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Catholic Conspirators? Religious Rebels in Nineteenth-Century Cuba

Jane Landers

Previously untapped, Catholic Church records document historic networks among free black communities in Havana, Matanzas and other Atlantic ports. In earlier centuries, membership in overlapping religious and military corporations advanced their interests and gained them status in Spanish society. The slave revolt of Saint-Domingue, the Cuban sugar boom and the rise of abolitionist activity, however, caused their position to deteriorate rapidly in the nineteenth century. The alleged conspiracies of Aponte in 1812 and La Escalera in 1844 ruined them. Leaders were executed and hundreds more were deported in an Atlantic diaspora. Ironically, the well-recorded connections these groups maintained in the military and the Catholic Church allowed Cuban officials to target them and neither previous loyalty nor service could save them.

This essay illustrates the value of ecclesiastical records for new insights into the history of African-descended peoples, slavery and resistance, and anti-slavery movements in nineteenth-century Cuba. Existing and noteworthy histories of the most famous ‘conspiracies’ to challenge Spanish control in Cuba, the 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Havana and the infamous La Escalera in Matanzas in 1844, as well as the most important works on slave revolts of the period, draw exclusively on secular records such as criminal interrogations and military tribunals, primarily from the National Archives of Cuba and Spain.¹ This is largely due to the political divide between church and state in Cuba, and the tight controls the Cuban government maintains over access to its national and provincial archives.

I, too, depend upon those valuable secular sources but sacramental records dating from the sixteenth century for Cuba are now publically available on the Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies (ESSSS) Digital Archive at Vanderbilt University and can enrich our understandings of these events.² These previously untapped, sources offer new insights into the lives of some of the key figures in these revolts

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such as their membership in and direction of overlapping religious brotherhoods and military units, their real and fictive kinship and patronage networks, and their property and its disposition at their deaths. Because the Catholic Church recorded sacramental documents across the Americas systematically for over three centuries prior to the final abolition of slavery and because it allowed an approved space within which persons of African descent could gather, organize and represent themselves as respectable subjects and brothers in Christ, this essay offers a model for historians of slavery and abolition in other Iberian colonies.³

Partially in fear that *bozales*, or recently arrived slaves from Africa, might introduce the dread ‘contamination’ of Islam or other ‘heathen’ practices into Spain, the Catholic Church mandated the baptism of African slaves in the fifteenth century, although Catholic baptisms of Africans in Spain date to at least the thirteenth century.⁴ The Church subsequently extended this requirement across the Americas and while the Catholic evangelization effort among Africans may have appeared minimal compared to that expended on indigenous populations, members of the Dominican and Jesuit orders focused their outreach on the miserable and enslaved who began to pour into the Spanish colonies in the seventeenth century. The famed Jesuit, Alonso de Sandoval, spent almost a half century working among the Africans of Cartagena (1606–1656) and then wrote an important ethno-historical treatise on Africans, their capacity for conversion and the mechanics to be followed to accomplish this desired end. His fellow Jesuit, Pedro Claver, continued Sandoval’s work among the Africans of Cartagena for which the Catholic Church eventually canonized him and named him Apostle of the Slaves.⁵

Once baptized, Africans and their descendants became eligible for the sacraments of marriage and Christian burial and through membership in the Catholic Church, they generated a host of other religious records such as confirmations, petitions to wed, wills and even, on occasion, divorce actions. Catholic registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials yield the longest serial data available for the history of Africans in the Americas. In addition to providing critical demographic statistics on the African populations in the Americas, these records also provide detailed information on ethnicity (described in the records as *naciones* or *castas* in Spanish records and *nacões* in Portuguese). Such ethnic and geographic markers enable scholars to track the history of specific groups over time in the targeted areas and make comparisons possible across Spanish and Portuguese colonies. Entries also record, when known, parents’ names and occasionally allude to birthplaces in Africa. Fictive kinship patterns and patron/client relations are also evident in godparent and marriage sponsor choices. The records for enslaved persons also provide information on owners, who in the Spanish cases, at least, sometimes served as godparents and sponsors. Testaments of free Africans often detail their property, last bequests, special devotions and additional clues to social networks.

Although the Catholic Church dictated a fairly common method for recording the sacraments, the ESSSS project is identifying interesting variations. Our Brazilian records seem to yield more testaments than are generally found in the Cuban and Spanish borderland records so far examined.⁶ Brazilian wills offer important

information on the occupations, property and economy of free and enslaved Africans, as well as additional insights into fictive and kin networks and religious devotion. In Cuba and Spanish Florida, and probably elsewhere in the Catholic Atlantic, white fathers often legitimated their mixed-race children to protect them and their inheritance, if any, in periods of political turmoil or transition.⁷

Catholic Church archives have also yielded a document type called *banhos* in Brazil and *expedientes de matrimonio* in Cuba. All persons wishing to be married in the church had to complete them and the betrothed had to show proof of when and where they had been baptized, state whether or not they had previously been married, give their legal status and occupation and other information pertaining to their family histories, such as their ethnicity. If they were enslaved, their owners also had to submit written permission for the slaves to wed. The mini-biographies have yet to be exploited but, like the other record types, should offer important evidence about networks among the enslaved.⁸

Following Iberian precedents dating to the fourteenth century, black Catholics across the Atlantic joined religious brotherhoods/confraternities (*cofradías* in Spanish colonies or *irmandades* in Portuguese) organized along ethnic lines. Black Catholics devoted hard-earned resources to support *cofradías* that promoted social cohesion, reinforced fictive and kin networks, provided charity and social services for its members, and recognized leadership that was generated from within the black community. As was true earlier in Iberia, public displays of religiosity and of civic organization also confirmed black claims to Christian brotherhood and membership in the larger corporate community.⁹ Historians have now begun to study the early black Catholic *cofradías* of Santo Domingo, Lima, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro and Havana, among other Atlantic sites, some of them dating to the sixteenth century.¹⁰

The *Cofradía de Juan Bautista* was founded sometime in the sixteenth century by *morenos criollos* (free blacks born in the Americas) and with the Pope's approval operated in the Cathedral of Santo Domingo, Española. Its constitution called for all the brothers to celebrate religious feast days together and to assist each other in illness and time of need 'such as when one (of the brothers) is hung'. In a clue to early race relations in Española it added 'the mothers of the brothers can enter the brotherhood and no one is allowed to disparage them'. In 1602, a Biafara man from Upper Guinea named Antón López, also established a *cofradía* devoted to *Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria* in the Cathedral.¹¹ By 1613, the *Candelaria* brotherhood had grown to more than 300 members and its members included Catholics of African descent, but also some of the town's leading Spanish citizens. Six other brotherhoods of color were also operating in Santo Domingo by 1613: two within the cathedral, another in the Franciscan church, another in the Dominican church, another in the Mercedarian church, and another, *La Pura y Limpia Concepción de Nuestra Señora*, was housed in the Hospital of San Nicolás de Bari. Officials reported to the king that all the brotherhoods performed good works and charity and kept well-adorned chapels, and that no problems had arisen from the multi-ethnic memberships.¹²

Like their counterparts in Spain and Española, Havana's black residents also organized themselves within the Catholic Church. Their bequests to the predominantly

white brotherhoods of the Santísimo Sacramento, Soledad and Veracruz can be found in Havana's notarial archives as early as the 1580s. Alejandro de la Fuente found that after 1600, however, Africans and their descendants focused their gifts on the black brotherhoods of Nuestra Señora de Remedios and Espíritu Santo, which maintained well-decorated altars in the city's main church.¹³ Over the next decades, the membership of the Espíritu Santo devotion grew and in 1638 the brothers erected an *ermita* (hermitage) in the Campeche neighborhood. By 1648, the neighborhood around the ermita had grown so populated that church officials declared it an auxiliary parish and in 1660 a royal order elevated Espíritu Santo to the status of second parish on the island.¹⁴ From humble beginnings and the piety and support of black Catholics, thus grew the second most important church in Havana. A Diocesan Synod officially recognized Espíritu Santo's black *cofradía* of Souls of Purgatory in 1680 but, sadly, no records of that *cofradía* have to date been located.¹⁵ During a pastoral visit in 1687, Monseñor Francisco Felix y Solana examined Espíritu Santo's only extant book of baptism of pardos and morenos (mulattos and blacks), but those records have also disappeared.¹⁶ The Espíritu Santo church experienced a revitalization after Jerónimo de Valdés was named bishop in 1706. Valdés performed many acts of charity for the black community, among which was founding the Casa de Niños Expósitos or Casa Cuna in 1711. This was a home for abandoned children, many of whom were of mixed race, and all of whom later bore his surname, Valdés.¹⁷ The foundlings' patron was Saint Joseph, the patron saint of carpenters, a common occupation of free men of African descent across the Americas.¹⁸ Bishop Valdés died in 1729 and among his last wishes was to be buried in of Espíritu Santo, where today a marble sepulcher made in his image holds his remains. With the Bishop's death, Espíritu Santo's archive was closed, not to be re-opened for over two decades.¹⁹

In the late sixteenth century, black Catholics also established a second important hermitage, Nuestra Señora del Buen Viaje. It became customary for sailors and travelers to offer prayers for safe passage at Buena Viaje before voyaging and others of thanks on their return to Havana. The city council of Havana elevated the Buen Viaje hermitage to a church in 1640 and it became the final processional point of Havana's Via Cruces or Stations of the Cross performed on Good Fridays.²⁰ Buen Viaje's black marriage and burial records date from 1692 and its baptism records date from 1702. Keith Manuel used the ESSSS database to analyze 444 black marriages performed in Buen Viaje church and found that Carabalíes were the most numerous of the many African ethnic groups represented. Others African ethnonyms listed in the Buen Viaje records include Congos, Lucumí, Mandinga, Gangá, Mina, Macuba, Mondongo, Briche, Arará, Bricama, Sape and Mozambique. Many more parishioners are listed as American-born criollos from Havana and other Cuban cities, but also from across the Atlantic world: Cartagena de Indias, Jamaica, Curacao, Puerto del Principe, Guarico (the Spanish name for Le Cap) and San Juan (Española), Martinique, Laguna (from Tenerife in the Canary Islands), Campeche, Mobile, Portugal and Badajos, Spain.²¹ Manuel's study highlights another important feature of religious records – their detailed attention to ethnolinguistic and natal origins. In 1736, black

parishioners of Buen Viaje established a *cofradía* dedicated to Santa Ifigenia, the black Virgin of Ethiopia (and Princess of Nubia), who paired with Santo Elesbão, was also a popular patroness of black Catholics in eighteenth-century Rio de Janeiro, as Mariza Soares has shown.²² This brotherhood's foundational documents are so faded they are hard to read but, as in the case of Espirtu Santo, its officers were also officers in the Batallón de Morenos Leales, which reflects the overlapping nature of religious and military corporations in colonial Cuba.²³

Despite their earlier prominence, black *cofradías* and churches seem to have lost autonomy and prestige as Cuba's demography shifted and the island's black population became increasingly African.²⁴ They also suffered physical neglect until a new Bishop, the Dominican-born Pedro Agustín Morrell de Santa Cruz, arrived to take up his post in the 1750s. Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz had already gained prominence by advocating on behalf of the black copper miners of El Cobre in the 1730s.²⁵ Once in Havana, he embarked upon a campaign to restore the city's neglected black churches, preserve what he could of their histories, and validate and encourage black Catholicism.²⁶ Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz reported with dismay that the ecclesiastical archive of the Buen Viaje church had been closed since the death of Bishop Jerónimo Valdés in 1729 and that the records were terribly damaged by polilla. After making an index of the few undamaged records, the bishop loaded the many more irretrievable records on carts to be burned in the countryside.²⁷ Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz also addressed the physical neglect of Havana's historic black churches, completing renovations of the Buen Viaje church and enlarging the Espíritu Santo. By 1760, Espiritu Santo counted 1100 'souls' among its parishioners. Each night, in a public display of their religiosity and claim to respectability, Espiritu Santo's black brotherhood of the Rosary processed from the church through the city streets.²⁸

Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz made an extensive ecclesiastic *visita* of the island, baptizing as he went, and later wrote a detailed report of his tour and the religious state of the island. In Havana he counted 'twenty-one houses that have served the devil', by which he meant African *cabildos de nación* unsanctioned by either the Catholic Church or the Spanish authorities.²⁹ Organized along ethnolinguistic lines, these groups gathered on Sundays and other of the Church's many obligatory feast days when they were released from their labors to celebrate with music and dance. They also hosted banquets and organized wakes and elected ethnic kings, queens and courts who commanded authority among their followers.³⁰ These gatherings had long worried Spanish officials. In 1535, authorities in Santiago de Cuba registered a complaint that a Congo 'king' was disturbing the peace with his drumming and in 1568 a Havana resident complained that 'the black men and women of this town call themselves kings and queens and organize gathering and banquets which create scandals'. Similar complaints and rumors of a planned revolt by Angolan *cabildo* members led authorities in Mexico City to execute 35 individuals, including 5 women, disband all back brotherhoods, forbid black gatherings and establish patrols of the city.³¹ Despite periodic episodes of governmental repression and terror, ethnic *cabildos* continued to organize across the Americas, as they did in Cuba. In 1681, Cuba's governor, Fernández de Córdoba, issued an order forbidding African

cabildos from gathering in private houses and requiring that all dances and gatherings take place outdoors, where they could be surveilled.³² Like previous prohibitions, this one seems to have been ignored for in 1691 the Ararás Magino (from Dahomey in modern-day Benin) met regularly in a house on Compostela Street owned by a free Arará woman, María de la Luz Caballero.³³ An early eighteenth-century cabildo identified as Carabalí Apapá and devoted to the Espíritu Santo also operated out of a house on Calle Egido.³⁴ Like many others, Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz lamented the drunkenness he witnessed at their noisy gatherings and the provocative dancing ‘in the custom of their lands’ but the Bishop advocated gentle persuasion to help Africans see for themselves ‘their abominations’. Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz handed out images of the Virgin and prayed the Rosary with the celebrants, who he said lived and died ‘like beasts’. Finally, he recommended converting African cabildos into ‘Temples of God or hermitas.’³⁵

The Bishop’s proselytizing efforts were interrupted by the unexpected and shocking British seizure of Havana in 1762. Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz made himself such a nuisance to the British occupiers that they exiled him to nearby St. Augustine, Florida. In that frontier colony, the reformist prelate had new challenges but also new opportunities to win souls to the ‘True Faith’ and perform acts of charity. Morrell de Santa Cruz became a patron of the African runaways from Carolina slavery who had converted to Catholicism and established the free black town of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose.³⁶ In Florida, the Bishop also ministered to members of the Disciplined Militia of Free Pardos and Morenos of Havana who had been assigned to help defend the Florida frontier from British and Indian raiders from Carolina. Captain Manuel Asención De Soto’s unit included his brother-in-law, adjutant Juan Fermín de Quixas, a mulatto shoemaker, Sergeant Antonio Horrutiner, and seven soldiers.³⁷ With the Treaty of Paris in 1763, the black militias of Havana and Mose joined approximately 3000 other Spanish, European, African and Indian subjects, and in blind obedience to their king, evacuated to Cuba.³⁸ Havana was not prepared to receive such a large influx of immigrants and initially they were quartered in private homes.³⁹ In 1764, the wealthy landowner Don Simón Rodríguez donated land for Florida’s displaced subjects and 84 families relocated to the settlement of San Agustín de la Nueva Florida, about 24 leagues from the provincial capital of San Carlos de Matanzas.⁴⁰

Much had changed in Cuba in the short time Morrell de Santa Cruz had been in Florida. During their brief reign, the British had imported many new Africans to Cuba and the Bishop had even more reason to be concerned about the state of Catholicism.⁴¹ Almost immediately he set to work to reinvigorate black Catholicism. He began by re-establishing the historic black *cofradía* of Espíritu Santo, ordering that its officers be chosen from the leadership of Havana’s free black militia. Following that directive, Commander Juan Bautista Lobainas and other officers who had served heroically in the recent British siege wrote a new constitution for Espíritu Santo.⁴² The black officers followed earlier church-approved models and were supervised in the process by churchmen, thus guaranteeing a certain conformity, but they elected the brotherhood’s officers and decided on devotions, dues, rules and

regulations. Among other requirements, the constitution called for members of the black militia to carry the *cofradía's* standard and the Eucharist from Espíritu Santo to the Cathedral and back during the annual Pentecost and Corpus Christi celebrations, thus restoring the black brotherhood to an important and public presence in the city. The new constitution was read aloud to the congregants, Lobainas and his officers signed the document, and the black militia officers were officially recognized as officers of the re-stored *cofradía*.⁴³ Sometime later, in another display of public devotion, members of Espíritu Santo's brotherhood donated funds and skills to reconstruct a collapsed wall of the church and to build Espíritu Santo's high altar, guarding the sanctuary at night until repairs were finished.⁴⁴

As Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz worked to reorganize Havana's black *cofradías*, black Catholics also seized the propitious moment to reconstitute themselves as government-sanctioned *cabildos*, thereby legitimating those discredited institutions to a certain degree. To be granted official recognition, members had to define their devotions as well as rules of conduct in charters or constitutions, just as religious brotherhoods would. Elected officers promised to monitor their own members and expel any miscreants, and they devoted themselves to a patron saint whom they honored on his or her feast day. In hopes that organizations affiliated with the Catholic Church would promote positive social values and good order, Spanish officials usually approved their requests to organize, granting them a license and designating the groups as *cabildos* rather than *cabildos de nación*, still associated with Africanness.⁴⁵ Three different Carabalí *cabildos* affiliated with the Buen Viaje church petitioned for new licenses in the eighteenth century. The Carbalí Ungua *cabildo* devoted to San Agustín stated that their original documents were destroyed in the hurricane that ravaged Havana in 1768. Their hand-written petition listed only the officials of the *cabildo*.⁴⁶ The second Carabalí *cabildo* attached to Buen Viaje church and devoted to Nuestra Señora de Belem, also petitioned for a new license to replace one granted in 1759. Their petition written in idiomatic Spanish identified this as the Sirgundo *Cabildo* (*segundo cabildo*) and listed 61 males and 240 women, both free and enslaved, among its members. By 1772, the Carabalíes *Asicutro cabildo* had also formed in Buen Viaje with 3 officers and 22 members.⁴⁷ These ethnically designated religious associations were licensed, monitored and controlled by Spanish government officials, who produced the secular records deposited in Cuba's national archive upon which scholars have so far depended for their histories.⁴⁸

The frequent government pronouncements suggest that the newly licensed *cabildos* were not much more orderly than the *cabildos de nación* Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz earlier decried. The most famous of their public displays in historical accounts, as well as artistic renderings, was the *Día de Reyes*, celebrated on the 6 January (Epiphany).⁴⁹ On this day *cabildo* members, led by their newly elected kings and queens, paraded through the streets of Havana performing African songs and dances accompanied by drums, scrapers and hollowed gourd rattles, while wearing elaborate costumes of raffia, peacock feathers, animal skins and horns, and beads. Stilt-walkers, lantern-bearers, masked figures and gymnasts added to the merriment.⁵⁰ The *cabildos*

also held well-attended dances in their houses, one of which the Swedish traveler, Fedrika Bremer, vividly recounted.⁵¹

The *cabildos*' visible references to Africa and to alternative power structures represented by black kings and queens seemed even more threatening after the slaves in nearby Saint-Domingue rose in bloody rebellion. Black militia units from Havana had been posted in Guarico since the eighteenth century and more were sent to fight there during the revolt, suffering terrible losses.⁵² The fact that the black militiamen had been exposed to the revolutionary 'contagion' of Saint-Domingue, even in the service of Spain, apparently tainted them. Matt Childs has chronicled the repeated efforts of Havana's 'honored' citizenry to control *cabildo* functions and the crowds they attracted to their houses. Finally, a 1792 edict finally gave the *cabildos* one year to relocate outside the city walls and ordered them to take the bodies of deceased members to the public mortuary rather than staging celebratory and 'disorderly' wakes in their meeting houses.⁵³

The disrepute of the *cabildos* was generalized also to what were once respected black *cofradías*. In 1803, Captain Marcos Morenos of the Batallón de Morenos, who had received the Medal of the Royal Effigy for his bravery during the British siege, attempted to re-establish the apparently once again lapsed brotherhood of Espiritu Santo. Despite the brotherhood's long history and former prominence, Moreno was blocked in this effort by Bishop Juan José Díaz de Espada on the grounds that he could not present the brotherhood's original royal approval. The distinguished black commander appealed Bishop Espada's decision to the Audiencia of Puerto Principe but that court ruled that black brotherhoods had in times of turmoil been 'centers of reunion, and of shelter, where sedition and agitation have been conceived' and prohibitions against unapproved gatherings were wise given 'The distance of these Dominions from the Metropole and center of Government, the different castes of their Populations, and the diversity of their customs and interests'. The Audiencia's lawyer added this was especially true in light of 'the fire that embraces the neighboring French colony'. In an added insult he wrote that 'the greater part of these Brotherhoods and Confraternities . . . denigrate frequently into pomp and vanity and maybe in disorders'.⁵⁴

Thus, racial paranoia led officials to view all black religious organizations with suspicion, and it seems there may, indeed, have been some overlap. At least some of Havana's free black militiamen belonged both to Catholic *cofradías*, organized within the Church, and the government-sanctioned *cabildos* that operated out of private homes.⁵⁵ Cuban historian José Luciano Franco earlier wrote that militiaman José Antonio Aponte was the *capatáz* (elected leader) of the Lucumí or Yoruba *cabildo* devoted to the African deity of lightning and thunder, Shango. Franco gave no source for his assertion and that claim is now questioned by Matt Childs.⁵⁶ Ecclesiastical sources now available on the ESSSS website let us say with certainty, however, that Aponte was a member of the Catholic *cofradía* established by the carpenters' guild and dedicated to St Joseph. Figure 1 shows that a number of the brothers were members of Havana's free black militia, and therefore, among the people of color given the most respect in Havana in this period. The brothers had already been

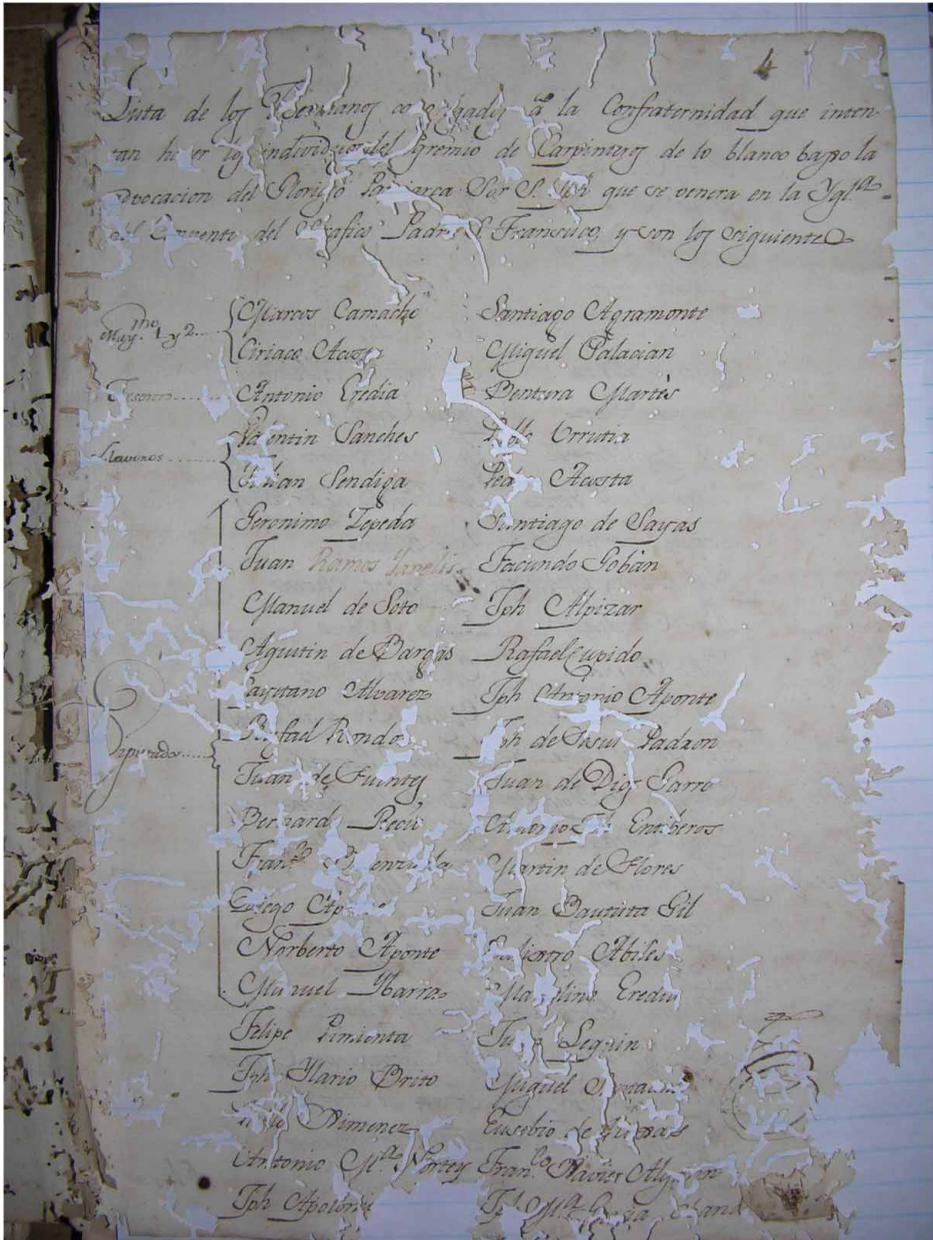


Figure 1. Cover Page, Brotherhood of Carpenters, of which José Antonio de Aponte was a member. ESSSS, Archbishopric Archive, Gobierno, Cofradías, Legajo 4, Expediente 21, Havana, Cuba.

operating for three years (since 1777) in the Convent of San Francisco when they petitioned for official government approval. Their hand-written petition included a printed document titled ‘Carta de Esclavitud al Glorioso San Joseph’ declaring their

'enslavement' and devotion to the Glorious St Joseph, the carpenter. In that document they called themselves the 'slaves of our Glorious Patron the Patriarch St Joseph, and of Jesus, and of his Sainted Mother'. It featured a printed illustration of the Holy Family being blessed by God, who floats above their heads in a cloud.⁵⁷ The brotherhood's petition listed the names of the first and second overseers, Marcos Camacho and Ciriaco Acosta, the treasurer, Antonio Eredia, the 2 brothers who kept the keys to the *cofradía's* treasury, Valetin Sanches and Julian Sendiga, 12 deputies and the remaining 135 brothers, among whom was José Antonio Aponte.

Matt Childs has examined in detail the Revolt of 1812 allegedly led by Aponte in the same year the Cortes of Cádiz adopted Spain's first (and short-lived) Liberal Constitution. Members of the Brotherhood of St Joseph who were allegedly Aponte's co-conspirators in that revolt and who went to their deaths with him on 9 April 1812 included Tomas Peñalver and Francisco Xavier Pacheco.⁵⁸ Other of Aponte's *cofradía* brothers and fellow militiamen escaped his final fate and may not have joined the alleged conspiracy. Hipolito Peñalver served 21 years in the black militia before retiring as a Sargent Second Class in 1802 and, in 1809, he played the Emperor of Hindustan in a Christmas play put on by Havana's free black militia.⁵⁹ Another of Aponte's *cofradía* brothers was Captain Manuel Asención de Soto, who was also a member of a *cofradía* in Matanzas province.⁶⁰

Matanzas means slaughter in Spanish and the history of the place is marked by violence. Its name commemorates the massacre of a group of unidentified Spaniards attempting to make a settlement on Cuba's northern coast sometime before 1513, but it is better known to modern scholars for a different slaughter: that of alleged conspirators in the plot known as La Escalera.⁶¹ Settled in the mid-sixteenth century, Matanzas's early purpose was to provide foodstuffs, cattle and swine for Spanish fleets stopping at its deep harbor.⁶² It became world famous when the Dutch privateer Piet Heyn captured the Spanish silver fleet there in 1628. Despite this debacle, it took another half century before Spain made serious efforts to colonize and fortify Matanzas, eventually providing funds for the introduction of homesteaders from the Canary Islands and for construction of a stone fort, the Castillo de San Severino (which mirrors in construction and timing that of Havana's second backwater St. Augustine, Florida, built in the same period).⁶³ Matanzas's provincial capital of San Carlos y San Severino de Matanzas was only formally established in 1693 and in the same year, its new parish began registering sacraments of free and enslaved persons of African descent. On 14 October 1693, Bishop Fray Diego Evelino de Compostela, baptized Joseph, the Congo slave of don Santiago de Arrate.⁶⁴

Like the European population, the free black residents of Matanzas were a diverse lot, with origins in the French, British and Spanish Caribbean as well as Africa. The free people of color in Matanzas occupied occupational and social niches similar to those of their counterparts in Havana, St. Augustine, Vera Cruz or New Orleans. They employed traditional means such as self-hire and *coartación* (self-purchase) to acquire freedom and, once free, ran small businesses, farmed and joined the institutions which offered them the most advantages, the military and the church.⁶⁵

In 1726, the free black residents of Matanzas established the city's first known black *cofradía* of the Santa Misericordia and another devoted to the Virgin of the Rosary, reforming the latter in 1736.⁶⁶ The Misericordia's foundational documents are badly faded and difficult to read but among the founders were the de Soto and Fermin families of Cuba's free black militia.⁶⁷ The brotherhood's membership lists confirm the links between black religious and military corporations; as in the case of Havana, black militiamen were prominent in this *cofradía*. In 1764, the parish priest of Matanzas married the recently returned Captain Manuel Asención de Soto and Agustina González, a woman born in the Canary Islands and identified in the marriage record as white.⁶⁸ Such boundary crossing was still possible in the mid-eighteenth century, and de Soto and the other members of the free black militias of St Augustine and Matanzas then enjoyed a certain status born of their military careers and their Catholicism.⁶⁹ Matanzas was still relatively racially mixed and the economy relatively diverse, but the institutional opportunities and, thus the possibilities of upward mobility were more limited for free blacks living in Matanzas than in Havana, which was almost twice its size.⁷⁰ Despite their service in Florida and elsewhere, and their attempts at social ascension, the black militiamen of Matanzas never achieved the status or wealth of their Havana counterparts, and they were more vulnerable to the worsening racial repression of the nineteenth century.

Cuba's economy, demography and race relations all changed dramatically after the slave revolt destroyed the French sugar colony of Saint-Domingue in 1791. Thereafter, Cuban and American planters living in Matanzas invested heavily in large-scale sugar cultivation and the introduction of ever larger numbers of African-born slaves.⁷¹ Matanzas planters such as the Americans Joaquín Madan and Zacarías Atkins organized their own direct trade in African slaves, although Havana-based traders also supplied the Matanzas slave market.⁷² Wealthy and powerful scions of Havana, like Ricardo O'Farill and O'Daly, the *asientista* (holder of the slave import monopoly) for the English South Sea Company, also established great new sugar estates in Matanzas and eventually planters also built a new port that opened Matanzas to international trade.⁷³ Neither the British embargo of 1807, nor the US embargo of 1808, nor the Mixed Commissions for the Suppression of the Slave Trade Britain established in Havana to decide whether captured ships were illegally slaving slowed the influx. Slave traders commonly landed their illicit cargos at Matanzas and at nearby bays on the northern coast.⁷⁴ By 1827 blacks, free and enslaved blacks formed two-thirds of the total population of the province. This demographic trend only accelerated and by 1841, the census showed Matanzas had a population of 27,148 whites, 4705 free blacks and mulattoes and 54,322 black slaves. Populations of color had almost doubled and now outnumbered whites more than two to one.⁷⁵ These multiple transformations came, ironically, as enlightened liberals around the Atlantic were promulgating the abolition of the slave trade and slavery and an end to monarchical government. Such rhetoric made already fearful Cuban planters more repressive and slaves more restive.

But while the countryside grew increasingly African, the city of Matanzas was still home to a more creolized and international free black population, many of them

with origins in, or connections to, Havana, Spanish Florida and other circum-Atlantic military posts. Political news traveled quickly between Havana and Matanzas via human conduits such as Cuba's black militiamen, some of whom, like Captain Manuel de Soto, were also members of brotherhoods in each city. After 1791, a weekly mail service linked the cities and by the turn of the century a bi-weekly service was in operation. The shipping companies that connected the ports charged persons of color a lower price for tickets and the official government newspaper, *La Aurora*, also connected the townspeople of Matanzas, black and white, to the wider world.⁷⁶

One free black linked to both Havana and Matanzas was the mulatto barber and militiaman, José Manuel Blonde. In 1821 Matanzas's priest, Don Pedro de Silva Caniego, denounced Blonde, as did several tavern-goers who heard him 'spreading rumors of general and absolute liberty'. During Blonde's trial, free black artisans, including two black carpenters born in Havana (possible brothers of St Joseph the Carpenter?), gave favorable assessments of Blonde's character. But the prosecutor warned, 'from a small spark of this nature, an electric fire could light that could result in the total dissolution of the social pact and tumble even the most solid political edifice' and stated it was necessary for 'the inexorable knife of the law to fall on such delinquents'. The court sentenced Blonde to six years in jail, but his penalty was later reduced and after almost a year spent in jail, Blonde was finally released.⁷⁷

The spark Blonde's prosecutor had feared did indeed ignite a fire. Major slave revolts shook Matanzas throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The most serious of these was the 1825 uprising which began on the El Solitario coffee plantation outside Matanzas. An initial group of 19 rebels, including one alleged witch, Federico, El Brujo (the Witch/Sorcerer), grew to over 223 as the leaders burned and looted 24 estates and killed 16 white men, women and children. Panicked whites poured into the city of Matanzas before troops squashed the uprising. Within days of the first uprising, another broke out which was also suppressed. In quick trials, the authorities sentenced 23 slaves to death and they were executed by firing squads at the Plaza de la Vigia, near the entry to town. Officials posted the heads and hands of several of the rebels in public places to be left there as a warning to others 'until time consumes them'.⁷⁸ This theater of horror was but a preview of what was to come in Matanzas.

In response to the 1825 uprising, Cuba's Captain General created new Military and Executive Commissions in Matanzas and Havana charged with reporting possible new conspiracies and keeping the population in line – especially the free people of color. Gatherings and activities that before would have gone unnoticed were now looked on with suspicion and more free blacks were swept up in investigations.⁷⁹ Officers of the free black militias were required to monitor their own communities and to enforce the increasingly repressive laws being enacted in Cuba. In 1831, the First Sergeant of the pardo battalion of Matanzas, Tomás Vargas, reported a suspicious gathering of between 20 and 30 free black men and women in a house on Contreras Street who were toasting the recently deceased 'Liberator' of New Granada, Simón Bolívar.⁸⁰ Any mention of the independence leader was enough to trigger inquiries. Vargas determined that the house was rented to a free mulatto carpenter, Bernardo Sevillán

(perhaps another brother of St Joseph?). Arrested in this investigation were all the captains and lieutenants of the free pardo and moreno militia of Matanzas and assorted other free people of color, men and women, from Matanzas, Havana and Gibacoa. All claimed to be members of a subscription group practicing 'some comedies for the Christmas season' and they had elected a 12-year-old girl to reign as queen of the festivities whom they dubbed Claudia, in honor of their patron saint.⁸¹ Each subscriber had paid five pesos to underwrite the costs of the theatrical production and the drinks to follow. The Matanzas players were rehearsing dramas such as *The Triumph of Ana María*, *The Duque of Viseo* and *Othello!*⁸²

What worried authorities most, however, was the collection of reading materials collected from the homes of those free blacks they arrested. Matanzas was known as the 'Athens of Cuba,' famed for poets and intellectuals such as Juan José Milanés and Domingo del Monte, but Military Commission records demonstrate that the free black community of Matanzas had formed similar literary and political circles. In Sevillán's library investigators found a volume entitled *Diccionario o nuevo vocabulario filosófico democrático, indispensable para todos los que desean entender la nueva lengua revolucionaria* (Dictionary or New Philosophical Democratic Vocabulary, Indispensable for All Those Who Wish to Understand the New Revolutionary Language). Another of the arrested militiaman, José Jorge López, owned *Meditaciones sobre las ruinas* (Meditations on the Ruins), *El bosquejo de la revolución de Méjico* (The Draft of the Mexican Revolution), *Guillermo Tell o la Suiza Libre* (William Tell or Free Switzerland) and the *Catecismo o Cantón constitucional para la educación de la juventud española* (The Constitutional Catechism for the Education of Spanish Youth). Authorities destroyed these incendiary materials and sentenced Sevillán and López to six months labor on public works. López appealed his sentence on the grounds that he was a veteran Lieutenant of Havana's Loyal Battalion of Pardos and thus entitled to a less degrading penalty. He won that appeal and spent the next six months in San Severino Castle rather than working shackled in public view, but even that sentence must have embittered the loyal militiaman.⁸³

In the following years, as Cuba's enslaved population grew ever more numerous, so did the incidence of slave revolts. Perhaps in an effort to regain reputation black Catholics living in Matanzas petitioned to re-organize the *cofradía* of the Santísima Virgen del Rosario, which had been created sometime earlier and apparently had fallen inactive. Father Manuel Francisco García wrote Captain General Miguel Tacón supporting this effort and after a royal *cédula* approved it in 1837, the brotherhood was official established in the San Carlos Church in Matanzas. Its officers included Julián Sisa and Simón Madan (Hermanos Mayores), Florencio Corzo (treasurer) and José de los Reyes Junco (secretary).⁸⁴ Madan was likely the former slave of the Matanzas sugar planter and slave trader. Don Joaquín Madan, and this connection may have assisted the brotherhood re-establish itself.

But neither church membership nor loyal military service would save Matanzas's free black community. After 1839, foreign-born persons of color had to present themselves to the authorities and show cause why they should not be deported. Some men related how long they had lived in Spanish territories. Others presented proof of their

military service in various Spanish posts and at least some were permitted to stay after proving their good conduct and presenting testimonials from Spanish military officers who had known them since their childhood. Neighborhood commissioners had to account for all such persons and recommend whether or not they should be permitted to remain; some were allowed to remain because they were already aged, or were ill, but others were promptly shipped away. Among those exiled to Vera Cruz were the free black Floridians, Antonio Jacobo, whose father Jorge Jacobo had been a Black Auxiliary of Carlos IV in Saint-Domingue and in St Augustine and Alejandro Pita Segui, whose father Benjamin had served in the same unit and posts.⁸⁵

Despite these precautionary expulsion, a new cycle of slave revolts broke out across Matanzas province in 1843 and Cuba's new Captain General, Leopoldo O'Donnell, whose charge it was to restore order at any cost, won infamy as a 'monster' for the regime of terror he launched in response. O'Donnell gave Military Commissioners in Havana and Matanzas a free hand against real or suspected black rebels, and a bloodbath followed. The governor of Matanzas, Antonio García Oña, led a cavalry unit that battled slave insurgents and oversaw the brutal executions that followed the Bemba and Triunvirato rebellions of 1843.⁸⁶ He also prosecuted the infamous repression known as La Escalera, for the ladder on which many suspects were whipped to death. Slaves from over 230 sugar and coffee plantations were implicated in this supposed conspiracy and arrested, as were many, if not most, of the free blacks of Matanzas. The US consul T.M. Rodney in Matanzas reported home,

It is generally supposed that the free mulattoes and blacks engaged in this affair, and it seems they are all engaged without an exception, will either be executed or driven from the island, the slaves will be dealt with severely, but only the prominent leaders will be executed.⁸⁷

The multi-layered networks among these targeted free black communities can be traced through the marriage and burial records held in the San Carlos de Matanzas Cathedral Archive, now online at ESSSS. Most well-known among the free blacks arrested in the repression of La Escalera was the gifted mulatto poet Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés, better known as Plácido, who in one poem had written the prophetic line, 'Die at the hands of an executioner, if necessary, to break the yoke [of slavery]'. Born in Havana, Plácido was abandoned at the Real Casa Cuna del Señor San José (the royal orphanage of St Joseph) by his Spanish mother, where he received a basic education from the Catholic friars at the Colegio de Belén, [Figure 2](#) shows that.⁸⁸ After a variety of employments such as carpenter, typesetter and comb-maker, he found his true calling as a poet. In 1826, he moved to Matanzas, the 'Athens of Cuba', where he developed a network of other free blacks and became a regular at the salons of the important Cuban liberal, Domingo del Monte.⁸⁹ Plácido and María Gil Morales, the legitimate daughter of Doroteo and María del Pilar Poveda, were married in the San Carlos church on 27 November 1842, attended by prominent white witnesses and godparents.⁹⁰

Another of those arrested, the mulatto dentist Andres Dodge, had also been raised in Havana's Casa Cuna and may have known Plácido since childhood.⁹¹ Dodge was



Figure 2. Statue of Plácido in front of the Iglesia del Buen Viaje, Havana, Cuba. Photo by Jane Landers.

mentored by another free mulatto dentist from Charleston, Charles Blakely, who had purchased a commission as first sergeant in the Battalion of Free Pardos of Havana. Both Dodge and Blakely were trained in London and were well-traveled and well-to-do property owners whose clientele included whites.⁹² On 29 July 1739, the

dentist Andres Dodge married Gabriela Josefa Pimienta, the mulatto daughter of cleric Nicolás González de Chávez (listed in the marriage record as unknown).⁹³ Dodge thus entered a well-known and propertied free black family with intimate connections to the church. Gabriela's brother, Santiago Pimienta, was himself a slaveowner whose ranch, ironically, was named La Paciencia (patience).⁹⁴

Aisha Finch describes the dinners Gabriela and Santiago's mother, Desideria Pimienta, hosted at her home attended by most of Matanzas' privileged free blacks. Among the guests were the mulatto violinist and orchestra leader, José Miguel Roman who was married to María Dominguera and the mulatto musician and militiaman Pedro de la Torre, who was married to Petrona Luna. The pardo militia Lieutenant, José Jorge Belen López also hosted dinners for the black elite of Matanzas. As noted, López and another of his dinner group, Antonio Bernoqui, had been arrested more than twenty years earlier at Bernardo Sevillán's home where a large group was allegedly practicing Christmas plays. Despite his brief incarceration in 1821, López apparently retained his military rank and respectability and on 4 December 1826, he married the free mulatta, María Trinidad Plaza.⁹⁵ The black militia Sergeant Manuel de Jesús Quiñones, who Finch designates 'one of the most important rebels leaders of the free Matanzas circle', and who also attended the Pimienta dinner parties, married María de los Dolores Simeona in the same church in 1830.⁹⁶ These marriages and other engagement with the Catholic Church were markers of respectability, as were their military titles and reputations. But precisely because these men were so well known and visible in their communities and so connected to one another, the Military Commission of Matanzas easily targeted them all as potential conspirators when Polonia Gangá, the enslaved concubine of planter Estéban Santa Cruz de Oviedo, warned him of a rebellion in the making.⁹⁷

All were promptly arrested and swiftly convicted. The condemned men were jailed in the chapel of the Hospital of Santa Isabel, where they were allowed a last visit with friends and family, as was customary. Rather than spend their last moments in good-byes, confessing their sins and commending their souls to God, however, they spent them copying Plácido's poems for distribution after his death. Governor Antonio García Oña was annoyed that government lawyers had discussed this with the prisoners and permitted it, which he felt discredited the government sentences.⁹⁸

Despite the governor's complaints, however, the condemned men did spend at least some time in confession and recording their last wills and testaments which are found in the burial records of the San Carlos de Matanzas Cathedral Archive. A number of the men named their heirs, left money to pay for masses for their souls, and made donations to charity. Santiago Pimienta, for example, left 200 pesos to commission a sculpture of St John the Baptist for the Pueblo Nuevo church on the outskirts of Matanzas, in a new neighborhood where other free black militia men lived. Pimienta also left six ounces of gold to help establish a school for poor girls in Matanzas. Others left alms to pay for masses for their souls and for payments to the convicts who would bury them.⁹⁹

The next morning, the condemned marched through the streets of Matanzas to their place of execution in the barrio Versailles. There, military officials tied their hands behind their backs sat them down on benches and shot them in the back. All

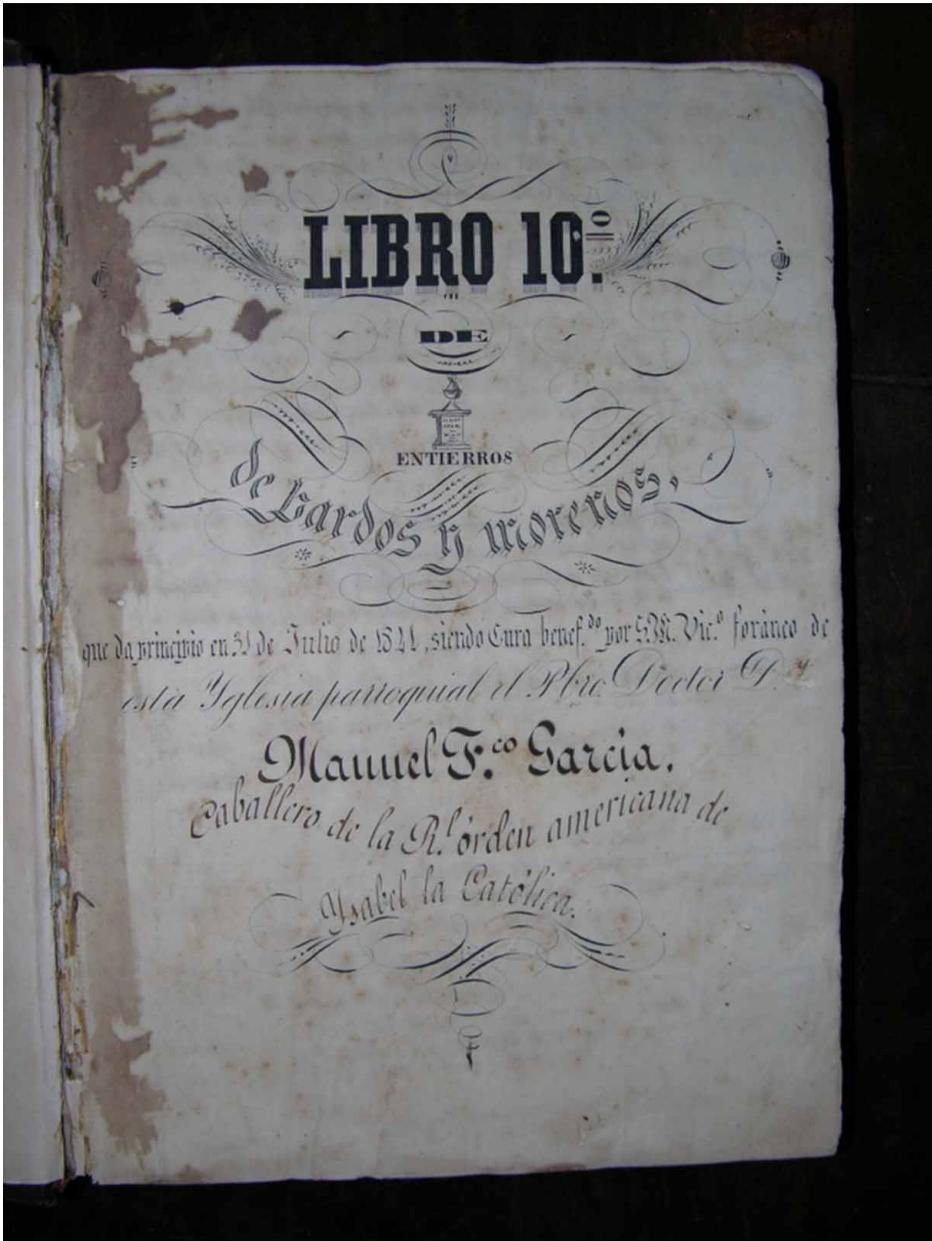


Figure 3 Cover Page, Book 10, Burials of Pardos and Morenos for Matanzas, 1841–1847, in which the victims of La Escalera are recorded. ESSSS, San Carlos de Matanzas Cathedral Archives.

were later buried in the cemetery of Matanzas and their deaths were recorded in the burial records of the San Carlos de Matanzas Cathedral Archive, shown in [Figure 3](#).¹⁰⁰ Manuel Francisco García, the same priest who had helped re-establish

the black brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario and who had married many of those executed in the La Escalera repression, entered their deaths in his registers, noting that his former parishioners were given 'all possible spiritual aid and consolation'.¹⁰¹

The priest noted that many others failed to receive the last sacraments, 'having arrived dead at the royal jail'. Father García apparently had no chance to minister to the many who died there and depended upon lists generated by the governor or military commissioner. But even those officials dutifully listed the names and place of residence of the dead, the names of their parents and wives, if known, and the names of owners if they were enslaved. They also gave the ethnicities of the dead, among which were Carabalí, Congo, Gangá, Mandinga, Mina, Lucumí and Mozambique.¹⁰²

In this terrible 'year of the lash', Captain General Leopoldo O'Donnell executed, jailed or deported most of the free black community of Matanzas, as well as hundreds of the enslaved. Michelle Reid-Vasquez has written about the subsequent dissolution of the free black militia and the reluctance of free blacks to re-join these militias when they were finally re-constituted in 1854.¹⁰³ But membership in the Catholic Church and its religious organizations apparently still offered some attraction to what was left of the decimated free black communities of Matanzas and Havana. Using records from the Cuban national archive, Reid, Howard, Childs and others have followed the re-organization of locally approved and royally licensed *cabildos/cabildos de nación* in Havana in the aftermath of La Escalera and their gradual evolution into mutual aid societies (*sociedades de socorros mutuos*) in the later decades of the century.¹⁰⁴ These organizations were dependent upon state approval, however, and suffered repeated suppressions when slave revolts, abolitionist pressures and independence movements threatened Spain's control of its 'ever faithful isle'. In contrast, *cofradías* approved and operating within the Catholic Church proved more stable and religious records as yet untapped, but now available online, can offer important information about reconstituted family and social networks in nineteenth-century Cuba, despite repeated episodes of governmental repression.

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Notes

- [1] Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); José Luciano Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte* (Havana: Consejo Superior de Cultura, Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional, 1963); Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1988); Michele Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash: Free People of Color and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011); Aisha K. Finch, *Rethinking Slave Rebellion in Cuba: La Escalera and the Insurgencias of 1841–1844* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Manuel Bárcia, *The Great African Slave Revolt of 1825* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2012) and *Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808–1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2008); Gloria García Rodríguez, *Conspiraciones y revueltas: La actividad política de los negros en Cuba (1790–1845)* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2003); Philip A. Howard, *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998); María Dolores González-Ripoll et al., eds., *El rumor de Haití en Cuba: temor, raza y rebeldía, 1789–1844* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2004); José Luciano Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte: 1812* (La Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 2006).
- [2] Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive (hereafter ESSSS), Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Vanderbilt University, <http://lib11.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib/esss>. David Wheat has transcribed Havana's oldest black baptism records from the Sagrada Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana, Libro de Barajas: Bautismos, 1590–1600 and placed them on the website. Records for Guanabacoa, Regla, Matanzas and Ceiba Mocha are also available online.
- [3] The ESSSS archive also holds ecclesiastical and secular documents for African-descended people from Rio de Janeiro and Paraíba, Brazil, Quibdó, Riohacha and Córdoba, Colombia, and St Augustine, Florida.
- [4] Mons. José Luis Sáez, *La iglesia y el negro esclavo en Santo Domingo: una historia de tres siglos* (Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Patronato de la Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo, 1994).
- [5] Frederick Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 232–57; Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud*, trans. Enriqueta Vila Vilár (Madrid: Alianza, 1987), 363–503; Anna María Splendiani and Mons. Tulio Aristizábal, *Proceso de beatificación de San Pedro Claver* (Bogotá: Centro Editorial Javeriana, 2002).

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- [8] For examples, see ESSSS.
- [9] Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), chap. 4.
- [10] Jane Landers, 'African "Nations" as Diasporic Institution-Building in the Iberian Atlantic', in *Dimensions of African and Other Diasporas*, ed. Franklin W. Knight and Ruth Iyob (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2014), 105–24; María Carmen Barcia, *Los Ilustres apellidos: Negros en la Habana colonial* (Habana: Ediciones Boloña, 2008); Rafael López Valdés, *Africanos de Cuba* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y del Caribe, 2002); Karen Graubart, "'So color de una cofradía': Catholic Confraternities and the Development of Afro-Peruvian Ethnicities in Early Colonial Peru', *Slavery & Abolition* 33 no. 1 (2012): 43–64; Jean-Paul Tardieu, *Los negros y la iglesia en el Perú, Siglos XVI-XVII* (Quito: Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano, 1997); Nicole Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers: Confraternities and Social Mobility for Afro-Mexicans* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006); Mariza de Carvalho Soares, *People of Faith: Slavery and African Catholics in Eighteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011). For a Spanish study see Isidoro Moreno, *La antigua hermandad de los negros de Sevilla* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1997).
- [11] The Pope formally approved this brotherhood in 1602. Carlos Larrazábal Blanco, *Los negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: República Dominicana, 1998), 134–6.
- [12] Sáez, *La iglesia y el negro esclavo en Santo Domingo*. Alejandro de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century*, with the collaboration of César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 98, 111.
- [13] de la Fuente, *Havana*, 168–9, 252.
- [14] Mons. Ramón Suárez Polcari, *Historia de la Iglesia Católica en Cuba*. Vols. 1 and 2 (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 2003), 130.
- [15] *Ibid.*
- [16] ESSSS, M. Cuadrado, *Obispado de la Habana: Su historia a través de los siglos, Libro 1, Parte 1, De las parroquias* (Habana: Archivo del Arzobispado de la Habana (hereafter AAH) [n.d.], Legajo 12), 252–3. Manuel Fernández Santalices, *Las antiguas iglesias de La Habana: tiempo, vida y semblante* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1997).
- [17] In addition to establishing a number of new churches and Cuba's first institution of higher learning, in 1718 Bishop Valdés also established the convalescent home of Belén and in 1722 the Hospital of San Lázaro to treat lepers, <http://www2.fiu.edu/~mirandas/obispos/bio-v.htm> (accessed March 20, 2015).
- [18] César García del Pino, ed., *La visita eclesiástica de Morrell de Santa Cruz* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1985), 19.
- [19] *Ibid.*
- [20] ESSSS, AAH, Cuadrado, *Obispado de la Habana*; Iglesia del Santo Cristo del Buen Viaje, www.iglesiadelsantocristo.org (accessed April 1, 2015).
- [21] Manuel, "'To Serve Almighty God and His Majesty'".
- [22] Soares, *People of Faith*, 21, 174, 151–53; de Oliveira, *Devoção negra*, 99–117.
- [23] Foundation documents for Brotherhood of Efigenia, Buen Viaje, 1736, ESSSS, AAH, *Archicofradías, Cofradías, y Asociaciones*, (hereafter Cofradías), Leg. 1, Exp. 18, María Carmen del Barcia also mentions this brotherhood and lists its officers as Captains Joseph Nicolás Guerra, Gregorio Guerra, Lorenzo Martínez and Alejandro Vásquez, Lieutenant Julián Guerra, and Sergeant Nicolás de Dios, *Ilustres apellidos*, appendix. In 1864, the free black

- Manuel Casanovas petitioned to re-establish this brotherhood which he stated had long been abandoned, <http://www.iglesiadelsantocristo.org> (accessed December 23, 2014).
- [24] Kenneth Kiple, *Blacks in Colonial Cuba, 1774–1899* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1976), 36–58. Between 1763 and 1792 Cuban planters imported more than 70,000 African slaves to work in the burgeoning sugar economy and importations only increased. David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Eltis determined that approximately 325,000 African arrived in Cuba between 1790 and 1820, over 70% of whom were males.
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- [26] Franco, *Las minas de Santiago del Prado y la rebellion de los cobreros*, 1530–1800.
- [27] Bishop Pedro Agustín (Morrell de Santa Cruz) to the Captain General, 6 December 1755, Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI) Santo Domingo (hereafter SD), Leg. 515, Exp. 51; Morrell de Santa Cruz, *La visita eclesiástica*, 28–9.
- [28] Cuadrado, *Obispado de la Habana*, 252–3.
- [29] Morrell de Santa Cruz, *Visita eclesiástica*; Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*, 101–2.
- [30] Fernando Ortiz, *Los cabildos y la fiesta afrocuana del Día de Reyes* (Havana: 1992); Suárez Polcari, *Historia de la iglesia*, 134–6; Marina de Mello e Souza, *Reis negros no Brasil escravista: História da festa de coroação de Rei Congo* (Belo Horizonte: Editorial UFMG, 2002).
- [31] *Relación del alzamiento que negros y mulatos, libres y cautivos de la ciudad de Méjico de la Nueva España pretendieron hacer contra los españoles*, cited in Jane G. Landers, ‘Cimarrón and Citizen: African Ethnicity and Corporate Identity and the Evolution of Free Black Towns in the Spanish Circum-Caribbean’, in *Slaves, Subjects and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 111–45.
- [32] Levi Marrero, *Cuba, economía e sociedad*, Tomo I (Rio Piedras: Editorial San Juan, 1972), 84 and *Actas capitulares del Ayuntamiento de La Habana*, Tomo II, 1566–74, cited in Barcia. *Los Ilustres apellidos*, 58–9.
- [33] Pedro Deschamps Chapeaux, *Los Batallones de Pardos y Morenos Libres* (La Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura, 1976), 40. Other free blacks bought rooms in that house, a custom I found still held in 1819 in the Lucumí’s cabildo house owned by the black militia Sergeant Juan Nepomuceno de Prieto. Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*, 170–2. For an extensive discussion of cabildo properties and administration see Howard, *Changing History*, chaps. 2 and 3.
- [34] Archivo Nacional de Cuba, (hereafter ANC) Leg. 687, Exp. 1. By 1714 the Carabalí Apapá devoted to Espiritu Santo owned a house on Calle Egido; Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux identified the subgroups of Carabalí in Havana as Abalo, Acocúa, Apapá, Agro, Bogre, Bricamo, Ecnaso, Elugo, Ibi, Ibo, Induri, Isicuat, Isique, Isuama, Isuama Apapá, Isuama Bogre Abate Singlaba, Isuama Aballa Ocuite, Isuama Ibi Isuama Isiegue, Issueche, Isuama Oquella, Orú, Oroso, Osoo Omuna, Ugri, *Los battallones*.
- [35] Bishop Pedro Agustín Morrell de Santa Cruz to His Majesty, Havana, 6 December 1753, AGI, SD, Leg. 515, Exp. 51.
- [36] Jane Landers, *Black Society*, chap. 2; Kathleen Deagan and Darcie MacMahon, *Fort Mose: Colonial America’s Black Fortress of Freedom* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995)
- [37] Like most of the free black militia, Fermin de Quixas/Quijas had a long career. Military records allow his to track his career in the Havana militia for more than half century as he steadily rose through the ranks from soldier to Captain of Grenadier. Libro de Servicios de los Oficiales y Sargentos del Batallón de Pardos Libres de la Habana, 31 December 1805, AGI, Cuba 1667 and 1771 B, cited in Bárcia, *Ilustres apellidos*,

- [38] Bishop Morrell de Santa Cruz subsidized the passage of the Mose militia to Cuba in 1764. AGI, Cuba 1076.
- [39] Nine free black families were initially settled at the small fishing village of Regla, also across the bay from Havana. Fifteen families of Florida Indians were re-settled in the village of Guanabacoa, an Indian reserve since 1554, located across the bay from Havana. Resumen de los Indios procedentes de la Florida, ANC, Guanabacoa, Protocolo de Cabildo, 1754–64, fol. 90–4.
- [40] Landers, *Black Society*, chap. 3; Instructions to Don Simon Rodríguez on the establishment of the Florida families in Matanzas, 1764, AGI, SD 2595; Los emigrados de Florida, AGI, Cuba 368; Report of Juan José Eligio de la Puente, Havana, 8 May 1770, AGI, SD 2585. Sherry Johnson argues that although the Floridano settlement was a failure, it was a prototype for later, more successful settlements, as Havana's population grew rapidly over the last part of the century. 'Casualties of Peace: Tracing the Historic Roots of the Florida-Cuba Diaspora, 1763–1800', *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* (Winter 2001): 91–125.
- [41] Elena Schneider, 'The Occupation of Havana: War, Trade, and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Cuba' (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2011).
- [42] In recognition of their service in the siege, a noted churchman preached the 'Sermon of the Flags' in Espíritu Santo and blessed the black unit's flag which bore the motto 'Victory or Death', a ceremony repeated when the island was restored to Spain in 1763. Cuba's black troops also helped establish Spanish control of New Orleans in 1769. Batallón de Morenos de la Habana, Datos militares y civiles, Junio de 1765, AGI, SD 2093 cited in Barcia, *Los Ilustres apellidos*; Deschamps Chapeaux, *Los batallones*, 31–2.
- [43] Keith Manuel, "To Serve Almighty God and His Majesty" (paper presented at the Southern Historical Society).
- [44] Cofradía del Espíritu Santo en la parroquia de este mismo nombre de esta Ciudad, 1765, ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, Leg. 5, Exp. 27, Num. 31. The brotherhood apparently faltered thereafter and in 1803 Captain Marcos Morenos, of the Batallón de Morenos Leales who received the Royal Effigy from the King attempted to re-establish it only to be blocked by a new bishop, Juan José Díaz de Espada. Marcos Moreno, Comandante del Batallón de morenos en justificación de como es protector de la Cofradía del Espíritu Santo, 1801, ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, Leg. 5, Exp. 27, Num. 3, cited in Manuel, "To Serve Almighty God". For more on the impact of the Saint-Domingue revolt see González-Ripoll, *El rumor* and Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolutions* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- [45] Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*, 103–19.
- [46] Request of Joseph Antonio Carmelita and Agustín Chamiso to reauthorize the Caravalí Ungua cabildo of San Agustín, 22 September 1769, AGI, Cuba 1197, Expedientes Sultos. años 1771–7. Carmelita, and Chamiso, First and Second Capatazes respectively, reported that on 15 October 1768 a hurricane had destroyed their meeting house and all their documents. They listed the cabildo's first and second Captains as Joseph Antonio Carmelita and Manuel de Sayas; Officials were Agustín Chamiso and Juan Joseph Castilla; and Soldiers were Pablo Santa Cruz, Guillermo Villarte, Manuel Chamiso, Hilario Castilla, Antonio Calvo, Francisco Castilla, Francisco de tal and Joseph de la Cruz, María del Carmen Barcia also found this cabildo recorded in the National Archive of Cuba but her citation, Fondo Escribanía de Ortega, Leg. 6, Exp. 1 and Fondo Escribanía de Varios, Leg. 211, Exp. 3114, listed only the two capatazes and called the cabildo the Carbalí Oquella San Agustín. Barcia, *Los Ilustres apellidos*, Table 1.
- [47] Expedientes Sultos, Memoriales sobre diferentes asuntos, año 1771–7, AGI, Cuba 1197.
- [48] Matt D. Childs, 'Re-Creating African Ethnic Identities in Cuba', in *Black Urban Atlantic*, 85–100; Barcia, *Los Ilustres apellidos*; Rafael E. López Valdés, *Pardos y morenos esclavos y libres en*

- Cuba y sus instituciones en el Caribe Hispano* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, 2007).
- [49] Paul H.D. Kaplan, 'Italy 1490–1700', in *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the 'Age of Discovery' to the Age of Abolition*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates Jr. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 111; Richard C. Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 102–7 and 140. Trexler demonstrates the 'plasticity of the magi theme' as kings were described as Indian or black depending on place and time. Black Cubans identified Melchior as the black magi who honored Christ at his birth; A.C. de C.M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441–1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
- [50] Fernando Ortiz, 'Los cabildos Afrocubanos', in *Orbita de Fernando Ortiz*, ed. Julio Le Riverend (Havana: Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba, 1973), 121–34.
- [51] Frederika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World; Impressions of America*, by Mary Howitt trans., 2 vols. (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1853), vol. 2, 379–83.
- [52] The 1795 Treaty of Basle required all Spanish subjects, military and civilian, to evacuate the island. Sherry Johnson, 'The Bittersweet Homecoming of Havana's "Six Skeletons"' (paper presented at the Consortium for Revolutionary Era Studies, Tallahassee, FL, March 2011).
- [53] Childs, 'Re-Creating African Ethnic Identities in Cuba'.
- [54] Marcos Moreno Comandante del Batallón de morenos en justificación de como es protector de la Cofradía del Espíritu Santo, 1801 ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, Leg. 5, Exp.27, Número 3, cited in Manuel, "To Serve Almighty God and His Majesty".
- [55] I have written earlier about Sergeant Second Class Juan Nepomuceno Prieto, the capatáz of the Lucumí (Yoruba) cabildo in Havana's Jesús, María y José barrio, who served as the Catholic godfather for many Lucumí 'liberated' by the British. Baptism of Jacobo, Iglesia de Santo Angel Custodio, 21 September 1828, ESSSS, Registro de Bautismos, 19 N, f. 164, entry # 978; Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*, chap. 4.
- [56] Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte*; Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*. Stephan Palmie also questions Aponte's African cabildo membership pointing out that Aponte had copied several royal cedulas pertaining to religious brotherhoods and called himself the 'deputy of the Virgen de Remedios'. Stephan Palmie, *Wizards and Scientists: Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 90–1.
- [57] Petition of the Brothers of St Joseph, ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, Leg. 4, Exp. 9 and Exp. 21, <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/esss.pl>, DSCN 0538 (accessed June 5, 2014).
- [58] Matt Childs identified Peñalver as a slave and Pacheco as a free and literate black militiaman and artisan, born in Cuba, as Aponte was. One of the deputies of the Brothers of St Joseph, Julian Sendiga, may have been related to the free black artisan, José Sendiga, who was sentenced to a four year jail term in the Aponte trials. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*, Appendix 1.
- [59] The full cast of characters and their roles appear in AGI, Cuba 357, Declaration of Captain Gabriel Dorotea Barba, 4 December 1809.
- [60] Landers, *Black Society*, chap. 3 and 'An Eighteenth-Century Community in Exile: The Floridanos of Cuba', *New West Indian Guide* 70, no. 1 & 2 (Spring 1996): 39–58.
- [61] Both Bartolomé de las Casa and Bernal Díaz del Castillo repeated the story of how Taíno natives drafted from Havana drowned the luckless Spaniards in mid-bay. Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, vol. 2, chap. 31 and Díaz del Castillo, *Verdadera historia*, 68–9 cited in Miguel A. Bretos, *Matanzas: The Cuba Nobody Knows* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 14–15. In 1513, perhaps in retaliation for the previous event, Pánfilo de Narváez slaughtered many more of the indigenous while exploring the island for its governor Diego de Velásquez.
- [62] Francisco J. Ponte y Domínguez, *Matanzas: Biografía de una provincia* (Havana: Academia de la Historia de Cuba, 1959); Bretos, *Matanzas*, chap. 3.

- [63] Expediente sobre la población y fortificación del puerto de Matanzas, años de 1681 a 1696AGI, SD 457, cited in Bretos, *Matanzas*, 271.
- [64] Bretos, *Matanzas*, 31, 35.
- [65] Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century: The Social and Economic History of Matanzas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 80–83.
- [66] Memorial to reform the Hermandad de la Santísima Virgen del Rosario, San Carlos de Matanzas Church, 26 March 1736, ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/index.php>
- [67] Foundation of the Brotherhood of Santa Misericordia, 1726, San Carlos de Matanzas Church ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, Leg. 1. Brothers included Captain Juan Luis Hurtado, Andres Fermin, Manuel de Soto, Bernardo de Torres, Joseph de Soto, Lorenzo Romero, Pablo _____, Melchor de Fuentes, _____ Garzia Vello, Joseph de la Crus y____, Joseph de Fuentes, Ygnacio Joseph de la Paz, Jacinto Fernandes, Juan Joseph Gonzales, Manuel Fig____, Estevan de Torres, Marcus____ Juan Mayeda, _____ de Berdesa and Francisco Olivera. Other than its foundation and re-establishment, no records of the black brotherhood of the Santa Misericordia survive.
- [68] Marriage of Captain Manuel de Soto and Maria Augustina Gonzales, ‘blanca, natural de Tacorente de las Yslas Canarias,’ Black Marriages, 8 April 1764, ESSSS, San Carlos de Matanzas Church Archives (hereafter SCMCA), Landers, ‘An Eighteenth-Century Community’.
- [69] In 1788 Captain de Soto had his Carabalí slave, Juan de la Luz, baptized in the Matanzas cathedral, where he, himself, had been married. Baptism of Juan de la Luz, 2 April 1788, ESSSS, SCMCA, Libro de Bautismos de Indios, Pardos y Morenos.
- [70] By the 1820s, Havana was the largest city in the Caribbean and the third largest in the Americas, with a population of over 100,000. Franklin W. Knight, ‘The Caribbean in the Age of Enlightenment, 1783–1837’ (paper delivered at Vanderbilt University); Allan J. Kuethe, ‘Havana in the Eighteenth Century’, in *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650–1850*, eds. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 13–39.
- [71] Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García and María del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market, 1790–1880* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 23–37.
- [72] Permission for Don Joaquín Madan to send his ship to Africa to purchase slaves, January 1815–July 1816, Diaspora collections at the major archives of the province of Matanzas, Cuba, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 060, http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=126;r=4596 (accessed May 1, 2015); Bergad, Iglesias García, and Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 23–37; Kuethe, ‘Havana in the Eighteenth Century.’
- [73] Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, chaps. 1 and 2; Bretos, *Matanzas*, 57.
- [74] Robert Francis Jameson visited Matanzas in 1818 and reported its annual revenue at \$249,023, a four-fold increase in just over 50 years. Robert Francis Jameson, *Letters from the Havana: During the Year 1820, Containing an Account of the Present State of the Island of Cuba* (London, 1821), 23–37. Under duress Spain had signed a treaty with Great Britain in 1817 that prohibited the African slave trade north of the equator but even after British naval forces began interdicting ships off the African coast in 1819, the Cuban slave trade continued with the clear collusion of Cuban officials, most of whom were members of the sugar plantocracy. David Murray, *Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). For illicit slave landings near Matanzas, 1842–1844, see Archivo Historico de la Nación, Madrid (hereafter AHN), Estado, Legajos 8037–8039, cited in Finch.
- [75] By 1827 Matanzas was producing about one-fourth of the sugar grown in Cuba and the demand for slaves was so great that Matanzas planters like Joaquín Madan and Zacarías Atkins organized their own direct trade in African slaves, although Havana-based traders also supplied the Matanzas slave market. Bergad, Iglesias García, and Barcia, *Cuban Slave Market*, 23–37; Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*, chap. 1; Bretos, *Matanzas*, chap. 5.

- [76] Francisco J. Ponte y Domínguez, *Matanzas: Biografía de una provincia* (La Habana, 1909), 94–97, 104.
- [77] I discuss this case in more length in *Atlantic Creoles*, chap. 5. Blonde complained that he was losing income from his barber shops (plural) in Havana as well as the rent he had paid for another. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Escoto Collection, Conspiracies, BMS Span 502 (700), folder 3, Causas políticas en Matanzas por subversión y sedición, 1821–1822. Escoto Collection, Conspiracies, BMS Span 502 (700), folder 3, Causas políticas en Matanzas por subversión y sedición, 1821–1822, Criminal charges against the pardo Manl José Blond [*sic*].
- [78] The Military and Executive Commission of Matanzas blamed the trouble on foreign planters who allowed their slaves too much liberty to travel along the roads and gather on week-ends for long nights of drumming, dancing, and feasting. Bárcia, *The Great African Slave Revolt*; García Rodríguez, *Conspiraciones y revueltas*, 83–7; Gloria García Rodríguez, *La esclavitud desde la esclavitud: la visión de los siervos* (Mexico: Centro de Investigación Científica Ing. Jorge L. Tamayo, 1996), 178–83; Israel Moliner Castañeda, ‘Las sublevaciones de esclavos en Matanzas’, *Islas*, 85 (1986): 24–48.
- [79] Foreign elements were always looked upon with even greater suspicion, so although black exiles from Florida who moved from Havana to Matanzas in 1827 may have had some earlier Florida networks to build upon, they must have experienced some of the institutional paranoia of the day. AGI, Cuba 358, Los emigrados de Florida.
- [80] All material on the Sevillán case comes from ANC, Comisión Militar Ejecutiva y Permanente, de Matanzas (hereafter CMM), Leg. 9, Núm.24; Also see ANC, CMM, Leg. 9, Núm. 25 cited in García, *Conspiraciones y revueltas*, 93–4. I discuss the Sevillán case in more length in *Atlantic Creoles*, chap. 5.
- [81] ANC, CMM, Leg. 9, Núm. 24.
- [82] For other discussions of contemporary free black subscription associations, dances and balls see Landers, *Black Society*, 147–8, Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769–1803* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 132–3, 144–7.
- [83] García, *Conspiraciones y revueltas*, 94–6.
- [84] Memorial to reform the Hermandad de la Santísima Virgen del Rosario, Iglesia de San Carlos de Matanzas, 26 March 1736, ESSSS, AAH, Cofradías, Leg. 8, Exp. 1. Other officers included Pablo Gálvez, Leonicio Dequinson (Dickinson?), Mauricio Cuello, Joaquin Navia, Lucio Cartaya, Adrian Cenac, Florencio Corzo, Fermín Jiménez, Luis Erice, Antolin González and José de los Reyes Junco; Brotherhood Statutes, 20 September 1836 and Royal Cédula establishing the Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Matanzas, 1837; Martha Silvia Escalona, *Los cabildos de africanos y sus descendientes en Matanzas: siglo XIX y primera década del XX* (Matanzas: Ediciones Matanzas, 2008), 60, 152.
- [85] Petition of Antonio Jacobo, 13 June 1844, Petitions of foreign blacks that they not be deported, 1844, ANC, Asuntos Políticos (hereafter AP), Leg. 141/6 and Petition of Alejandro Pita Segui, 24 May 1844, *ibid*. I am grateful to Manuel Bárcia Paz for these references. I discuss these cases further in *Atlantic Creoles*.
- [86] Finch, *Rethinking Slave Rebellion*, 189–94.
- [87] Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*, 22; Jonathan Curry-Macadi, ‘How Cuba Burned with the Ghosts of British Slavery: Race’, *Abolition and the Esclaera, Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 25, no. 1: 71–93.
- [88] Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*, 2–26, 233–66; Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*, chap. 6; On Plácido’s transnational impact see Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo, *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 29–47.

- [89] Franklin Knight, 'Prologue: Plácido and Cuban History during the Nineteenth Century', in *Cuba: Plácido, Poeta mulato de la emancipación (1809–1844)*, ed. Enildo García (New York: Senda Nueva, 1986), 11–16. William Luis, *Literary Bondage* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Jackie Vernon Willey, 'Writing and Rebellion in Plácido's Poetry', (Masters of Arts thesis, Vanderbilt University, 2010).
- [90] Marriage of Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés and Maria Gil Morales, 27 November 1842, Libro de Matrimonios de Pardos y Morenos, p. 106b, Entry 355, ESSSS, SCMCA.
- [91] Marriage of Andres Dodge and Gabriela Josefa Pimienta, 29 July 1739, Libro de Matrimonios de Pardos y Morenos, ESSSS, SCMCA.
- [92] Blakely practiced both in Havana and Matanzas and advertised in the official newspapers that he had been examined and certified by the Royal Protomedicato of Havana, the government institution charged with issuing medical credentials. Blakely had also spent time in the 1830s in New York. Pedro Deschamps Chapeaux, *El negro en la economía, habanera del siglo XIX* (La Habana: Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba, 1991), 157–165; Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*, 227–29.
- [93] Marriage of Andres Dodge and Gabriela Josefa Pimienta, 29 July 1739, Libro de Matrimonios de Pardos y Morenos, ESSSS, SCMCA.
- [94] Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*.
- [95] Marriage of José Jorge Belen Lopez and María Trinidad Plaza, 4 Dic. 1826, Libro de Matrimonios de Pardos y Morenos, ESSSS, SCMCA
- [96] Finch, *Rethinking Slave Rebellion*, 161; Marriage of Manuel Quiñones and María Dolores Simeona, Libro de Matrimonios de Pardos y Morenos, 1833, p. 75b, entry 374, ESSSS, SCMCA; Entierros de Pardos y Morenos, Libro 10, 1841–1847, ESSSS, SCMCA, Burials for 28 June 1844 appear as entries 1152–62.
- [97] García, *Conspiraciones y revueltas*, 94–6; Finch, *Rethinking Slave Rebellion*, 185; Manuel Barcia, 'Exorcising the Storm: Revisiting the Origins of the Repression of La Escalera Conspiracy in Cuba, 143–1844', *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 15, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 311–26.
- [98] Governor of Matanzas to the Military Commission, 9 July 1844, Escoto Collection, Conspiracies, Documents 1844–5, MS Span 52 (716) Houghton Library, Harvard University; William Luis, 'Editor's Note', *Afro-Hispanic Review*, 31, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 5–12.
- [99] Burial of Santiago Pimienta, Burials of Pardos y Morenos, Book 10, 1841–1847, 28 June 1844, ESSSS, SCMCA, p.109, entry # 1153.
- [100] Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*, chap. 6
- [101] ESSSS, SCMCA, Burials of Pardos y Morenos, Book 10, 1841–1847, Burials for 28 June 1844, Andres José Dodge, p. 109, entry # 1152, Santiago Pimienta, Entry # 1153, Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés, alias Plácido, entry # 1154. In addition to the executed, are many others whose entries describe them as 'prisoners in the Royal Jail who died in the Charity Hospital of this city.'
- [102] *Ibid.*
- [103] Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash*, chap. 5.
- [104] *Ibid.*; Howard, *Changing History*; Matt D. Childs, "'The Defects of Being a Black Creole': The Degrees of African Ethnicity in the Cuban Cabildos de Nación', in *Slaves, Subjects and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 209–45 and Childs, 'Retaining and Recreating African Ethnic Identities in Cuba: The Relocation of Havana's Cabildos de Nación', in *The Urban Black Atlantic during the Era of the Slave Trade*, eds. James Sidbury, Jorge Cañizares-Ezguera and Matt D. Childs (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 85–100.