South Seas Company, however, had not been included in those negotiations and they claimed a large sum from Spain as well. Spain conversely demanded £68,000 from the British South Seas company. Operating independently of Britain, vessels owned by the company continued their deprivations upon Spanish shipping, putting the provisions of Utrecht in jeopardy. By October 1739, Spanish authorities refused to pay the £95,000 to England and England recalled Ambassador Keene from Madrid. The War of Jenkins' Ear began. It became a part of the larger European affair, King George's War or War of Austrian Succession from 1740-1748.<sup>30</sup>

Newcastle's bureaucratic maneuvers could not salve the misfortunes of war, however, and Wimble's fortunes again came to an abrupt yet, timely halt. In March 1740, the crew of the *Penelope* sought medical attention at Greenwich Hospital on the Thames. Wimble had lost another ship to Spanish attack, this time while on the verge of war. On the same day that the Greenwich account was recorded, the Board of Trade finalized a refusal of his case, salt in the wound for Wimble. He had had enough. As a good Englishman, he blamed only Spain's impropriety. They had plagued his efforts since he first arrived in the West Indies in 1718. For more than twenty years, he suffered the loss of merchandise, crew, and at least eight ships because of Spanish privateers and *guarda costas*.<sup>31</sup>

That September, Wimble obtained a Letter of Marque and outfitted a privateer, with Newcastle's help, and named it *Revenge*.<sup>32</sup> His merchant days were over and Britain needed all the experienced captains they could find. Newcastle found it a simple matter to again aid James Wimble in his eagerness to fight for Britain.

The war effort since October 1739 did not require covert transactions of patronage as before. Britain routinely refitted Spanish prizes as privateers. State papers in British archives show that two ships named *St. Joseph* and *St. Jago*, captured off Faro, Portugal, attracted the attention of Newcastle late in 1739. Later brought to Exeter, then to Woolwich, *St. Joseph* contained a large amount of gold and jewels, five boxes of which Newcastle ordered deposited in the Bank of England, under grenadier guard. Newcastle debated with the Treasury on whether to restore that fourth-rate vessel to Portugal, but decided against it. Charles Compton, the envoy to Portugal, inferred the "need for the

<sup>29</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero, and Stanley Leathes, eds. (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1909.), 65-8.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> "Extract from accounts of the collector of the Greenwich Hospital sixpenny duty: Penelope, James Wimble, master, of Cape "Fare" trade. 27 Mar.," Admiralty, Greenwich Hospital, Accounts, Various (ADM 68/89-143, 194-204, selections), Names of Ships and Amounts Paid for Greenwich Hospital Duty (ADM 68/197), Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives*, copy at North Carolina Department of Archives and History (72.1713.2); "Journal, March 1740: Volume 48," *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations, Volume 7: January 1735 - December 1741* (1930), 321-326, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>> (accessed: April 9, 2009).

<sup>32</sup> James Wimble, "Declaration by [James] Wimble, [captain of REVENGE, privateer, sent to Thomas Corbett, secretary to Admiralty Board.] 18 Sep." (September 18, 1740), Admiralty, Secretary's Department, In Letters (ADM 1, selections), Letters from Doctors' Commons (ADM 1/3878), Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives*, copy at North Carolina Department of Archives and History (72.1713.2).

Royal Navy to provide convoy for the trade to Oporto.”<sup>33</sup> He wanted to refit both ships. Searchers stripped both ships clean of any treasure and Newcastle ordered the refit.<sup>34</sup>

*St. Jago*, the smaller sixth-rate craft, seemed ideal for service as a privateer, as inferred by Charles Carkesse at the Treasury Board to Newcastle. Newcastle, dealing with both of these ships, agreed. A Treasury Warrant for March 10, 1740 released Francis de Pumereco, late Master of the “St. Joseph” brig, then in Exeter. No other ships held at Woolwich demanded Newcastle’s attention at the time. Indeed, timing proved which one of these Spanish vessels became Wimble’s privateer. *St. Joseph* still remained at the Woolwich Royal Navy Yard after records detail *Revenge’s* refit. That refit included twenty carriage and forty swivel guns, comparable to *St. Jago’s* sixth-rate probable size, and Wimble took charge of the ship in London, immediately after the refit that September. No references to *St. Jago* exist after those events.<sup>35</sup>

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* printed details from London, England that “Several eminent Merchants [actually, two: John James Stephens and Nicholas Bell] of this city” outfitted a privateer for James Wimble.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, a later ship’s trumpeter, James Wyatt tells that Captain Wimble sent 2nd-Lieut. William Warren [Richardson] to London to “acquaint the Owners with our Success” in taking their recent prize, presumably these owners were Stephens and Bell.<sup>37</sup> As demonstrated, the evidence suggests that *St. Jago* became *Revenge*. The duke of Newcastle directed the unloading of its cargo and the appointees of its sale in Woolwich. Thus, the ship fell into Wimble’s hands following provisioning by Stephens and Bell, under Newcastle’s direction.

James Wimble determined to do severe damage to the Spanish now that he served Britain as an official privateer with Letter of Marque in hand. Another

<sup>33</sup> Charles Compton, “Charles Compton to Duke of Newcastle” (Lisbon: January 16, 1740) Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives, State Papers SP 89/40*, <<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>> (accessed October 9, 2010).

<sup>34</sup> “Charles Compton to Duke of Newcastle” (January 16, 1740); Josiah Burchett (December 23, 1740), Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives, Admiralty Records, ADM 354/113/205*, <<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>> (accessed October 9, 2010); “Warrants, Letters, etc.: 1740, January-March,” *Calendar of Treasury Books and Papers, Volume 4: 1739-1741* (1901), 291-306, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk>> (accessed: 12 October 2010); “Request for directions regarding the fitting of the St. Joseph Prize” and “Dimensions of the St. Joseph Prize and the names of the merchant builders who could dock her,” Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives, Admiralty Records, ADM 106/929/150, ADM 106/929/173*.

<sup>35</sup> James Wimble, “For Thomas Corbett Esq., Secretary of ye Admiralty,” Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives, ADM 1/3878*, copy at North Carolina Department of Archives and History (72.1713.2); “Treasury Books and Papers: November 1739,” *Calendar of Treasury Books and Papers, Volume 4: 1739-1741* (1901), 60-67, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk>> (accessed: October 11, 2010).

<sup>36</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), November 20, 1740, Issue: 623: 1; Inclusion: James Wimble, “For Thomas Corbett Esq., Secretary of ye Admiralty,” Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives, ADM 1/3878*, copy at North Carolina Department of Archives and History (72.1713.2).

<sup>37</sup> James Wyatt, *The life and surprizing adventures of James Wyatt, born near Exeter, in Devonshire, in the year 1707. Containing. I. His entering himself Trumpeter on board the Revenge Privateer, Capt. James Wimble, May 29, 1741. II. An Account of their Cruize; and of his being taken Prisoner by the Spaniards; with his wonderful Deliverance from Death. III. The Manner of his escaping from the Spaniards, with Capt. Robert Winter and five others. IV. How they were drove by contrary Winds on the Coast of Barbary; where they were taken Prisoners by the Moors, and the Hardships they endur’d among the Insidels. With the Manner of his Deliverance, and his Arrival safe in England after various Vicissitudes of Fortune. Written by himself. Adorn’d with copper plates* (London, Eng.: printed and sold by E. Duncomb, in Butcherhall-Lane; T. Taylor, at the Meuse Back-Gate; and E. Cook, at the Royal-Exchange, 1748), 11.

letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty expressed James Wimble's angry sentiments in regards to Britain's traditional enemy. Where once he carried lumber, staves, barrels of rice, and English books, he now loaded for more than simple naval pursuits;

*... his Ship is called the Revenge... burthen of about two hundred Tons... she carries twenty Carriage and forty Swivel guns, one hundred and fifty Men, one hundred and seventy small arms, one hundred and seventy Cutlasses, thirty Barrels of powder, Sixty rounds of great [grape] shot and about a thousand weight of small... victuald for six Months, has two Suits of Sails, five anchors, five Cables, and about a thousand weight of spare Cordage...<sup>38</sup>*

*Revenge* could handle almost any Spanish privateer. Charles Pinfold Jr. listed James Sterling as 1<sup>st</sup>-Lieutenant; William Richardson, 2<sup>nd</sup>-Lieutenant; George Hume, Gunner; John Turner, Boatswain; James Browne, Carpenter; George Groves, Cook; and John Stephens, Surgeon. The *American Weekly Mercury* of May 15, 1741 announced Wimble's difficulties and depravations from the Spanish ever since arriving in American waters as a young mariner. The Pennsylvania newspaper stated that Wimble, now a seasoned fighter, "[was] to proceed with all possible expedition" and wished him every success.<sup>39</sup>

Two authors mentioned in two almost identical accounts added great detail to James Wimble's initial foray. James Wyatt and James Parry enlisted at Woolwich as well, just prior to the launching. They both state that they came aboard on May 29, 1741, probably just prior to leaving port on the Thames. Snippets of Wimble's first voyage as a privateer come through these accounts.

Sailing down the river to cannon salutes "of the Men at War at Deptford," *Revenge* rounded the Kent coast to Deal, where "we set our Agent ashore and saluted him with Seven Guns...."<sup>40</sup> Repeated visits to Deal perhaps involved Wimble's brother, Thomas, Excise officer for Kent under ex-mayor of Hastings, John Collier.<sup>41</sup>

They left the "Hope" and passed the Downs, a chain of chalk hills that run along the south coast behind Dover towards Portsmouth. *Revenge* headed for Hastings, arriving by July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Wyatt stated, "There the Captain [Wimble] went ashore to see some of his friends...."<sup>42</sup> Journal statements such as these assure historical accuracy, for Wimble was born and raised in Hastings, leaving for America in 1718 from there. He had family and friends in that Sussex town which confirms this James Wimble as the same man that recently saved Wilmington, North Carolina.

Actually, these two journals came from the same source. The first, published in 1748 by James Wyatt, who signed aboard *Revenge* as "trumpeter" on May 29, 1741, tells almost precisely the same account as the second. This second account of "Master at Arms," James Parry was "borrowed" from Wyatt's

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<sup>38</sup>James Wimble, "For Thomas Corbett Esq., Secretary of ye Admiralty," Great Britain, *British Public Record Office, National Archives*, ADM.1./3878, copy at North Carolina Department of Archives and History (72.1713.2).

<sup>39</sup> *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), (From Thursday July 16, to Thursday July 23, 1741), Issue: 1125: 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*; Wyatt, 9.

<sup>41</sup> Sussex Archaeological Society, *Sussex Archaeological Collections Relating to the History and Antiquities of the County Vol. XLV* (Lewes, England: Farncombe and Company, Limited, 1902), 75.

<sup>42</sup> Wyatt, 10.

account. Parry's amended version was published in 1770, twenty-nine years after his first edition which didn't mention Wimble at all. These accounts state the same details, verbatim, with the exception of a reversal of the hero's names. Wyatt mentioned Parry, "Late Organist of Ross in Hertfordshire" and his book, subtitled "Memoirs of His Life and Amours."<sup>43</sup> Parry's 1741 first edition tells nothing of *Revenge's* fight against the Spanish with James Wimble and was published too early. Parry's full title indicates that he wrote his first edition before Wyatt wrote his and his second edition, in 1770, included Wyatt's detail. Even though two accounts exist, they vary only with respect to Wyatt's and Parry's rolls as the main character. The dates match well with other substantial records. Therefore, Wyatt's account, as the first mentioning Wimble's mission, takes precedence for the purposes of this study and can be considered somewhat reliable, pardoning his lack of memory with names.<sup>44</sup>

Both of these men mention a difficult encounter between them. Wyatt had an argument with Parry, to which Parry challenged Wyatt. Then, Parry tried to prevent Wyatt from leaving the *Revenge* (who had permission), and even fired on him with a musket, hitting the oar handle of the shore boat. According to both accounts, *Revenge* stopped first at Hastings immediately after leaving Deal, on July 3, 1741. In a few days, Wimble's crew spotted three vessels near the coast of France and pursued them, to find two French fishermen and one fully-laden Spanish ship which they returned to Plymouth as a prize. They immediately dispatched 2<sup>nd</sup>-lieutenant, William Warren [Richardson] to London to inform the owners, Stephens and Bell of their success.

While they awaited his return with Chief Agent Parker and a £300 loan on the prize money, Wimble's ship and crew enjoyed Plymouth's hospitality. Wyatt's narrative describes visiting his wife while Parry's involved a tour of Plymouth. Only a minor variation, both describe the drowning of a member of the crew in the Cattewater (part of Plymouth Harbor) and his funeral. The crew members at this funeral display the customary regalia attributed to military forces of the day. Wyatt and Perry relate that "Every one had a Pair of Pistols stuck in his belt, a Hanger by his Side, and there were Swords crossed on the Coffin-lid."<sup>45</sup>

James Wimble's *Revenge* and crew sailed from Plymouth harbor on August 2, 1741 and passed the Eddystone lighthouse to patrol the Spanish coast. In total, Wimble found possibly three different Swedish ships and returned them all to Britain as prizes. Admiralty records show the *Humility of Stockholm*, 300 tons, laden with wine, oil, almonds, Castille soap, fruits, and war materiel. The war materiel made this ship a foe in British eyes. Bureaucratic negotiations, therefore, with Count Wasenberg, Secretary from the King of Sweden, lasted for months. *Humility*, master John Westman, remained detained at Plymouth by mid-November. *Krimihl*, however, possessed no contraband and elicited a

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<sup>43</sup> James Parry, *The true Anti-Pamela: or memoirs of Mr. James Parry, Late Organist of Ross in Herefordshire. In which are inserted, his amours with the celebrated Miss - of Monmouthshire. Written by himself. In two parts complete. Part I. Memoirs of his Life and Amours. Part II. A journal of his Adventures in a cruise against the Spaniards, on board the Revenge privateer, Capt. Wimble. With his Genuine Letters of Love and Gallantry. In two volumes, Vol. 2.* (London, Eng.: printed for J. Lever, Bookseller. Stationer and Printseller, at Little Moorgace, near Moorfields, 1770).

<sup>44</sup> Wyatt; James Parry, *The true Anti-Pamela: or memoirs of Mr. James Parry, Late Organist of Ross in Herefordshire. In which are inserted, his amours with the celebrated Miss - of Monmouthshire. Written by himself. Memoirs of his Life and Amours. With his Genuine Letters of Love and Gallantry. In two volumes. Vol. 2.* (London, Eng.: Printer unknown, 1741).

<sup>45</sup> Wyatt, 9; Parry, 2: 98.

heated debate, which included the duke of Newcastle. Newcastle deftly suggested that "particular Care [should be taken] that all persons concerned in the Swedish Ship, may have an opportunity of appearing at the Time of Trial & make their defense."<sup>46</sup>

James Wyatt mentioned possibly a third Swedish vessel, which Wimble ordered 1<sup>st</sup>-Lieut. Davis to carry to Cape Fear, perhaps in reserve for his own use.<sup>47</sup> Undoubtedly, Wimble sensed the diplomatic trouble that Swedish prizes caused Newcastle and other British officials. Still, this vessel may have been *Krimihl*. Newspaper accounts conflict with Wyatt's account and tell of 1<sup>st</sup>-Lieut. Davis arriving from the coast of Cornwall with a Swedish prize, which he took into Plymouth.<sup>48</sup>

After these events in the English Channel, Wimble and crew continued to patrol west along the Spanish coast, were resupplied in Lisbon, sailed off Oporto, patrolled the Bay of Cadiz, and the West African coast until arriving in Santa Cruz. There, a group of Jews and Moors from Spain entertained them. Happily, Wyatt indicates that these emigrants had no love for the Spanish king.<sup>49</sup>

From here, *Revenge* made an easy jump west to the Spanish islands of the Canaries. There, they cruised past Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, and Grand Canary Island until they arrived at Point Niger. They attempted to raid Tenerife at the port of La Oratavio, failed, and several of the landing party died. Spaniards captured James Wyatt on September 12, 1741, ending his detailed account of the voyage. Obviously, Parry's ends here as well.<sup>50</sup>

Newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic cheered on Captain Wimble's *Revenge* as it continued against the Spanish in the open Atlantic. *Daily Post* of London announced on October 27, 1741, that Wimble had captured *William and Mary*, laden with Spanish iron. By this time, *Revenge* had left the Canary Islands and traveled across the Atlantic to the West Indies. There Wimble and crew would stay for almost a year, based in New Providence, in the midst of Spanish *guardas costas* activity. The *Boston Post-Boy* of Massachusetts told of Wimble's engagement for several hours, taking two ships as prize on December 14th. The *Boston Evening-Post* of the same town reported the loss of Wimble's ship the following March 15, 1742.<sup>51</sup>

Newspapers in the eighteenth century, however, obtained their news only as fast as ships could travel and the story often developed errors along the way. According to newspapers, he lost his first *Revenge* in the December 1741 battle off "Atling's Key" (Acklin Key). According to Wimble's own words to Lord Wilmington, the ship grounded three leagues west of "Atwood's Keys" because of navigation error at night. Apparently, the man on watch "alter'd his course 3

<sup>46</sup> Henry Penrice, "[Doctors Commons], H[enry] Penrice, [judge of High Court of Admiralty] to "Sir." 6 Aug." (August 6, 1741) Great Britain, *British Public Record Office*, National Archives, ADM.1./3878, copy at North Carolina Department of Archives and History (72.1711.1-3); "Warrants, Letters, etc.: 1741, October-December," *Calendar of Treasury Books and Papers, Volume 4: 1739-1741* (1901), 552-561, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>> (accessed: October 11, 2010).

<sup>47</sup> First Lieutenant of *Revenge* was given as "James Sterling" in September 1740. Still, later records list Davis as the prize commander. Wyatt may have gotten the rank wrong or Davis became First Lieutenant before this incident.

<sup>48</sup> *Daily Post* (London, England), Tuesday, October 27, 1741; Issue 6908.

<sup>49</sup> Wyatt, 20-50.

<sup>50</sup> Wyatt, 20-50.

<sup>51</sup> *Daily Post* (London, England), Tuesday, October 27, 1741; Issue 6908; *Boston Post-Boy* (Boston, MA), May 3, 1742, Issue: 353: 3.

points Easterly from Orders....” Still, Wimble’s prize money so far gave him the ability to obtain another vessel in New Providence to continue the fight.<sup>52</sup>

Spanish *guardas costas* could be just as deadly as the unpredictable shoals of the Outer Banks. Historians Sandra Riley and Thelma Peters tell of mariner/geographer John Crowley, of *H.M.S. Blandford*, offering advice in 1739 to the king about Spanish tactics in the Bahamas. According to Crowley, the Spanish chose two hiding places near New Providence to intercept British ships. At “Hole in the Wall,” secluded *guardas costas* awaited enemy shipping through the Northeast channel seaside, between Abaco and Eleuthera. Memory Rock off West End, Grand Bahama gave British vessels some difficulty near the Gulf of Florida. These two locations afforded *guardas costas* a perfect vantage point with which to interrupt British traffic through the Bahamas and probably saw the majority of the action in this war. For the most part, Wimble, like most British captains, avoided these locations when alone.<sup>53</sup>

A report from Charles Towne, South Carolina concerning the events of April 1742, told that Wimble recently left New Providence [Bahamas] in concert with Capt. Charles Davidson after purchasing the prize ship, *St. Antonio*. Capt. Thomas Frankland of *H.M.S. Rose* had recently captured this Spanish privateer. Furthermore, the *American Weekly Mercury* reported in September, 1742 that “Capt. James Wimble in the *San Antonio* privateer,” had recently been attacked by a pair of Spanish ships.<sup>54</sup> Wimble and Davidson had to cruise through the “Hole in the Wall” to pass north from New Providence, one of the favorite Spanish hiding places.

Later reports and shipping records show that Wimble renamed this *St. Antonio* to *Revenge* after the purchase in New Providence. Wimble entered the Bahamas in this *Revenge* late in 1742 and shipping records show James Wimble as the owner and that his ship was originally condemned in New Providence on November 28, 1741. The records also show old habits die hard with James Wimble, as he doubled as a merchant, carrying a cargo of cotton, limes, and oranges.<sup>55</sup>

Shipping in the Caribbean could be problematic enough even when not at war. The tropical atmosphere and the weather constantly plagued European crews. *American Weekly Mercury* reported in September 1741 that four 70-gun ships and seven 60-gun vessels lay inert due to the loss of “one half of their Men by Sickness.”<sup>56</sup> The same article tells that, in June, 1741, a large British ship carrying 260 barrels of gunpowder suddenly blew up after being struck by lightning. Only the heartiest of men survived, especially if injured.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *The Manuscripts of the Marquess Townshend*, Historical Manuscripts Commission Eleventh Report, Appendix IV (London, Eng.: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 304-5.

<sup>53</sup> Sandra Riley and Thelma Peters, *Homeward Bound: A History of the Bahama Islands to 1850 with a Definitive Study of Abaco in the American Loyalist Plantation Period* (Miami, Fl.: Riley Hall, 2000), 88; “Will of John Crowley, Mariner now belonging to His Majesty’s Ship *Blandford*” (17 January 1741), Prerogative Court of Canterbury and related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers, *National Archives* (PROB 11/707).

<sup>54</sup> *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), November 18 – December 2, 1742, Issue: 1195.4.

<sup>55</sup> Great Britain. Public Record Office, Naval office shipping lists for the West Indies (excluding Jamaica), 1678-1825 : [microform] in the Public Record Office, London (East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorkshire, England : EP Microform, [198-]).

<sup>56</sup> *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Thursday October 15, to Thursday October 22, 1741; Issue: 1138: 2.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*



James Wimble suffered a serious battle injury and lost his second *Revenge* after its purchase only a few months earlier. Prior to May 21, 1742, he battled a 60-gun Spanish Man of War while in consort with *St. Andrews* privateer, under the before-mentioned Capt. Davidson of Newport, Rhode Island. In a letter, Wimble stated:

*we met with a Spanish ship from Cales to the Havana mounting thirty guns and 250 men and passengers. I lay under her stern for two howers and my concert [Capt. Davidson] not coming up and at last having the misfortune to receive a chain shot from the ship's stern chace guns which took my left arm off, about 5 inches from my body, not acquainting my people of this for some time being afraid of discouraging them, loosing a great deal of blood I fell down upon one of the guns and being taken up and carried down to my surgeon [the lieutenant dropped off from the ship's stern to speak with Davidson who] thought proper to quit the ship.... [sic]<sup>58</sup>*

*Revenge* lost a topmast and bowsprit and suffered severe damage in the rigging. This unfortunate event prevented the taking of the Spaniard. Davidson had Wimble's unconscious body carried aboard *St. Andrews* and the crew abandoned *Revenge*.

A different approach for Wimble, this letter he wrote to Lord Wilmington and not the duke of Newcastle. While recuperating from his wound, Wimble sought fresh patronage from the recent namesake of North Carolina's new town on the Cape Fear River. Wimble wrote, "If His Majesty would trust me with a 20 Gun Ship the Spaniards should well pay for it."<sup>59</sup> He may have been aware of Newcastle's financial troubles of late and the awkward chances of obtaining the needed cash from him. Historian Ray A. Kelch wrote the *Duke Without Money*, famously illustrating Newcastle's renowned spending habits.<sup>60</sup>

The impetuous Wimble needed the ship right away. After only four months (a short time from which to recuperate) Captain Wimble had another *Revenge* and closely engaged a Spanish privateer (within thirty yards) while holding twenty-three Spanish prisoners through the old Straits of Bahama. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported September 13<sup>th</sup> that the Spaniard attempted to board them, which would be highly undesirable with prisoners on board. A fortunate shot from *Revenge*, however, destroyed the Spaniard's rigging, severing the boom and scattering the topsail and other sails upon the quarterdeck. The Spaniard "Thus muzzl'd," the crew of *Revenge* killed twenty of their crew, including the captain.<sup>61</sup> Having done enough damage, Captain Wimble allowed their opponent to sail away, desiring not to complicate his difficult situation with enemy prisoners still on board. *Revenge* took about 120

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<sup>58</sup> *The Manuscripts of the Marquess Townshend*, Historical Manuscripts Commission Eleventh Report, Appendix IV (London, Eng.: Her Majesty's Stationary Office by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 304-5; *Boston News-Letter* (Boston, MA), From Thursday May 20, to Thursday May 27, 1742, Issue: 1992: 1.

<sup>59</sup> *The Manuscripts of the Marquess Townshend*, Historical Manuscripts Commission Eleventh Report, Appendix IV (London, Eng.: Her Majesty's Stationary Office by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 304-5.

<sup>60</sup> *The Manuscripts of the Marquess Townshend*, Historical Manuscripts Commission Eleventh Report, Appendix IV (London, Eng.: Her Majesty's Stationary Office by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1887), 304-5; *Daily Post* (London, England), Tuesday, October 27, 1741; Issue 6908; *Boston Post-Boy* (Boston, MA), December 14, 1741; Issue: 371: 2; *Boston Evening-Post* (Boston, MA), March 15, 1742; Issue: 345: 1; Ray A. Kelch, *Newcastle: A Duke Without Money* (London, Eng.: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974).

<sup>61</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), September 16, 1742; Issue: 718: 2.

shot in the mast and rigging, had most of her gun-tackle and blocks destroyed, and put in to New Providence for repairs. Even though they lacked the proper crew, not one hand died in that battle. The *Boston Evening-Post* tells the same account, with fewer prisoners and guns. It adds, however, that the next day, they picked up a prize, added guns and men to the ship, and then proceeded to sink seven sloops and carry one into New Providence. There, they refitted as indicated by the *Boston Post-Boy*. Each hand of *Revenge* collected 150 pieces of eight prize money. By October, a refitted *Revenge* sailed into Charles Towne. Variations in number of guns reported in newspapers had as much to do with acts of prize transfers like these as with misreporting. *Revenge*, as with most privateers, armed their prize vessels, transferring crew and weapons to continue the fight, stronger in the number of vessels used. This increased tactical advantage. More cannon would be picked up later.<sup>62</sup>

Wimble's *Revenge* proceeded to Cape Fear to pick up hands, but contrary winds prevented this. Instead, the ship arrived in Newport, Rhode Island by January 1743.<sup>63</sup> Wimble joined forces with James Allen of Newport, Rhode Island, captain of another *Revenge* in March and, together, they dealt a serious blow to Spain that spring in the Bahama Channel. On April 18, 1743, Wimble and Allen chased a frigate of 240 tons, *Angola*, in sight of Morro Castle, Havanna, 8-10 leagues east of that shore. They fought for an hour and a half until *Angola* struck her colors. It happened that this vessel once belonged to the British until captured by the Spanish. British prisoners, including the former master, were on board as well. When Wimble and Allen recaptured her, she carried tons of sugar, molasses, ginger, elephant's teeth, bags of cotton, and war materiel. Wimble and Allen carried her into Newport to be condemned.<sup>64</sup>

Legalities hampered proceedings on this prize. *Angola*, an English ship, captured by a Spanish privateer, sailed en route to Baracoa to be processed by a Spanish court when intercepted by the two *Revenues*. Therefore, when Wimble and Allen recaptured *Angola* before it reached Baracoa, the vessel could not be considered a lawful prize because it had not yet changed ownership. The Rhode Island Vice-Admiralty Court convened on May 27, 1743 to decide the disposition of that ship. Judges took depositions of Phillip De Arrieta, master of *Angola*, Antonio Rodriguez, and Cayetano Ramos of the twenty-four Spanish prisoners. Hon. Judge John Gidley also interviewed several of the English crew taken prisoner by the Spanish as well as William Richardson, 2<sup>nd</sup>-Lieut. (noted variously as 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the accounts) of Wimble's *Revenge*. Gidley found in favor of Allen and Wimble and the court allowed for double payment of the prize money.<sup>65</sup>

The loss of this rich cargo and the English recapture of their ship and crew angered the Spanish in Havana. They responded by outfitting two privateers charged specifically with destroying the privateers *Revenge*. Despite their determination, the specifically-charged privateers failed. Captain Frankland of *H.M.S. Rose* intercepted them on the Florida coast. While the British took one ship in tow to Charles Towne, they left the other at the bottom of Matanzas Bay.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*: .*Boston Evening-Post* (Boston, MA), November 29, 1742, Issue: 382: 1; *Boston Post-Boy* (Boston, MA), November 15, 1742, Issue: 413: 2.

<sup>63</sup> *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), March 10, to March 16, 1742-3, Issue: 1210: 3.

<sup>64</sup> Howard M. Chapin, *Rhode Island privateers in King George's war, 1739-1748* (Providence, R.I.: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1926), 53-54.

<sup>65</sup> Howard M. Chapin, *Rhode Island privateers in King George's war, 1739-1748* (Providence, R.I.: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1926), 55.

Inured at the risk of one of their own, the crew of *Rose* made sure the Spanish crew failed to swim to shore, “a noble dish for such Fish as love Spanish Carcasses.”<sup>66</sup>

As a privateer in the War of Jenkin’s Ear, James Wimble finally proved his worth to the Board of Trade, the duke of Newcastle, and to Britain. Wimble’s past business acumen faded in the swirling smoke of the cannon, frustrating merchants like Robert Pringle in Charles Towne, having loaned an unpaid sum to refit Wimble’s *Revenge*.<sup>67</sup> James Wimble was too busy pounding the Spanish to repay a loan. Numerous contemporary accounts detail Wimble’s feverish exploits during the war with Spain.<sup>68</sup> William Cumming’s “The Turbulent Life of Captain James Wimble” tells of the loss of his left arm, his first and second ships, and of possibly a fourth *Revenge* near Cuba in 1744.<sup>69</sup> No one more deserved his vengeance upon the Spanish or recognition of his efforts and hardships.

Wimble would persevere, “unable to believe that the royal government would not give him his due.”<sup>70</sup> According to Wimble biographer William P. Cumming, with one arm remaining, “Capt. James Wimble of the *Revenge* Privateer,” famous co-founder of Wilmington, North Carolina, faded into history after pursuing a final Spanish privateer in the Florida Keys.<sup>71</sup> Still, Cumming did not realize that James Wimble and the crew of *Revenge* indeed survived that 1744 encounter near Cuba.

In London, in the year 1745, the year following Wimble’s fight with the “final” Spanish privateer, publishers printed a pamphlet from mariner John Griffin that told of Wimble’s survival. This pamphlet informed that *Revenge*’s crew raised £328 13s for “the Relief of Decay’d Mariners and Seamen in the Merchant’s Service of Great Britain.”<sup>72</sup> Listing all of the subscribing masters, “James Wimble, at present of London” appears on the second page of the list.<sup>73</sup> Records at the National Archives in Britain also show James Wimble, “timber merchant of London” and his brother, Thomas Wimble, “of the timber trade,” in Deal, Kent.<sup>74</sup>

Closest to his brother, Thomas, James Wimble based himself in London for the war years of 1740-1745 near his family’s English home. While he lived most of his time away from Boston, his children lived American lives. Newcastle and Wimble’s brother could best help James Wimble’s political endeavors and that

<sup>66</sup> *Boston Evening-Post*, published as *Boston Evening Post* (June 20, 1743), Issue: 411: 2.

<sup>67</sup> Swanson, Carl E., *Predators and Prizes: American Privateering and Imperial Warfare, 1739-1748* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 212.

<sup>68</sup> *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* (London, England), Tuesday, July 14, 1741; Issue 2098; *Common Sense or The Englishman’s Journal* (London, England), Saturday, September 6, 1740; Issue 187; *London Evening Post* (London, England), Thursday, September 17, 1741; Issue 2162; *Country Journal or The Craftsman* (London, England), Saturday, August 14, 1742; Issue 841; *London Evening Post* (London, England), Thursday, April 25, 1745; Issue 2726; *Penny London Post or The Morning Advertiser* (London, England), Wednesday, December 2, 1747; Issue 716.

<sup>69</sup> Cumming, “Turbulent Life,” 17-8; *Boston News-Letter* (Boston, MA), March 29, 1744; Issue: 2087: 2; *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* (London, England), Tuesday, July 14, 1741; Issue 2098.

<sup>70</sup> William P. Cumming, “The Turbulent Life of Captain James Wimble,” *North Carolina Historical Review*, 46, January 1, 1969, 18.

<sup>71</sup> Cumming, “Turbulent Life,” 17-8; *Boston News-Letter* (Boston, MA), March 29, 1744; Issue: 2087: 2; *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* (London, England), Tuesday, July 14, 1741; Issue 2098.

<sup>72</sup> John Griffin, *Proposals for the relief and support of maimed, aged, and disabled seamen, in the merchants service of Great Britain. Humbly offer’d to all Lovers of their Country, and to all true Friends to Trade and Navigation* By John Griffin, Mariner (London, Eng.: [s.n.], 1745), 23-5.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> National Archives refs

fact drew his attention throughout the war. Perhaps the damage to his merchant's reputation encouraged him to remain afterwards. Robert Pringle continued searching for repayment of Wimble's loan in the Caribbean.

James Wimble lived the remainder of his life, possibly in London. Still, no known grave for him has been found in the family cemetery at All Saints Church in Hastings or elsewhere. He could just as easily have died in America, after possibly returning to his family, one son of whom followed in a mariner's footsteps as master of the sloop *Stamford*, based in Boston. That son, William Wimble even lived a short time on the "Wimble Tract" in the new town of Wilmington, North Carolina, a town that his father helped to build.<sup>75</sup>

History may never fully understand the extent of Newcastle's contribution in Wimble's regard whereas his extensive support at the Board of Trade remains quite obvious. James Wimble's difficulties with the Board of Trade, stemmed perhaps from his "illiterate" letters that supposedly displayed a gentleman without education. However, as Wimble family historian Paul Collins noted, by viewing the handwriting on Wimble's 1733 Cape Fear sketch, "no one can say that James Wimble was completely bereft of an education."<sup>76</sup> British and American records speak of a man that dealt with bureaucratic delays, great losses, and intermittent successes. Wimble gave his most robust efforts to preserve his dignity and for his beloved Britain. James Wyatt and James Parry published nine separate editions of the same account of Wimble's *Revenge* in London. It was well read for that long. Britain loved him back.

James Wimble had known prosperity, thanks in part to Thomas Pelham-Holles' aid and support. Yet, he suffered too, as often as twelve times taken "by ye Spanish," eight as merchant and four times as a privateer.<sup>77</sup> He also lost an arm in battle. Still, his contributions far outweigh his misfortunes. Wilmington, North Carolina has greatly prospered on naval stores ever since James Wimble's 1733 influence. His merchant experience, his sketch of the Lower Cape Fear, and his final map of North Carolina are significant contributions to the history of the whole state. Historian Alan D. Watson intuited, "Wimble, an enterprising Englishman, no doubt was the prime instigator of the new town."<sup>78</sup> Still, his only enduring legacy on either side of the Atlantic remains the innocuous coastal hazard, "Wimble Shoals" on the North Carolina coast. James Wimble, however, left an impression upon the men with whom he served. In James Wyatt's words, "Captain Wimble... was exceeding[ly] kind to me; and behaved, on all Occasions, with a great deal of Courage and Bravery."<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Watson, *Wilmington*, 39.

<sup>76</sup> James Wimble, *Wimble MS 1733 Coastal Carolina from Shallotte Inlet to Currituck Inlet* (New Hanover County, North Carolina Map Collection - Southeastern North Carolina Project: Wilmington, NC, 2009), <<http://www.nhcgov.com/AgnAndDpt/LIBR/LocalHistory/Pages/default.aspx>> (accessed January 17, 2009); Paul A. Collins, email interview by author, June 25, 2009.

<sup>77</sup> "America and West Indies: July 1736, 1-15," *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 42: 1735-1736* (1953), 234-248, <<http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=72847&strquery=wimble>> (accessed: March 13, 2009); "America and West Indies: November 1737," *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 43: 1737* (1963), 270-288, <<http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=72914&strquery=wimble>> (accessed: March 13, 2009); Cumming, "The Turbulent Life of Captain James Wimble," 1-18.

<sup>78</sup> Alan D. Watson, *Wilmington, North Carolina, to 1861* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2003), 9.

<sup>79</sup> Wyatt, v.

## Spain's Diplomacy and Saint-Domingue's Revolution, 1791-1795

*The moment of vengeance approaches; tomorrow night all the whites must be exterminated.*<sup>1</sup>

French traveller Antoine Dalmas argued that the slave 'generals' that had planned to start a revolution in Saint-Domingue transmitted that proclaim to the slave masses, in order to encourage them to massacre the white inhabitants of that colony. In the night of 21 August 1791, most slaves from the North Province of Saint-Domingue might have celebrated a *vodou* ceremony at a place known as Bois Caïman, which signalled the beginning of the revolution. The slave revolution shook the colony's political, economic, social and racial structure, and it gave way to a bloody war that finished on 1 January 1804 with the birth of the Republic of Haiti, the first black independent state in the history of humankind. But the echo of Saint-Domingue's revolution reached other territories, significantly Spanish Santo Domingo, in the eastern hemisphere of the island of Hispaniola. In this article, I provide relevant information to prove that Santo Domingo's inhabitants collaborated with Saint-Domingue's slave insurgents from 1791, though the colonial government's connection with Saint-Domingue's former slaves was not official until the spring of 1793, when Spain and France declared war to each other.

One must study Saint-Domingue's social structure in the years prior to the slave revolution for explaining that historical outcome. For this purpose, I have analysed the colony's background from a socio-economic and from a political perspective. Taking into account C.L.R. James' considerations in his essay *Black Jacobins*,<sup>2</sup> there were three different socio-economic groups in Saint-Domingue: the *grands blancs*, either wealthy planters, or traders, or agents of the French maritime bourgeoisie; the *petits blancs*, governors and overseers in sugar plantations, artisans and shopkeepers, though among them there were also beggars and adventurers from continental France and from the whole Europe who wished to seek their fortune in the French Caribbean; and the free people of colour. Some of the latter, especially in the Southern and the Western Provinces, which Stewart R. King studied in his book *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig* (2001), had reached a wealthy position and they were landowners and slave-owners, becoming economically and socially integrated in the elite. Others had reached a high military status and they preserved the memory of their African ancestry.<sup>3</sup> But after the War of the Seven Years (1756-1763), which had sanctioned Great Britain's naval supremacy and had undermined France's Empire overseas, the French government looked forward to reinforcing the link

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<sup>1</sup> Antoine Dalmas, *Histoire de la Révolution de Saint-Domingue, depuis le commencement des troubles, jusqu'à la prise de Jérémie et du Môle S. Nicolas par les anglais; suivie d'un mémoire sur le rétablissement de cette colonie*, vol. I (Paris: Chez Mame Frères, Imprimeurs-Libraires, Rue du Pot-de-Fer, n. 14, 1814), 117.

<sup>2</sup> C.L.R. James, *Los jacobinos negros. Toussaint L'Ouverture y la Revolución de Haití* (Madrid – México D.F.: Turner – Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003), 41-70.

<sup>3</sup> Stewart R. King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig. Free people of Color in Pre-Revolutionary Saint Domingue* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001); John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 117.

between the French Antilles and the metropolis. For this purpose, it joined all the white inhabitants of the French Caribbean under the term 'French citizens', whereas at the same time it discriminated the free people of colour, keeping them apart from that concept and calling them *affranchis*, which meant 'liberated', in order to remember their slave ancestry.<sup>4</sup>

There were two factions in Saint-Domingue's political scenario in the 1780s: the *grands blancs* and the *petits blancs*, on the one hand, and the colonial authorities, on the other hand. The latter, with the support of the French bourgeoisie, whose income depended on slave trade and sugar production, did not wish to allow the French revolutionary principles to enter the colony, for fear that the *affranchis* and the enslaved people saw their chance to revolt. The *grands blancs* and the *petits blancs* only demanded the right of representation in the French National Assembly, but they wished to prevent the revolutionary principles from arriving in the French Caribbean, for the same reason. With that idea in mind, both factions called for colonial assemblies in the three provinces of Saint-Domingue (the North, the West and the South) and, later on, all the representatives met in a common Colonial Assembly, at Saint Marc. Metropolitan authorities ended up granting the right of representation to the *grands blancs* only, so the *petits blancs* radicalised their position and they demanded full application of the French revolutionary ideas in Saint-Domingue, which they believed that would grant them political power in the colony.

As the radical *petits blancs* dominated Saint-Marc's Assembly, the *grands blancs* deserted it and met in another assembly at Le Cap, capital of the North Province, adopting a rather conservative position. Then colonial authorities took advantage of the schism between *petits blancs* and *grands blancs* and approached the wealthy planters, in an attempt to get their help for keeping Saint-Domingue safe from any revolutionary change. They counted on the support of the free people of colour, whom the *petits blancs* envied because they had reached a well-off position despite the colour of their skin. Hence hatred for the *petits blancs* was the only link between the government, the *grand blancs* and the free people of colour. In order to make their cause triumph, they constituted an army that attacked Saint Marc in the summer of 1790, making most deputies of the Colonial Assembly flee on board the *Léopard*. The *léopardins* reached France by mid-October and they presented their demands to the French National Assembly, but Antoine Barnave paid no attention to them and dissolved Saint-Marc's Assembly, sanctioning the triumph of the governmental coalition in Saint-Domingue.

When colonial authorities and the *grands blancs* heard those news, they felt relieved and they tried to get rid of the free people of colour, whose help they did not need any more since they had already triumphed over the *petits blancs*. As a consequence of their attitude, as well as of the French government's decision to not grant political and civil rights to the free people of colour, a rebellion broke out in Saint-Domingue in October 1790, under the lead of the *mulato* lawyer Vincent Ogé and the former soldier Jean-Baptiste Chavannes. Ogé's rebellion failed and both generals were arrested in the

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<sup>4</sup> Garrigus, "Saint-Domingue's Free People of Color and the Tools of Revolution," in David Patrick Geggus and Norman Fiering (eds.), *The World of the Haitian Revolution* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), 51-5.

Dominican frontier and taken back to Saint-Domingue, were the government executed them on 25 February 1791.<sup>5</sup>

After those events the French government tried to grant the right of representation to the wealthy free people of colour, too, but the governor of Saint-Domingue, marquis of Blanchelande, prohibited the publication of that initiative in the colony, making it clear that he would limit the right to vote to all the white inhabitants of that territory, regardless of their patrimony. Later on, in the elections to choose the colony's representatives that had to go to the French National Assembly, the *grand blancs* triumphed in the North Province and the *petits blancs* did so in the western and in the southern provinces. All the representatives chosen in the aforementioned election met in the Colonial Assembly at Léoganne on 1 August 1791, but they moved to Le Cap one week later.

Saint-Domingue's social and political panorama changed once more, especially after Ogé's rebellion and due to the rumour of the supposed royal decree to grant political rights to free people of colour. Colonial authorities, led by the marquis of Blanchelande, counted on the support of the *grands blancs* from the North Province; merchants, craftsmen and planters born in the colony, most of them *petits blancs*, wished to implement some moderate reforms in Saint-Domingue to seize political power, avoiding any socio-political change that might favour the ascent of the *affranchis*. The free people of colour longed for full implementation of French revolutionary ideas in the colony, knowing that it was their only chance to reach posts of responsibility and to get judicial and civil equality with the white elite. Finally, the slaves started to play an important role, too, which I will analyse in the following sections.<sup>6</sup>

### Fire around Le Cap

Contemporary witnesses and present-day historians have provided different figures for Saint-Domingue's population before the outbreak of the slave revolution. British admiral Marcus Rainsford said that there were 40,000 whites, 24,000 free people of colour and 500,000 slaves;<sup>7</sup> the author of the *Historia de la Isla de Santo Domingo* argued that there were around 31,000 whites and 435,000 blacks;<sup>8</sup> and Laurent Dubois has stated that there existed 31,000 whites, 28,000 free people of colour and 465,000 slaves.<sup>9</sup> In any case, the whites were terrified because a slave revolution might turn the colony into a white cemetery, as happened between 1791 and 1804.

The identification of the historical event that signalled the beginning of the slave revolution is problematic: oral tradition states that most slaves from the North Province gathered in a place known as Bois Caïman in the night of 21 August 1791 to celebrate a *vodou* ceremony, under the lead of the priest

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<sup>5</sup> Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereinafter AHN), Ultramar (hereinafter U), box (hereinafter b.) 765; James, *Los jacobinos negros*, 81.

<sup>6</sup> Torcuato S. di Tella, *La Rebelión de Esclavos de Haití* (Buenos Aires: ediciones del Ides, 1984), 64-9.

<sup>7</sup> Marcus Rainsford, *An Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti: Comprehending a View of the Principal Transactions in The Revolution of Saint Domingo; With Its Antient and Modern State* (Pall Mall: Albion Press Printed, Published by James Cundee, Ivy-Jane, Paternoster-Row, 1805), 91.

<sup>8</sup> DVAEP, *Historia de la Isla de Santo Domingo, continuada hasta los últimos acontecimientos durante la insurrección de los xefes negros, especialmente en el año 1800 (VIII de la República Francesa) y siguientes hasta el presente de 1806* (Madrid: Imprenta de Villalpando, 1806), 21-2.

<sup>9</sup> Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: the Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge: MA – London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 30.

Boukman Dutty and his female assistant, Cécile Fatiman. Both characters might have killed a black pig, making all the slaves that had gathered there drink the animal's blood and participate in a collective dance to bring them luck; thereafter they all swore to kill all the white inhabitants of Saint-Domingue.<sup>10</sup> David Geggus and Jacques de Cauna have argued that unlike the mythic *vodou* ceremony at Bois Caïman, of which there is almost no historical evidence, a meeting of slave drivers, coachmen and other 'elite slaves' had taken place on 14 August 1791, one week before, in the Lenormand de Mézy estate. There they might have decided to rebel with the masses' support, in order to take advantage of the revolution in France and to bring revolutionary changes to the colony, which might grant them freedom and political control over Saint-Domingue.<sup>11</sup>

At the turn of the eighteenth century, in Saint-Domingue as in other colonies, observers could identify two slave groups: 'the elite slaves' and the 'slave masses'. The latter worked mainly in the sugarcane fields in harsh conditions, whereas the former had other posts of responsibility, for instance coachmen, cattle risers or domestic slaves, which kept them far from sugarcane fields and enabled them to enjoy a better living and a closer relation with their masters.<sup>12</sup> They took advantage of their prestigious position for leading slave rebellions.<sup>13</sup> Among the 'elite slaves' there were several *creole* slaves, that is, slaves born from enslaved parents in Latin America and the Caribbean, who usually learned to read and write, as was the case of Toussaint Bréda, later known as Toussaint Louverture;<sup>14</sup> African-born slaves could acquire that knowledge, too.<sup>15</sup>

Despite their different socio-cultural background, all the enslaved people had a certain experience of liberty and therefore they wished to conquer that right: only the African-born slaves had been free in their country of origin and had always longed to recover that status, but the whole slave collective knew about the advantages of freedom thanks to the testimony of their African ancestors; to the readings of European thinkers, especially Abbé Raynal and Denis Diderot, in the case of the slaves who could read; and to the indirect testimony of their masters, who talked about political events in France.<sup>16</sup> But despite any external influence, as Laurent Dubois has sustained, the main reason for the slaves to revolt was their wish to put an end to their condition as

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<sup>10</sup> James, *Los jacobinos negros*, 33.

<sup>11</sup> David Geggus, "Haitian Voodoo in the Eighteenth Century: Language, Culture, Resistance," *Jahrbuch Für Geschichte Von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* 28, 1991, 45; Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 84-92; Jacques de Cauna, "Toussaint Louverture et le déclenchement de l'insurrection des esclaves du nord en 1791: un retour aux sources," in Alain Yacou (dir.), *Saint-Domingue espagnol et la révolution nègre d'Haïti. Commémoration du Bicentenaire de la naissance de l'état d'Haïti (1804-2004)* (Paris – Pointe-à-Pitre: Karthala – CERC, 2007), 151.

<sup>12</sup> Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848* (London – New York: Verso, 1988), 191.

<sup>13</sup> Graham Townsend Nessler, *A Failed Emancipation? The Struggle for Freedom in Hispaniola during the Haitian Revolution, 1789-1809*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation (Michigan: The University of Michigan, 2011), 53-4.

<sup>14</sup> Philippe R. Girard, *The Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon. Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian War of Independence, 1801-1804* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2011), 11-5.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Craton, "Forms of Resistance to Slavery," in Franklin W. Knight (ed.), *The Slave Societies of the Caribbean*, vol. III (London and Basingstoke: Unesco Publishing – Macmillan Education Ltd., 1997), 244.

<sup>16</sup> Madison Smartt Bell, *Toussaint Louverture: A biography* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2007), 18-83.



well as their hatred for their oppressors,<sup>17</sup> which Hilary Mcd. Beckles defined as 'self-liberation ethos'.<sup>18</sup> They knew that circumstances not always made easy an open rebellion against the masters, so most times they limited their actions to certain manifestations of African culture that they adapted to their circumstances and to their necessities in America.<sup>19</sup> For example, in Saint-Domingue they created a language, *créole*, from the mixture of French and different African dialects, and they also invented a religion, *vodou*, from the combination of Catholic and African elements. Hence the slaves were the main actors of Saint-Domingue's revolution and of other insurrections before and after it, only in 1791 they made up their minds to revolt because political circumstances in the metropolis favoured them.<sup>20</sup> Thus we can discard Craton's theory stating that Saint-Domingue's revolution was a mere echo of the Storming of the Bastille,<sup>21</sup> an imperfect interpretation of that historical event that goes back to the late-nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup>

Apart from the wish to conquer freedom violently, taking advantage of political chaos in continental France, the ideology of the slave insurgents is complex and it is subject to different interpretations. In his essay on the Haitian revolution, the Haitian historian Céliigny Ardouin stated that the slaves revolted when they heard the rumour that the French King had granted them three free days per week, but the Colonial Assembly and the *petits blancs* had not allowed the application of those orders that threatened the status of the white people.<sup>23</sup> According to the report of Pierre-Victor Malouet, a French witness of the slave insurrection, and to the description by the United States' agents in Le Cap François, the slaves proclaimed that they had risen up in rebellion to restore Louis XVI to his throne, and the clergy and nobility to their rights and privileges, which meant the restoration of the *ancien régime* in the French territories.<sup>24</sup> Moreover the beginning of the revolution might have coincided with the reception in Saint-Domingue of news of Louis XVI's arrest in Varennes in July 1791, when the King was trying to flee France in order to ask for foreign assistance against the revolutionary government.<sup>25</sup>

Given the circumstances, everything seems to point out that the slave revolution in Saint-Domingue originated as a counter-revolutionary movement, since the slave insurgents claimed to defend the rights of the French King, but the reality was much more complex. In the last decades of the

<sup>17</sup> Dubois, *Avengers*, 104-5.

<sup>18</sup> Hilary Mcd. Beckles. "Caribbean Anti-Slavery: The Self-Liberation Ethos of Enslaved Blacks," in Verene Shepherd and Hilary Macd. Beckles (eds.), *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World. A Student Reader* (Kingston – Princeton – Oxford: Ian Randle Publishers – Marcus Wiener Publishers – James Currey Publishers, 2000), 869.

<sup>19</sup> Sidney Wifred Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture: an Anthropological Perspective* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1976); Mary Turner, "Religious Beliefs," in Knight, *Slave Societies*, 287-321.

<sup>20</sup> Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti. The Saint-Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 39.

<sup>21</sup> Craton, "Forms," 244.

<sup>22</sup> Antonio del Monte y Tejada, *Historia de Santo Domingo*, vol. III (Santo Domingo: Sociedad Literaria "Amigos del País," 1890), 125.

<sup>23</sup> Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (hereinafter SCRBC), John Kobler – Haitian Revolution Collection (hereinafter JK – HRC), b. 1.

<sup>24</sup> The National Archives (hereinafter TNA), War Office (hereinafter WO) 1/58; National Archives and Record Administration (hereinafter NARA), Record Group (hereinafter RG) 59, Microfilm (hereinafter M) 9, Roll (hereinafter R) 1/1797-1799; Gene E. Ogle, "The Trans-Atlantic King and Imperial Public Spheres. Everyday Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Saint-Domingue," in Geggus and Fiering, *The World*, 89-91.

<sup>25</sup> Geggus, *Haitian*, 84.

eighteenth century, forty per cent of the African-born slaves that arrived in Saint-Domingue came from western and central Africa, especially from the Kingdom of Congo, which supplied the slave traders that operated in the coast with war prisoners made during confrontation between different African tribes.<sup>26</sup> John K. Thornton analysed the monarchist loyalty of the African slaves at the time, but he made it clear that the latter was not monolithic at all, identifying two different conceptions of the King: on the one hand, some African-born individuals longed for an authoritarian king that would involve his subjects in different wars against his enemies, in order to expand the territory under his command; on the other hand, other Africans preferred to look for a 'democratic' king that would protect them against any danger.<sup>27</sup>

Not only was the slaves' monarchist loyalty not monolithic, but it also shifted depending on the rebels' different interests during Saint-Domingue's revolution. Gene E. Ogle and more recently Graham Nessler have stated that the French King was the symbol that gathered all the slaves in Saint-Domingue together, the African-born and the *créole*, because they saw him as their only defender against the abuses of the masters as well of the colonial government.<sup>28</sup> But Laurent Dubois had previously argued that, though the King was regarded as a counter-weight to the planters, due to his efforts to reform slavery, especially through the *Code Noir* in France (1685) and the *Código Negro Carolino* in Spain (1783), the slave insurgents combined their appeals to the King with some republican proclaims: they believed that the King and the National Assembly were the only metropolitan institutions that would hear their demands.<sup>29</sup> Therefore the slave insurgents' political discourse, as many other elements of the slave culture in America, was syncretic, too: it was the result of the combination of African and European elements that the slaves adopted, adapting them to their necessities. Thus it is possible to explain why by late July they demanded universal emancipation to Saint-Domingue's Colonial Assembly. As Dubois has stated, the monarchic-republican political language that they used also proves that, instead of imitating the metropolitan events, the slaves shaped their own revolutionary path, becoming the main agents of Saint-Domingue's revolution.<sup>30</sup>

### The Spanish Cordon Sanitaire

In September 1791 the governor of Santo Domingo, Joaquín García, addressed to the Spanish Crown the first official report about Saint-Domingue's revolution by a Spanish authority, which contained important factual mistakes:

*The night of the 22-23 August [1791] an insurrection of black slaves, some free mulatos, and whites (so they say) happened around the Guarico (that is, in the northern part of the [French] colony), which*

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<sup>26</sup> Dubois, *Avengers*, 40.

<sup>27</sup> John K. Thornton, "I am the Subject of the King of Congo: African Political Ideology and the Haitian Revolution," *Journal of World History* IV, no. 2 (1993), 181-214.

<sup>28</sup> Geggus, "Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean in the Mid-1790s," in David Barry Gaspar and David Patrick Geggus, *A Turbulent Time: the French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 131-55; Ogle, "The Trans-Atlantic King," 95-6; Nessler, *A Failed Emancipation?*, 40-1.

<sup>29</sup> Dubois, *Avengers*, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Dubois, "An enslaved Enlightenment: rethinking the intellectual history of the French Atlantic," *Social History* 31, no. 1, 12-3.

*started with the depraved deed of burning sugar mills; killing every white man, and proclaiming liberty. [...] Several blackened whites are involved in the plot and have directed the cruellest actions, and the gravest crimes.*<sup>31</sup>

First, scholars have discussed the precise date of the revolutionary outbreak, but David Geggus argues that the *vodou* ceremony of Bois Caïman took place on the night of Sunday 21 August 1791, when the slaves gathered pretending to celebrate mass to not arise the suspicion of their masters. In addition, the deputies of Le Cap's Assembly were supposed to meet the next day, so the slaves might have also chosen that day because authorities and forces of order would be occupied organising the meeting and would not be able to pay attention to a slave rebellion.<sup>32</sup> Second, governor García blamed the 'blackened whites', that is, the white people born within Saint-Domingue, for the disorders in that French territory, but his accusation was not true: the wealthy planters and the impoverished whites, some of them born there, had only caused trouble between 1789 and 1791, when they had demanded the right of representation. Finally, García identified the 'blackened whites', the free people of colour and the slaves, all together, as the troublemakers in Saint-Domingue, but a coalition of the three factions was impossible: they had different interests that did not favour their union against the colonial government.

In his correspondence, García said nothing about another faction that played an important role in Saint-Domingue's revolution: many French monarchist that lived there had started to cross the Dominican border, in order to take refuge in Santo Domingo, since they heard the first news of the French revolution in September 1789. They were afraid that the arrival of the revolutionary principles to Saint-Domingue might encourage the coloured people to kill the whites.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know the precise number of French migrants that crossed the border: only Carlos Esteban Deive mentions a list of French families that arrived in San Miguel, near the Dominican frontier, by early 1790.<sup>34</sup> However, we know that they chose Santo Domingo because it was a slave-owning colony, though slaves amounted only one-third of its population, and also because it belonged to Spain, defender of the *ancien régime*.<sup>35</sup> Those French migrants brought their slaves with them and, in some cases, they became so integrated in Santo Domingo's life that some of them even participated in the colony's government: for example, José de Sterling became alderman in Santo Domingo's town hall.<sup>36</sup>

According to Torcuato S. di Tella, those French refugees conspired from Santo Domingo to prevent French subversive ideas from triumphing in Saint-Domingue. They knew that the French maritime bourgeoisie, main financier of the French revolution, received its income from the slave trade and from the

<sup>31</sup> Archivo General de Simancas (hereinafter AGS), Secretaría del Despacho de Guerra (hereinafter SGU), b. 7149, expediente (hereinafter e.) 74, document (hereinafter d.) 439.

<sup>32</sup> Geggus, *Haitian*, 87-8.

<sup>33</sup> TNA, WO 1/58, 349-53; Geggus, *Haitian*, 173; Carlos Esteban Deive, "Les réfugiés français dans la partie espagnole de l'île Saint-Domingue au temps de la fronde des Grands Blancs et de la révolte des mulâtres," in Yacou (dir.), *Saint-Domingue espagnol*, 123-34.

<sup>34</sup> Deive, *Los refugiados franceses en Santo Domingo, 1789-1801* (Santo Domingo: Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña, 1984), 68.

<sup>35</sup> Franklyn J. Franco, *Los negros, los mulatos y la nación dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Editora Nacional, 1969), 72-3.

<sup>36</sup> Deive, "Les réfugiés," 127.

sugar market, closely linked to Saint-Domingue. Therefore they thought that if they made those sources of income perish provoking a slave rebellion, they would be in a position to force the maritime bourgeoisie to listen to their demands, to stop the radical development of the French revolution in the metropolis and, above all, to keep the French Caribbean apart from those events. Otherwise, they would go on supporting the slave insurrection and the French bourgeois would lose Saint-Domingue, *la Perle des Antilles*, forever. Those people might have encouraged the publication of the false news of a decree by the French King bettering the slave existence in Saint-Domingue. For all these reasons, Tella depicted the conspiracy that led to the slave revolution as a reactionary plot urged with the assistance of the enslaved people, which he called 'black Vendée'.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, though monarchism and conservatism were present in the discourse of certain groups that took part in those events, the slaves' wish to terminate their sufferings was the main reason for them to rebel; external actors and circumstances only favoured them, but they would have had no effect if the slaves had not wished to revolt.

Joaquín García's silence about the French migrants in Santo Domingo is interesting because it suggests that he might have wished to hide Spain's complicity in the first compasses of Saint-Domingue's revolution. In order to understand Spain's strategy, it is necessary to go back to late 1790, when the Spanish Secretary of State, Count of Floridablanca, explained King Carlos IV the strategy he had to follow to confront the French revolution. Floridablanca warned the King to stay officially neutral in the French socio-political chaos and to send troops to the Spanish border for preventing the French troops and the subversive ideas from entering Spain; those troops would form the Spanish *cordon sanitaire*. But according to the Secretary of State, the *cordon sanitaire* also implied secret collaboration with counterrevolutionary groups of the French society, whom the Spanish government had to give money for conspiring against the revolutionaries from within France.<sup>38</sup>

This strategy was applied in the Spanish Empire overseas, too: in November 1791 Carlos IV warned the colonial governors to not interfere in Saint-Domingue's revolution as long as it was a confrontation between different white factions, that is, as long as it remained as a mere echo of French events. Only if Saint-Domingue's slaves went out of control and started killing the white inhabitants of the colony indiscriminately, Spanish colonial authorities would have to assist the latter in confronting the slave rebels sending them food and weapons. In addition, if the situation in Saint-Domingue became critical, the different Spanish colonial governors in the Caribbean would get their armies ready to defend their territory in case Saint-Domingue's slaves attacked other Spanish possessions.<sup>39</sup>

Joaquín García was the main representative of the Spanish *cordon sanitaire* in America, since Saint-Domingue's rebels would cross the border and invade his colony if they succeeded in seizing power and in killing the whites of that territory. That was why he had already taken some steps to defend Santo Domingo, even before receiving the King's instructions. In the report he sent to Spain in September 1791, he admitted that he had just sent troops to the Dominican frontier. He had made that decision after receiving a letter from the governor of Saint-Domingue, Marquis of Blanchelande, who had asked for his help when the slaves of that French colony had already gone out

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<sup>37</sup> Tella, *La Rebelión*, 70.

<sup>38</sup> Gonzalo Anes, *Economía e "Ilustración" en la España del siglo XVIII* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1984), 184.

<sup>39</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 6846, e. 79, d. 376; Geggus, *Haitian*, 172-3.

of control, killing the white inhabitants of that territory. García refused to assist Blanchelande: first, he argued that if he sent Hispanic-Dominican troops to Saint-Domingue, he would leave his own colony defenceless against the former slaves; second, he said that he needed to consult the King before making any decision. Blanchelande tried to pressure García, warning him that unless the French and the Spaniards joined their forces together to beat the slave insurgents of Saint-Domingue, they would soon control that French possession, they would cross the Dominican border and they would take Santo Domingo, too. Blanchelande's advice awoke García's 'fear of the black', though not in the sense that the French governor had expected: instead of helping him, García stayed neutral towards the events in the western part of Hispaniola, but at the same time he strengthened the defences of the border to stop an attack on his own colony.

### Spain's Diplomacy

Up to this point, two elements of the Spanish *cordon sanitaire* were present in Joaquín García's attitude towards Saint-Domingue's revolution: official neutrality in that historical episode and the strengthening of the Dominican frontier. Secret collaboration with the reactionary plot that originated the slave revolution was also manifest in Santo Domingo, though it was not official until 1793, so in the first two years of that historical episode it is difficult to find out whether Hispanic-Dominican authorities approved that collaboration.

The French exiled monarchists that had planned the reactionary plot from Spanish Santo Domingo were political refugees that lacked the necessary economic resources to carry out their plan. Therefore, they counted on the secret help of the Marquis of Blanchelande, head of the monarchist faction within Saint-Domingue, who could not support them officially because if he did so, the French government would accuse him of treason.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, the conspirators exiled in Santo Domingo needed foreign help, which they received from people and troops at the other side of the Dominican border. Saint-Domingue's slave generals mentioned trade with those people in their correspondence; for example, in October 1791 Toussaint Bréda described that secret commerce in two letters addressed to other black generals:

*I cannot meet you; neither of us can go to the Spanish [camp]. If the Spaniard has anything to communicate to me, he only has to come to my camp. After the demands I have just transmitted to the Spaniard, I am waiting for the things I asked for him day after day.*<sup>41</sup>

General Bréda refers to a secret trade that the inhabitants of the Dominican border might have carried out. On the one hand, Joaquín García refused to become involved in Saint-Domingue's revolution when the Marquis of Bourgoing asked for his help, but on the other hand, if he did not support secret trade with Saint-Domingue's former slaves, at least he tolerated it.<sup>42</sup> Cultural solidarity might have moved the people of the frontier to carry out that smuggling: in the last one hundred and fifty years, the border between the

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<sup>40</sup> Jorge Victoria Ojeda, *Tendencias monárquicas en la revolución haitiana. El negro Francisco Petecou bajo las banderas francesa y española* (México City: Siglo XXI Editores, 2005), 19-20; Cauna, "Toussaint Louverture," 136.

<sup>41</sup> Cauna, "Toussaint Louverture," 154-5.

<sup>42</sup> Victoria Ojeda, *Tendencia*, 26; Nessler, *A Failed Emancipation?*, 58.

French and the Spanish part of Hispaniola had shifted constantly, so people that at the turn of the eighteenth century served different kings had once belonged to the same Crown, either the French or the Spanish. That was why they gave economic support to a conspiracy that was initially aimed at favouring the counterrevolution in Saint-Domingue.

By early 1792 another black officer, Georges Biassou, addressed a letter to governor García that suggests the latter's complicity in Saint-Domingue's slave revolution from the beginning. After the death of Boukman Dutty, first slave general, in November 1791, three former slaves had confronted each other to become supreme commander of the rebel forces: Jeannot Bullet, Georges Biassou and Jean-François Papillon, who in the end became the new chief of the insurgents, though Jean Landers argues that the honour corresponded to Biassou.<sup>43</sup> Jean-François and Biassou joined their forces for the sake of the slave revolution, but they often fought each other because Jean-François wished to seize absolute power, for which purpose he tried to get rid of his comrades-in-arms that prevented him from doing so. Hence on 20 January 1792 Biassou asked for Joaquín García's mediation to stop Jean-François' ambitious plan in Saint-Domingue.<sup>44</sup> Biassou's demand shows that he regarded the Hispanic-Dominican governor as his ally in the island.

Several foreign testimonies also suggest that Spain was behind Saint-Domingue's revolution. Around 1793 a French anonymous planter, witness of those events, stated that the general opinion was that the Spaniards had provoked the first insurrection of the enslaved people of the North Province of Saint-Domingue.<sup>45</sup> The United States' agents present in Saint-Domingue at the time corroborated that testimony.<sup>46</sup> Finally the French ambassador in Madrid, Marquis of Bourgoing, counted Spain's collaboration with Saint-Domingue's former slaves among France's reasons for declaring war to Spain in March 1793.<sup>47</sup>

Nevertheless, present-day historians must be very careful and we must consider the context of those documents, as they reflect the strategic interests of the different governments that produced them: French planters and colonial authorities would never admit their responsibility in the slave revolution. Instead, they blamed an external agent for it and Spain was the perfect scapegoat. For their part, the United States wished to attack Spain's prestige in order to make the inhabitants of Saint-Domingue ask for their assistance, so they could benefit from control over that territory and from trade with Saint-Domingue, undermining Great Britain's geo-politic influence in the area. Even if we despise those foreign documents, the correspondence of the black generals still reveals that the Spanish representatives in Santo Domingo played an important role in the counterrevolutionary plot that might have originated Saint-Domingue's revolution.

In the short term, maybe Joaquín García knew that support to the reactionary conspiracy that originated Saint-Domingue's revolution would prevent the French revolution from triumphing in Hispaniola and, thence, from

<sup>43</sup> Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 55-6.

<sup>44</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 2, d. 7; Yacou, "La stratégie espagnole d'éradication de Saint-Domingue français (1790-1804)," in Yacou, *Saint-Domingue espagnol*, 180.

<sup>45</sup> TNA, WO 1/58, 349-53

<sup>46</sup> NARA, RG 59, M 9, R 1/1797-1799, 3.

<sup>47</sup> Emilio Laparra y Elisabel Larriba (eds.), *Manuel de Godoy. Memorias* (Alicante: Universidad de Alicante, 2008), 174-5.

arriving to other Spanish colonies. But in the long term, Dominican Spaniards knew that the former slaves, who had proclaimed that they defended the rights of the French King, were very difficult to control. So they could easily start killing all the whites of Saint-Domingue indiscriminately, the monarchists as well as the republicans. They saw their suspicion confirmed a few weeks after the revolutionary outbreak, when the Marquis of Blanchelande reported to Joaquín García the white massacre that the former slaves had started in the North Province of his colony. García then denied his help to Blanchelande: he wanted to make time and wait until the whites and the blacks of Saint-Domingue killed each other. Meanwhile he sent troops to the Dominican border for stopping a possible black invasion of his colony. Once the killing in Saint-Domingue was over, García would send the colonial army to that territory apparently to restore order, but his real intention would be to re-conquer Saint-Domingue, which had been a Spanish possession until the French saw their sovereignty acknowledged there in the peace Treaty of Ryswick, in 1697.<sup>48</sup>

The strategy that the Spanish authorities carried out in Hispaniola was very risky: the former slaves could also rebel against the Dominican colonial executive and invade Santo Domingo, turning the whole island into a black possession. But the Spaniards thought that if their plan succeeded, the benefits would be so huge that they were worth the risk.<sup>49</sup> The Spanish Crown's plan in Hispaniola was secret and it was even kept from other colonial governors; for instance, in September 1791 Luis de las Casas denounced Joaquín García, arguing that he had violated Spain's promise of neutrality towards the French territories because he had sent troops to Saint-Domingue.<sup>50</sup> Later on, Las Casas discovered García's strategy and he backed it. In fact, in 1794 Joaquín García addressed him a letter admitting that he had always intended to occupy the whole colony of Saint-Domingue.<sup>51</sup>

### The Black Auxiliaries

Spain's attitude towards the French and Saint-Domingue's revolution changed suddenly: on 21 January 1793 the French National Convention executed King Louis XVI and in March France and Spain declared war to each other. As both countries were already at war, the Spaniards did not need to keep their contacts with Saint-Domingue's rebels in secret anymore and they started to mention them in official documents: the King's first instructions to Hispanic-Dominican authorities date from February 1793, one month before the declaration of war between Spain and France. In that document, Carlos IV admitted that he wished to take advantage of Saint-Domingue's former slaves not only to stop the French revolutionary ideas from arriving to Santo Domingo, but also to reconquer the western part of Hispaniola.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Jacinto Gimbernard, *Historia de Santo Domingo* (Madrid: M. Fernández y Cia., S.A., 1978), 102-7; Yacou, "La stratégie," 177-86.

<sup>49</sup> Julien Raymond, *Réflexions sur les véritables causes des troubles et des désastres de nos colonies, notamment sur ceux de Saint-Domingue, avec les moyens à employer pour préserver cette colonie d'une ruine totale* (Paris, 1793), 9.

<sup>50</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 6846, e. 79, d. 373.

<sup>51</sup> AGI, E, b. 5A, e. 22, d. 1.

<sup>52</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 22, d. 343; Victoria Ojeda, *De "libertad, excepciones, goces y prerrogativas." Impulso y dispersión de las tropas auxiliares del rey de España en la guerra de Santo Domingo (1793-1848)* (Universitat Jaume I: Castellón de la Plana, 2005), 39-40.

According to the Spanish King, Dominican colonial authorities had to offer the black generals freedom, lands and other advantages within Santo Domingo, exclusively for them. Carlos IV also told Santo Domingo's Archbishop, Fernando Portillo y Torres, to name a religious intermediary to carry out negotiations between the Dominican colonial government and the former slaves, taking it for granted that the latter would feel more confident negotiating with a religious authority.<sup>53</sup> The mere appointment of an intermediary between Hispanic-Dominican authorities and the slave insurgents proves Spain's wish to make its contacts with Saint-Domingue's rebels official. Santo Domingo's authorities designated the *mulato* priest of Dajabón, José Vázquez, for that task, considering that he knew Jean-François and, therefore, he would find it easier to come to friendly terms with the Spanish government.<sup>54</sup> Apart from his past link to Jean-François, Dominican Spaniards also chose Vázquez due to his *mulato* condition, which placed him socially and racially halfway between the slave generals and the Dominican colonial government; hence he played the role of 'cultural go-between', as Michel Vovelle defined it.<sup>55</sup>

Spanish Dominican authorities agreed with the Crown's point of view, but they knew Santo Domingo's reality better than the King and they made him some suggestions: for example, Joaquín García ordered that colonial troops assisted José Vázquez, in case the black officers turned his offers down and they decided to invade Santo Domingo.<sup>56</sup> Fernando Portillo also told the King to make it clear that freedom and lands promised to Saint-Domingue's former slaves would never be extensive to Santo Domingo's enslaved people, whom Hispanic-Dominican authorities had to dissuade from imitating their fellow slaves at the other side of the border.

Negotiations between Dominican colonial government and the slave officers were more intense by late April and early May 1793.<sup>57</sup> I have had access to letters exchanged between the black general Jean-François and Santo Domingo's authorities, especially José Vázquez and Fernando Portillo, which allow us to study the slaves' reasons for allying with Spain in the spring of that year. The first relevant aspect is Jean-François' supposed spirituality, which might have been a major reason for him to look for the support of the Spanish catholic monarchy against French revolutionary heathenism. Yet many experts have discussed the topic without coming to an agreement.<sup>58</sup> Given Jean-François' African background, I argue that the religious expressions that he used in his correspondence show his wish to use the same linguistic and cultural code as the one that the Spanish authorities employed.<sup>59</sup>

The second crucial aspect is the intense trade between Saint-Domingue's rebels and Hispanic-Dominican authorities. In a letter dated on 6 May 1793, the black General made a list of the items that he needed from the Spanish camp: food, consecrated bread for celebrating mass and weapons (6,000 rifles, 400 guns and 400 swords), which he wanted to send to his troops in Grande Rivière. Jean-François also thanked the Dominican Spaniards for the souvenirs

<sup>53</sup> Geggus, *Haitian*, 175.

<sup>54</sup> Yacou, *La stratégie*, 182-4.

<sup>55</sup> Michel Vovelle, *Ideologías y mentalidades* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1985), 161-74.

<sup>56</sup> Victoria Ojeda, *De "libertad"*, 40-1.

<sup>57</sup> TNA, WO 1/59, 260.

<sup>58</sup> José Luciano Franco, *Historia de la revolución de Haití* (Santo Domingo: Editora Nacional, 1971); Yves Benot, *La Révolution française et la fin des colonies: essai* (Paris: La Découverte, 1989).

<sup>59</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 22, d. 354.



that they had previously sent him.<sup>60</sup> Finally, in another letter dated on 9 May 1793 he apologised for not having sent the Spaniards the coffee provisions he had previously promised them, arguing that the harvest had been lost because of the bad weather.<sup>61</sup> These documents show that trade between the Dominican colonial government and Saint-Domingue's insurgents was a regular activity at least in 1793. But Toussaint Bréda's correspondence in the fall of 1791 proves that trade went back to the early days of the slave revolution, though at such an early stage individuals might have carried it out without Santo Domingo's government official consent.

The last relevant aspect is the oath of loyalty to the Spanish King that Jean-François pronounced in May 1793:

*[...] that I will consider myself fortunate for being able to be under your protection and I will do my best to serve the great King and I will keep my promise to avenge God and the great King [of France] till the last moment, and I will hurry to aid Spain.*<sup>62</sup>

Apparently, he had only accepted the Spanish King's protection because the latter had promised to avenge Louis XVI, whom the black rebels regarded as their only legitimate sovereign, and to defend the rights of the Duke of Enghien, the French King's heir to the throne. Hence, everything seems to suggest that neither did Jean-François, nor did his fellow generals, nor did the black troops regard alliance with Spain as an end in itself, but as a means of avenging the French King.

On 6 May 1793, Saint-Domingue's former slaves under the lead of Jean-François and Biassou became 'Carlos IV's black auxiliary troops'. Their condition as 'auxiliary troops' shows the strong racial prejudices of Dominican colonial authorities, which never thought of integrating them in the colonial regular army due to the colour of their skin.<sup>63</sup> The Spanish Crown and the auxiliaries ratified their alliance towards late June 1793, when Santo Domingo's colonial army allowed those former slaves to cross the border and to settle within Santo Domingo.<sup>64</sup>

## Conclusions

The information that I have handled in this research allows me to argue that Spain played an important role in Saint-Domingue's revolution from the beginning of that historical event, though it is necessary to clarify the implications of Spain's 'complicity'. It is not possible to demonstrate Spain's official collaboration with Saint-Domingue's former slaves: between 1791 and 1793 Dominican colonial authorities never mentioned any contacts with them in their correspondence with the Spanish Crown, and foreign testimonies that blame Spain for starting the revolution hide other geo-political interests in the area. Yet Toussaint Bréda's mention of trade with Hispanic-Dominican people in October 1791, and George Biassou's letter to Dominican colonial governor Joaquín García two months later, point out that at least the inhabitants of the Dominican frontier collaborated with Saint-Domingue's slave insurgents.

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<sup>60</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 22, d. 352.

<sup>61</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 22, d. 359.

<sup>62</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 22, d. 368.

<sup>63</sup> Geggus, *Haitian*, 179.

<sup>64</sup> AGS, SGU, b. 7157, e. 22, d. 402.

Maybe they were inspired by a sentiment of cultural solidarity, since people at both sides of the border had once served the same King, either the Spanish or the French, and at that moment they wished to support materially an insurrection that seemed aimed at preserving the *ancien régime* both in France and in the French Caribbean.

At the first stages of the slave rebellion, Joaquín García and the Spanish Crown may not have backed the insurgents officially, but they sympathized with them and at least they tolerated smuggling in the Dominican frontier, which favoured the rebels. The situation changed in 1793: in March France and Spain declared war to each other and the Spanish authorities took the necessary steps to persuade most insurgents from Saint-Domingue to join the Dominican colonial army, which they did in May 1793. In their correspondence with Spain's representatives in the island, the slave generals mentioned their dealings with the inhabitants of Santo Domingo, which seemed to go back to August 1791, when the slave revolution started. Hence, those letters reinforce my main argument: Spain took part in Saint-Domingue's revolution, though not officially until the spring of 1793, when Spain and France were already at war.

However, it is important to highlight the role of the slaves: if they had not wished to put an end to their miserable condition, they would have never rebelled against Saint-Domingue's white elite, regardless of the different foreign countries that might have tried to use them for their own purpose. Events in continental France, which had provoked chaos in the metropolis, favoured the slave insurgents and made it more difficult for France to control its possessions overseas. Hence the slaves shaped their own revolutionary path, mixing elements from their own African cultural background and from the European ideological atmosphere, which they adopted to their own circumstances, creating a syncretic revolutionary language. Thus it is possible to understand why they longed for universal emancipation, a revolutionary principle that they developed fully in the Caribbean, whereas in Europe it had been restricted to the white population, and at the same time they hoped to get the French and the Spanish King's support to achieve that goal. According to African tradition, the King was the character that would always protect his subjects against the abuses of governors and, in the case of the French Antilles, against the oppression of the masters and of colonial authorities. Toussaint Louverture's ascent to power in Hispaniola in 1801 evidenced that the former slaves succeeded in achieving their claims.

Filibustering, Honor and the U.S. Print Media:  
The 1844 Sentmanat Expedition to Tabasco, Mexico

On May 25, 1844, the *William A. Turner* sailed out of New Orleans, allegedly en route to Honduras, but the vessel never made it to Central America. Instead, it arrived on the shores of Tabasco, a province in southeast Mexico. One of its passengers, Francisco de Sentmanat y Zayas, had been governor of that state between 1842 and 1843. The other passengers, some seventy or eighty men of European, American, and Cuban origins, were heavily armed. Mexican authorities believed the men in this expedition had intentions to conquer Tabasco. Upon their arrival, approximately on June 10, 1844, they apprehended the foreigners. A few days after their arrest, about a dozen of the detainees were put to death, including the former governor of Tabasco. The rest were imprisoned, but eventually released.<sup>1</sup>

Men involved in such unofficial, offensive military expeditions launched from U.S. soil became known as filibusters.<sup>2</sup> Dozens of filibustering expeditions occurred throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. These men understood that the political instability south and west of the American borders provided them with a tactical advantage despite of their small numbers. Filibustering was also facilitated, financed and promoted by U.S. imperialists and expansionists. For this reason, historians have often explained filibustering through the framework of *Manifest Destiny* or territorial expansionism.<sup>3</sup> The Sentmanat expedition, however, can hardly be explained through such a reductionist paradigm. Sentmanat was a republican idealist and driven more by his conceptions of honor, than by dreams of territorial conquest. He was also more heavily involved in Mexican politics at the time of his expedition than most accounts reveal. The following account explores his motivations for filibustering, as well as the reactions the expedition produced within the U.S. print media.

Born in Havana, Cuba, in 1804 and to a wealthy and aristocratic family of military tradition, Sentmanat was reared in a society that valued honor, military prowess and leadership.<sup>4</sup> He was schooled in the era's republican idealism, and became involved in conspiracies against the Spanish Crown during the 1820s. For his subversive activity, Spanish authorities exiled him from the island. In 1832, he married into the Marigny's, one of the wealthiest, aristocratic families of New Orleans, whose patriarch was a strong supporter of republicanism. By the 1830s, Sentmanat became involved with the liberal faction in Tabasco, Mexico. Disillusioned with the despotic Mexican federal government, he defied the incumbent president, Antonio Lopez de Santa

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<sup>1</sup> "Later from Mexico." *Boston Evening Transcript*. July 28, 1844.

<sup>2</sup> For definitions of filibustering see Robert May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire: 1854-1861*, (Gainesville, University Press of Florida: 2002), 3; and Stout, Joseph, *Schemers and Dreamers: Filibustering in Mexico: 1848- 1921*, (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2002), x.

<sup>3</sup> May, "Young American Males and Filibustering in the age of manifest Destiny: The United States Army as a Cultural Mirror," *Organization of American Historians* Vol. 78. No. 3 (Dec., 1991): 857.

<sup>4</sup> Sherry Johnson, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba*, (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida), 177-179.

Anna.<sup>5</sup> Sentmanat's actions throughout his life reveal his undeterred commitment to republican ideals, but also the ways in which contemporary honor codes influenced his decisions.

The following account of the Sentmanat expedition brings to the fore a neglected chapter in the historiography of filibustering. While the secondary literature on this subject is extensive, most monographs hinge on the lives of the usual suspects: William Walker, Narciso Lopez, John Quitman, among others. Furthermore, U.S. and Latin American historians often explain their behavior through the lens of territorial expansion. Filibustering has also served the nationalist narratives of some historians. Cuban historians, for instance, have described Narciso Lopez and his expeditions as incipient manifestations of the Cuban independence movement. While these trends are helpful in understanding some of the broader processes behind the filibustering movements, they fail to explain the idiosyncratic dimension of filibustering.

Rodrigo Lazo's recent work, *Writing to Cuba*, moves away from the traditional paradigms used to explain filibustering. Using gender as a category of analysis, Lazo explores filibustering through the writing of several exiled Cubans in the U.S. These men sought to promote filibustering in order to free Cuba from Spanish despotism. Lazo argues their works reflected their regret for not taking part in filibustering with the "sword" as the *man of action* does, but with the more effeminate "pen." In exile, they could only work to promote their cause through the publishing of anti-Spanish newspapers, books and poems.<sup>6</sup> There are striking similarities between the exiles Lazo studied and the twice-exiled Sentmanat. Like the Cuban exiles in Lazo's work, Sentmanat maintained transnational connections to other republican idealists in the Atlantic basin. These men shared political ideology, which mixed with inherited-Iberian concepts of masculinity and honor, determined their duty as leaders. Sentmanat, however, was a military man and he embodied the "republican man of action," which Lazo's exiles sought to emulate and support.

While it is impossible to move away from the paradigm of *Manifest Destiny* when discussing filibustering expeditions, that framework is limited. As Lazo argues, in order to understand the actions of transnational filibusters we must move beyond nation-based models of literary study and consider their connections to both Cuba and the United States. Accordingly, an exploration of Sentmanat's connections to Cuba, New Orleans, and Mexico is necessary in order to understand his militant actions.

Lazo's work, along with those of Robert May have also paved the way for understanding how filibustering stories were used in the print media to promote war or U.S. intervention in foreign affairs. Lazo argues that for exiled Cubans the print media became a tool to spread the call for the independence of Cuba and even annexation to the United States.<sup>7</sup> May has also addressed the role of the print media in promoting filibuster plots, arguing that "newspapers and periodicals published countless news items and editorials about filibuster plots, battles, and trials" which provided "the nation with heroes, martyrs and villains."<sup>8</sup> Indeed in the 1840s, newspapers published articles that attributed

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<sup>5</sup> Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar is Made With Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba*, (Middletown, CT 1988 Wesleyan University Press), 169-171.

<sup>6</sup> Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, (The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 5.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> May, "Young American Males and Filibustering in the Age of Manifest Destiny: The United States Army as a Cultural Mirror," *Organization of American Historians* Vol. 78. No. 3 (Dec., 1991): 857.

hero-like qualities to Sentmanat. Most of these newspapers were affiliated to the Democratic Party, which supported James Polk's pro-territorial expansion position in his 1844 campaign. On the other hand, some Whig papers, particularly the DC National Intelligencer, vilified Sentmanat and admonished other papers for favoring his illegal activity.

Hence, the Sentmanat expedition and its aftermath provide a lens to analyze nineteenth-century codes of honor and the use of the U.S. print media for propagandistic purposes. Through a close analysis of political manifestos, personal accounts and newspaper articles this research points to Sentmanat's conception of personal, military and political honor, which converged and ultimately drove him to filibuster in defense of his honor. Secondly, the dozens of newspaper articles printed about Sentmanat and his expedition reveal the ways in which partisan newspapers capitalized on the story in order to further their political agendas.

### Honor, Liberalism and the Republican *Man of Action*

By the time Sentmanat filibustered in Mexico his principles reflected a clear convergence of personal, military and political codes of honor.<sup>9</sup> Sentmanat left several traces of his strict adherence to these codes whether by dueling in defense of his personal honor, writing public manifestos in defense of his political honor or filibustering in defense of his military honor. These public transcripts of behavior supported the Iberian notions of masculinity which first reared him in Cuba.

Born and nurtured within the upper echelons of Havana society, Sentmanat was exposed early in his life to rigorous social norms. Sentmanat's aunt was Teresa de Sentmanat y Copons, who was married to the Conde de Santa Clara, Juan Procopio de Bassecourt y Bryas. The Conde was captain general of Cuba from 1796 to 1799.<sup>10</sup> The Sentmanats were also of noble blood related to the Casa de los Marqueses Sentmanat y de Castellodosius, grandes de Espana.<sup>11</sup> These families schooled their children in traditional Iberian principles and norms which emphasized male dominance over the female. For elite creoles, personal honor embodied a number of characteristics, attitudes and conducts that rationalized men's social and racial hierarchy.<sup>12</sup> Because of the importance of honor to male identity and to the maintenance of social hierarchies, it had to be defended when exposed to threats.

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<sup>9</sup> Francisco Sentmanat, "Manifiesto de Francisco de Sentmanat." San Juan Bautista, Tabasco: May 25, 1841, *The Pronunciamento in Independent Mexico 1821-1876*. University of St. Andrews.

<<http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamentos/search.php?searchString=sentmanat&pid=204>> (accessed April 18, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> For genealogy see Sherry Johnson, "From Authority to Impotence: Arango's Adversaries and their Fall from Power during the Constitutional Period (1808-1823)," *Ediciones Universidad Salamanca*, 158 (2009): 206 and Santa Cruz y Mallen, Francisco Xavier, "Del pasado-Por el Conde San Juan de Jaruco: El Capit an General Conde de Santa Clara," *Diario de la Marina*, November 28, 1948. <[http://www.cubangenclub.org/members/del\\_pasado/del\\_pasado\\_capitan\\_general\\_conde\\_santa\\_clara.htm](http://www.cubangenclub.org/members/del_pasado/del_pasado_capitan_general_conde_santa_clara.htm)> (Accessed April 20, 2012).

<sup>11</sup> See Santa Cruz y Mallen, Francisco Xavier, "Del pasado-Por el Conde San Juan de Jaruco: El Capit an General Conde de Santa Clara." While this article contains some inaccurate biographical information on Francisco de Sentmanat, the lineage generally coincides with Sherry Johnson's account.

<sup>12</sup> Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 25.

The Sentmanat family was also of a longstanding military tradition.<sup>13</sup> Ramon de Sentmanat, his father, advanced to brigadier general of the Spanish forces and several of his uncles had distinguished military careers.<sup>14</sup> Brave and honorable service was publicly recognized and rewarded in Cuba,<sup>15</sup> however, maintaining such public prestige was not easy, as the young Francisco de Sentmanat probably learned early in his life. Slandorous public accusations could easily call into question honorable careers. In the 1810s, Sentmanat's father, Ramon was publicly calumniated by a disgruntled peninsular captain, Antonio de Alcazar. Ramon demanded restitution from Alcazar, but never received it. Instead, the Sentmanats along with other Creole families in Cuba lost prestige and status when the paranoid Spanish Crown purged creoles and *radicados* from authority. Despite of this episode Francisco Sentmanat, followed in his father's footsteps and pursued his military career in Spain "under the auspices of two well-positioned uncles."<sup>16</sup>

Ramon de Sentmanat's dramatic fall from power likely influenced Francisco's perceptions of the Spanish Crown, but his more radical political views probably developed under liberal, Father Felix Varela. Sentmanat attended the San Carlos Seminary and studied under the priest with whom he took courses in constitutional government.<sup>17</sup> In the early 1820s, Sentmanat along with other graduates of Varela's classes signed a petition in support of imperial political reform. This landed him in prison, but he escaped and ended up in Mexico under the service of the General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, while the latter still maintained allegiance to the liberal factions of that country. From Mexico, Sentmanat continued his involvement in conspiracies against the Spanish Crown.<sup>18</sup>

When Sentmanat sought fortune in Mexico, the country was in political disarray as most other newly independent Latin American nations. Mexicans had achieved independence in 1821, but the Spanish threat remained latent for several decades. In 1829, Spain attempted to regain control of its former colony and launched an expedition from Cuba. Despite Mexico's victory against the Spanish forces that same year, the armed struggle left the Mexican government and military in shambles. Concurrently, the central government in Mexico struggled to administer control over its northernmost provinces. Illegal and legal Anglo-American immigration to Texas posed various challenges. The new settlers arrived with economic and political plans which clashed with Mexican laws. Influential settlers often owned slaves and planned on using them for cotton production. Many of them ignored Mexican laws against slavery. Texans also sought statehood for their territory which at the time was part of the state of Coahuila—jointly named *Coahuila y Tejas*. Fearing conspiracy plots, Mexican president, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna denied Texans statehood. He also centralized power and "embraced the *centralistas*, a conservative, clerical,

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<sup>13</sup> In *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba*, Sherry Johnson argues that in the aftermath of the 1762 British occupation of Havana, military reforms altered the structure of the Cuban economy and society and an increased number of Cubans became involved in the military.

<sup>14</sup> Sherry Johnson, "From Authority to Impotence: Arango's Adversaries and their Fall from Power during the Constitutional Period (1808-1823)," *Ediciones Universidad Salamanca*, 158 (2009): 206.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>16</sup> Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the conflict between Empires over Slaver in Cuba*, (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 169.

<sup>17</sup> Johnson, Sherry, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba*, 178.

<sup>18</sup> Johnson, Sherry. *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba*, 177.

and authoritarian party” and fired the *federalista* or liberal vice president.<sup>19</sup> He abolished the Mexican, Liberal Constitution of 1824. In response, a series of Mexican provinces, including Tabasco and Texas, rebelled against the federal government. In 1836 a group of Texan rebels declared independence from Mexico. In Tabasco, Sentmanat’s sided with the *federalistas* and help oust the conservative government in Tabasco.<sup>20</sup> Sentmanat had worked closely with Santa Anna when he adhered to liberal principles, however, the president’s newly conservative stance was at odds with Sentmanat’s ideology.

Sentmanat’s involvement in both Cuban and Mexican politics reveals his predisposition to consistently defend republicanism against despotism. Despite his prior allegiance to Santa Anna, he stood by his federalist principles when the latter abolished the liberal Mexican constitution. Nonetheless some *federalistas* made allegations against Sentmanat for his prior affiliation to Santa Anna, claiming that Sentmanat was soft on *centralistas*. He publicly refuted these rumors in a manifesto, declaring his principles and defending his political honor.<sup>21</sup>

Sentmanat carried his personal life much as he did as a militant defender of republicanism. Between his involvement in anti-imperialist conspiracies in Cuba and the civil wars in Mexico, he married into one of the most prominent families in New Orleans. The marriage took place on 20 June 1831, after his second exile from Cuba and before his involvement in Mexican politics. Prominent New Orleans residents attended the wedding ceremony, including witness, Manuel Andry and Bernard Marigny, father of the bride and French-Creole nobleman, prominent politician in New Orleans.<sup>22</sup> While in the Crescent City, Sentmanat took part in a series of “affairs of honor.” This behavior was not uncommon for a male member of the upper echelons of New Orleans Society. The Marigny patriarch also took part in many duels.<sup>23</sup> The two also shared similar republican ideology, but Marigny appeared to be a supporter of territorial expansion. In Marigny’s *Thoughts on American Diplomacy*, he praised American democratizing institutions. He alluded to the death of well-known Cuban filibusters of the early 1850s calling them brave but unfortunate country-men. <sup>24</sup> He sympathized with their efforts despite the illegality of filibustering expeditions. In New Orleans Sentmanat found his niche, one that emphasized some of the same honor codes and republican values which shaped his involvement in politics and war from Cuba to Mexico.

Sentmanat’s networking in the Crescent City included other republican zealots. The *New Orleans Picayune* called Sentmanat a collaborator of General Jose Antonio Mejia and “another patriot against the ‘centralization against representation.’”<sup>25</sup> In 1856, Sentmanat’s daughter married the son of Pierre Soule, who was one of the most ardent promoters of William Walker’s

<sup>19</sup> Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, ( NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 661.

<sup>20</sup> “From Yucatan,” *New York Spectator*, September 4, 1841.

<sup>21</sup> Francisco Sentmanat, “Manifiesto de Francisco de Sentmanat.” *The Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico 1821-1876*. University of St. Andrews. San Juan Bautista, Tabasco: May 25, 1841. <<http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/search.php?searchString=sentmanat&pid=204>> (accessed April 18, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Charles Nolan, ed., *Sacramental Records of the Roman Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of New Orleans Vol 19, 1830-1831*, (New Orleans: Archdiocese of New Orleans, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999), 92.

<sup>24</sup> Bernard Marigny, *Thoughts upon the Foreign Policy of the United States, from 1784 to the Inauguration of Franklin Pierce; Statistics of Spain, of the island of Cuba* (New Orleans: J. L. Sollee, 1854), 36.

<sup>25</sup> “To Honorable Pierre Soule.” *New Orleans Picayune*, March 28, 1870.

filibustering schemes in the 1850s.<sup>26</sup> Nelvil also became member of the same militia that Sentmanat belonged to—the New Orleans Cazadores Regiment.<sup>27</sup> While the explicit connections of Marigny and Soule to Sentmanat's later filibustering activities in Mexico are not clear, while in New Orleans, Sentmanat certainly surrounded himself by men who shared many of his republican ideologies.

Sentmanat also spent his time in New Orleans challenging or dueling men he deemed corrupt, reaffirming his position as a sort of crusader against despotism.<sup>28</sup> In 1829, he wrote to the *New Orleans Bee*, to complain about a series of articles that were published by another newspaper, *L'Argus*, which he claimed, took the side of a man named Jean Guerin. He openly called him a liar and accused him of embezzlement. In another instance, he exposed the frauds of Ribaud, an alleged corrupt surveyor of the port of Tampico in Mexico. His quarrel with Ribaud ended in another duel.<sup>29</sup> This behavior contributed to his public identity as a man of honor and courage since details of duels were often printed in New Orleans papers. During this period only men of the upper classes were considered worthy of dueling, as those of the lower-classes brawled or got involved in street fights in order to resolve their personal disputes.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Sentmanat was evidently not afraid to give up his life in defense of his ideals, a characteristic which held elite men above others in their own mind.<sup>31</sup> Elite leaders had to set themselves apart from the masses, contrary to how politicians run today attempting to pass as "common men."<sup>32</sup> Sentmanat's dueling record in New Orleans signals Sentmanat's commitment to maintaining his personal honor and masculinity. As a man of high society and leadership he needed to maintain it against any insult to himself and his family.

Although dueling confirmed virtues of the male in a very public manner when the affairs were published, duels could also underline possible personal deficiencies. Too much dueling could reveal unresolved personal problems.<sup>33</sup> Yet Sentmanat dueled or used the print media to attack individuals strategically during his years in New Orleans. The men he chose to challenge were men accused of crimes against society not merely against Sentmanat. In the case of Jean Guerin, the man he accused of embezzlement, Sentmanat implied that his actions had defamed his fellow-citizens. Similarly, Ribaud was a corrupt official

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<sup>26</sup> Pierre Soule was an outspoken advocate of U.S. expansionism and was later involved in the filibustering schemes of William Walker, the most notable filibuster of the 1850s in Nicaragua. For more information see Preston Moore, "Pierre Soule: Southern Expansionist and Promoter," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol 21, No. 2 (May, 1955), doi: 2955118.

<sup>27</sup> "Funeral of General Sentmanat," *Times-Picayune*. June 22, 1845. His son in law, Nelvil Soule would also become member of the New Orleans Cazadores and Captain of the regiment during the Civil War period.

<sup>28</sup> See Arthur Freeman, "The Early Career of Pierre Soule," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 25 No. 4 (October 1942) pp. 971-1119. <<http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/filibusters/Soule-LHQ.pdfand>> (Accessed 23 October 2010). Also see "A l'Editeur de l'Abeille." *Abeja*. October 23, 1829.

<sup>29</sup> "A l'Editeur de l'Abeille." *Abeja*. October 23, 1829.

<sup>30</sup> Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 349-61.

<sup>31</sup> Joanne Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 167.

<sup>32</sup> Pablo Piccato, "Politics and the Technology of Honor: Dueling in Turn-of-the-Century Mexico." *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Winter, 1999), 331-354. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3789626>> (Accessed April 1, 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 349-61.



whose actions could affect other fellow-citizens. He positioned himself as a crusader against dishonorable men, perhaps harboring political ambitions that he later fulfilled in Mexico. Indeed the men who Sentmanat duelled allowed him to check passion and transform it under the rubric of honor; he could not be accused for succumbing to personal vendettas when he killed a man for the greater good of the gentry.<sup>34</sup>

This trajectory from Cuba, to Mexico, to New Orleans, exposed Sentmanat to various cultures with strong codes of military, political and personal honor. In Cuba, he was raised within a traditional Spanish household and within an increasingly militant society. The antebellum American South was broadly similar in its society's own codes of honor and predilection for violence. Studies in both regions relate the "short temper" of males at the face of insult.<sup>35</sup> Yet, this culture of honor and violence was more highly developed in the American South than in Spanish America, measuring by "the thousands of duels that settled questions of honor among elite males and the even more common fights with knives, clubs, and fists that resulted from the offended honor of more humble men."<sup>36</sup> Doubly exposed and reared in these societies, Sentmanat adopted violent practices in defense of his honor.<sup>37</sup>

Even though notions of honor began to change in Latin America during the nineteenth-century, partly due to collateral changes brought by the processes of independence in most former Spanish colonies, elite men and women in particular continued to observe strict codes of honor. For instance, the practice of dueling, despite being outlawed a century before independence, continued into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup>

Like personal honor, military and political honor adhered to gendered notions of masculinity. Sentmanat's predilection for being a man of military action is associated with these ideas of masculinity. Cuban exiled writers of the mid-nineteenth-century made this association and printed works which elevated the man of action to the archetypal male. The new man of Cuba was masculine via his militarism and liberal ideology. These writers favored the use of the sword over the use of the pen, but felt impotent to do so in exile. Many of these men wrote in exile from the United States and their writings reflected the frustrations they confronted for failing to meet the model of masculinity.<sup>39</sup> Sentmanat embodied this man of action during the 1840s in the same way that other filibusters did in the 1850s.<sup>40</sup> The man of action was more masculine than the man of the pen<sup>41</sup> because in his militancy, more was at stake—his life. Sentmanat was willing to lose his life for his honor in personal and in political

<sup>34</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, 143.

<sup>35</sup> Lyman L. Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame and Violence in Colonial Latin America*. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1998, 14-15.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

<sup>37</sup> "Duel," *Maryland Sun*. April 19, 1844. Also see "Duel." *Rhode Island Newport Mercury*. April 27, 1844 and "Duel" April 19, 1844. *Virginia Gazette*.

<sup>38</sup> Piccato, "Politics and the Technology of Honor: Dueling in Turn-of-the-Century Mexico." *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Winter, 1999), 331-354. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3789626>> (Accessed April 15, 2011).

<sup>39</sup> Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, (The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 100.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 99 The author also acknowledges that these notions developed throughout the nineteenth century when Latin American revolutionaries such as Jose Marti, Simon Bolivar, and Argentinean president and novelist Domingo F. Sarmiento, grappled with a perceived opposition between intellectual work and military action.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

affairs. He was a *republican man of action*, willing to lose his life not only in defense of personal honor via dueling, but also in defense of his political ideals. Like the contemporary defenders of the duel, he believed that the duelist humbly offered his life for a greater cause than his own. Sentmanat saw the defense of republican values as his cause.<sup>42</sup> For a man who grew up during the age of democratic revolutions and who was indoctrinated in republican values there was no separation between personal honor and political and military duty. Personal, political and military codes of honor reinforced each other and drove him to act according to political inclinations and “revolutionary masculinity.” The militarism manifested in Sentmanat’s later filibustering expedition to Mexico provided an excellent opportunity for him to prove his masculinity and his honor. The soldier and the duelist both commanded respect because they offered their lives in acts of martyrdom. Furthermore, dueling and defending political ideals by offering up one’s own life provided an outlet for achieving power—the political manifestation of honor.<sup>43</sup>

Lazo pointed to the influential, literary precedent for the *man of action* by quoting from Miguel de Cervantes’ seventeenth-century text, *Don Quixote*: “to attain eminence in the learned professions costs a man time, nights of study, hunger, nakedness, headaches, indigestion, and other such things...But to reach the point of being a good soldier requires all that it requires to be a student but to so much greater a degree that there is no comparison; for the soldier is in peril of losing his life at every step.”<sup>44</sup> Newspaper accounts that followed Sentmanat through the last years of his life and well after reinforce the contemporary interest in the “man of action” who so perfectly embodied bravery and martyrdom.

#### A Public Affair 1840-1847

The following section unveils both the ways in which the U.S. print media reinforced Sentmanat’s own perceptions of himself as an honorable, defender of republicanism and the political spins which directed most accounts of Sentmanat’s adventures. Most articles about Sentmanat appeared between the period of 1841 and 1846, which marks his rise and fall in Mexico. This period also coincides with increased tension between the U.S. and Mexico over the annexation of Texas. According to recent historiography, American newspapers were often known as the organs of political parties and carried news with partisan spins. Many of these papers adhered to the Whig or Democratic parties’ views on economic and political policy.<sup>45</sup> Most Whigs adamantly opposed territorial expansion and favored a new Bank of the United States. They also favored a stronger central government and intervention in the economy. Democrats ardently defended states’ rights and most favored

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<sup>42</sup> Piccato, “Politics and the Technology of Honor: Dueling in Turn-of-the-Century Mexico.” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Winter, 1999), 331-354. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3789626>> (Accessed April 15, 2011).

<sup>43</sup> Johnson Lyman, “Dangerous Words, Provocative Gestures, Violent Acts” in *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Lyman L. Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 14-15.

<sup>44</sup> Lazo, *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, 101.

<sup>45</sup> For more information on newspaper partisanship see Melvin Laracey’s, *Presidents and the People: The Parisian Story of Going Public*, (TAMU Press, 2002); Michael F. Holt’s, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War*, (Oxford University Press, 2003); John Sacher’s, *A Perfect War of Politics: Parties, Politicians, and Democracy in Louisiana 1882-1861*, (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2003).

territorial expansion and protection of the institution of slavery.<sup>46</sup> Not surprisingly, democratic newspapers favored Sentmanat and criticized the Mexican government for executing him. Although most articles about Sentmanat followed the agendas of political parties there are some exceptions. The Whig-leaning newspapers appear more divided on the issue, with some showing adamant criticism of the General, while others demonstrating sympathy and even admiration.

The rise of Sentmanat in Mexico began when he engaged in revolutionary activity against the Mexican central government in 1840. His incursion was facilitated by the deep political turmoil that people in Mexico continued to experience in the 1830s.<sup>47</sup> Like Texas, Yucatan seceded, for a second time, in 1840. That same year, Sentmanat joined a coalition of forces in Tabasco and together with the leaders, Fernando Nicolas Maldonado and Juan Pablo Anaya, deposed the conservative government of Ignacio Gutierrez.<sup>48</sup> The *federalistas*, debated over a provisional government and in 1841, Tabasco also separated from Mexico.

Despite his role in deposing the government of Tabasco and leading Tabasco forces, Sentmanat did not claim the territory for himself or for the U.S. government. In fact, after deposing Ignacio Gutierrez, Sentmanat left Tabasco, relinquishing power. He did not return until 1841 after factional strife continued. Sentmanat helped reincorporate Tabasco in 1842 after a series of negotiations which forced Santa Anna to make assurances that federalism would be restored.<sup>49</sup> Subsequently, Santa Anna gave Sentmanat the governorship of Tabasco. Sentmanat and some newspaper reports asserted an election took place in favor of Tabasco's return to the Mexican family and Sentmanat's appointment as governor.<sup>50</sup> Whether Sentmanat was an opportunist at this point or a zealous republican, willing to cooperate with the central government is unclear. Nonetheless, his actions do not appear driven by expansionist pretensions—part of the *Manifest Destiny* framework. Rather, Sentmanat's behavior points to the importance of integrating this paradigm with the convergence of honor and nineteenth-century republican ideology.

American newspapers quickly took notice of Sentmanat's activities in Mexico. The *New York Spectator*, upon receiving news of Sentmanat's victories, readily reported on them with some favorable bias toward Sentmanat. This trend followed that of other U.S. newspapers which favored *federalista* rebellions. The *New York Spectator* emphasized Sentmanat's victories over *Centralista* forces and outlined the various movements working in concert toward revolution. Regarding the neighboring revolution in Yucatan the paper stated "the most flattering accounts are given of the progress of the Yucatan republic in the road to power and prosperity."<sup>51</sup> Although one of the newspapers' editors, Horace Greeley, later became an outspoken abolitionist

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<sup>46</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 507- 508.

<sup>47</sup> Carlos Martinez Assad, *Breve Historia de Tabasco*, (Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico 1996), 96. Also in "From Tabasco," *NY Spectator*, January 5, 1842.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 99.

<sup>49</sup> "Convenio de Ixtacomitan," Ixtacomitan, Chiapas: December 12, 1841, *The Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico 1821-1876*, University of St. Andrews, <<http://arts.standrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/search.php?searchString=sentmanat&pid=1095>> (Accessed April 20, 2012).

<sup>50</sup> Assad, 101 and "From Tabasco" *NY Spectator*, January 5, 1842.

<sup>51</sup> "From Yucatan," *New York Spectator*, September 4, 1841.

and promoter of the Whig Party and later, of the Republican Party, the political affiliation of this newspaper is unclear for this period.

The *Spectator's* spin was more in tune with that of the Southern Democratic paper, the *Patriot*. It reported on Sentmanat's appointment as governor and when rumors of Sentmanat's collaboration with the government of Santa Anna to repress rebellious troops in Yucatan reached the U.S., it delivered the news from the Yucatan rebels' perspective. It referred to them as the "unpretending States rights men of the Peninsula." The *Southern Patriot* even included an excerpt from a Yucatan newspaper article calling it "the fervent prayers that are daily sent on high."<sup>52</sup> The inclusion of religious references created sympathy towards the Yucatecans' cause and it humanized them in the eyes of the papers' readers. It created a nexus between the religious in the United States and the faithful Yucatecans. The article also referred to Yucatan as a republic that needed to sustain herself against the Mexicans and called for her sons to prefer death than the ignominy of a reconquest. The article's inclusion of such nationalistic fervor and its acknowledgment of Yucatan as a republic functioned as validation of the cessation and of the sovereignty of Yucatan as a separate nation. The newspaper omitted any context about the factionalism that existed within the alleged union of the Yucatan family.

Although in the views of some Mexican *federalistas*, Sentmanat's alleged collaboration with *centralistas* challenged Sentmanat's political allegiances, U.S newspapers like the northern *Spectator* and the *Southern Patriot* were not critical of Sentmanat. Despite their opposing political endorsements, both papers implied that Santa Anna had made concessions toward Sentmanat if he could help reincorporate Tabasco. From the viewpoints expressed in these papers, he successfully helped depose a centralist government in order to reinstate federalism. Nothing about his actions had yet challenged the image of a courageous and honorable general that was forged during his years in New Orleans. In fact, the articles reporting on his Mexican adventures reinforced Sentmanat's heroic status. His honor and masculinity were publicly confirmed because of his offensive military action, perceived victories and bravery. These militant attributes proved manliness, especially in the U.S. South where concepts of masculinity were intertwined with militancy.<sup>53</sup>

Sentmanat only governed Tabasco for one year. In July of 1843, he rebelled against Santa Anna after he sent another Cuban, General Pedro de Ampudia, on a mission to repress separatists in Yucatan. Sentmanat denied passage to Ampudia's troops and refused to harbor them. In response, Ampudia attacked Sentmanat's troops and decimated them. He forced Sentmanat into exile and subsequently discredited him in front of his troops and in latter public reports.<sup>54</sup> In such reports, Ampudia emphasized that he decimated his troops in a half hour and that Sentmanat took off in an embarrassing and disorderly retreat. When he addressed *Tabasquenos* he called him a tyrant, an ungrateful adventurer who committed his troops to a cause which was personal to him forgetting the considerations that he owed them and "insisting on allowing hate

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<sup>52</sup> *Southern Patriot*, July 21, 1842.

<sup>53</sup> John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South 1800-1861*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).

<sup>54</sup> Carlos Maria Bustamante, "Apuntes para la historia del gobierno del General Antonio Lopez de Santa-Anna, desde principios de Octubre de 1841 hasta el 6 de diciembre de 1844, en que fue depuesto el mando por uniforme voluntad de la nación." *Ampudia letters*, August 1, 1843.

<<http://www.senado2010.gob.mx/docs/biblioteca/virtual/1/2584/2584.htm>> (Accessed April 20, 2012).

which results from *contiendas intestinas* [personal conflicts]" befall on them."<sup>55</sup> The two generals shared a mutual conflict which led to the standoff at Tabasco. Sentmanat's exile, the result of this standoff, led Sentmanat to return and filibuster in 1844. This demonstrates the limits of the empire paradigm when discussing filibustering. While Sentmanat was a zealous republican, ultimately it was personal beef and dishonor which led him to launch the illegal expedition from U.S. territory.

Despite Ampudia's account of the embarrassing retreat he forced on Sentmanat's forces, U.S newspapers continued to print articles favorable towards Sentmanat. The Pennsylvania *North American*, whose editor Morton McMichael was a prominent Whig, echoed an article by the New Orleans *Bee* describing Sentmanat's declaration against the general government and enthusiastically reporting that despite of his defeat, his forces were increasing daily. The paper mentioned Sentmanat's former residence in New Orleans and the fact that he was son-in-law to "one of our oldest and most respectable citizens."<sup>56</sup> The New Orleans papers constantly made this connection when reporting about Sentmanat. This connection to the Marignys functioned as more than a simple reference for the reader because it reasserted Sentmanat's status and kinship to a distinguished family. The articles also regularly referred to Sentmanat as the *General*. Bertram Wyatt-Brown has argued that in slaveholding states, titles and military rankings were an obvious and useful signification of esteem.<sup>57</sup> Newspapers reinforced social hierarchies by alluding to rankings and kinship ties. By including Sentmanat's connections, newspapers reinforced his position of leadership in his former city of New Orleans and positively portrayed Sentmanat. Up to this period, American papers whether of Whig or Democrat partisanship demonstrate some favor toward Sentmanat and separatist movements in Mexico.

While kinship connections were mostly relevant to New Orleans residents, Northern newspapers also emphasized them and, in doing so, reinforced those social hierarchies. The *Pennsylvania North American* reported that by July 29, 1843, General Sentmanat had rebelled against the Mexican federal government and was at the head of 600 men preparing to make a stand against the troops under General Ampudia who had been dispatched against him. According to the paper, Sentmanat's forces daily increased in numbers, and *independentistas* from the rebellious state of Yucatan were to join him soon. The paper added that "General Sentmanat was formerly a resident of New Orleans and son-in law to one of the oldest and most respectable citizens[, Bernard Marigny]."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> [Translation by author Ampudia Letters in Bustamante, Carlos Maria. "Apuntes para la historia del gobierno del General Antonio Lopez de Santa-Anna, desde principios de Octubre de 1841 hasta el 6 de diciembre de 1844, en que fue depuesto el mando por uniforme voluntad de la nación." August 1, 1843 Ampudia letters <<http://www.senado2010.gob.mx/docs/bibliotecaVirtual/1/2584/2584.htm>> direct text [olvidandose de las consideraciones que debia guardaras y empenandose en que recayese sobre vosotros el odio que resulta de las contiendas intestinas]

<sup>56</sup> "Important From Mexico, Revolution in Tobasco." *Pennsylvania North American*. July 29, 1843 <[http://imgcache.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl\\_004032011\\_2230\\_34013\\_895.pdf](http://imgcache.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_004032011_2230_34013_895.pdf)> (Accessed April 1, 2011) Also see "Important From Mexico, Revolution in Tobasco." *South Carolina Southern Patriot*. July 26, 1843. <[http://imgcache.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl\\_004032011\\_2233\\_48608\\_23.pdf](http://imgcache.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_004032011_2233_48608_23.pdf)> (Accessed April 1, 2011)

<sup>57</sup> Bertram, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, 146.

<sup>58</sup> "Important from Mexico, Revolution in Tobasco" *Pennsylvania North American*. July 29, 1843. A similar account was also reported by the *Southern Patriot* of South Carolina on July 26, 1843.

On August 4, 1843 the Georgia *Augusta Chronicle*, which often adhered to conservative national Whig line and came close to echoing the Whig press elsewhere on issues of tariffs and the National Bank, printed a similar article to one published by the Democrat-leaning New Orleans *Picayune*.<sup>59</sup> It stated that Sentmanat was making every preparation to return to Tabasco. Alluding to his courage, the article stated that he was “determined to fight or die.”<sup>60</sup> Other papers spoke of Sentmanat’s inferiority of forces and how in spite of that he inflicted severe damage to those of Ampudia.<sup>61</sup> Despite Ampudia’s official reports of a short and swift defeat of Sentmanat’s troops, these articles described an obstinate and prolonged battle of several hours.<sup>62</sup> While Ampudia may have inflated his military abilities in his reports, the articles made no mention of the different version of events. Furthermore, they emphasized Sentmanat’s offensive attitude. In light of his retreat and the circumstances of the battle, this emphasis in various papers is striking.

These reactions point to newspapers’ sympathies toward secessionists in Mexico, despite their Democrat or Whig leanings in issues of economics and fiscal policy. Filibustering seems to be a less contentious subject at least during Sentmanat’s initial rise in Mexican politics. During this period, in which Sentmanat collaborated with Santa Anna in the repression of Yucatan separatists, the papers presented the stories from the Yucatecan point of view. With the turn of events and Sentmanat’s defiance of the federal government, the *Southern Patriot*, the *Pennsylvania North American*, the *Georgia Augusta Chronicle*, among others reported the news in a manner which clearly favored Sentmanat over the federal troops. The General’s behavior merged in line with the newspapers clear bias for secessionists. Even if Sentmanat had no stake in Mexico’s conflicts with Texas or in a possible full-scale war between the U.S. and Mexico, his dissent in Tabasco strengthened American perceptions and public opinion of an oppressive and aggressive central Mexican government, which in turn, strengthened the pro-war cause of expansionist Whigs and Democrat newspaper editors. Internal strife also weakened the ability of the Mexican state to defend the territory of Texas and against a possible war with the U.S. Hence, Sentmanat’s dissent contributed to factional strife in Mexico and made the country a weaker contender in a possible war with the U.S, while it also strengthened pro-war sentiments in the U.S.

These articles present the first look at U.S. reactions to the Sentmanat affair. They reflect a positive disposition toward Sentmanat, regardless of the region in which they were printed. While most of these articles are echoes of New Orleans papers, other newspapers actively participated in constructing Sentmanat’s public identity by reprinting the articles unedited. Sections referring to Sentmanat’s kinship were often included after he declared against Santa Anna’s government. His military-offensive attitude against Ampudia was highlighted as a sign of bravery.

The publication of Sentmanat’s battle against Ampudia’s troops initially reinforced his publicly constructed honor, but reports of his offensive return to Tabasco proved false. He did not return immediately as the papers indicated. Instead, he fled the country confirming Ampudia’s description of the account. Ampudia not only decimated Sentmanat in battle, he effectively questioned his

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<sup>59</sup> Anthony Gene Carey, *Parties, Slavery and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*. (University of Georgia Press, 1997)

<sup>60</sup> “Latest from Tobasco,” *Georgia Augusta Chronicle*, August 4, 1843.

<sup>61</sup> “Mexico,” *Massachusetts Boston Courier*, August 14, 1843.

<sup>62</sup> “From Mexico” *Georgia Augusta Chronicle* August 7, 1843.

military capabilities and his honor. Regardless of Sentmanat's beliefs of his self-worth, honor was located in the public—where an individual's reputation was malleable and ultimately defined by other peers. His failure in Mexico and his embarrassing retreat questioned his reputation and masculinity in the eyes of the very people who read about his heroic adventures.<sup>63</sup> In this way, the political actually became personal. When Sentmanat returned to New Orleans, he quickly became involved in masculine and militant activities. He duelled and he recruited men in order to return to Mexico and face Ampudia once more.<sup>64</sup>

Sentmanat's publicized affair of honor during April of 1844 in New Orleans served two purposes—it restored his reputation as a brave man, despite the embarrassing loss against Ampudia and demonstrated to his peers his military prowess. During this period he recruited for his filibustering expedition. A former lieutenant of the New Orleans Cazadores regiment, Sentmanat understood that militia officers needed to prove competence and manliness in order to demonstrate they were worthy of leadership. Dueling presented an excellent opportunity to exhibit his prowess with firearms before his prospective recruits.<sup>65</sup> Although most of the recruits likely did not witness the affairs of honor the duel was publicized by the local papers.

Shortly after this affair, Sentmanat launched his military expedition against Ampudia on May 25, 1844. Newspapers quickly began to cover the expedition. At first, the *Times-Picayune* seemed particularly interested in ruling out the news of the expedition. The paper alleged people in New Orleans had no prior knowledge of it. In June of 1844, one of the *Picayune's* articles ridiculed the story of Sentmanat's expedition which had previously been printed by *La Indiana*, its New Orleans Spanish counterpart. The paper questioned the claim that Sentmanat recruited men in New Orleans in order to filibuster the state of Tabasco. The *Picayune* stated it “measurably” translated from that paper an article about an expedition that emulated that of the first conqueror of Mexico, Hernan Cortez. The *Picayune* emphasized the extravagance of the story and sarcastically commented that Sentmanat was a wild adventurer, one that would surely awake its reader's interests.<sup>66</sup> Despite the *Times-Picayune's* insistence on having no prior information of the excursion, the *Pennsylvania Public Ledger* picked up the Sentmanat story on June 24, 1844 and confirmed that some newspapers had knowledge of the expedition well before June. It stated the editors of the *Diario*<sup>67</sup> got wind of Sentmanat's expedition before it even sailed out.<sup>68</sup>

*La Indiana* certainly had major errors in its story. First, it said the schooner on which Sentmanat and his followers traveled was the *William Tono*. The *Picayune* corroborated that no such William Tono had been in or left New Orleans, but that the *William A. Turner* cleared on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May for Honduras and that it was the only ship with a name resembling the alleged

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<sup>63</sup> Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 32.

<sup>64</sup> “Duel,” *Maryland Sun*, April 19, 1844.

<[http://imgcache.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl\\_004032011\\_2305\\_59399\\_161.pdf](http://imgcache.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_004032011_2305_59399_161.pdf)> (Accessed April 1, 1844).

<sup>65</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, 148.

<sup>66</sup> “A Daring Expedition,” *Massachusetts Daily Atlas*, June 13, 1844.

<sup>67</sup> No information on the origins of the *Diario* is provided by the *Ledger*.

<sup>68</sup> “Later from Mexico,” *Pennsylvania Public Ledger*, June 24, 1844.

vessel of the filibusterers.<sup>69</sup> Nonetheless, the *Picayune's* article is noteworthy in light of other accounts emphasizing the “public nature” of the expedition.<sup>70</sup>

Just a few days later, perhaps after news of the excursion could no longer be hidden, the *Times-Picayune* included a report by a gentleman who corroborated the filibustering story. He stated he had been on a different ship alongside the *William A. Turner* when she was “off one of the passes, and steering for the Mexican coast.” He said the decks of the vessel were “crowded with the men of various nations, but principally Spaniards, and that they were busy cleaning their muskets and other arms. The captain of the vessel had told the informant that they were emigrants, on their way to Honduras,” but the informant stated they did not look like peaceful immigrants.<sup>71</sup> In addition to this man’s account, the author of the article provided information that suggests a printer of the city was aware of the expedition. He said “one of the printers, who are attached to the offices of New Orleans, had made every arrangement to join the expedition, but were accidentally left. Furthermore, it detailed that “the object of the leader was to land at Tabasco [SIC], declare at once against the General Government, and by the suddenness and daring of the movement he hoped to raise a revolution that would spread over the entire state.” The article also confirmed there were a few Americans among his men.<sup>72</sup>

According to the various newspaper accounts, Ampudia ordered Sentmanat killed within a few days of disembarking in Tabasco. He also had his head severed, in order to display it publicly—a treatment reserved for slaves during this time period. The Mexican consul in New Orleans, Mr. Arangoiz, was concerned about the decimation of such information. The *Picayune* published an extract from the letter he sent to the *New Orleans Courier* with concerns about published articles by the *Picayune* and the *Courier*. Arangoiz said the “dead body of Mr. Sentmanat was respected and no outrage was committed upon it” and asked the *Courier* to announce that the sources of their information were not entirely reliable.<sup>73</sup> Despite the pleas of the Mexican consul, the next day the *Picayune* confirmed that Sentmanat’s head was cut off.<sup>74</sup> The consul’s denial contradicted most accounts which described that Sentmanat’s head was severed and publicly displayed in the capital of Tabasco. Interestingly, Arangoiz was careful not to say that the body was *not* mutilated and rather, he insisted that his body had been respected and expressed concern about the validity of the information the New Orleans papers were publishing. More than an effort to establish the truth of Sentmanat’s final moments, Arangoiz seemed preoccupied with how the public might receive the news of the story for “on reading these expressions” he felt, “the public...would conceive an unfavorable idea of the civilization of the Mexican people.”<sup>75</sup> The threat of war during this period between Mexico and the U.S was high, as the U.S. Congress continued to debate the annexation of Texas. Public repudiation of Mexicans only heightened the tensions and turned public opinion in favor of war.

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<sup>69</sup> “A Daring Expedition,” *Times-Picayune*.

<sup>70</sup> Several newspaper articles point to the public nature of the expedition including “The Last Moment of Life,” *DC National Intelligencer*, August 19, 1844 and “Sentmanat and his Expedition,” *Louisiana Times-Picayune*, June 5, 1844.

<sup>71</sup> “Sentmanat and his Expedition,” *Louisiana Times-Picayune*, June 5, 1844.

<sup>72</sup> “Sentmanat and his Expedition,” *Louisiana Times-Picayune*, June 5, 1844.

<sup>73</sup> *Times-Picayune*, July 6 1844.

<sup>74</sup> “Late from Mexico,” *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, July 7, 1844.

<sup>75</sup> *Times-Picayune*, July 6 1844.



Arrangoiz's pleas and concerns become more relevant when analyzing the way some newspapers used the story months after Sentmanat's death. The Democratic, *DC Madisonian*, published on January 7, 1845 detailed correspondence between various diplomats protesting the severity of the punishments and asking for clemency for their fellow country-men.<sup>76</sup> The Whig-leaning, *Massachusetts Daily Atlas* alleged that the correspondence published by the Madisonian was of little interest and was sent to the Madisonian for publication "merely to excite a feeling of anger against Mexico."<sup>77</sup> These articles reveal a polarization of opinions with regards to Sentmanat as tensions between Mexico and the United States over Texas heightened.

Over a year after Sentmanat's death, newspapers continued to use its sensationalistic appeal. On August 15, 1845 just a few months before the U.S. officially annexed Texas, the *New York Albany Evening Journal*, founded by the Whig Thurlow Weed, and the *Ohio Plain Dealer* published a letter allegedly addressed to a "respected" resident of Washington.<sup>78</sup> The letter was apparently written by an American in Mexico. The American described how there was so much anger against Americans that they were going to win the war without much effort. He stated that General Ampudia was at the head of a campaign of ten-thousand Mexicans who would "subdue and effectually conquer the US... liberate the slaves [and] give them their freedom and a colony in Mexico." In commentary, the article reminded its readers that Ampudia was the same man who killed Sentmanat and "boiled his head in oil and as his reward is to be appointed to the command of...ten thousand Mexican veterans, who are to attack the southern States to butcher and boil in oil all the old women men and children, to lay waste the fields of the sunny South; liberate the negroes give them Mexican liberty and the benefit of their humane and benign laws and institutions."<sup>79</sup> Two years after Sentmanat's death, on June 2, 1846 the *Vermont Gazette* also reminded its readers that Ampudia boiled another gentleman's head in oil, and added that "he ate the ears too- but we are only certain of the former fact," juxtaposing Sentmanat, the civilized gentleman from New Orleans to the savage Ampudia.<sup>80</sup>

A handful of U.S. papers did not show sympathy toward Sentmanat or capitalized on the sensational appeal of the details of Sentmanat's death. The Whig *DC Daily National Intelligencer*, which demonstrated a consistent anti-expansionist and anti-war stance, condemned Sentmanat's actions from the beginning and applauded those criticisms published by other newspapers. It noted that the *New Orleans Tropic* stated the Tabasco expedition was imprudent, fool-hardy, wild and unwarrantable because the U.S. was at peace with Mexico. "The result was lamentable," it continued, "but it was one that was expected and fully deserved." It regretted the way he died and protested the

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<sup>76</sup> Melvin Laracey, *Presidents and the People: The Partisan Story of Going Public*, (TAMU Press, 2002), 86.

<sup>77</sup> "Mexican Diplomatic Correspondence." *Massachusetts Daily Atlas*. Jan 11, 1845. For information on the *Massachusetts Daily Atlas*' political affiliations see Frederic Hudson, *Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872*. Nabu Press, 2010, 390.

<sup>78</sup> "From the Washington Union" *Ohio Plain Dealer*. August 15, 1845 and also in the *New York Albany Evening Journal*. August 15, 1845. For political affiliations see Michael F. 5, 1845, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War*, (Oxford University Press, 2003), 433.

<sup>79</sup> "From the Washington Union" *Ohio Plain Dealer*. August 15, 1845.

<sup>80</sup> "Selected Items," *Vermont Gazette*, June 2, 1846.

“barbarous cruelty practiced by the Mexicans,” but accepted that Sentmanat’s actions were contrary to all law, recognized by no government, and was to all intents and purposes a revolutionary expedition, and those who composed it were accordingly dealt with as traitors and invaders.”<sup>81</sup> Although few criticisms of Sentmanat appear in the papers, they are noteworthy and show the divergent opinions in the print media of the time. These criticisms often came from the known “organs” or newspapers of the Whig party in both the North and South.

In August of 1844 several newspapers published articles about Sentmanat’s last words to his wife. Most of these took a sympathetic tone. The democrat *Maryland Sun* stated his words were full of “religious feeling, affection for his wife, his children, his family generally.”<sup>82</sup> In response to these publications, the *DC Daily National Intelligencer* again voiced its criticism of Sentmanat and praised the efforts of newspapers like *Old School Republican* for admonishing the actions of the General who led a number of brave men into “certain destruction with no better hope than that of kindling up in ones’ own country the horrors of civil war, this is a thing that can claim no brave man’s pity...but should rather call down the austere judgment which all times have pronounced upon him who seek, in mere passion or faction to wrap in blood the land that bore him.”<sup>83</sup> According to the same article in the *DC Intelligencer*, the *Old School Republican* called Sentmanat’s efforts “wanton unprovoked hair brained and foolhardy pieces of Quixotism which has been perpetrated within the recollection of living men.” The paper reminded its readers that Sentmanat “met death *well*.” Whether the paper italicized the word “well” to refer to Sentmanat’s courage or it whimsically pointed to, but omitted the gruesome details of his death, is left to interpretation. In light of the sarcasm in the rest of the article, the latter seems more plausible. The newspaper also justified the Mexican authorities’ response to foreign ministers who solicited the remission of the penalty incurred by Sentmanat by asking “Why did you not interpose to prevent the commission of the crime, instead of coolly waiting to see it committed and then stop into prevent the punishment which it demanded!”<sup>84</sup>

A few years later, in the midst of the Mexican-American war, *St. Louis Republican*, when discussing the death of Ampudia, mentioned his connection to Sentmanat’s death, but avoided discussing details of his death. This contrasts with the articles of the *Southern Patriot*, the *Vermont Gazette*, the *Madisonian* and the *New York Albany Evening Journal*, which strongly emphasized the gruesome details. These articles point to partisan trends that were not strictly divided along regional lines, but rather, along political parties. Newspapers which generally favored Democrat, presidential candidate James K. Polk, who ran a pro-territorial expansion campaign, also favored Sentmanat. On the other hand, pro-Whig papers which favored Henry Clay were more likely to be critical of Sentmanat’s activities in Mexico.

When Sentmanat’s remains returned to New Orleans in the middle of 1845, many newspapers once again picked up the story, but by this time no surviving reports expose a critical tone toward Sentmanat. For the most part, the papers

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<sup>81</sup> “From the New Orleans Tropic of July 4,” *District of Columbia Daily National Intelligencer*. July 12, 1844.

<sup>82</sup> For the article see “The Last Token,” *Maryland Sun* August 3, 1844. For the newspaper’s political affiliation see Brugger, Robert J., *Maryland: A Middle Temperament*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).

<sup>83</sup> “The Last Moment of Life,” *District of Columbia Daily National Intelligencer*. August 19, 1844.

<sup>84</sup> The *Old School Republican* article on Sentmanat was reprinted in “The Last Moment of Life,” *District of Columbia Daily National Intelligencer*. August 19, 1844.

remembered Sentmanat as a brave, “gallant” but unfortunate man.<sup>85</sup> *The Times Picayune* continued to refer to Sentmanat as a hero and emphasized his military titles. It informed its readers that the details of the funeral of a “heroic officer” would take place at the residence of “Bernard Marigny, Esq.” and that the infantry companies of the New Orleans Cazadores Legion were to turn out on the occasion in full uniform to parade in the public to commemorate Sentmanat’s former membership in the Spanish Cazadores.<sup>86</sup> *The South Carolina Southern Patriot*, not surprisingly, also reminded its readers that “the savage and shocking mutilation of his body after his capture by the fiendish minions of Ampudia” was already known to the world.<sup>87</sup>

### Conclusion

Sentmanat did not filibuster with the purpose of annexing the territory of Tabasco to the U.S. He was not an advocate of territorial expansion despite keeping the company of expansionists in New Orleans. He was a staunch defender and an active promoter of liberal republicanism, which led to his involvement in Mexican politics. Unfortunately, the politics turned personal when Ampudia embarrassed him in battle and publicly called him a coward for fleeing Mexico. For a man who was reared in societies governed by codes of honor, this situation merited redress. He could not openly challenge him to a duel while exiled from Mexico, so his only option was to filibuster and defeat Ampudia in battle. The very newspapers which had elevated Sentmanat’s reputation to heroic levels would become his demise if he did not return to Mexico and prove correct those reports which stated he was on the offensive. Hence, Sentmanat returned to New Orleans only to duel and recruit men in order to filibuster and fully embody the “revolutionary man of action.”

Some newspapers, most of which had connections to Democrats, used the very heroic image that they helped forge in order to incite anger against Mexicans as the debates over the U.S. annexation of Texas and war with Mexico ensued. The Sentmanat affair contributed an entertaining story—one with heroes and villains—to capture the American public. The *Vermont Gazette*, the *New York Albany Evening Journal*, the *Times Picayune* and the *Madisonian* among dozens of other newspapers across the U.S. capitalized on the Sentmanat story in order to promote their pro-war agendas.

A handful of newspapers—all of which had Whig connections—showed nuances in the American reception of Sentmanat’s actions. The *New Orleans Tropic* emphatically spoke out against the expedition and the *St Louis Old School Republican* and *DC District of Columbia Daily National Intelligencer* both expressed their concern that other newspapers bolstered Sentmanat’s memory, when his actions had led to the destruction of so many other men. Nonetheless, by the beginning of the Mexican-American War, the only surviving reports utilized the Sentmanat story to excite the public against Mexico. Criticism of Sentmanat waned as the eve of the Mexican-American War approached. The election of the democratic candidate, James Polk in November of 1844 over Whig candidate, Henry Clay also signals the predominance of the pro-expansionist factions during this period. Overall, the sensationalistic appeal of the Sentmanat story served to bolster pro-war propaganda in the U.S. print media.

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<sup>85</sup> “Remains of Gen. Sentmanat,” *Carolina Southern Patriot*, June 27, 1845.

<sup>86</sup> “Funeral of Gen. Sentmanat,” *Times-Picayune*, June 22, 1845.

<sup>87</sup> “Remains of Gen. Sentmanat,” *South Carolina Southern Patriot*, [from N.O. Bee]

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Review: Hal Brands. *Latin America's Cold War*.  
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

In *Latin America's Cold War*, Hal Brands uses the multicultural, multi-archival method also used by Tanya Harmer and others in narrower focuses, attempting to bring this approach to the entire Cold War period of Latin American history. Brands claims that while many previous studies were well done, the dramatic increase in availability of sources, in the U.S., former Soviet Union, and especially Latin America make it not only possible, but essential that this story be retold. Brands bases his work on the existing literature, adding these new materials "to tell a fuller, better-integrated story of Latin America's Cold War than has heretofore been possible."<sup>1</sup>

Brands focuses on the events and conditions in Latin America, on the choices made by Latin Americans rather than U.S. or Soviet policies. Like Harmer, rather than portraying Latin Americans as reacting to these policies, Brands recognizes Latin American agency, their ability to make their own choices and determine their own fates. This fits in nicely with a much needed new trend in the study of the Cold War in Latin America, one that deemphasizes the role of the U.S. and the USSR, instead recognizing that Latin Americans themselves had objectives that had little or nothing to do with the larger ideological debate between the superpowers.

Brands tells the story of the Cold War in Latin America as a back and forth, Right and Left, democracy and autocracy, getting steadily more violent. Brands describes the "spiraling ideological extremism" that characterized this period; not traditional cold war ideology, but a uniquely Latin American struggle.<sup>2</sup> Brands recognizes the role of the U.S. in contributing to this spiral by attempting to support one side or another, helping to destabilize the region politically, economically and socially.

The major theme of the text, one that features prominently in each chapter, is complexity. Rather than searching for large ideas or themes that can explain great swathes of time, or attempting to fit each event into a static framework, Brands represents this period as one of "a series of overlapping conflicts."<sup>3</sup> These "convergent conflicts" laid the groundwork for the interactions of the Cold War in Latin America, and continued throughout the period.<sup>4</sup> This convergence is demonstrated in the failure of Central American revolutions, the failure of Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, and other incidents throughout the Cold War in Latin America.

Seeking to tell a fuller story of this period, Brands recognizes the large role Cuba had in shaping Cold War Latin America. Cuba had a greater role than the Soviet Union in inter-American affairs, and rivaled the U.S. in influence in the region. Brands leaves the U.S. out of his narrative wherever possible. He describes Latin Americans' relationship with U.S. power as "ambivalent."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 129.

Describing the 1960s, Brands concludes: “[A] decade defined by intervention wound up revealing the limits, rather than the extent, of foreign influence in Latin America.”<sup>6</sup> Brands argues for more independence and control for Latin Americans in foreign affairs during this period.

*Latin America's Cold War* represents an important step in the evolution of scholarship on Latin America. It is part of a growing trend convincingly arguing for greater attention to the role Latin Americas had in shaping their own affairs.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 38.

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Review: J. R. McNeill. *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

J. R. McNeill's *Mosquito Empires* is a powerful example of a history that is environmental, without being environmentally-deterministic. Toussaint Louverture, Simón Bolívar, and George Washington all won their revolutions through leadership, strategy, and sacrifice, but they had the aid of a little biting insect. McNeill focuses on the "Greater Caribbean...the Atlantic coastal regions of South, Central, and North America, as well as the Caribbean islands."<sup>1</sup> He analyzes the movements and strategies of the great imperial powers in the Atlantic from 1620 to 1914, including the Spanish, French, Dutch, British, and Americans. Indeed, this work is as much an Atlantic history as it is an environmental history. McNeill has a simple, two-part argument concerning "differential immunity" to yellow fever and "differential resistance" to malaria, both diseases using mosquitos as vectors.<sup>2</sup> First, he claims that Spain retained its American empire because diseases wiped out the majority of those European armies who tried to take parts of the Spanish New World. Second, he argues that the American revolutions of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were successful because the disease ecology favored the locally born.

The scope of his book requires McNeill to work in a number of archives and use a wide variety of sources. Archives include the National Archives and the British Library in the United Kingdom, the Biblioteca Nacional and the Archivo General de Indias in Spain, and the Library of Congress in the United States. He uses journals, diaries, and letters to great effect, using the words of military men to indicate both the presence of disease and how some of these men even used disease in their strategic plans. He is also familiar with printed primary sources. For example, in his discussion of the Dutch in Brazil he uses the contemporary account in Willem Piso's *Historia naturalis brasiliae*. McNeill also acknowledges the work of scientists investigating the El Niño-Southern Oscillation phenomenon, with the severity of the rainy season having an obvious effect on mosquito populations. There are the requisite references to secondary sources, especially environmental history classics by Alfred Crosby, William Cronon, and Philip Curtin. In fact, McNeill's discussion of the changing Caribbean ecology owes a clear debt to Cronon's *Changes in the Land* and his coverage of military conquest and disease owes another debt to Curtin's *Disease and Empire*.

McNeill's text has three parts. The first part reviews the positions of the European empires in the Atlantic in the 1600s, the condition of the local ecology and the unfolding changes to that ecology, and the poor state of medical knowledge at the time. With convincing prose, McNeill argues that the vast majority of ecological changes brought by the Europeans resulted in an environment ripe for mosquitoes, and thus epidemics of yellow fever and malaria. Such alterations, however, did not happen overnight.

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<sup>1</sup> J. R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914*. (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

In the second part of this text, McNeil discusses the last several successful conquests that dislodged the established imperial powers in America, followed by several unsuccessful conquests that fell to disease. The former includes the Dutch in Brazil and the English in Jamaica, while the latter includes the Scots at Darien, Panama and the French at Kourou, Guyana. Essentially, once yellow fever had reached endemic, and frequently epidemic, proportions by the 1690s, it was not possible to displace the reigning power. This is the essence of the first half of McNeill's argument. To further this point, McNeill convincingly contends that a major part of Spanish defense plans in the Greater Caribbean included delaying invaders long enough for disease to wipe them out. This strategy explains the heavy fortifications evident at Havana, Cartagena, and other cities in the Spanish New World. The Spanish could endure a siege awaiting the arrival of "battalions of bloodthirsty mosquitoes."<sup>3</sup> McNeill finishes with a discussion of the British sieges of Cartagena in the 1740s and Havana in the 1760s; even the successful siege of Havana led to 10,000 British military deaths, with only 700 of those in combat.

In an interesting aside, McNeill suggests that heavy losses to yellow fever in Havana might have slowed the British Government's response to Pontiac's Rebellion. This slow reaction led to the creation of the Proclamation Line as an attempt to keep American colonists and American Indians separated. As argued by Woody Holton in *Forced Founders*, cutting the American settlers off from the lucrative land speculation market added to their colonial grievances. Consequently, mosquitoes and yellow fever in Cuba were a potential factor leading to the protests that later ignited in the American War for Independence. This brief example illustrates the interconnections of Atlantic history at work in this text and why this volume is useful to scholars outside of McNeill's Greater Caribbean.

The third part of McNeill's text changes directions and looks at "the role of mosquitoes in making the revolutionaries victorious."<sup>4</sup> McNeill examines the revolutions in the soon-to-be independent United States, Haiti, and Latin American Republics and argues that the local disease ecology had a vital, but not deterministic, role. This is the second half of McNeill's argument. He spends considerable time on the British southern strategy in the American War of Independence. In this case, the British were far more susceptible to malaria than the Americans, many of whom had differential resistance to that disease. Thus, Cornwallis lost over half his army to sickness and had no recourse but to surrender. McNeill even indulges in a little speculation, suggesting that if malaria was not present in the southern colonies, they "might well have stayed loyal...in effect creating a southern version of Canada linked to the plantation world of the British West Indies."<sup>5</sup> In both Haiti and Latin America, the local population had differential immunity to yellow fever, while the French and Spanish Governments sent unseasoned troops to their deaths. While these forces held the unhealthy coastal ports and cities, the revolutionaries could escape into the healthier environment of the highlands. McNeill finishes with a brief discussion of US imperial endeavours, including the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, and the construction of the Panama Canal. What makes these stand out are Winfield Scott's Mexican strategy that clearly accounted for the local disease environment, and the mosquito control efforts of William Gorgas, first in Cuba and next in Panama. Indeed, McNeill suggests

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 140.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 193.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 233.

that, thanks to Gorgas, by the turn-to-the twentieth century “yellow fever had disappeared entirely from Havana, perhaps for the first time since 1647.”<sup>6</sup>

McNeill’s book is clearly a good environmental history, but it is perhaps an even better Atlantic history. While focused on the Greater Caribbean, McNeill reaches out to the corners of the Atlantic basin. He could not tell this narrative without the presence of the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British, Americans, Africans (both slave and free), and the dwindling populations of Native Americans. Decisions made in London impacted events in Havana leading to the showdown at Lexington and Concord. Furthermore, his two-part argument is clear and well-supported by the evidence he uses in this text. Succinctly, by the 1690s it was not possible to dislodge the Spanish from any large parts of their American empire because of the differential immunity and resistance to yellow fever and malaria between local and foreign born populations. This ecological advantage, however, “later functioned as fifth (and sixth) columns in the revolutionary wars”<sup>7</sup> of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 308.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 305.



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Review: David Suisman. *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Historians who research popular music tend to approach their subjects of study from cultural and social perspectives. They like genres and artists who shaped the music and lyrics of pop songs: electronic instrumentation since the Electric Eighties, “Beatlemania” during the Swinging Sixties, and the success of Blues Queens in the Roaring Twenties. David Suisman’s study investigates fundamental and versatile transformations that predate those trends. At the broadest level, *Selling Sounds* explains the evolution of popular song from traditional to manufactured content. The text shows that several contemporary approaches to producing, distributing, and consuming music have their roots in an all-encompassing reinvention of popular music during the Progressive era in the United States.

Suisman’s narrative begins in the late nineteenth century, when music constituted the soundtrack of social gatherings. Audible only in the moments of its creation, popular music was an immaterial, ephemeral, elusive medium. Yet, in an era that also witnessed the professionalization of sports and the rise of cinema, inventors and entrepreneurs sought to give music a material form. Emile Berliner, Thomas Edison, and other engineers pioneered sound carriers that separated the experience of listening from the process of making music in both spatial and temporal terms. Young composers in booming metropolises specialized in crafting short and catchy tunes. Publishers and distributors built their businesses on the principles of efficiency and mass production. By the late 1920s, the American music market represented a hotbed of technological innovation and a new, multi-million dollar entertainment market. When the Great Depression stalled this evolution temporarily, the United States had developed from an outlet market for European high-brow classics into the world’s leading supplier of excitingly modern music.

Suisman’s book is a valuable addition to the literature on American popular culture because it investigates the making of the music market in unprecedented depth. The author’s account is shaped by economic, technological, and demographic factors. Suisman explains the creation of American pop music as the result of predominantly commercial objectives—most of the book’s protagonists are not singers or instrumentalists but engineers and entrepreneurs. He argues that the vast majority of characteristics of the music business, from the label-based infrastructure of the recording industry to the chorus-driven nature of formulaic pop songs, were results of profit-oriented market development. Suisman cites technological progress and demographic diversification as two catalysts that contributed to the expansion of the market. Hardware manufacturers and record companies constantly renewed their promises of convenience and sound quality while racial minorities and immigrants occupied niches within the dynamic industry. Suisman’s recounting of the *Commercial Revolution in American Music* is more intricate than the book’s subtitle indicates.

*Selling Sounds* illuminates multiple connections between the music industry in its formative years and that of the present. The book demonstrates how complex transformative processes turned a previously folkloric

entertainment genre into the prototype of commercial pop music that dominates present-day hit lists. Encapsulated in popular songs, several elements of those transformations have outlasted an entire century. The average length of singles, which was initially dictated by the capacity of early sound carriers, has remained in the ballpark of two to four minutes. The legal concepts of chord progressions as intellectual property and royalties as compensation for public playback are the legacy of early copyright legislation. The marketing of recorded music by artist instead of title throughout the world, a standard that emerged with the first musical celebrities, implemented the star system in pop music. *Selling Sounds* demonstrates that the social, economic, and technological fabric of the Progressive era shaped music in a more comprehensive fashion than any other branch of popular culture. The Progressive zeitgeist is still recognizable in the source code of contemporary chart toppers.

With impressive clarity, *Selling Sounds* also illustrates how the judicial system increasingly shaped cultural content in the early twentieth century, when state authorities began to mediate between creative minds, commercial enterprises, and the American audience. The music scene experienced legal action over patents and monopolies decades before the Supreme Court divested film studios of their vertically integrated outlets. Suisman discusses the Copyright Act of 1909, which granted producers and publishers control over the application of their intellectual property, as the moment that made music merchandise. He also shows how radio licensing served as an instrument of cultural policymaking when states facilitated the rapid expansion of a medium for millions. Current challenges for the music industry, such as cultural protectionism in the age of globalization and free file sharing on the internet, are the legal heritage of the revolutions Suisman describes.

Although hardly light on context, *Selling Sounds* does lack a bird's eye perspective on general transformations during the Progressive era. Suisman's argument of American popular music as a commercial invention would be sharper had he grounded it more firmly in the ideologies of the period. In order to sell sounds in the first place, they had to be standardized, quantified, and marketed. The song factories of the early twentieth century resembled Henry Ford's car plants to a remarkable extent; in Suisman's own words, "[e]very aspect of songwriting, publishing, and promoting was broken down into elemental, specialized parts"<sup>1</sup> while "the primary motivation for writing a song was to sell it, not to express some inherently human feeling."<sup>2</sup> Progressive desire for professionalization was evident in the creation of new occupations and retail strategies. One integrative context focused on Progressivism would have served the book's narrative better than single chapters dedicated to aspects such as technology, immigration, and race.

What makes *Selling Sounds* a controversial text is the author's tangible bias. Suisman's writing hints at little appreciation for the legacy of the transformations he describes. He laments the predominance of corporate interests over aesthetic and artistic concerns in the production of popular tunes, yet he provides little qualitative analysis in the first place. Equating the creative potential of magnetic tape with "manipulation and control," and branding the copyright-based music business an "ancien régime,"<sup>3</sup> Suisman

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<sup>1</sup> David Suisman, *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Suisman, *Selling Sounds*, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Suisman, *Selling Sounds*, 282.

writes from the perspective of a purist. In his perception, musical production should serve as “a means of forging dynamic social bonds, both among musicians and between musicians and audiences.”<sup>4</sup> As important as the social dimensions of live musical production may be, most innovations that enhanced both the commercial and artistic value of popular music in the last one-hundred years occurred in the studio. If audio recording and reproduction had not set in motion those revolutionary transformations, writing the history of sound would be a terribly difficult endeavor.

*Selling Sounds* is a straightforwardly argued, elegantly written study on a subject of great complexity. Although it addresses an impressive number of factors that shaped the revolution in popular music, the narrative never loses its focus as an economic history of a cultural industry. David Suisman produced his book during years when dwindling revenues began to pose a concrete threat to the long-term survival of the recording industry in its current shape and form. The context of present-day challenges for the music business emphasizes the relevance of Suisman’s work, and it reminds aspiring historians that successful books are not only written with analytical skill and verbal proficiency—but also with a sense of timing.

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<sup>4</sup> Suisman, *Selling Sounds*, 277.