

The Early Slave Trade from Angola to Spanish America and Brazil, 1575-1595*

El temprano comercio de esclavos desde Angola
hacia Hispanoamérica y Brasil, 1575-1595

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In this essay we use new and overlooked sources to provide a chronology for the early slave trade from Angola to Spanish America, beginning with two voyages that sailed from Luanda Island soon after the arrival of the first governor of Portuguese Angola. Similar voyages to the Caribbean and Río de la Plata were common after 1595, but during the preceding decade, the traffic of enslaved Africans from Angola to Spanish America was largely an extension of an older, more intensive trade from Angola to Brazil.

KEYWORDS: Angola; Slavery; Slave trade; Brazil; Caribbean; Río de la Plata.

En este ensayo empleamos fuentes nuevas y subutilizadas para ofrecer una cronología del temprano comercio de esclavos desde Angola hacia Hispanoamérica, lo cual comenzó con dos navíos que zarparon de la Isla de Luanda justo después de la llegada del primer gobernador de la Angola portuguesa. Semejantes viajes al Caribe y al Río de la Plata eran comunes a partir de 1595, pero en la década anterior la trata de africanos esclavizados desde Angola hacia Hispanoamérica fue en gran medida una extensión de un tráfico más viejo y más intensivo desde Angola hacia Brasil.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Angola; esclavitud; comercio de esclavos; Brasil; Caribe; Río de la Plata.

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The traffic of enslaved West Central Africans to the Iberian peninsula and to São Tomé and Príncipe first took shape during the late 1400s; by the 1530s, São Tomé's inhabitants had established direct trade with the region south of the Kingdom of Kongo known to the Portuguese as «Angola», much of which was under the control of the Kingdom of Ndongo.¹ Despite Angola's well-known importance within the overall transatlantic slave trade over the following centuries, the beginnings of the traffic from Angola to the Americas remain obscure. This essay draws on overlooked and previously unknown sources to provide a new assessment of the early slave trade from Angola to Brazil and a chronological overview of the first slaving voyages from Angola to Spanish America. It opens with an analysis of two voyages that sailed from West Central Africa directly to Hispaniola in 1575, shortly after Paulo Dias de Novais arrived on Luanda Island as the first governor of the new Portuguese colony of Angola.

Dias de Novais's declaration of war against Ndongo in 1579 transformed politics and Portuguese slaving practices in the region, but another decade would pass before Angola surpassed São Tomé in the trade to Spanish America. Regardless of the precedent set by the two vessels arriving in the Caribbean in 1575, the Casa de la Contratación in Seville only began to authorize full-scale slaving voyages from Angola to Spanish America in the late 1580s and early 1590s. In the intervening years, the only ships to sail from Luanda to the Caribbean were those that had deviated from registered destinations in Portugal or, more commonly, Brazil. Direct traffic from Angola to the Spanish Caribbean remained limited until the early 1590s, at which point the trade began to increase dramatically, accompanied by a rapidly growing traffic from Luanda to the recently refounded settlement of Buenos Aires. This increase in the trade from Angola to Spanish America was already underway prior to the beginnings of the Spanish crown's first *asiento* with Pedro Gomez Reynel in 1595.² Importantly, the nascent trade from Angola to the Spanish Caribbean and Río de la Plata during the late 1580s and early 1590s also confirms the existence and illustrates the continuing influence of a surge in Angola-Brazil traffic that was at least a decade older.

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1 Brásio, 1952-1988, II: 14-15. Caldeira, 2013, 88-90.

2 Scelle, 1906, 344, 375. Reinel's *asiento* was agreed upon on January 30, 1595, and would commence on May 1 of that year, but in preparation Reinel had undertaken the administration of the «license» system on November 1, 1594.

In early December 1575 two ships sailing together, both named *Santo Antonio*, disembarked a total of over three hundred enslaved Africans on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. As noted by the island's royal officials, the galleon and caravel had been en route to New Spain and Honduras respectively. Both vessels carried «blacks»; the caravel also brought a cargo of clothing (*ropa de vestir*). After arriving in Santo Domingo, Francisco Rebolo, the pilot of the galleon, presented registration papers that had been issued in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. According to the papers, he and the galleon's shipmaster San Juan de Elejabeitia were *vecinos* of Triana in Seville. Pedro Colombo, who had captained the caravel but died prior to its arrival in Ocoa, was a *vecino* of Gran Canaria. Other crew members were ostensibly *vecinos* of Seville, the Canary Islands, Galicia, various towns in the province of Huelva, and El Puerto de Santa María; an enslaved *grumete* was simply listed as «Gaspar esclavo del piloto Francisco de Rebolo». Rebolo's papers contained several inconsistencies, including no mention whatsoever of a galleon.³ Rather than objecting to the various discrepancies between the papers presented by Rebolo and the conditions in which the two ships had arrived in Hispaniola, the crown prosecutor in Santo Domingo objected to the legality of both voyages on the grounds that Rebolo's papers were patently false: they had already been used as authorization to transport enslaved Africans to Spanish America on two previous occasions.⁴ The vessel's captives were confiscated and sold at auction, with proceeds going to the royal treasury. The case was not concluded until 1590; Rebolo spent most of the intervening years in Seville, but returned to Santo Domingo in 1585 to settle the issue before going back to Spain again in late 1586.⁵

3 «Proçeso... contra Francisco Rebolo y San Juan de Elejabeitia sobre los trezientos y tantos negros que truxieron al puerto desta çiudad», Santo Domingo, 1578-1590, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla (AGI), Escribanía, 1A, n. 2, pieza 4. On the caravel's arrival at Ocoa, see «Las quantas que se thomaron al thesorero Diego Ximenez de Peralta del año de 1575», AGI, Contaduría, 1052, n. 1 (1575), ff. 13r, 16r.

4 The same papers had apparently been used by Ventura de Espinosa to take enslaved Africans to Cartagena de Indias in 1572, and by Francisco Núñez and Pedro Álvarez de Silva to take captives to Hispaniola in 1574. «Cartas y Recabdos que an benido para S.M. de la yslla Española», 1572-1574, AGI, Santo Domingo, 71, l. 3, ff. 12v-13r, 66r-66v, 68r-68v. We thank Marc Eagle for providing his transcriptions and analysis of this source.

5 Real provisión al presidente y oficiales de la Casa de la Contratación, Madrid, May 11, 1585, AGI, Indiferente, 426, l. 27, f. 111v. Chaunu and Chaunu, 1955-1959, III: 392-393. Rebolo also had previous experience in the slave trade. In Santo Domingo in March 1576, while providing testimony about a different unregistered slaving voyage, he described himself as being about forty years old, and noted that «este testigo a despachado y sacado algunas vezes de la yslla de Cabo Verde muncha cantidad de negros», AGI, Escribanía, 2A, pieza 2, f. 77v.

During the mid-1570s in Hispaniola, the arrival of two slaving voyages that had not been registered to sail there was a fairly commonplace occurrence.⁶ Much more unusual was that nearly all of the approximately 240 African women, men, and children who survived long enough to be sold in Santo Domingo in late December 1575 and early January 1576 were described as being «of the Angola land» (*de tierra Angola*).⁷ Some witnesses who were questioned about the arrival of these vessels in Santo Domingo assumed that both had sailed from São Tomé; others stated that they could say little about the expenses incurred on either voyage «because they have never traveled to Angola» or traded there.⁸

A legal suit initiated earlier that year by Hector Diaz, a Portuguese merchant and vecino of Seville, provides further information that portrays Rebolo and Colombo's voyages in an entirely different light.⁹ On April 15, 1586, Diaz complained to House of Trade officials in Seville that he had made an agreement in Lisbon in 1574 with Paulo Dias de Novais, who at that time was soon to become the donatary captain and first governor of Portuguese Angola. Hector Diaz provided Dias de Novais with two galleons, both named Santo Antonio, that would sail from Lisbon to Angola, stopping only if necessary in Madeira or the Cape Verde Islands. The galleons would embark enslaved Africans in Angola and then return directly to Portugal. Two individuals designated to administer the galleons, one of whom was Hector Diaz's brother Baltasar Álvarez, were specifically instructed not to take the galleons or the captives they carried to Spanish America. According to Diaz, the two galleons departed from Lisbon with Dias de Novais and his family onboard, and after arriving in Angola, proceeded to embark captives as planned.¹⁰ But soon afterwards, Baltasar Álvarez and Dias de Novais made a new arrangement with a man named Francisco Rebolo, who claimed to have a license to take slaves to Spanish America. Rebolo persuaded them to lend

6 Eagle, 2018.

7 «Proçeso... contra Francisco Rebolo», AGI, Escribanía, 1A, n. 2, pieza 4, ff. 274r-327r. Most captives were sold between December 16, 1575 and January 7, 1576. Six captives were sold on May 10, 1576.

8 *Ibidem*, ff. 216r-220v. For discussion of São Tomé as a hub that re-exported captives from Angola to the Caribbean in this period, and the assumption that Rebolo's vessel sailed from São Tomé, see Wheat, 2016, 74-76, 93-94, 105.

9 «Proçeso de Hector Diaz [...] contra Francisco Rebolo y Baltasar Alvarez sobre un registro de esclavos que navegaron a Yndias de Castilla con papeles falsos», Seville, 1586, AGI, Contratación, 727, n. 6. Many thanks to Alex Borucki for directing us to this source.

10 Dias de Novais's fleet departed from Lisbon in late 1574, stopping in Madeira and the Cape Verde Islands before reaching Luanda Island in February 1575. Birmingham, 1966, 48. Amaral, 2000, 73-75. The embarkation of captives must have taken place at some point, possibly over an extended period, during the following six to eight months.

him one of the galleons, including approximately 500 enslaved Africans who were already onboard. Dias de Novais also provided an additional 250 captives on a smaller caravel that he owned, having previously purchased it from Hector Diaz, and the two vessels departed for New Spain. The galleon's shipmaster was Rebolo's brother-in-law, San Juan de Elejabeitia; the caravel's shipmaster was Pedro Colombo.

Soon after the vessels' departure from Angola, a massive and initially successful revolt erupted on the caravel, resulting in the deaths of the entire crew, including Colombo. But the galleon piloted by Rebolo soon caught up to the caravel. In retaking the smaller vessel, mariners from the galleon killed many of the enslaved Africans who had risen up; others threw themselves into the sea.¹¹ At this juncture the remaining crew and surviving captives were evidently redistributed among the two ships, and the journey westward recommenced. Later, having run out of water, the galleon and caravel both stopped in Hispaniola, where Rebolo and Elejabeitia presented the invalid registration papers in December 1575.

As they reviewed Hector Diaz's complaints roughly a decade later, officials in Seville believed that the names provided by the galleon's crew members in Santo Domingo must have been false identities, because they did not match the crew members known to have been onboard the galleon at the time of its departure from Lisbon with Paulo Dias de Novais and his entourage. But separate sources recorded in the Canary Islands and Portugal in 1576-1578 indicate that at least some of the mariners who arrived in Santo Domingo on the galleon with Rebolo and Elejabeitia, or perhaps on the caravel owned by Dias de Novais, used their real names. They also provide some confirmation of the insurrection aboard the caravel. In Las Palmas de Gran Canaria on October 8, 1576, a *vecina* named Úrsula Muñoz identified herself to a public notary as the «widow of Pedro Colombo, deceased, who was killed by the blacks in Guinea», and authorized a third party in Seville to collect any money or properties that had belonged to her deceased husband.¹² A power of attorney notarized in Tenerife nine months later indicates that Andrés Lorenzo, who had served as a *paje* on Rebolo and Colombo's voyage from the Canary Islands to Angola (presumably on a different ship), and on the passage from Angola to Santo Domingo, was

11 «Proceso de Hector Diaz», AGI, Contratación, 727, n. 6, f. 1v: «Por haberles faltado agua tomaron la ysla de Sancto Domingo habiendo en el camino muerto todos los esclabos o la mayor parte de la dicha carabela porque se lebantaron los esclabos della y mataron la gente que en ella yba y arribando el dicho galeon sobre ella mataron grande parte de esclabos y los demas se hecharon a la mar».

12 Lobo Cabrera, 1990, 259.

still waiting to collect his wages.¹³ A document similar to the one commissioned by Colombo's widow was notarized in Vila do Conde, Portugal, in August 1578 by Margarida Francisca, whose son Francisco, a mariner, had died on a recent voyage to «Angola and the Antilles».¹⁴

The 1575 itinerary of Hector Diaz's galleon and Dias de Novais's caravel sheds new light on the founding of Portuguese Angola as yet another example of global, trans-imperial trade organized by private merchants working simultaneously within and around parameters established by metropolitan authorities in early modern Iberia.¹⁵ Dias de Novais's association with Baltasar Álvarez and Francisco Rebolo at the expense of his earlier business partner Hector Diaz – not to mention Rebolo's violation of House of Trade protocols designed to regulate slaving voyages to Spanish America – might be viewed within a broader pattern in which «self-organized, trans-imperial and cross-cultural networks» presented «serious challenges for the state, church and monopolistic institutions» that often relied on those same networks, and on the individuals who participated in them, as «agents of empire-building».¹⁶ The significance of this episode is even greater in that it demonstrates a direct relationship between the founding of the Portuguese colony of Angola and the advent of the transatlantic slave trade from Angola to Spanish America. The same vessels initiated both historical processes: several months after depositing Angola's first governor on Luanda Island in 1575, the galleon that had transported Dias de Novais, accompanied by a smaller caravel that he owned, set sail for Spanish America with several hundred West Central African captives.

1575-1579

The 1575 voyages to Hispaniola corresponded to the earliest stages of the Portuguese colony of Angola, a period in which Iberian merchants procured most captives via trade. After his arrival on Luanda Island in

13 Poder de Andrés Lorenzo a Sebastián Rodríguez, Garachico, 24 julio 1577, Archivo Histórico Provincial de Santa Cruz de Tenerife (AHP SCT), Protocolos Notariales, 2229, f. 688r. We thank José Miguel Rodríguez Yanes for sharing this information.

14 Procuração passada por Margarida Francisca, 26 August 1578, Arquivo Distrital do Porto (ADP), Cartório notarial Vila do Conde, 1.º ofício, ff. 181r-182v, available at: <https://pesquisa.adporto.arquivos.pt/details?id=1480675> (accessed Dec. 1, 2021). Many thanks to Thiago Krause for pointing us toward this source.

15 Ebert, 2008, 57. Silva, 2015, 98-99.

16 Antunes and Polónia, 2016, 3.

February 1575, Paulo Dias de Novais established his authority over the Portuguese who already resided there, re-established contact and trade relations with Benguela, and hosted an emissary from Ndongo (squelling rumors – which were essentially true – that the Portuguese intended to conquer the region).¹⁷ What would become the city of São Paulo de Luanda was founded on the mainland adjacent to Luanda Island in early 1576; the settlement quickly grew to approximately 300 vecinos, roughly the same size that it would maintain for the next three decades.¹⁸ Among his many other activities during the mid-1570s, as Beatrix Heintze observes, Paulo Dias de Novais «devoted himself especially to the slave trade».¹⁹ The Portuguese colony's relations with Ndongo were «peaceful» and «above all, commercial» during this period.²⁰ In November 1576, nearly two years after Dias de Novais's arrival as governor of Angola, Padre Garcia Simões wrote that «12 thousand *peças*» were being exported from Luanda every year, and that «in the past year, including 4,000 who died, there were 14 thousand». Simões's understanding was that most of these thousands of captives had been «slaves of the King» who had rebelled or committed a crime at some point in the past, and were being sold rather than being punished with execution.²¹ The Kingdom of Ndongo had recently expanded by warring with neighboring states, and two different types of unfree status already existed in the region: *mubika* were either prisoner of war or captives who had been purchased; *kijiku* were captives who, over time, had been «permanently integrated into the community and were only sold under special circumstances».²² Contemporary observer Jerónimo de Castaño wrote that from the time of Dias de Novais's arrival until 1578, «more than fifty thousand slaves were taken out of the Kingdom of Angola».²³ Regardless of this figure's accuracy, the vast majority of the enslaved Africans that Iberians acquired from Ndongo prior to the outbreak of war in 1579 appear to have been purchased with cloth and other types of merchandise.²⁴

17 Birmingham, 1966, 49-50. Amaral, 2000, 89-93. Candido, 2013, 37. Caldeira, 2014, 13-15. Thornton, 2020, 82-84, 115.

18 Amaral, 2000, 93, 101-102. Vansina, 2003, 268-270.

19 Heintze, 2002, 541.

20 Caldeira, 2013, 94. See also Birmingham, 1966, 49-51.

21 Brásio, 1952-1988, III: 146. Amaral, 2000, 118-119.

22 Caldeira, 2013, 93. See also Birmingham, 1966, 32-33. Heintze, 2007, 484-487. Heywood and Thornton, 2007, 70. Thornton, 2020, 70-73.

23 Miralles de Imperial y Gómez, 1951, 69-70. Brásio, 1952-1988, IV: 606-607.

24 Birmingham, 1966, 50-51. See also Alpern, 1995, 6-12.

The auctions of 243 enslaved men, women, and children confiscated from Rebolo and company in Santo Domingo beginning on December 16, 1575, provides a very limited glimpse of the sexes and approximate ages of captives exported from Portuguese Angola during the first year of Dias de Novais's governorship. Only 100 captives were listed as *negros*, male adults, including two men, described as «large» (*grande*) or «old» (*viejo*). The median prices of adult men were 115 *pesos* of fine gold each; several of those who sold for much lower prices were described as missing a tooth or an eye, or as having sores (*llagas*) on their bodies, or skin conditions such as scabies (*sarna*). Another 67 captives were adult women described as «*negras*», three of whom were mothers with their children: one with two girls («*dos negritas sus hijas*»), and one with her adult daughter. A third woman, listed as «old» (*vieja*), was sold with an infant (*una criatura*). The median price paid for adult women was 110 *pesos de oro fino*, but several were sold for much lower prices, including two described as being exceptionally thin and weak (*flaca, alma en boca*).

The remaining 76 captives sold at auction in Santo Domingo were children and adolescents described as *negritas* and *negritos*, *negrillas* and *negrillos*, *negritas muchachas* and *negritos muchachos*, one «*negra moça*», and one infant. While some of these terms may have been used more or less interchangeably, some can be associated with estimated ages. One entry recorded the sale of a *negrita* who appeared to be ten years old; another mentioned a *negrito muchacho* judged to be between 12 and 14 years of age. Enslaved children and adolescents sold for a median price of 90 *pesos* of fine gold, again with much lower prices paid for those who were emaciated, ill, or missing teeth. Like the adult women and men, the vast majority were described as being *de tierra Angola*, but two individuals were listed as a *negrito de tierra Manicongo* and a *negrito* «who said that he was from the land of Ryo Anche» (*que dixo hera de tierra Ryo Anche*).²⁵ Two girls listed as a *negrita* and a *negrilla*, both «of the Angola land», were also described as being *lora*, with lighter-colored skin. Of the 243 captives sold at auction in Santo Domingo, nearly all were described as bearing one or more brands; the most common was «fR», presumably Francisco Rebolo's initials. The only person ascribed a name was *un negrito de tierra Angola llamado Manuelillo*, who sold for 80 *pesos* of gold.²⁶

25 On Portuguese writers' limited understanding of West Central African political entities during the late 1500s, including the invention of a «kingdom of Benguela» where no centralized state existed, see Candido, 2015.

26 «Proçeso [...] contra Francisco Rebolo», AGI, Escribanía, 1A, n. 2, pieza 4, ff. 274v-327r.

The striking presence of women and children of varying ages, who together comprised nearly sixty percent of this group of West Central Africans sold in Santo Domingo in late 1575 and early 1576, fits well with studies indicating the prevalence of women and children on slave ships from Angola to Spanish America during the early seventeenth century.²⁷ However, if approximately 500 captives had initially been embarked on the galleon and another 250 on the caravel, as Hector Diaz later claimed, then these 243 individuals represented less than one third of the captives who had been aboard both vessels at the outset of their voyages. The large-scale uprising on the caravel owned by Dias de Novais and the violence of the subsequent retaliation by Rebolo and crew members on the galleon were no doubt responsible for many deaths. As David Richardson has pointed out, revolts commonly took place on slaving voyages that carried larger numbers of women, perhaps because enslaved women on slave ships usually experienced greater mobility and better access to keys, weapons, and information than their male counterparts.²⁸ The insurrection on Dias de Novais's caravel and its aftermath were particularly likely to have resulted in the deaths of adult male captives, which would have skewed both the ages and sex ratios of survivors who appear in the 1575-1576 auction records. If the galleon had departed from Luanda with 500 enslaved Africans, disease and malnutrition must have been very significant factors as well, unless Hector Dias's estimate of the number of captives embarked was exaggerated. It is also possible that additional surviving captives were concealed or underreported after arriving in Hispaniola, or that they had simply been disembarked elsewhere.

That the caravel owned by Dias de Novais was the setting of a major revolt among the enslaved Africans on board, and that it resulted in the deaths of the shipmaster Pedro Colombo and other crew members, seems unsurprising. But insurrections on slaving voyages from Angola were relatively uncommon: although vessels departing from West Central Africa comprised nearly half of all known slaving voyages to the Americas from the 1520s to the 1860s, they were the settings of «only about one in ten of known ship-board revolts» during the entire 340-year period.²⁹ Thus far, no other revolt is known to have taken place on a transatlantic slaving voyage from West Central Africa during the sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. On one

27 Eagle, 2014, 105-107. Schultz, 2015, 434-438. Castillo Palma, 2016, 157, 164-166. Wheat, 2016, 93-103.

28 Richardson, 2001, 76.

29 *Ibidem*, 77 and 91. Behrendt, Eltis, and Richardson, 2001, 457.

voyage from Angola to Portobelo and Cartagena de Indias in 1611, the captives allegedly «wanted to revolt», causing the vessel to make an unplanned landing on the island of La Margarita.³⁰ On a slaving voyage from Angola to Veracruz the following year, fifty captives allegedly managed to escape during a stopover in Jamaica.³¹ There are many other examples of resistance by enslaved West Central Africans and it is certainly possible that other slave ship uprisings may have taken place, but the next shipboard insurrections known to have occurred on voyages from West Central Africa to the Americas took place more than a century later, in 1684 and 1701.³²

1579-1587

In his analysis of a letter written by Dias de Novais on January 3, 1578, Ilídio do Amaral notes that the governor and donatary captain appeared to be alarmed by «ships that came to acquire slaves for Brasil and the Antilles, to the detriment of the Crown and himself».³³ Thus far only two slaving voyages arriving in the Caribbean prior to 1585 are known to have sailed from Angola, and Dias de Novais was demonstrably complicit in both of them. The origins of the traffic from Angola to Brazil are less clear. Scattered clues provide evidence of the slave trade to Brazil during the third quarter of the sixteenth century, but thus far we have no data to confirm or disprove the existence of direct slaving voyages from Angola to Brazil prior to 1575.³⁴ Lisbon notarial records analyzed by Jorge Fonseca refer to slaving voyages that were intended to transport captives from Angola to Pernambuco, Salvador de Bahía, and Espírito Santo during the 1570s, 1580s and 1590s, but the earliest such reference is from December 1578.³⁵ Yet São Tomean merchants had been trading in the bay of Luanda since the 1530s, and a Portuguese factor had been posted in the area since at least 1550.³⁶ When Dias de Novais's small fleet arrived at Luanda Island in 1575, seven ships from São Tomé were already anchored there, and Luanda Island was already inhabited

30 Caja de Margarita, AGI, Contaduría, 1668, n. 1, Almoxarifazgos 1611-1614, pliegos 4, 9.

31 Vila Vilar, 1977, 258-259.

32 *Slave Voyages*, 2020, available at: <https://slavevoyages.org/voyages/EjIA2BZt> (accessed December 4, 2021). These were a Dutch voyage from northern Congo to Curaçao (1684) and an English voyage from Cabinda to Jamaica (1701).

33 Amaral, 2000, 166. Brásio, 1952-1988, IV: 296.

34 Domingues da Silva and Ribeiro, 2020, 486-489. See also Schwartz, 2010, 20. Mello and Albuquerque, 1997, 98. The authors thank Eduardo França Paiva for directing us to the latter source.

35 Fonseca, 2010, 194-195.

36 Birmingham, 1966, 32-33. Caldeira, 2011, 56-57.

by approximately forty «very rich Portuguese men», probably including a number of São Tomeans who had previously resided in Kongo.³⁷ In addition to his roles as the first governor of Portuguese Angola and as a backer of at least two slaving voyages to Spanish America, Dias de Novais invested in sugar estates on São Tomé and, by 1579, in Brazil.³⁸ Jerónimo de Castaño claimed not only that fifty thousand captives had been exported from Angola between 1575 and 1578, but also that they had «filled up the state of Brazil».³⁹ Regardless of whether it predated Rebolo's voyage or commenced at roughly the same time, the traffic of enslaved Africans from Angola to Brazil during the late 1570s was certainly much larger than the barely-existent trade from Angola to the Spanish Caribbean at that time.

The outbreak of war between Ndongo and Portugal in 1579 marked the beginning of a new era for the transatlantic slave trade from Angola, featuring a qualitative shift in the processes of enslavement. After 1579, enslaved Africans embarked in Luanda were obtained not only by trade, but also as prisoners of war taken by Portuguese forces and their allies, and as tribute paid by subjugated communities.⁴⁰ Duarte Lopes claimed to have witnessed a change over time in the slave trade from Angola over the six years that he resided there (1578-1584), during which time «more than five thousand» enslaved Africans were exported annually. Whereas most of Luanda's trade with Portugal had previously been routed through São Tomé, he noted, vessels began traveling directly from Lisbon to Angola in the late 1570s and 1580s.⁴¹ Furthermore, the contract regulating the slave trade from Angola was separated from that of São Tomé for the first time in 1579.⁴² In the years after 1578, as other potential sources of revenue in Angola dried up or failed to materialize, Dias de Novais and subsequent governors would continue to rely on slave trafficking as their primary economic activity. Beatrix Heinze succinctly characterizes the traffic of enslaved Africans as «the driving force and measure of all the investments and all the policies that had been made in relation to Angola» throughout the period from 1575 to 1607.⁴³

By the late 1570s and early 1580s, the traffic from Angola to Brazil was already substantial, and *avenças* or contracts recorded in Lisbon at this

37 Amaral, 2000, 76, 82. Caldeira, 2013, 93.

38 Amaral, 2000, 190-191. Caldeira, 2011, 62-63.

39 Miralles de Imperial y Gómez, 1951, 69-70. Brásio, 1952-1988, IV: 606-607.

40 Heintze, 1988, 162-170. Heywood and Thornton, 2007, 109-144.

41 Fonseca, 2010, 63.

42 Caldeira, 2013, 162.

43 Heintze, 2002, 557-559.

time indicate that trade from Angola to Brazil was competing with – and at times already outpacing – the trade from São Tomé. Nearly 100 vessels were registered in Lisbon in 1579-1585 to embark anywhere from 40 to 400 «*peças*» in either Angola or São Tomé; a list of these planned voyages was compiled in July 1585.⁴⁴ Although the list rarely specifies intended ports of embarkation or disembarkation, it provides the names of vessels and shipmasters, the numbers of «*peças*» to be unloaded, and the amount of taxes paid for each intended voyage. Since voyages that embarked captives in São Tomé generally paid 2,000 reais for each *peça*, and voyages embarking captives in Angola paid the higher sum of 3,000 reais per *peça*, the intended port of embarkation for most vessels in this list can be determined by dividing the number of *peças* by the amount of taxes paid.⁴⁵ If this simple calculation is correct, thirty different *avençadores* arranged to embark 3,158 *peças* on 32 different ships in São Tomé, with payments made for all but three of these voyages in the years 1581-1583. All but four of these entries specify that the enslaved Africans to be embarked were «*peças de São Thomé*». A larger group of at least 66 investors paid to embark at least 7,767 captives in Angola – and probably much larger numbers, if some captives were evaluated as being worth less than one *peça* – on 59 different vessels (Table 1). Many payments for the intended voyages to Angola were also concentrated in the years 1581-1583 (24 voyages), but an even larger number (31 voyages) were recorded in 1579. Several *avençadores*, one of whom was António Mendes de Lamego, sponsored voyages to both São Tomé and Angola.⁴⁶

For most of the vessels listed in Table 1, we cannot yet confirm their ports of embarkation or disembarkation, the numbers of enslaved Africans transported, or whether they ever sailed at all; these were intended voyages, and not necessarily voyages as they took place in reality. Some of the vessels that paid fees to load captives in São Tomé may have gone to Angola instead, or vice versa; others may have embarked captives in both places, or loaded supplies in São Tomé before sailing onward to Luanda to embark captives. For example, in March 1581 *avençador* Martim Vaz arranged for shipmaster António Domingues to load «40 *peças de São Tomé*» on the

44 «Folha de todo o Rendimento das avenças de Angola e Sam Thome», Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon (BA), 51-VI-54, n. 41, ff. 152r-159v. A chart summarizing the entire list is provided in Mendes, 2007, 673-675.

45 The export tax for captives transported from Angola to Brazil was still set at 3,000 reais per *peça* during the early 1590s. Fernández Chaves, 2022.

46 Other *avençadores* who sponsored voyages to both Angola and to São Tomé included Antonio Bocarro, Antonio Rodrigues de Torres, Pero Anes, Pero Vaz Galego, and Simão Lopez de Lima.

ship *Sancto Antonio*, but paid 3,000 reais per *peça* (the rate for Angola); the ship's planned itinerary is unclear.⁴⁷ In April 1585, Álvaro Pita Calheiros paid 120,000 reais for *mestre* António Gonçalves to embark 60 *peças* on the *navio* named *São Lourenço*; this intended voyage is not listed in Table 1 because the tax rate (2,0000 reais per *peça*) suggests that captives were to be embarked in São Tomé rather than in Angola.⁴⁸ But in Vila do Conde at the end of the same month in 1585, Calheiros signed a contract with pilot Francisco Maio, agreeing to join him as pilot of the ship *São Lourenço*, which was «anchored in Viana de Castelo, on a voyage to Angola and regions of Guinea, to load male and female slaves and take them to Brazil, to the village of Olinda, in the captaincy of Pernambuco».⁴⁹

Even less is known about most of these voyages' intended ports of disembarkation. Some of the agreements listed in Table 1 may have been designed to authorize the transportation of captives from Angola to peninsular Portugal, São Tomé, Madeira, or elsewhere, possibly including Spanish America. In 1583, *avençador* Luis Peres and his associates paid the considerably higher rate of 4,000 reais per *peça* for the intended voyage of the ship *São João*, on which shipmaster Manoel Dias was registered to transport 200 *peças* from São Tomé to Spanish America («*Índias*»); three voyages planned in 1579 had paid the same rate and presumably were also bound for Spanish America.⁵⁰ None of these voyages appear in Table 1 because we have no indication that they intended to embark captives in Angola, but this trajectory was certainly possible. In addition to the Rebolo and Colombo voyages of 1575, mariners and investors based in Seville had been aware of Angola as a place to procure captives as early as 1575-1577, if not sooner.⁵¹ The beginning of the Iberian Union in 1580 provided further opportunities for increased Spanish trade and contact with Angola, often via the Canary Islands.⁵²

47 *Ibidem*, f. 154v.

48 *Ibidem*, f. 157r.

49 Contrato celebrado entre Álvaro Pita Calheiros e Francisco Maio, 29 April 1585, ADP, Cartório Notarial de Vila do Conde, 1.º ofício, ff. 63r-64v, abstract available at: <https://pesquisa.adporto.arquivos.pt/details?id=1480875> (accessed Dec. 1, 2021).

50 «Folha de todo o Rendimento das avenças», BA, 51-VI-54, n. 41, ff. 152v, 153v, 156v.

51 In Seville in October 1577, four captives were registered to be acquired in «Angola»; see «Almojarifazgo de los esclavos [...] año de 1577», Archivo General de Simancas, Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas-I, 1365, n.10, pliego 16. However, all four were ostensibly to be obtained by vessels carrying larger numbers of captives embarked in the Cape Verde Islands, «Guinea», or Sao Tomé. See Pérez García and Fernández Chaves, 2009, 612, 620-621.

52 Santana Pérez, 2015.

TABLE 1
 INTENDED VOYAGES FROM ANGOLA TO BRAZIL
 REGISTERED IN LISBON, 1579-1585

<i>Date of payment</i>	<i>Avençador</i>	<i>Peças</i>	<i>Reais</i>	<i>Ship</i>	<i>Mestre</i>
1579-01-29	João Nunes	200	600,000	Salvador	João Lopes
1579-01-30	Luis de Siqueira, Diogo Dias	240	720,000	S. Antonyo	Luis de Siqueira
1579-01-30	Andre Lopez, Francisco Mrz.	400	1,200,000	S. Antonio	Francisco Mrz.
1579-01-??	Francisco Ramires	220	660,000	caravela N. S. da Comçeição	Diogo Correa
1579-02-05	Antonyo Mendes	120	360,000	pataixo Santa T.	Domingos Frz. Lomba
1579-02-20	João Velho Barreto	300	900,000	São João	Manoel Frz.
1579-02-20	João Velho Barreto	300	900,000	galião S. Antonio	Simão Alvarez
1579-02-12	Luis Gomez, João Mrz., Lopo Rois de Lisboa	260	780,000	galiom N. S. da Juda	João Mrz. Gayo
1579-02-12	Andre Lopes	180	540,000	pataixo S. Antonio	Gaspar Frz. Rodovalho
1579-02-16	Andre Lopez	250	750,000	?	Francisco da Rocha
1579-02-12	Andre Soares, Simão Glz.	80	240,000	Sprito Sancto	Belchior Glz. Botelho
1579-02-16	B.º Jorge	300	900,000	S. João	?
1579-02-27	Anrique Roiz Barçelos	80	240,000	Santo Antonyo	Manoel Mrz.
1579-03-16	Ant.º Malla, Diogo Luis, P.º Matheus	250	750,000	galeão Sprito Sancto	P.º Matheus (piloto)
1579-??-??	Ant.º Glz. da Costa	100	300,000	«quaisquer»*	?
1579-04-11	Gaspar Maçiol	100	300,000	Salvador	P.º Alvarez
1579-04-24	Xpvão de Freitas	100	300,000	S. Antonio	Gaspar Thome
1579-04-29	Julião Paes, Andre Lopez	165	495,000	N. S. de Paço	Antonio Glz.
1579-05-07	Gomes Lopes	100	300,000	S. Antonio	Francisco Gomez
1579-02-25	Diogo Castanho	220	660,000	?	Gco. Piz.º
1579-12-10	Manoel Gomez	220	660,000	Sprito Sancto	P.º Frz.

TABLE 1 (continuation)

<i>Date of payment</i>	<i>Avençador</i>	<i>Peças</i>	<i>Reais</i>	<i>Ship</i>	<i>Mestre</i>
1579-08-01	Miguel Dias do Porto	80	240,000	S. Antonio	Andre Moutinho
1579-??-??	Vco. Pinto, Antonio Luis Castellobranco	167	501,000	Santo Antonyo	?
1579-08-27	Andre Dias, Antonyo Dantas	100	300,000	S. Antonio	Gco. Alvrz.
1579-10-17	Manuel Dias	130	390,000	Corpo Sancto	Pantalião Frz., Martim Frz.'
1579-10-17	Ant.º Bocarro	120	360,000	N. S. da Vitoria	?
1579-10-19	Manuel Lopez	130	390,000	N. S. da Guia	Belchior Piz
1577-09-04	Fernão Beserra	100	300,000	São Pedro	Francisco Mayo
1579-11-17	Manoel Dias, Jorge Mendes	150	450,000	N. S. da Piedade	Diogo da Guarda (piloto)
1579-??-??	Alvaro Gil, Duarte Pinel, João Anriqs.	160	480,000	N. S. do Cabo	Gomes Preto
1579-12-09	Aleixo Dias	133	399,000	Sanctiago	Gco. Mrz.
1580-01-17	João Nunes	120	360,000	N. S. Conçeição	Francisco Glz.
1581-02-15	João Velho Barreto, Rui Lopez	150	258,000	São João	Manoel Frz.
1581-03-17	Sebastião Casado	60 †	180,000	N. S. de Nasare	Frco Frz.'
1581-03-18	Luis de Siqra, Antonio Mendes de Lamego	120	360,000	Santo Antonio	Luis de Siqueira
1581-04-22	Andre Lopez, Julião Paes	119	90,000	N. S. do Paso	Ant.º Frz.'
1581-04-22	Guaspar Mariel	30	90,000	Bom Jhu	Francisco Dias
1581-08-09	Ant.º Roiz de Torres, Andre Prz.'	60	180,000	N. S. Boa Viage'	Andre Prz.
1581-10-12	Jeronimo Dias	160	480,000	S. Antonio	Thome Roiz
1581-10-12	Diogo Corbes, Diogo Leitão	80	240,000	São Boa Ventura	João Mrz.'
1582-03-27	Ruy Lopez da Costa, Manoel da Costa	80	240,000	S. Antonyo	Alvaro Frz.'

TABLE 1 (continuation)

<i>Date of payment</i>	<i>Avençador</i>	<i>Peças</i>	<i>Reais</i>	<i>Ship</i>	<i>Mestre</i>
1582-10-20	P.º Freire	60	180,000	pataxo S. Ant.º	João Dominges
1582-10-18	P.º Vaz Galego	100	300,000	São Sebastião	Domingos Glz.
1582-11-12	Manoel da Costa	100	300,000	N. S. Misericórdia	Fernão Dalvrz.´
1582-12-18	Simão Lopez de Lima	60	180,000	Anunçiada	Diogo Dias
1583-01-04	Jorge Lopez de Lix. ^a	60	180,000	Santiago	João Cardoso
1583-01-04	Ant.º Roiz´ de Frandes e parceiros	70	210,000	Sancta Crus	P.º Frz.
1583-02-17	Gco. Alvrz.´ de Vilasboas	70	210,000	S. Francisco	Fernão Machado
1583-03-08	A.º da Vaza, Adrião Pinto	80	240,000	S. Antonio	Adrião Pinto
1583-03-23	Lopo Serrão e parceiros	100	300,000	S. Antonio	Gaspar Glz.
1583-03-31	Andre Lopez, Eytor Coronel	63	189,000	Espirito Sancto	Ant.º Cardoso
1583-04-01	Roque Nunes Carneiro	80	240,000	S. João	Sebastião Casado
1583-04-02	Diogo Lopez	60	180,000	N. S. da Graça	Ant.º Frz.´
1583-11-29	Diogo Soares	80	240,000	N. S. Conceição	Domingos Glz.
1583-12-07	Diogo Soares Brandão	60	210,000 ‡	Trindade	Antoino de Seixas
1583-12-20	P.º Anes	50	150,000	N. S. Conceição	P.º Anes
1583-12-23	P.º Roiz´, Gco. Peixoto	70	210,000	N. S. da Graça	Gaspar Dias
1584-01-13	Andre Lopes	80	240,000	Spirito Sancto	Antonyo Frz.´
1584-02-14	Gco. Dinis	100	300,000	N. S. da Batalha	Domingos Jorge
1585-04-10	Nuno de Barros	50	150,000	São Sebastião	P.º Glz.

Source: «Folha de todo o Rendimento das avenças», BA, 51-VI-54, n. 41, ff. 152r-157r. See also Mendes, 2007, 673-675. Fonseca, 2010, 192-199. * The entry for 1579-?-?-?, António Gonçalves da Costa, is not a voyage; Costa paid fees to embark 100 *peças* on «any of the ships that go from Angola to Brazil». † The entry for 1581-03-17, Sebastião Casado, reads «16 pº», but this appears to be an error for 60 *peças*. ‡ In the entry for 1583-12-07, Diogo Soares Brandão, payment was higher than usual at 3,500 reais per *peça*, but this ship went to Angola. See discussion in the text.

The planned destination for most if not all of the voyages listed in Table 1 was probably Brazil. On an unstated date in 1579 (likely between March 16 and April 11), rather than specifying a certain boat or shipmaster, António Gonçalves da Costa paid 300,000 reais to embark 100 *peças* «on any of the ships sailing from Angola to Brazil» (*quaisquer navios q fosse de Emgolla pera o Brasil*).⁵³ Notarial records produced in Lisbon during these years and analyzed by Jorge Fonseca provide further evidence that several of these vessels were scheduled to sail from Angola to Brazil, and to Pernambuco in particular. In a contract recorded on December 20, 1578, João Lopes, *mestre* and owner of the ship *Salvador*, agreed to take 200 captives from Luanda to Pernambuco; there he would deliver them to *avençador* João Nunes's brother, returning to Lisbon with a cargo of sugar and brazilwood.⁵⁴ As noted in Table 1, Nunes's payment of 600,000 reais in accordance with his *avença* for 200 *peças* was recorded a month later, in January 1579. In other cases, pre-paid *avenças* may have been used to attract business partners or voyage backers. In November 1582, Manoel da Costa paid 300,000 reis for 100 *peças* to be embarked on the ship *Nossa Senhora da Misericórdia*, which was owned by shipmaster Fernão d'Álvarez. Three months later, Lisbon-based investors Jorge Rodrigues Solis and Francisco Rodrigues signed an agreement to provide da Costa – who, as Fonseca notes, was a *moço da câmara do rei* – with 950,000 reais worth of merchandise to take to Angola. Da Costa was to purchase enslaved Africans on the investors' behalf and deliver the captives to their associates in Pernambuco, bringing a cargo of sugar or cotton back to Lisbon on the return voyage.⁵⁵

Like Rebolo, Elejabeitia, and Colombo's voyages a decade earlier, at least two voyages arriving in the Spanish Caribbean from Angola during the mid-1580s were unauthorized *arribadas*, but both had ostensibly been sailing to Brazil rather than to Portugal. On December 7, 1583, *avençador* Diogo Soares Brandão paid an abnormally high rate (3,500 reais per *peça*) for 60 *peças* to be transported by *mestre* António Seijas on the ship *Trindade*.⁵⁶ This entry is one of a small number of intended voyages that do not fit the assumption that vessels embarking captives in São Tomé paid

53 «Folha de todo o Rendimento das avenças», BA, 51-VI-54, n. 41, f. 152v. For reference to «dous centos cento corenta mil de escravos q se devarão ao Brasil», see f. 157r.

54 Fonseca, 2010, 192-193.

55 *Ibidem*, 193, 196-199.

56 «Folha de todo o Rendimento das avenças», BA, 51-VI-54, n. 41, f. 156v.

2,000 reais per *peça*, while those embarking captives in Angola paid 3,000 reais per *peça*. Brandão's reasons for paying a higher rate are not clear; the *Trindade* went to the Spanish America instead of Brazil, which could have been Brandão's intention from the outset, but we have no evidence for a fixed tax rate or other metropolitan regulations for this trajectory. According to Spanish Caribbean sources, the ship *La Trinidad* (whose shipmaster was «Antonio Çexas») made an «emergency landing» in Santo Domingo, Hispaniola on October 2, 1585. Whereas Brandão had paid to embark 60 *peças*, the vessel was found to have been carrying 164 surviving «*piesas desclavos negros*», twenty of whom died soon after arriving in Hispaniola. According to royal officials in Santo Domingo, the vessel had been sailing «from the kingdom of Angola to the province of Brazil». ⁵⁷ A similar case took place on the coast of Venezuela eighteen months later. While en route from Angola to «Brazil», the ship *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* was allegedly forced to land at La Guaira on April 20, 1587. The ship's *maestre* and captain were Gaspar Díaz and Antonio Fraile (Freire), respectively. It carried 246 enslaved Africans. ⁵⁸

By 1585-1587, the same years in which slaving voyages from Angola to Brazil began to be diverted toward the Spanish Caribbean, there are also unmistakable signs of the beginnings of Angola's long-lasting connections to Buenos Aires, both directly and via Rio de Janeiro. We have very little information about the slave trade from any African region to Buenos Aires prior to 1590; the port had only just been re-established in 1580 after a half-century of abandonment. ⁵⁹ However, a 1587 letter penned to the Spanish crown by Hernando de Montalvo, treasurer of the Río de la Plata and Paraguay, evinces the port's rapid integration into Atlantic slaving networks. In his letter, Montalvo requested instruction regarding the duties he should levy on captives brought from «Brazil and Guinea», indicating that slave routes to Buenos Aires from both Brazil and Africa may have already been active. ⁶⁰ If so, traffic along these routes was evidently limited until the mid- or late 1590s, unless there were earlier slaving voyages that

57 Cuentas de 1586, Santo Domingo, AGI, Contaduría, 1053, n. 7 (1586), pliego 7: «la nao nonbrada la Trinidad maestre Ant^o Çexas que yendo del rreyno de Angola a la provi^a del Braçil arribo por casso fortuyto a esta çiudad de Santo Domingo...».

58 Arcila Farias, 1983, 142, 149.

59 Schultz, 2015, 427-428. See also Schultz, 2016.

60 Hernando de Montalvo, «Carta-relacion de los principales sucesos del Rio de la Plata», Buenos Aires, August 23, 1587, AGI, Charcas, 38, n. 22. In this source, Montalvo's use of the term «Guinea» appears to have been a general designation for sub-Saharan Africa, including Angola.

went unrecorded.⁶¹ But Montalvo and other Iberian residents of the Río de la Plata already envisioned the possibility of direct exchange for enslaved Africans. In his letter of 1587, Montalvo also mentioned that one local official had recently sent a Portuguese individual named Duarte Nuñez to the *pampas* to slaughter three or four hundred wild horses and collect their tails; the official's rationale was that the tails would be «a very good commodity to take to the Guinea coast to barter for slaves».⁶² Andrew Battell, an English sailor who spent roughly a year in Angola in 1600-1601, later described horse tails as «great jewels», noting that «two slaves will be given for one tail, which commonly they bring from the River of Plate».⁶³

The Spanish Caribbean and Buenos Aires were both transformed by the arrival of thousands of captives from Angola during the half century after 1590, and both received maritime traffic that was ostensibly destined for Brazil, but the Angola-Brazil trade would play a far more prominent role in the early development of Buenos Aires. Unlike the Spanish Caribbean, which had a longer history of exchange with the Cape Verde Islands, the Upper Guinea Coast, and São Tomé going back to the early 1500s, the vast majority of transatlantic slaving voyages to Buenos Aires took place after 1590 and embarked captives in West Central Africa.⁶⁴ Most of those vessels landed somewhere on the Brazilian coast prior to continuing their journey south. Passage up the Río de la Plata was only possible during a few months of the year, and for ships arriving from Africa, Brazil offered opportunities to re-provision and refresh crew members and captives after several weeks at sea.⁶⁵ For residents of Buenos Aires, by the 1590s Rio de Janeiro also provided a platform for participating in the outfitting of slaving voyages that would sail directly to Angola.⁶⁶ Grain, horses, hides, tallow, and other commodities

61 «Relazion de los negros de Guinea y otras partes que an entrado en Buenos Ayres desde su fundazion asta el año de 682», Buenos Aires, June 12, 1682, AGI, Charcas, 123, s/n, ff. 1r-2v. Molina, 1966, 71-81.

62 Montalvo, «Carta-relacion de los principales sucesos», Buenos Aires, August 23, 1587, AGI, Charcas, 38, n. 22.

63 Ravenstein, 1901, 75.

64 The ship *San Juan*, with captain and *maestre* Cipion Grimaldo, disembarked 180 «negros de Guinea» in Buenos Aires in 1597; here «Guinea» again appears to have been used to designate sub-Saharan Africa (including Angola), but it is also possible that the vessel had transported captives from West Africa. «Testimonio de todos los negros q an entrado por este puerto de Buenos Ayres desde el año de 1597 hasta este presente de 1606», Buenos Aires, March 12, 1606, AGI, Charcas, 38, s/n, f. 1r.

65 Schultz, 2017, 256-260.

66 For winds and currents as logistical factors that facilitated the round-trip traffic between Brazil and Angola during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Miller, 1988, 314-325; Domingues da Silva, 2017, 38-41. See also Alencastro, 2000, 116, 312-325.

produced in the hinterland of Buenos Aires would become highly useful in Luanda and Benguela; *Porteños* without access to specie entrusted these «*frutos de la tierra*» to merchants bound for Brazil or Angola – or for Brazil and then Angola – along with specific requests for captives.⁶⁷

1587-1595

The first contract signed by the Spanish crown for the delivery of enslaved Africans from Angola to Spanish America was awarded to Pedro de Sevilla and António Mendes Lamego for a period of six years in 1587 (Lamego, as noted above, had previously sponsored slaving voyages from both São Tomé and Angola). The agreement was not definitively approved until late 1589.⁶⁸ Thus the earliest vessels to have been registered with the House of Trade in Seville with the explicit intention of embarking captives in Angola and transporting them to Spanish America sailed during the late 1580s. Like its predecessors, the earliest known voyage that fits this description was also an *arribada*. Under the command of *maestre* Pedro López and captain Duarte Núñez, the ship *San Juan* had departed from the Canary Islands for Angola, where it embarked captives who were to be delivered to New Spain. Instead, the vessel made an «emergency landing» in Cartagena de Indias on August 16, 1588 with at least 241 «*pieças de esclavos*». Various witnesses – including notable figures such as Duarte León, Blas Herrera, and Jorge Fernández Gramajo – testified that the captives were in very poor health from their long voyage, and for this reason should be sold as soon as possible in Cartagena instead of being taken onward to New Spain.⁶⁹ Other vessels authorized to transport captives from Angola to Spanish America during the late 1580s included the *Nuestra Señora de la Victoria*, which was registered in Seville in 1588, and the *Nuestra Señora*

67 Sempat Assadourian, 1966, 14. Schultz, 2016, 99-100. On horses in West Central Africa, see Ferreira, 2007, 10. The intensity of these South Atlantic connections and their association with the export of silver from Potosí via the Río de la Plata led the viceroy of Peru and the Spanish crown to order the closure of the port of Buenos Aires from 1596 to 1602, but this policy appears to have been largely ineffective. See Molina, 1966.

68 Scelle, 1906, 324-335, 790-798. Heintze, 2002, 553. Caldeira, 2015, 109. Bonciani, 2017, 29-30.

69 Borrego Plá, 1983, 58. «Fee de los negros», Cartagena de Indias, July 15, 1591, AGI, Santa Fe, 37, r. 6, n. 103a/b, f. 3r. «Cuentas tomadas a la ciudad de Cartagena», 1566-1588, AGI, Contaduría, 1384, n. 5, f. 24r. Causa contra el contador Alonso de Tapia, AGI, Escribanía, 586B, pieza 13, ff. 238r, 283v-284r.

del Buen Viaje, which departed from Seville in April 1589.⁷⁰ The captain of the latter vessel, Antonio Freire, may have previously been the captain of the ship *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* that made an emergency landing in La Guaira two years earlier.⁷¹

Despite the inclusion of Angola in slaving contracts such as that operated by the *contratadores* Pedro de Sevilla and António Mendes Lamego, and despite Paulo Dias de Novais's death in 1589 and the subsequent establishment of Angola as a territory ruled by the crown (rather than as a donatary captaincy), slaving voyages from Luanda to Spanish America in the early 1590s continued to display a degree of continuity with earlier voyages from Angola.⁷² Some voyages allegedly sailing to Brazil continued to arrive in the Caribbean as *arribadas*. Having departed from Sanlúcar de Barrameda in December 1589, the ship *Espiritu Santo* remained in Luanda for nine months. Although it had been dispatched for Pernambuco, strong winds ostensibly blew the ship off course; its *maestre* Pedro de Arze was aiming for Cartagena de Indias when the ship wrecked near the mouth of the Magdalena River in early 1591. The surviving captives were taken to Cartagena by land.⁷³

Even early voyages from Angola that were bound for Cartagena de Indias went to other Caribbean sites. The ships *Las Cinco Llagas* and *Nuestra Señora de las Nieves* were both registered to sail to Cartagena, but in 1591, after departing from the Canary Islands and embarking captives in Angola, both made «emergency landings» in Santa Marta instead.⁷⁴ On the vessel *Las Cinco Llagas*, the shipmaster's name appeared to be different in every port of call: Pedro Díaz was initially registered to serve as *maestre* on the ship's voyage to the Upper Guinea Coast and Cartagena, but registration papers drawn up in Garachico six months later listed the ship as sailing via Angola under the command of shipmaster Baltasar Ribero and captain Manuel Ribero. Upon arrival in Santa Marta, Manuel Ribero was

70 Ortiz Arza, 2015, 151. Santana Pérez, 2015, 902.

71 Santana Pérez, 2015, 902. Arcila Farias, 1983, 142, 149.

72 Bonciani, 2020, 2-3.

73 Autos del capitán Pedro de Arce con Pedro de la Helguera y Luis de Rivas, AGI, Contratación, 736B, n. 31. «Cuenta tomada del año de 1591 a los oficiales Reales», Cartagena de Indias, 1591, AGI, Contaduría, 1384, n. 3, r. 5, ff. 51r-54r. Chaunu and Chaunu, 1955-1959, III: 432-437. Borrego Plá, 1983, 59.

74 Comisión al doctor Francisco Méndez de la Puebla para la averiguación y castigo de las arribadas maliciosas, 1594-1596, AGI, Escribanía, 585A, pieza 3, ff. 131r-218r. «Registro de esclavos. Manuel Gaspar maestre a Cartagena por Angola», 1589, AGI, Contratación, 2875, n. 4, r. 1, ff. 70r-77v. Chaunu and Chaunu, 1955-1959, III: 432-433, 458-459.

identified as *maestre*. Interestingly, when the *Cinco Llagas* was registered in the Canaries, the «factor and administrator of the *armazón*» who traveled on the voyage, «Diego Suarez Brandau», was described as «*natural de la villa de Canaria*».⁷⁵ Presumably this was the same *avençador* Diogo Soares Brandão who in December 1583 had financed the voyage of the ship *Trindade*, which was registered to transport 60 *peças* from Luanda to Brazil but instead disembarked 164 captives in Santo Domingo.

The first two vessels that were registered in Seville to embark enslaved Africans in Angola, and actually completed their voyages as intended, arrived in Cartagena de Indias in 1593. Both voyages had initially departed from the Canary Islands in 1592, and both had been registered in accordance with the contract awarded to Antonio Mendes Lamego and Pedro de Sevilla. The ships *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* (*maestre* Gaspar Díaz) and *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* (*maestre* Pedro Yanes) docked in Cartagena on March 3 and May 1, 1593, respectively.⁷⁶ Over the following ten years, much larger numbers of slaving voyages from Angola would arrive in Cartagena, Veracruz, Buenos Aires, Santo Domingo, Santa Marta, La Margarita, Havana, Santiago de Cuba, Jamaica, and other Spanish American ports. The traffic from Angola grew to massive proportions during the first half of the seventeenth century, and was a key component in the first of two peak periods in the overall traffic of enslaved Africans to colonial Spanish America.⁷⁷ But a small number of vessels would continue to arrive from Angola without license, or as *arribadas* that had been registered to sail to Brazil.⁷⁸

* * *

The volume, geographical reach, and comparatively late starting date of the traffic from Angola easily make it the best-documented branch of the slave trade to Spanish America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It bears keeping in mind that the transatlantic slave trade from

75 Comisión al doctor Francisco Méndez de la Puebla, AGI, Escribanía, 585A, pieza 3, f. 188r.

76 «Pedro Yanes *maestre*», 1592, AGI, Contratación, 2875, n. 6, r. 1, ff. 142r-151v. «Gaspar Díaz *maestre*», 1592, AGI, Contratación, 2875, n. 6, r. 4, ff. 198r-223v. «Tercios y quartos de negros», Cartagena de Indias, 1593, AGI, Contaduría, 1385, n. 1, pieza 2, ff. 14v-16r, 19r-20v. Chaunu and Chaunu, 1955-1959, III: 472-473, 492-495, 499. Vila Vilar, 1978, 299. Borrego Plá, 1983, 59.

77 Borucki, Eltis and Wheat, 2020, 16-17.

78 For examples see Vila Vilar, 1977, 171, 264-265. Eagle, 2014, 104. Wolff, 2021, 151, 154.

Angola differs from that of other regions of Atlantic Africa in another crucial respect. Precedents for the trafficking of enslaved Africans from Arguim, the Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the Upper Guinea Coast to the Americas were set in the Spanish Caribbean during the first half of the sixteenth century.⁷⁹ By contrast, the first slaving voyages from Angola to the Caribbean in 1575 were directly contemporary with the founding of Luanda as the capital of Portuguese Angola, but would not be followed by similar voyages for another decade, while the slave trade from Angola to Brazil was flourishing by the late 1570s and probably earlier. In other words, during the 1570s and throughout the 1580s the trade from Angola to the Americas was primarily oriented towards Brazil. Just as the 1575 voyages from Luanda to Hispaniola were outgrowths or modifications of planned slaving voyages from Angola to Lisbon, the incipient traffic from Angola to the Spanish Americas during the 1580s and early 1590s was an extension of the pre-existing Angola-Brazil trade: several of the vessels that transported enslaved Africans from Luanda to the Caribbean were *arribadas* that had been ostensibly sailing to Brazil. In the first half of the 1590s, as trade relations linking Buenos Aires to both Brazil and Angola intensified, the traffic from Luanda to the Spanish Caribbean was often financed or operated by individuals who had previously been involved in the older trade from Angola to Brazil.

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⁷⁹ Eagle and Wheat, 2020. Pérez García, 2021.

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