ABSTRACT

Title of Document: Freedom, Kinship, and Property: Free Women of African Descent in the French Atlantic, 1685-1810

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Directed By: Professor Ira Berlin, Department of History

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property: Free Women of African Descent in the French Atlantic, 1685-1810" examines the role kinship and property played in the lives of free women of African descent in the Atlantic ports of Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. Over the course of the long eighteenth century, a distinct cohort of African women and women of African descent recognized as not enslaved, enjoyed status and position in the slaveholding French Atlantic. Free status allowed them to claim their own labor, establish families, accumulate property, and demand the rights that accompanied freedom. However, free women of color's claims to freedom, kinship, and property were not always recognized, and during the tumultuous era of the founding of the French Atlantic world these women struggled to secure livelihoods for themselves and their progeny. "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" explores the ways French Atlantic free women of African descent labored to give meaning to their freedom.

This study developed out of my broader interests in Atlantic slavery, diaspora studies, and the histories of black women and of free people of color. Using travel narratives, notarial records, parish registers, and civil and criminal court records, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" describes the lives of women of African descent in eighteenth-century Senegal, Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana. In Senegal, African and Eurafrican women's commercial networks and liaisons with European men secured them prized positions in local trading networks and the society being built at the *comptoirs*. In Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, free women of color manipulated manumission laws, built complicated kinship networks, and speculated in property to support families of their own. Free women of African descent created kinship networks, established material wealth, and maneuvered through a world of slave trading, international warfare, and revolution. Considering how free women of color negotiated kinship and property as they moved with slaves and goods between Atlantic port cities sheds important light on the formation of the black Atlantic over time.

Freedom, Kinship, and Property:
Free Women of African Descent in the French Atlantic, 1685-1810

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
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Doctor of Philosophy
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Dedication

In loving memory:

Clyde A. Woods

&

James E. McLeod

Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not exist without the commitment and support of my chair, Ira Berlin. Thank you for being a patient guide and for your devotion to the art of writing history. Thank you to Elsa Barkley Brown for your guidance, encouragement, and professionalism as I fumbled along. To Hilary Jones, thank you for your support and for pushing me to incorporate Saint-Louis and Gorée on their own terms. To A. Lynn Bolles and Psyche Williams-Forson, thank you for your time, feedback, and encouraging words. To my entire committee, your kind advice has shaped this project and my development as a scholar in the most positive ways. All shortcomings are my own.

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At the Louisiana State Museum Historical Center, Dr. Susan Tucker hunted down obscure references with ease. Siva M. Blake at the Historic New Orleans

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Portions of this dissertation were presented in the following venues: The American Historical Association's 2009 Annual Meeting, Michigan State University Department of History's 2010 Speakers' Series, the Bowdoin College Africana Studies/Gender & Women's Studies 2010 Symposium "Testify, Witness & Act: Black Women's Resistance," and the Pennsylvania State University Africana Research Center's 2011 Emerging Scholars Speaker Series. My thanks to attendees who offered helpful feedback at those events, including Bettye Collier-Thomas, Walter Hawthorne, Jane Landers, Jessica Millward, Salamisha Tillet, and David Wheat.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> Ultimately, to write about slave societies with a fictive neutrality that conceals a universal enslaved male, runs the risk of missing the very essence of what constituted the experience of enslavement for both men and women.
> -- Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (2004)[1]

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property: Free Women of African Descent in the French Atlantic, 1685-1810" examines the role kinship and property played in the lives of free women of African descent in the Atlantic ports of Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. Over the course of the long eighteenth century, a distinct cohort of African women and women of African descent recognized as not enslaved, enjoyed status and position in the slaveholding French Atlantic. Free status allowed them to claim their own labor, establish families, accumulate property, and demand the rights that accompanied freedom. However, free women of color's claims to freedom, kinship, and property were not always recognized, and they struggled to secure livelihoods for themselves and their progeny. "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" explores the ways French Atlantic free women of African descent who lived, worked, and labored in slaveholding regimes during the tumultuous founding of the French Atlantic world gave meaning to their freedom.

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[1] Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 7.

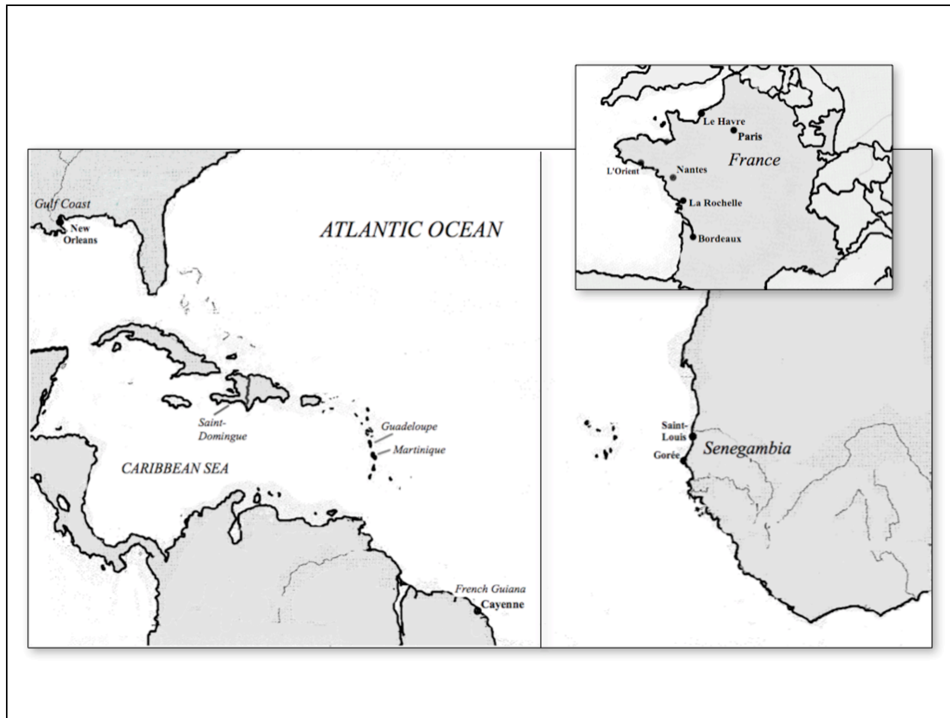

Figure 1.1. Key outposts of the slaveholding French Atlantic

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" developed out of a broader interest in Atlantic slavery, black women's history, and histories of free people of color and diaspora studies. Using travel narratives, notarial records, parish registers, and civil and criminal court records, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" describes the lives of women of African descent in eighteenth-century Senegal, Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana. In Senegal, African and Eurafrican women's commercial networks and liaisons with European men secured them prized positions in local trading networks and the society being built at the *comptoirs*. In Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, free women of color manipulated manumission laws, built

complicated kinship networks, and speculated in property to support families of their own. Free women of African descent created kinship networks established material wealth, and maneuvered through a world of slave trading, international warfare, and revolution. Considering kinship and property as free women of color moved with slaves and goods between Atlantic port cities sheds important light on the formation of the black Atlantic over time.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" begins in the late seventeenth century with French occupation of Saint-Louis and Gorée. It continues through the development of free communities of color in the Americas as the fortunes of the French Atlantic rose and fell. As early as the 1680s, the French began to transport enslaved African women and men across the Atlantic to provide labor for sugar, indigo, coffee, and rice plantations in the Americas. Slave trading from outposts Saint-Louis and Gorée led to an increased French presence along West Africa's coast. Although Saint-Louis and Gorée played a minor role in the larger Atlantic slave trade, the French cultivated dreams of building a slave trading empire and maintained the *comptoirs* as critical to their overseas pursuits.[2] In the Antilles, plantation slavery spread quickly, especially

[2] There is considerable debate around whether Gorée was an important port of disembarkation for slaves being shipped to the Americas. This debate centers on research conducted by Joseph Ndiaye, former director of the 'House of Slaves' in Gorée, and his claim that the building housed and funneled millions slaves into the Atlantic slave trade. Historians of the slave trade like Philip Curtin, David Eltis and David Richardson argue against either Saint-Louis or Gorée having a central role in the trade. According to their research, Senegambian ports supplied only a few hundred slaves per year, in comparison to the tens of thousands shipped from ports in the Bight of Benin or West Central Africa. This debate continues to resurface; first in 1980 with scholarly concern over UNESCO designating Gorée a World Heritage Site, and in recent years through the work of Ralph Austen and Ana Lucia Araujo on history and memory of slavery in Africa, and by Mark Hinchman, and Ibrahima Thiaw on archaeology and architecture at Gorée. On the debate itself see Ibrahima Thioub, "Regard critique sur les lectures Africaines de l'esclavage et de la traite Atlantique," *Historiens-Geographes du Sénégal (Special Issue: L'esclave et ses traites en Afrique, discours mémoriels et savoirs interdits)* 8, (2009): 15-28; Ralph A. Austen, "The Slave Trade as History and Memory: Confrontations of Slaving Voyage Documents and Communal Traditions," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (1997): 229-244. My study is concerned with the women at the *comptoirs* and thus is not a traditional study of

in Saint-Domingue, where land and climate lent themselves to the mass production of sugar and coffee. Along the Gulf Coast, slave trading and plantation slavery created opportunities for land ownership and wealth, although only a small number of property owners and concessionaires invested in staple production. Although white French settlement throughout the Atlantic was uneven and disproportionately male, a native-born population developed in concert with one composed of enslaved and free people of color.

In the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, France lost several of its overseas holdings. In 1758, Great Britain took command of Gorée and Saint-Louis, maintaining control over Saint-Louis for several years. The Crown retained Saint-Domingue, and the colony's astronomic rise continued. In 1763, Louisiana was transferred to the Spanish and effectively occupied in 1769. Gorée and Saint-Domingue remained a part of the French empire, and the Crown appointed royal governors to better enforce its rule. These administrative shifts changed everyday life as new laws and institutions were imposed on restive, multi-racial populations. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, refugee diasporas created by the chaotic years of the Haitian Revolution and the transfer of Louisiana to the United States changed the geography of the French Atlantic again.

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the slave trade. I do not enter the Gorée debate or argue for or against actual versus relative impact of Senegambia in the trade. My interest is in Saint-Louis and Gorée as part of the French Atlantic, and the *comptoirs* as locations where French and African interaction led to the creation of a distinctive, multi-racial, slaveholding society. However, I do rely on data from the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade database and the numbers summarized most recently in Eltis and Richardson's published atlas. The database and atlas offer the most comprehensive statistics available on the slave trade. According to both, ships embarking from Saint-Louis and Gorée comprised only a fraction of the eighteenth-century French slave trade. Most French slave ships embarked from Ouidah, Malembo and Loango. See David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 33. See also Appendix B: Charts and Tables Related to the French Slave Trade.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" focuses on French Atlantic ports and outposts: Saint-Louis and Gorée in Senegal; Cap-Français, Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes in Saint-Domingue; and New Orleans and Mobile in Gulf Coast Louisiana. Erratic French colonial administration, trans-Atlantic slave trades, plantation slavery and contraband commercial networks connected the three colonies throughout the time period under study. The ports were major nodes of these connections. The ports were also economic and administrative centers of the French Atlantic, critical to the expansion of France's imperial endeavors, and spaces where connections between each could and would be made.

At the three sites, women of African descent lived as free or secured manumission, created complicated kinship networks infused with Catholic ritual, and accumulated property to pass on to their descendants. From each locale, free women of African descent exploited Atlantic trading networks and took advantage of the greater mobility people of African descent possessed in urban spaces. Free women of color were present in other French Atlantic spaces like Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiane, as well as French colonial enterprises in the Indian Ocean. Free women of African descent were also visible beyond the ports as slaveowners and commercial agents of the Wolof, and in the plantation districts of Saint-Domingue and the Gulf Coast.[3] However, free women of African descent were especially visible in the commercial centers of the three locations of this study.

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[3] See account of Yaasin Bubu, deposed ruler in Cayor, in Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 50-2; and descriptions of "Senghora Catti" as trader and agent for the damel of Cayor in George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 132-4. In Gulf Coast Louisiana, one of the most famous free women of color was Marie Thérèze Coin-Coin Metoyer, whose descendants owned land, slaves, and other property in eighteenth-century Natchitoches. See Elizabeth Shown

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" explores the inherent conflict of living as a free woman of color in societies structured on enslaved black labor. Free women of color confronted royal governments, legislative councils, and trading companies dominated by men. They lived and labored in societies where their race left them vulnerable to enslavement, violence, and labor extortion by trading company officials, colonial administrators, and slaveowners. A free woman of color's status was not static. Freedom's meaning also altered with each successive generation removed from enslavement, as women traveled, and as colonial geographies shifted. As circumstances changed they were forced to begin the process of negotiating their independence over again.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" argues free women of color responded to the constraints of sex and race in a world where slavery was ubiquitous by cultivating interlocking networks of kinship and property. These networks sustained them. In Senegal, free African and Eurafrican women made alliances with French traders, while in Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, enslaved African and women of African descent escaped bondage through formal manumission and built lives in freedom by accumulating property and participating in Catholic rituals of baptism, godparentage, and, less commonly, marriage. They traveled the trade routes being created throughout the Atlantic to join husbands and other family members in distant locales. They strengthened kinship networks by accumulating property through

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Mills, "Marie Thérèse Coincoin: Cane River Slave, Slaveowner, and Paradox," in *Louisiana Women: Their Lives and Times,* eds. Janet Allured and Judith F. Gentry (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 10-29. For a look at the differences between urban and rural free black life in the Louisiana context see H. Sophie Burton, "Free People of Color in Spanish Colonial Natchitoches: Manumission and Dependency on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1766-1803," *Lousiana History* 45, (2004): 173-197.

successions and transfers, and using testaments and bequests to distribute property among family members. By the nineteenth century, communities of free women of color stretched between Saint-Louis and Gorée in Senegal; Cap Français, Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes in Saint-Domingue; and New Orleans and Mobile in coastal Louisiana.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" has two major themes. First, it argues kinship construction and property accumulation were strategies free women of color in the French Atlantic used to give meaning to their freedom. Accumulating economic as well as familial and spiritual wealth, free women of color stabilized their communities against the uncertainty and upheaval of life in the French Atlantic. Second, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" explores the communities created by free women of color as part of the simultaneous development of francophone communities of color around the Atlantic. While free women of color engaged in activities that sustained them and their kin, they were also creating and recreating Afro-Atlantic spaces in multiple locales. As a whole, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" tells the story of women of African descent who were especially vulnerable to the upheavals of French colonialism, but whose commercial and community savvy assured their survival and the formation of black communities in new places. By exploring their history, this study reshapes our understanding of how the black Atlantic was created and renders the place of women, sexuality, and gender relations central to any discussion of comparative global history.

Historiography

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" intersects historiographies of slavery, Afro-Atlantic women, free people of color, and diasporic studies, and is a critical appreciation of all four.

First and foremost, histories of slavery and the slave trade ground the exploration of free women of color in the French Atlantic. Scholars like Ira Berlin, Robin Blackburn, David Brion Davis, Philip Curtin, and David Eltis have pinpointed the Atlantic slave trade and slavery as crucial to "the early development of the New World and in the growth of commercial capitalism."[4] These sweeping, comparative studies found human bondage deeply implicated in legal codes, political institutions, and social customs throughout the Americas.[5] This study also builds on "new studies of slavery" by Vincent Brown, Laurent Dubois, Jennifer Morgan, and Dylan

[4] David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 10. See also Ira Berlin, "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African- American Society in Mainland North America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (April 1996): 251-288; Berlin, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (New York: Verso, 1998); Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848* (New York: Verso Press, 1988); Philip D. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); David Eltis and David Richardson, *Routes to Slavery: Direction, Ethnicity, and Mortality in the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 1997); Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010). The connection between slavery and capitalism is well described by Caribbean historian Eric Williams. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

[5] Work by Ira Berlin has influenced my comparative approach to the slaveholding societies in this study. Berlin's emphasis on the importance of time and place, and distinction between "societies with slaves" and "slave societies" provides a useful model to understand differences in systems of slavery in Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States. See Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, 10; Berlin, "Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America," *The American Historical Review* 85, no. 1 (1980): 77-80.

Penningroth which call for renewed attention to the political culture and everyday social relations of the enslaved.[6] Micro-histories of slavery have highlighted the impact of bondage on individual lives. Chapters 3 and 4 of "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" model work by Rebecca Scott, Jean Hébrard, Randy Sparks, and James Sweet, who use case studies to bring the lives of people of African descent into focus and capture details otherwise lost in broader analyses.[7]

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" owes a further debt to histories of slavery in Africa. Philip Curtin, Martin Klein, Paul Lovejoy, Patrick Manning, and Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers have analyzed the trans-Atlantic, trans-Saharan, and domestic slave trades and related in Africa, multiple systems of African slavery to

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[6] Vincent Brown, "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (2009): 1231-1249; Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: the Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Dubois, "An Enslaved Enlightenment: Rethinking the Intellectual History of the French Atlantic," *Social History* 31, no. 1 (2006): 1-14; Morgan, *Laboring Women*; Dylan C. Penningroth, *The Claims of Kinfolk: African American Property and Community in the Nineteenth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). See also work presented at the conference "Middle Passages: Histories and Poetics," convened by Herman L. Benett at the City University of New York Graduate Center on May 6-7, 2010. The term "new studies of slavery" is drawn from the volume of the same name, edited by Edward Baptist and Stephanie M. H. Camp. Edward E. Baptist and Stephanie M. H. Camp, *New Studies in the History of American Slavery* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006).

[7] Rebecca J. Scott, "The Atlantic World and the Road to *Plessy v. Ferguson*," *Journal of American History* 94, no. 3 (2007): 726-733; Scott, "Slavery and the Law in Atlantic Perspective: Jurisdiction, Jurisprudence, and Justice," *Law and History Review* 29, no. 4 (2011): 915-924; Rebecca J. Scott and Jean Hébrard, "Rosalie of the Poulard Nation: Freedom, Law, and Dignity in the Era of the Haitian Revolution," in *Assumed Identities: The Meanings of Race in the Atlantic World,* eds. John D. Garrigus, Christopher Morris, and Franklin W. Knight (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010), 116-144; Randy J. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); James H. Sweet, "Mistaken Identities? Olaudah Equiano, Domingos Álvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the African Diaspora," *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009): 279-306. Many thanks to Hilary Jones for suggesting work by Sparks.

domestic production in West and West Central Africa.[8] Scholars like Michael Gomez, Robin Law and Kristin Mann, J. Lorand Matory, and John Thornton have shown that slavery and African society informed black identity, politics, and resistance beyond the continent.[9] Guided by these examples "Freedom, Kinship, and

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[8] See Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975); Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Supplementary Evidence* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975); Martin A. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers, eds., *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977). For a selection of studies discussing individual African societies in more detail see Ralph A. Austen and Jonathan Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroon Rivers: The Duala and Their Hinterland, c. 1600- c. 1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Walter Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves: Transformations Along the Guinea-Bissau Coast, 1400-1900* (London: Heinemann, 2003); Robin Law, *Ouidah: the Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port', 1727-1892* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004); Kristin Mann, *Slavery and the Birth of an African City: Lagos, 1760-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988) and work discussed in the methodology section of this preface. In an African context, slaves were found in a wide range of activities—including household production, the military, and in harems—and less likely to labor solely on plantations. This would be the case into the nineteenth century. The Atlantic slave trade was eclipsed by the volume and duration of the Saharan slave trade to East Africa and across the Indian Ocean. See Richard Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Frederick Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1997); John Hunwick and Eve Troutt Powell, *The African Diaspora in the Mediterranean Lands of Islam* (Prinecton, NJ: Wiener Publishers, 2002).

[9] Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: the Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Robin Law and Kristin Mann, "West Africa in the Atlantic Community: The Case of the Slave Coast," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (1999): 307-334; J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005); John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). See also Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Paul E. Lovejoy and David V. Trotman, eds., *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora* (London: Continuum, 2003); John Thornton and Linda M. Heywood, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Much of the most recent work on direct connections between Africa and its diaspora focuses on the "South Atlantic" diaspora between Portugal, Nigeria and Brazil. For a sample of this work see Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs, eds., *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Ana Lucia Araujo, *Public Memory of Slavery: Victims and Perpetrators in the South Atlantic* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010); Kristin Mann and Edna

Property" explores slavery in Senegal on its own terms, situating the interaction between Saint-Louis and Gorée on the one hand, and Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana on the other securely in time and place. This study demonstrates the importance of understanding connections and disconnections creating the French Atlantic. The Senegal *comptoirs* were African societies and the French living there were guests and renters. This fact makes them distinct from Le Cap, Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, New Orleans, and Mobile, which were French colonial ports within French colonial societies.[10]

Second, this study is indebted to histories of women of African descent during the period of slavery. In the United States, Angela Davis, Darlene Clark Hine, and Deborah Gray White led the way in outlining ways enslaved black women faced racial and sexual oppression.[11] Hilary Beckles, Barbara Bush, Arlette Gautier, Lucille Mair, Marietta Morrissey and Verene Shepherd have described the crucial role black women in the Caribbean played in plantation production.[12] Research by

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G. Bay, eds., *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin and Brazil* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001).

[10] Law and Mann, "West Africa in the Atlantic Community," 307, 311.

[11] Angela Davis, "Reflections on the Black Women's Role in the Community of Slaves," *Massachusetts Review* 13, no. 1/2 (1972): 81-100; Darlene Clark Hine, "Lifting the Veil, Shattering the Silence: Black Women's History in Slavery and Freedom," in *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History* (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1994), 3-26; Deborah G. White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999). Davis's, Hine's and White's work refuted ideas of black women as either emasculating matriarchs or hypersexual house slaves who benefitted from the system of slavery. The well-circulated and controversial "Moynihan Report" propagated these ideas. Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Labor, 1965).

[12] Hilary Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989); Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (London: Heinemann, 1990); Arlette Gautier, *Les soeurs de solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclavage aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Caribénnes, 1985); Lucille Mathurin Mair, *The Rebel Woman in the British West Indies During Slavery* (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1975); Marietta Morrissey, *Slave Women in the New World: Gender Stratification*

and volumes compiled by Claire Robertson and Martin Klein, and Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna G. Bay profiled the predominance of women as slaves in Africa, their importance to household production, and the many roles women played as slaves, wives, and heads of households.[13] Taken together, their work was some of the first to center the labor and lives of women of African descent before emancipation.

In more recent years, questions of reproduction, kinship, and intimate relations across race and status have been of special interest.[14] Jennifer Morgan's reproductive history of enslaved women in West Africa, Barbados, and South Carolina, used a comparative framework to show links between assumptions of

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in the Caribbean (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989); Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey, eds., *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995). See also Rhoda E. Reddock, "Women and Slavery in the Caribbean: A Feminist Perspective," *Latin American Perspective* 12, no. 1 (Winter 1985): 63-80.

[13] Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, eds., *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1983); Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna G. Bay, eds., *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976). See also Richard Allen, "Femmes de couleur libres et esprit d'enterprise dans la société esclavagiste de l'île de France à la fin du XVIIème siècle," *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* 5, (2004): 147-161; Edna G. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Marie Rodet, "Sexualité, mariage et esclavage au Soudan français à la fin du XIXe siècle," *Clio: Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés* 33, no. 1 (2011): 45-64; and work described in the methodology section of this preface.

[14] Along with the following scholars, see work presented at the conference "Sexuality and Slavery: Exposing the History of Enslaved People in the Americas," convened by Daina Ramey Berry and Leslie M. Harris on November 11-12, 2011. Although sex, race, and reproduction have gained much attention in recent years, other aspects of women's lives, including resistance and labor, continue to come to the fore. Aisha K. Finch, "Scandalous Scarcities: Black Slave Women, Plantation Domesticity, and Travel Writing in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 23, no. 1 (2010): 101-143; Natasha Lightfoot, "'Their Coast Were Tied Up Like Men': Women Rebels in Antigua's 1858 Uprising," *Slavery and Abolition* 31, no. 4 (2010): 527-545; Sasha Turner, "Home-Grown Slaves: Women, Reproduction, and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Jamaica 1788-1807," *Journal of Women's History* 23, no. 3 (2011): 39-62. Recent work is also concerned with issues related to gender, slavery and emancipation. See Pamela Scully and Diana Paton, eds., *Gender and Slave Emancipation in the Atlantic World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005). The term "sex across the color line" gained wide usage thanks to Martha Hodes. Martha Hodes, *Sex Across the Color Line: White Women and Black Men in the Nineteenth-Century American South* (Trenton, NJ: Princeton University, 1991), 9. Unlike Hodes, I do use the term 'interracial sex' as a way to describe black-white sexual liaisons as distinct from other relations.

African women's labor potential and their potential fertility in the New World.[15] Guillaume Aubert, comparing discussions of blood and sex in France, New France, Saint-Domingue, and the Gulf coast, described the way ideologies of race in the French Atlantic became sexualized as interracial sex fell under scrutiny.[16] Trevor Burnard and Jennifer Spear describe the complicated role sex and kinship played in the lives of free and enslaved women of color residing in Jamaica and New Orleans, respectively. Such work suggests dichotomies of coercion and consent are difficult to apply to enslaved and free women of color's lives, and that kinship during the period of slavery was complicated by property and bondage.[17] Finally, Joseph Miller argued slavery in Africa created a setting where women as a whole were "domiciled and dominated." His long view of slavery, from the ancient world to the present,

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[15] Scholars of early Atlantic women have long encouraged researchers to consider the comparative perspective in black women's history. Compilations by Darlene Clark Hine and David Barry Gaspar brought together research on enslaved and free women of color in different slaveholding societies. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine, eds., *More Than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996); Gaspar and Hine, eds., *Beyond Bondage: Free Women of Color in the Americas* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004). Morgan's work is critical to this study because it employs a gendered, diasporic framework to analyze the experiences of women enslaved in Africa and the Americas and the racial ideology around them..

[16] Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France:' Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2004): 439-478.

[17] Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Jennifer M. Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008). Arlette Gautier was one of the first to suggest it would be better to think of relations between enslaved and free women of color and European men in the French Atlantic in terms of *l'intérêt* than *l'amour*. Issues of consent, coercion and production complicated affection and violence. Gautier, *Le soeurs de solitude*, 168. Myriam Cottias, "La séduction coloniale, damnation et stratégies: Les Antilles XVIIIe-XIXe siècles," *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* 5, (2004): 163-179; Joan Dayan, "Erzulie: A Women's History of Haiti," *Research in African Literatures* 25, no. 2 (1994): 5-31.

proposed an understanding of slavery as less a history of plantations and more one of women in homes, in labor, and in a range of sexual liaisons.[18]

With the notable exception of the work of Arlette Gautier and Bernard Moitt, the unique experiences of women in the slaveholding French Atlantic still need to be explored.[19] The demography of family and household has dominated much of the recent history on slavery in the francophone world.[20] While those studies were critical to drawing attention to the way slavery shape the lives of enslaved and free women of color's households, book-length studies focused on the larger experiences of women of color in the French Atlantic are still needed.[21] "Freedom, Kinship, and

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[18] Joseph C. Miller, "Domiciled and Dominated: Slaving as a History of Women," in *Women and Slavery: The Modern Atlantic,* eds. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 284-312. See also Claire Robertson, "Femmes esclaves et femmes libres de l'Afrique et l'Europe à l'Amérique: Travail et Identité," *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* 5, (2004): 123-147.

[19] Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001). John Garrigus has explored masculinity and citizenship in colonial Saint-Domingue. John D. Garrigus, "Redrawing the Colour Line: Gender and the Social Construction of Race in Pre-Revolutionary Haiti," *Journal of Caribbean History* 30, (2006): 28-50. Myriam Cottias has explored gender during emancipation. See Myriam Cottias, "Gender and Republican Citizenship in the French West Indies, 1848-1945," *Slavery and Abolition* 26, no. 2 (1995): 233-245. See also forthcoming work by Dominique Rogers and Stewart King. Dominique Rogers and Stewart R. King, "Housekeepers, Merchants, Rentières: Free Women of Color in the Port Cities of Colonial Saint-Domingue, 1750-1790," in *Women in Port: Gendering Communities, Economies, and Social Networks in Atlantic Port Cities, 1500-1800,* eds. Douglas Catterall and Jodi Campbell (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, forthcoming, 2012).

[20] See Arlette Gautier, "Les familles esclaves aux Antilles françaises, 1635-1848," *Population (French Edition)* 55, no. 6 (2000): 975-1001; John D. Garrigus, "'To Establish a Community of Property:' Marriage and Race Before and During the Haitian Revolution," *The History of the Family* 12, no. 2 (2007): 142-152; Jacques Houdaille, "Trois paroisses de Saint-Domingue au XVIIIe siècle," *Population (French Edition)* 18, no. 1 (1963 Jan/Mar): 93-110; and Houdaille, "Quelques données sur la population de Saint-Domingue au XVIIIe siècle," *Population (French Edition)* 28, no. 4 (1973): 859-872 and work described in the methodology section of this preface.

[21] Articles on women and slavery in the French Atlantic have been important to continuing the conversation. See Marie Polderman, "Les femmes en Guyane dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle," in *Esclavage, résistances et abolitions,* (Paris: Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1999); Dominique Rogers, "Réussir dans un Monde d'Hommes: les Stratégies des Femmes de Couleur du Cap-Français," *The Journal of Haitian Studies* 9, no. 1 (2003): 40-51; Karol K. Weaver, "'She Crushed the Child's Fragile Skull:' Disease, Infanticide, and Enslaved Women in Eighteenth-Century Saint-Domingue," *French Colonial History* 5, no. 1 (2004): 93-109; Weaver, "Fashioning Freedom:

Property" engages with histories of women of color in the early Atlantic, and addresses a need by exploring these histories from a French Atlantic perspective. In doing so, this study responds to Jennifer Spear's call for more woman-centered histories "that are attentive to other forms of difference as they incorporate a diverse array of female historical subjects."[22]

Third, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" is in conversation with comparative histories of free people of color. Scholarship on manumission and the emergence of free populations of color in the Americas was deeply influenced by Frank Tannenbaum who suggested the numbers and treatment of free people of color in a slave society was also a measure of that society's brutality.[23] Nearly forty years ago, a conference convened by David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene to assess this thesis and the position of free people of color culminated in an edited volume.[24] Among the contributors exploring the emergence and significance of free people of color during the period of slavery and the slave trade were Léo Elisabeth and Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, on the free people of color in Martinique and Saint-Domingue, respectively.[25]

Slave Seamstresses in the Atlantic World," *Journal of Women's History* 24, no. 1 (2012): 44-59 and work described in the methodology section of this preface.

[22] Jennifer M. Spear, "The Distant Past of North American Women's History," *Journal of Women's History* 16, no. 4 (2004): 44.

[23] Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: the Negro in the Americas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1946). More specifically, Tannenbaum argued that slavery in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies was less brutal because of the moral personality afforded the slave through laws and the Catholic Church. In Tannenbaum's thesis, ease of manumission was crucial.

[24] David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene, eds., *Neither Slave Nor Free: The Freedman of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

[25] Léo Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," in *Neither Slave nor Free*, 133-171; Hall, Gwendolyn Midlo. "Saint-Domingue." In *Neither Slave Nor Free*, Cohen and Greene, eds., 172-192. This was not the only conference or printed assessment of the Tannenbaum thesis. For an overview of the debate

Scholars since, like Melanie Newton, describing the political culture of freedmen in Barbados, Dominique Rogers on free people of color in urban Saint-Domingue, and Ben Vinson on free men of color in militias in colonial Mexico have continued to explore free people of color's civic, legal and political activity and their complicated relationship to slaveowners and slaves.[26] Moreover, scholars have questioned the very meaning of manumission and the impact of formal status on the lives of people of African descent in Africa and the Americas.[27]

Despite the attention paid to free people of color in slaveholding societies, understanding free status and the meaning of freedom in the lives of free women of color requires further exploration. Wilma King's comprehensive study of free women of African descent in the United States South is one example of the few book-length studies to place free women of color at the center of their analysis.[28] The

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and a response using Cuba as a lens, see Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slave Law and Claims-Making in Cuba: The Tannenbaum Debate Revisited," *Law and History Review* 22, no. 2 (2004): 339-369. See also work presented at "The Tannenbaum Thesis Revisited," a workshop of the Atlantic History Seminar convened by Bernard Bailyn at Harvard University on November 6, 2004.

[26] Melanie J. Newton, *The Children of Africa in the Colonies: Free People of Color in Barbados in the Age of Emancipation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008); Dominique Rogers, "Les libres de couleur dans les capitales de Saint-Domingue" (Thèse de doctorat, Université de Bordeaux III, 2001, 1999); Ben Vinson III, *Bearing Arms for His Majesty: The Free-Colored Militia in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

[27] Rosemary Brana-Shute and Randy Sparks, eds., *Paths to Freedom: Manumission in the Atlantic World* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2011); Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* University of North Carolina Press, 2000); John D. Garrigus and Christopher Morris, eds., *Assumed Identities: The Meanings of Race in the Atlantic World* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010); Robertson, "Femmes esclaves et femmes libres;" Rebecca J. Scott, *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba After Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

[28] See Wilma King, *The Essence of Liberty: Free Black Women During the Slave Era* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006). See also Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *A Fragile Freedom: African American Women and Emancipation in the Antebellum City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Adele Logan Alexander, *Ambiguous Lives: Free Women of Color in Rural Georgia, 1789-1879* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991); Diane Batts Morrow, *Persons of Color and Religious At the Same Time: the Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860* (Chapel Hill:

unique experiences of free women of color deserve special consideration. Free women of color experienced freedom differently from free men of color, and related to members of slave societies—enslaved women and men, white women, white men and men of color, and other free women of color—in particular ways. In addition, even comparative studies of free people of color tend not to engage the experiences of free women in slaveholding African societies, or incorporate free African women into their analysis.[29] "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" contributes to the study of free

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University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Amrita Myers, Chakrabarti, *Forging Freedom: Black Women and the Pursuit of Liberty in Antebellum Charleston* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); and Pedro L. V. Welch and Richard A. Goodridge, "*Red" and Black Over White: Free Coloured Women in Pre-Emancipation Barbados* (Bridgetown: Carib Research and Publications, 2000). However, much of the current work on free women of color in slaveholding societies can be found in articles, book chapters, unpublished dissertations, within studies on free white women in slaveholding societies, or within studies on enslaved women. Scholarship of this kind includes Barbara Bush, "White 'Ladies,' Coloured 'Favorites' and Black 'Wenches:' Some Considerations on Sex, Race, and Class Factors in Social Relations in White Creole Society in the British Caribbean," *Slavery and Abolition* 2, no. 3 (1981): 245-262; Virginia Meacham Gould, "Urban Slavery, Urban Freedom: The Manumission of Jacqueline Lemelle," in *More Than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas,* eds. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 298-314; Gould, ed., *Chained to the Rock of Adversity: To be Free, Black and Female in the Old South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998); Suzanne Lebsock, "Free Black Women and the Question of Matriarchy: Petersburg, Virginia, 1784-1820," *Feminist Studies* 8, no. 2 (1982): 271-292; Lebsock, *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1985); Jessica Millward, "'A Choice Parcel of Country Born:' African Americans and the Transition to Freedom in Maryland, 1770-1840" (Ph.D. diss, University of California, 2003); Loren Schweninger, "Property Owning Free African-American Women in the South, 1800-1870," *Journal of Women's History* 1, no. 3 (1990): 13-44;); Felix V. Matos Rodriguez, *Women in San Juan, 1820-1868* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2001); and Susan Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). See also essays compiled in David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine, eds., *Beyond Bondage: Free Women of Color in the Americas* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), and work cited in the sources section of this preface—in particular work by Virginia Gould, Kimberly Hanger, and Dominique Rogers. While this research has been instrumental in developing a history of free women of color, interpreting the meaning of free status in the lives of free women of African descent within and across slaveholding societies requires further analysis.

[29] For example, the two most important edited volumes on free people of color, *Neither Slave nor Free*, by Cohen and Greene and *Beyond Bondage*, by Gaspar and Hine, do not include essays on free African women in slaveholding societies on the African continent. Much of the work on free African women in slaveholding societies in Africa and their relationship to status and slavery can be found in journal articles, book chapters, and within texts on women and slavery in Africa. A selection of such work follows. See Richard Allen, "Free Women of Color and Socioeconomic Marginality in Mauritius, 1767-1830," in *Women and Slavery: Africa, the Indian Ocean World, and the Medieval North Atlantic,* eds. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 359-379; Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (New

people of color in slave societies by focusing on women of African descent and their experiences with freedom, and by making comparisons on both sides of the Atlantic.

Finally, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" is in dialogue with diaspora studies, in particular studies of the black Atlantic. Paul Gilroy first introduced the concept of the black Atlantic as an alternative to nationalist constructions of an African diaspora. Gilroy warned against interpretations of diaspora that homogenized and marginalized the complex cultural dynamics and transnational self-identification of people of African descent. Instead, he suggested black consciousness was best articulated by those "who were prepared to renounce the easy claims of African-American exceptionalism in favour of a global, coalitional politics."[30] While offering a fascinating treatise, Gilroy was criticized for focusing on mobile, learned, Anglophone men of African descent who were based in Europe, the Caribbean, and the United States. Women of color were largely absent from his analysis. Gilroy also failed to incorporate histories of men and women of color in the French, Spanish, or Portuguese and Brazilian Atlantics, or to integrate into his analysis African men and women in Africa despite the long history of interaction between the continent and its diaspora.

York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Susan Herlin Broadhead, "Slave Wives, Free Sisters: Bakongo Women and Slavery, c. 1700-1850," in *Women and Slavery in Africa,* eds. Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1983), 166-184; Philip J. Havik, *Silences and Soundbites: the Gendered Dynamics of Trade and Brokerage in the Pre-Colonial Guinea Bissau Region* (Münster: Lit Verlag Münster, 2004); Martin A. Klein, "Women in Slavery in the Western Sudan," in *Women and Slavery in Africa*, 67-88; Bruce L. Mouser, "Women Slavers of Guinea-Conakry," in *Women and Slavery in Africa,* 320-339; Claire Robertson, "Femmes esclaves et femmes libres de l'Afrique et l'Europe à l'Amérique: Travail et identité," *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* 5, (2004): 123-147; and John Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[30] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (New York: Verso, 1993), 4.

Scholars such as Jacqueline Nassy Brown, Joan Dayan, Joy James, and Michelle M. Wright have used archival research and literary theory to critique Gilroy's portrayal of the black Atlantic.[31] Dayan, in a thoughtful critique of Gilroy's work, points out an Enlightenment bias in Gilroy's emphasis on writing, rights and reason. As a result, the slave was "an icon for modernity" and "the Middle Passage becomes a metaphor." Dayan asked scholars to remain attuned to historical context and described the making of race and diaspora as a more dynamic process than the one Gilroy offered.[32] Brown called for more research on black women because their travels and identities "were born of rigidly gendered circumstance" and they "as travelers, are differently valued as producers of diasporic space."[33] Otherwise, even free or enslaved women of color who traveled would be excluded from membership among the "confident, sophisticated natives" of the Atlantic world.[34]

Despite the specific criticisms of Gilroy, some scholars have found theories of the black Atlantic useful for capturing the elasticity of race and place within the

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[31] Jacqueline Nassy Brown, "Black Liverpool, Black America, and the Gendering of Diasporic Space," *Cultural Anthropology* 13, no. 3 (1998): 291-325; Joan Dayan, "Paul Gilroy's Slaves, Ships, and Routes: The Middle Passage as Metaphor," *Research in African Literatures* 27, no. 4 (1996): 7-14; Joy James, *Transcending the Talented Tenth: Black Leaders and American Intellectuals* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 58; Michelle M. Wright. *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). See also Michael Hanchard, "Afro-Modernity: Temporality, Politics, and the African Diaspora," *Public Culture Public Culture* 11, no. 1 (1999): 245-268.

[32] Dayan, "Paul Gilroy's Slaves," 2, 3.

[33] Brown, "Black Liverpool, Black America," 315.

[34] Berlin, "From Creole to African," 253. Berlin described the first generation of people of African descent to move, work, and marry around the Atlantic littoral as "Atlantic creoles." Daina Ramey Berry discussed the way gender is implicated in the qualitative worth assigned "skilled" slaves. See Daina Ramey Berry, "*Swing the Sickle for the Harvest is Ripe:" Gender and Slavery in Antebellum Georgia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007); Berry "'She Do a Heap of Work:' Female Slave Labor on Glynn County Rice and Cotton Plantations," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 4 (December 1998): 707-734.

African diaspora. Geographer Katherine McKittrick argued the black Atlantic remains a useful framework for capturing the movement of bodies and the importance of place to racial identities during the period of slavery.[35] Christine Chivallon, noting French Caribbean migrants' long reticence toward describing themselves as part of an African diaspora, argued the term black Atlantic might be used instead. The black Atlantic, and the theory at its core, was more "suitable for designating the process by which multiplicity in community life helps to avoid creating an ethnicizing, authoritarian centrality."[36]

While the critiques offered important interventions, the concept of a black Atlantic was useful in conceptualizing this study. When applied to Atlantic slavery—slave trades, the plantation complex, the formation of racial ideologies, and labor commodification—the concept of a black Atlantic suggests multi-layered migrations and exchanges that essentialist notions of diaspora and race fail to explain. This is

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[35] Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 2006), xix-xxi; Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, eds., *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place* (New York, NY: South End Press, 2007).

[36] Christine Chivallon, "Beyond Gilroy's Black Atlantic: The Experience of the African Diaspora," *Diaspora* 11, no. 3 (2002): 372. Chivallon: "In the French Caribbean, sociological or anthropological research long emphasized that absence of community centralization, viewing it as the symptom of an eminently painful history." See also Chivallon, "De quelques préconstruits de la notion de diaspora à partir de l'exemple antillais," *Revue européenne de migrations internationales* 13, no. 1 (1997): 149-160; Chivallon, "Du territoire au réseau: comment penser l'identité antillaise (From the Territory to the Network: How to Conceive Antillean Identity)," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 37, no. 148 (1997): 767-794. For classic expressions of francophone black identity, see Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004); Édouard Glissant, *Le Discours Antillais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997); Leopold Sédar Senghor, "Vues sur l'Afrique noire, ou assimiler, non étre assimilé," in *Senghor: Prose and Poetry,* eds. John Reed and Clive Wake (London: Heinemann, 1965), 49-52. See also poems and prose published in the periodical *Présence Africaine* from its founding in 1947 into the present-day. In 1947, Senegalese writer and statesman Alioune Diop founded Présence Africaine. Its mission was "to be open to the collaboration of all men of good will (white, yellow, or black) capable of helping us to define the African originality and to hasten its insertion into the modern world." See Alioune Diop, "Niam n'goura ou les raisons d'être de Présence Africaine," *Présence African* 1, no. 1 (November-December 1947): 7; V. Y. Mudimbe, ed., *The Surreptitious Speech: Presence Africaine and the Politics of Otherness 1947-1987* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1992).

especially true for eighteenth-century Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. At all three, and into the nineteenth century, ideas of race and freedom were in flux. Nevertheless, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" agrees with arguing for women of color's important role in the shaping of a black Atlantic. By bringing special attention to the ways that free women of color interacted with Europeans, traveled, and were cultural brokers, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" incorporates them into the conversation as black Atlantic women.

Sources

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" draws on a variety of sources. This comparative and diasporic study of slavery was only possible because meticulous research on individual slave societies already existed. A specialized secondary literature has remained vital to this thesis. Boubacar Barry, George Brooks, Philip Curtin, and James Searing laid the foundation for studies of coastal Senegal and Eurafrican relations with Europeans.[37] Conferences organized by Djibril Samb on

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[37] Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave*; Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*; Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*; James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993). See also Jean Boulégue, *Les Luso-Africains de Sénégambie, XVI-XIXème siècles* (Dakar: Universite de Dakar, 1972); Abdoulaye Bara Diop, *La société Wolof: Tradition et changement* (Paris: Karthala, 1981); Mamadou Diouf, Le Kajoor au XIXe siècle (Paris: Karthala Editions, 1990); Michael David Marcson, "European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: Saint Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1976); Peter Mark, '*Portuguese' Style and Luso-African Identity: Precolonial Senegambia, Sixteenth-Nineteenth Centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Trevor R. Getz, *Slavery and Reform in West Africa: Toward Emancipation in Nineteenth-Century Senegal and the Gold Coast* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004); Hilary Jones, "From *Mariage à La Mode* to Weddings At Town Hall: Marriage, Colonialism, and Mixed-Race Society in Nineteenth-Century Senegal," *African Historical Studies* 38, no. 1, (2005): 27–49; Jones, "Citizens and Subjects: Métis Society, Identity and the Struggle Over Colonial Politics in Saint Louis, Senegal, 1870-1920" (Ph.D., Michigan State University, 2003); Bruce L. Mouser, "Landlords-Strangers: A Process of Accommodation and Assimilation," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*

slavery and the slave trade at Saint-Louis and Gorée have furnished two extraordinary volumes on human bondage at the *comptoirs*.[38] This dissertation also owes a debt to research guides, manuscripts, and statistics first published by Charles Becker and Victor Martin, Philip Curtin, André Delcourt, and Prosper Cultru.

Work by Arlette Gautier, John Garrigus, Bernard Moitt, Dominique Rogers, and Stewart King was instrumental in understanding the brutality of pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue.[39] Studies by Moitt and Gautier have been especially important as the only book-length treatments devoted entirely to the experiences of enslaved and free women of color in the French Caribbean. Work by Virginia Meacham Gould, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Kimberly Hanger, Thomas Ingersoll, Paul Lachance, and Jennifer Spear provided the foundation for understanding the lives of slaves and free people of color along the Gulf Coast.[40] This study of the Gulf Coast has also

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8, no. 3 (1975): 425-440; Nathalie Reyss, "Saint Louis du Sénégal et l'époque précoloniale: l'émergence d'une société métisse originale, 1658-1854" (Thèse de doctorat, Sorbonne, 1983).

[38] Djibril Samb, ed., *Gorée et l'esclavage: Actes du Séminaire sur "Gorée dans la Traite Atlantique: Mythes et réalités" (Gorée, 7-8 avril 1997)* (Dakar: IFAN, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, 2000); Samb, ed., *Saint-Louis et l'esclavage: Actes du Symposium international sur "la traite négrière e† Saint-Louis du Sénégal et dans son Arrière-pays:" (Saint-Louis, 18, 19 et 20 décembre 1998)* (Dakar, Senegal: Université Cheikh Anta Diop, 2000).

[39] Arlette Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*; John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (New York: Macmillan, 2006); Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*; Dominique Rogers, "Réussir dans un monde d'Hommes;" Dominique Rogers, "Les libres de couleur dans les capitales de Saint-Domingue" (Thèse de doctorat, Université de Bordeaux III, 2001, 1999). See also Gabriel Debien, *Les esclaves aux Antilles françaises (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)* (Basse-Terre: Société d'histoire de la Guadeloupe et Fort-de-France, 1974); Carolyn E. Fick, *Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); Charles Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches à Saint-Domingue aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: L'Ecole, 1975); David P. Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women in Saint Domingue," in *More Than Chattel*, 259-278; Susan Socolow, "Economic Roles of the Free Women of Color of Cap Français," in *More Than Chattel*, 279-297; and work described in the historiography of this preface.

[40] Virginia Meacham Gould, "In Full Enjoyment of Their Liberty: The Free Women of Color of the Gulf Ports of New Orleans, Mobile, and Pensacola, 1769-1860" (Ph.D. diss, Emory University, 1992); Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995); Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803*

benefitted from archival material published by Heloise Cruzat, Charles Nolan, Charles Maduell, Laura Porteus and Dunbar Rowland.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" draws on primary source material found in France, Senegal, and Louisiana. The French maintained extensive records of their eighteenth-century ventures overseas. Materials on French colonies in the Americas and French tenure in precolonial Senegal are housed primarily at the Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer in Aix-en-Provence, France. A small amount of material relating to the same time period is available at the Archives National du Sénégal in Dakar, Senegal. Finally, New Orleans archival resources are especially rich. This dissertation mines sources found at the Historic New Orleans Collection, the New Orleans Notarial Archives, the New Orleans Public Library, and the Louisiana Historical Center at the Louisiana State Museum. Records for Spanish Louisiana are also held in the Historic New Orleans Collection in New Orleans, including copies of the Papeles Procedentes de Cuba. Finally, material from the French Colonial Collection at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. was also used.

(Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Thomas N. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans: The First Slave Society in the Deep South, 1718-1819*, 1st ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999); Paul F. Lachance, "The 1809 Immigration of Saint-Domingue Refugees to New Orleans: Reception, Integration and Impact," *Louisiana History* 29, no. 2 (1988): 109-141; Paul F. Lachance, "The Formation of a Three-Caste Society: Evidence From Wills in Antebellum New Orleans," *Social Science History* 18, no. 2 (1994): 211-242; Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order*. See also Caryn Cossé Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism, and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition in Louisiana, 1718-1868* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Emily Clark, *Masterless Mistresses the New Orleans Ursulines and the Development of a New World Society* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Virginia Meacham Gould, "'A Chaos of Iniquity and Discord:' Slave and Free Women of Color in the Spanish Ports of New Orleans, Mobile, and Pensacola," in *Creoles of Color of the Gulf South,* eds. Catherine Clinton and Michele Gillespie (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 28-50; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, "African Women in French and Spanish Louisiana: Origins, Roles, Family, Work, Treatment," in *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South,* eds. Catherine Clinton and Michele Gillespie (Oxford University Press, 1997), 247-261; and work described in the historiography of this preface.

Any history of women of African descent during the period of slavery must build a narrative using fragments of sources and disparate materials. "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" is no exception. This dissertation uses source material that was incomplete, written from the perspective of slaveowning elites, and demonstrated clear biases against the women themselves. Availability of different types of sources also varied across the three locations. However, when read carefully, eighteenth-century sources become useful for addressing women's lives. Many documents produced during this time period pay special attention to bondage, commerce, property, and trade, and are especially useful for exploring ways kinship and property operated in free women of color's lives. Although it is critical to respect the limits of each document, by bringing material together in creative ways, snippets of women's lives begin to unfold.

For Senegal, trading company documents and parish registers housed at the Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer (CAOM) in Aix-en-Provence, France supplied information on women's lives at the *comptoirs*. Reporting to company directors in France, trading company officials amassed a range of material including letters, budgets, employee rolls, descriptions of land and people, and descriptions of important events. These reports described commercial relations and social relations at the *comptoirs*, and though focused on trade and labor, also mentioned encounters with African and Eurafrican women that ranged from commerce to crime.

Early Saint-Louis and Gorée parish registers were also used. Parish registers listing residents' birth, death, and marriage information are available as early as 1730

at Saint-Louis and 1777 at Gorée.[41] Parish registers outline the kinship and patronage networks African and Eurafrican women were part of. In France, a representative of the Catholic Church would have compiled the registers, usually the *curé* or parish priest, and registration would have accompanied rites of baptism.[42] However, no permanent priest or curé resided at Saint-Louis and Gorée until 1779.[43] Before then, religious authority consisted of itinerant missionaries, *curés* and *aumôniers* or chaplains attached to the garrisons, and seasonal visits from *curés* and *aumôniers* assigned to merchant vessels stopping to trade at the port.[44] When no religious authority was present, company directors stepped in to register life events. Although the registers are neither comprehensive nor consistent, the registers are useful for understanding social interactions across race, gender, and status.[45] They provide a

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[41] In France, the *registres paroissiaux* or parish registers became *État civil* or civil registers after 1792. In Senegal, a similar transition did not occur until 1830 when the Napoleonic Code was implemented in the region. See Jones, "From Mariage à la Mode," 37.

[42] Louis Henry, "Une richesse démographique en fiche: les registres paroissiaux," *Population (French Edition)* 8, no. 2 (1953): 282. For more information see also Michel Fleury and Louis Henry, *Des registres paroissiaux a l'histoire de la population: manuel de dépouillement et d'exploitation de l'état civil ancien* (Paris: L'Institut National d'Études Démographiques, 1956); Michel Fleury and Louis Henry, *Nouveau manuel de dépouillement et d'exploitation de l'état Civil ancien* (Paris: Éditions de l'Institut national d'études démographiques, 1985). In theory, registering a baptism, death or marriage included a fee but it is not clear what fees were charged (or whether a fee was consistently applied) at either Saint-Louis or Gorée.

[43] Pierre Lintingre, "La Mission du Sénégal sous l'Ancien Régime," *Afrique Documents* 87, 207.

[44] Lintingre, "La Mission du Sénégal," 207; Nathalie Reyss, "Saint Louis du Sénégal," 219-220.

[45] In Senegal, the details of the interaction between *curé* (or other official) and the resident registering the act are unclear. However, information from Saint-Domingue suggests the person registering the act provided information following a general template of questions asked by the curé (birth date and place, names of the mother and father, race and sex of the child, parents, godparents and witnesses), and that information could be contested. For example, demographer Jacques Houdaille noted a godfather who refused to sign a baptism register because it listed him as a "quarteron" instead of a "tierceron." The curé left a note in the margin on the protest. Jacques Houdaille, "Trois paroisses de Saint-Domingue,"105-6, 105n. More research is needed on the dialogue between people of color and officials over the registers.

record of residents' names, race, color and ethnic designations, religious affiliations, free or enslaved status, and evidence of kinship ties through marriage and godparentage.

For Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, notarial records were an important resource. "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" incorporates notarial records held for Saint-Domingue at the Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer and for the Gulf Coast at the New Orleans Notarial Archives. The sample used includes notarial records contracted by or on behalf of free women of color, and recorded by notaries working in Cap Français, Port-au-Prince and its environs, and Les Cayes in Saint-Domingue, and New Orleans in Louisiana. Notarial acts exposed hierarchies of color and status as names, familial relations, and racial designations took on official meaning.[46] *Contractants* wishing to register an act would visit the office of the nearest notary where, for a fee, the notary registered the act according to a basic template.[47] In both Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, types of acts registered included manumissions, marriages contracts, testaments, property transfers,

[46] Unfortunately, details on what occurred between free people of color and individual notaries in Saint-Domingue or Gulf Coast Louisiana remain unclear and under-researched. Similar to parish registers, both the contractant and the notary had an opportunity to confirm the information within the act by signing their name or leaving their mark. However, many contractants, both black and white, indicated they could neither read nor write.

[47] If the *contractant* was infirm or otherwise unable to visit the notary in his office, they could request the notary visit them and pay any travel related expenses along with the regular fee. This was common for last wills and testaments. Regular fees differed according to the type act. In 1775, in Saint-Domingue, recommended fees for most acts registered in the notary's office cost twelve livres. The price rose to 66 livres for a marriage act and 8 livres per hour for property sale. King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 6, 289n. For a full list of fees see "Règlement des Administrateurs, portant tarif des droits curieux, droits de fabrique et frais de justice," in *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises* (hereafter *Loix et constitutions*), ed. Louis-Élie de Saint-Méry Moreau (Paris: chez l'Auteur, 1784-1790), 5:619-649. For examples of templates used in metropolitan France, see François Benoît de Visme and Claude-Joseph de Ferrière, *La science parfaite des notaires, ou le parfait notaire: Contenant les ordonnances, arréts et réglemens rendus touchant la fonction des notaires, tant royaux qu'Apostoliques* (Paris: Chez Durand, 1771). On the reforms of the 1770s, see John D. Garrigus, "Redrawing the Colour Line" 28-50.

sales, and declarations of all kinds. The acts themselves contained information requested by the notary and information offered by the person registering. Information requested differed depending on the type of act, but could include the *contractants* name, name of spouse, names of other persons involved in the transaction, race, color and ethnic designations, free and enslaved status, and details of the legal action being notarized.[48] Information provided also differed as those registering offered personal details about their lives, families, racial designation, and property holdings, including slaves.

The size and composition of the population of free people of color—as well as other populations—varied by time and place. Demographic data in "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" was compiled from unpublished censuses and published tabulations. Eighteenth-century census numerations were compiled with difficulty at uneven intervals at each location. Available population counts, while rough estimates, can be used to make general comparisons and trends across time and place. Specific surveys, like the 1779 census of Saint-Louis and the 1791 cadastral survey of New Orleans, provided more detailed information about size of households, property ownership, and urban development in each location. The *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, which include a range of demographic data compiled by Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Paul Lachance, and Virginia Meacham Gould was especially helpful in organizing data for the Gulf Coast.[49]

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[48] King, *Blue Coat Or Powdered Wig*, 5-7, 9.

[49] *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

Finally, European seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travel writing on Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana proved useful for describing everyday life and for presenting European impressions of women of African descent. When used in this study, the term travel writing designates material produced that described, cataloged, and disseminated information on foreign places and people.[50] Seventeenth and eighteenth-century travel writing used in this study includes general histories, narrative accounts of voyages and explorations, ethnographic descriptions, maps and surveys. All were authored by white men—British, French, and born in the Americas—traveling through Africa, the Caribbean, and North America as missionaries, scientists, commercial agents, sailors, and soldiers.[51] Their texts described their impressions of the land and climate, as well as customs, politics, and

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[50] This broad definition of 'travel writing' is adopted from a similar definition of 'world writing' by geographers Miles Ogborn and Charles W. J.. Withers: "Our principal concern is with what we have called "world writing," that is, with geographical knowledge's role in travel, trade, and the politics and economics of empire between about 1660 and 1800." Ogborn and Withers definition of world writing includes texts not used in this study such as gazetteers, dictionaries, and works of "political arithmetic" (statistics, almanacs, etc.). Miles Ogborn and Charles W. J.. Withers, "Travel, Trade, and Empire: Knowing Other Places, 1660-1800," in *A Concise Companion to the Restoration and Eighteenth Century,* ed. Cynthia Wall (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 13-35. For an overview of the genre of *littérature des voyages* see François Moureau, "Le voyageur français et les étranges étrangers: bilan d'études sur le siècle des Lumières," in *The Eighteenth Century Now: Boundaries and Perspectives,* ed. Jonathan Mallinson (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2005), 148-159; Dominique Lanni, "Etat présent des recherches en français sur la littérature des voyages," *Bolletino del CIRVI* 46, (2002): 555-576; Friedrich Wolfzettel, *Le discours du voyageur: pour une histoire litteraire du récit de voyage en France, du Moyen Age au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris, 1996). For analyses of representations of people of African descent in French texts see William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter With Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980); Andrew S. Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness: Science and Slavery in an Age of Enlightenment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

[51] Travel writing by women during the period and for the places under study was not available. Nineteenth-century accounts of interest include Mary Hassal, *Secret History; Or, the Horrors of St. Domingo, in a Series of Letters, Written By a Lady at Cape François* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1808); Anne Raffenel, *Voyage dans l'Afrique Occidentale: comprenant l'exploration du Sénégal…execute en 1843 et 1844* (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1846). Texts written by free women of color for the period and places of this study were also unavailable and may not exist. For a nineteenth-century example, see Virginia Meacham Gould's edited volume of letters written between women in a Louisiana free family of color during and after the United States Civil War. Gould, ed., *Chained to the Rock of Adversity.*

religious practices they encountered. Details on women of African descent varied. Some travelers offered only cursory impressions of women of color, while others described their homes, dress, food ways, courting rituals, physical characteristics, and sexual mores.

Eighteenth-century travel writing as whole was fraught with racialized and gendered assumptions about people of African descent.[52] While authors' investments in slavery ranged across time and place, in publishing their accounts most intended to impress and thrill white audiences in Europe and abroad. Some, like Jean-Baptiste Labat's *Nouvelle Voyage du Afrique Noire*, were openly plagiarized.[53] Because of their limitations, travel writing was not used to offer definitive accounts of the lives or motivations of free women of African descent. However, these portrayals influenced the behavior of company and colonial officials, traders, slaveowners, and non-slaveowning whites towards women of color. When read carefully, travel writing offers a glimpse into the world free women of African descent inhabited.

Methodology, Language, and Terminology

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" is concerned with the social relationships emerging from the intersection of freedom, kinship, and property in Senegal, Saint-

[52] Mark, *'Portuguese' Style*, 82. See also George E. Brooks, "Artists' Depictions of Senegalese Signares: Insights Concerning French Racist And Sexist Attitudes in the Nineteenth Century," *Genéve Afrique/Geneva Africa* 18, no. 1 (1980): 75-90; Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans*, 29; Christopher Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle: Literature and Culture of the Slave Trade* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); and Doris L. Garraway, *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 93-145.

[53] Cohen, *The French Encounter with Blacks*, 29.

Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. As a comparative study, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" is the story of free women of color in specific ports in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. This study also compares African and Eurafrican women's involvement with Europeans at Saint-Louis and Gorée with that of free African women and women of African descent in Saint-Domingue and along the Gulf Coast. As a diasporic study, "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" explores links between women across communities. In "Freedom, Kinship, and Property," the differences between the lives of free women of African descent in each place are as important as the similarities.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" also explores the meaning of slavery and freedom on both sides of the Atlantic.[54] In their thesis on slavery and freedom in Africa, Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers's argue slavery in Africa created dichotomies of alienation and belonging, not slavery and freedom.[55] Nonetheless, Paul Lovejoy and James Searing describe the influence of Atlantic slavery on creating master-slave dynamics at the coastal outposts, including Saint-Louis and Gorée. Lovejoy argues that at the *comptoirs* and along the coast, "slaves—owned by Europeans and Euro-Africans—should be discussed in the context of slavery in the

[54] Lovejoy writes, "These slaves—owned by Europeans and Euro-Africans—should be discussed in the context of slavery in the Americas as well as in Africa." Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 128. For a comparison of slavery, freedom, citizenship, and labor during the postemancipation period see Cooper, Holt, and Scott, *Beyond Slavery*, 1-32.

[55] See Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality," in *Slavery in Africa*, Kopytoff and Miers, eds., 3-84, especially discussion of rights-as-persons (7-8) and freedom as contrasted to 'belonging' in Africa (17). See also discussion of wealth, knowledge and people in Jane I. Guyer and Samuel M. Eno Belinga, "Wealth in People as Wealth in Knowledge: Accumulation and Composition in Equatorial Africa," *Journal of African History* 36, no. 1 (1995): 91-120.

Americas as well as in Africa."[56] While slavery at Saint-Louis and Gorée incorporated many elements of slavery further inland, it was shaped by the practice of chattel slavery established by the French as slave traders and slaveowners on both islands. More important, while "freedom" at Saint-Louis and Gorée was defined less by formal manumission and more by kinship networks, property ownership, and wealth in people, free African and Eurafrican women's status and position made them distinct from enslaved women. As laborers and dependents, enslaved women were subject to their owners, vulnerable to violence, and without kinship lineages to draw on for protection. Free status, in contrast, allowed African and Eurafrican women to establish households, claim protection of spouses and kinfolk, and assign everyday labor to dependents of their own—including slaves. This study explores the distinctive characteristics of this free status in Senegal, but in dialogue with advantages and rights fought for and accorded to free women of color in colonies across the Atlantic. By exploring the interplay between freedom, kinship, and property at Saint-Louis and Gorée, and comparing it to Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, similarities and differences emerge that flesh out the meaning of freedom and belonging in all three places.

In "Freedom, Kinship, and Property," a free person of color is defined as any person of African descent recognized as not owned by an individual, trading company, civil court, or legislative council.[57] This loose definition provides a base to

[56] Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 128. Searing, *West African Slavery*, 93, 107.

[57] Maroons and other slaves who freed themselves by running away but were viewed as fugitives by the societies they lived in are not included in this study. For more information on maroon groups across the Atlantic world see Richard Price, *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

understand the legalities of free status, while still interrogating the meaning of freedom when free status varied between the three locales. Status separated free women of color from slaves. Freedom of movement, property ownership, and the ability to petition colonial authorities for redress of grievances were just some of the distinguishing marks of free status. In addition, whether a free person of color was a former slave (*affranchi/e*), free born (*née libre*), or generations removed from slavery could further define their status. Sex, race, color, and religion also impacted the social standing of free women of African descent. Whether a Eurafrican woman traveling from Gorée to New Orleans or a free *mulâtresse* living in Cap Français, freedom was negotiated on a daily basis.

During the period of slavery, kinship took on a variety of forms, some with ambiguous, ill-defined boundaries. Biological ties existed alongside kin created via religious and patronage ties through god-parentage, institutional affiliation, charity, and dependency. Property and property relations overlapped and confounded kinship as free and enslaved created families, labored alongside each other, and as free people of color acquired slaves of their own. Even intimacy between women of African descent and European men complicated issues of property. The boundary between what was love, what Gautier describes as *l'intérêt* or self interest, and what was simply good service blurred as enslavement forced slave and master into close quarters.[58] As free women of color carved positions for themselves and their networks in the French Atlantic, their relationships created shared experiences across time and place. This study speaks to those shared experiences.

[58] Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*, 168.

In this study, race and gender were defined as "social constructions based on markers of difference" which organize power relations in a given society.[59] In the Atlantic world, Morgan noted, "gender functioned as a set of power relations through which early slaveowning settlers and those they enslaved defined, understood, and adjusted the confines of racial slavery."[60] As a result, the term "woman" came to mean different things at different times and places. For free women of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana, their gender as "women" was constructed in relation to their African ethnicity and African descent, status and generation of freedom, religion, and location. Although ideologies of race and gender were not the primary focus of this study, the story that unfolded revealed ways free women of color negotiated, challenged, and appropriated categories of difference for themselves even as assumptions of gender and race changed around them.

The women in "Freedom, Kinship, and Property" lived during a time period when markers of differences were becoming codified in law and enforced by those in power. European officials, traders, and slaveowners, as well as the women themselves, drew on a vocabulary of race and gender that varied by place and evolved over time. This study explores the drama of this process. Nonetheless, to bring a narrative coherence to the material a handful of explanatory, contemporary terms are used. "Free women of color" and "free women of African descent" are used to describe women of African descent born in Africa or the Americas, of any race-

[59] Elsa Barkley Brown, "'What Has Happened Here:' The Politics of Difference in Women's History and Feminist Politics," *Feminist Studies* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 302; Hilary McD. Beckles, "Historicizing Slavery in West Indian Feminisms," *Feminist Review* no. 59 (1998): 37; Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 17, no. 2 (1992): 253, 258; Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 7.

[60] Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 7.

mixture, who are recognized by civil and criminal authorities as not enslaved. When more specificity is needed, I use "black" to refer to women of African descent born in Africa or the Americas regardless of status or race-mixture.[61] "African" describes individuals born in Africa, whether they resided in Africa or the Americas. "Eurafrican" describes women, men, and children along the West African coast who were socially and culturally descended from unions between European men and African women.[62] These broad, general terms should be read as an effort to maintain narrative coherence when the analysis moves across time and place. They do not replace women's own self-identification. When such self-identification is known, it is used rather than the aforementioned terminology.

When describing the individuals and events in detail, the terms used follow francophone vocabularies of race more closely, remaining true to the time and place under discussion.[63] As a general rule, French Atlantic race designations spelled out African descent, gender, and purported race-mixture. At times, ethnicity, religion, occupation, and free or enslaved status further defined or clarified an individual's "race." The salience of these other categories of identity differed according to location and as terminology entered common usage over time. The terms *négresse* (woman, black), *mulâtresse* (woman, mixed-race white and black) were widely used at each locale. In Senegal, *négresse* and *mulâtresse* existed in conjunction with terms

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[61] The same definition applies to the use of "free people of color," "free men of color," "black people," or "black men" throughout the text.

[62] I follow George Brook's usage. See Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, xxi.

[63] Exploring classifications of race used by the Wolof or Gulf South Indian groups such as the Choctaw, Chickasaw or Natchez, while important, was beyond the scope of this study.

describing ethnicity (Portugaise, Wolof, "du Sénégal," Bambara), occupation (*signare*, *lançado*), and religion (*mahometante*, *moresse)*.

In Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, the heritability of bondage was codified in law and the role of status in defining race became central (*affranchie*, *femme de couleur libre*). An extensive taxonomy of race mixture also developed over time. By 1789, designations ranged from *quarteronne* or one-fourth black to the more obscure *mamelouque* or descended from a white and a métis/metisse.[64] Distinguishing African from "creole" or born in the Americas was important. Individuals continued to identify themselves and others by African ethnicity, but the significance of ethnicity changed and regional markers such as "Senegal," and birthplace (" creole de Martinique" or "née en Afrique") took on new meaning. Such adaptations were not limited to African ethnicity. Among the terms used by Europeans along Senegal's coast, *métis* or *metisse* described men and women of Eurafrican descent.[65] But in an American context, *metisse* more often referred to women of full or part-Indian descent.[66] This was especially true in Gulf Coast

[64] Médéric Louis-Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie francaise de l'îsle Saint-Domingue* (Philadelphia, P.A.: Chez l'Auteur, 1797), 1:72.

[65] In his 1623 Richard Jobson, a British trader published an account of his travels trading along the Gambia River. He recounted interactions with "treacherous métis" traders, describing them as descended from Portuguese merchants and African women and engaged in commerce along the Gambia. Richard Jobson, *Discovery of the River Gambia and the Golden Trade of the Aethiopians*, ed. Charles G. Kingsley, (England: Teignmouth, 1904), 36-7, 38-9. For an explanation of the term métis in a Senegal context, see usage by Mark, '*Portuguese' Style*, 82-3.

[66] Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France'", 448-9; Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 8-9; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 74.

Louisiana, where, into the nineteenth century, people of European, Native American, and African descent engaged in a range of intimate relations.

In "Freedom, Kinship, and Property," individuals are described by their racial designation and any other markers accorded them in the sources. As such the terms *négresse* and *mulâtresse* appear throughout the study, as do *mahometante, Bambara*, and *affranchie*. At times, this attention to identification produces a more tedious narrative or requires terms to be used that would be seen as pejorative today. To provide an honest and accurate portrayal of the time period, it was necessary to capture the use of such terminology by officials, slaveowners, and even the women themselves.[67] Finally, terms especially fraught with contemporary meaning are avoided except when used by individuals during the time period under study. *Métis/metisse*, *noir/e*, and "Creole," though used during the time period, also describe present-day communities of color and resonate with twentieth and twenty-first century political meaning beyond the scope of this study. To prevent confusion, these terms and others like them are not used.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property" is divided as follows. "Chapter 1: Introduction," describes the argument of the dissertation, explains its contribution to the historiography, reviews the sources used, and offers a discussion of the methodologies, language, and terminology used. "Chapter 2: Free People of Color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana," reviews the history of free communities of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. It

[67] See Appendix C for more discussion of classifications of race.

provides an overview of slavery and freedom throughout the Atlantic world, before proceeding into an analysis of slavery and freedom at each locale. Finally, this chapter compares and contrasts the history and experiences of free women of African descent in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana.

"Chapter 3: Intimacy, Service and the Legal Culture of Manumission" explores the relationship between official regulation of intimate relations and manumission in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. Crown, colonial, and trading company officials regulated intimate relations and manumission differently in all three places. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, officials feared intimacy between the races threatened commerce but did not define clear boundaries between slave and free at the *comptoirs*. Across the Atlantic, a manumission policy emerged in the context of debates over intimacy between European men and women of African descent. Despite official concern, slaveowners continued to manumit their slaves. The chapter also explores "good and agreeable relations" as a justification for manumissions "in payment" for affection, filiation, and services that ranged from personal to carnal in nature.

"Chapter 4: Wives, Soldiers, and Slaves: Free Women of Color and Kinship" describes the kinship ties free women of African descent formed and the impact of those ties on their lives and livelihoods. Free women of color's kinship networks included white men and men of color, as well as a range of children, godchildren and other dependents. These relationships changed over time and place from Senegal to Saint-Domingue to Louisiana. The chapter explores the multi-racial, multi-status society being formed at Saint-Louis and Gorée. It

details the ways free African and Eurafrican women, who formed ties with European soldiers, sailors, and traders, used Catholic baptism and godparentage to create new kinship links. These ties offered security and support, linked residents across race, status, and even religion, and but also existed within hierarchies of status and bondage. Kinship also moved free African and Eurafrican women across the Atlantic in interesting ways. The unique story of "Madame Pinet," a *mulâtresse* who traveled from Gorée to New Orleans in 1728, provides a provocative testimony on the power of kinship and its relationship to freedom in the broader Atlantic.

"Chapter 5: Death Rites as Birthrights: Free Women of Color, Property, and Inheritance" describes the relationship between property, inheritance, and community as free women of color accumulated wealth in the French Atlantic. The self-conscious choices free women of color made about the way property would be distributed within their kinship networks continued even after their death. Officials attempted to restrict or prohibit free women of color from owning property, inheriting and exercising their succession rights. These attempts met with varied success in each locale. However, free women of color persisted in their determination that wealth accumulated over their lives would continue within their lineages. Free women of color passed on property to their descendants, but also used inheritance practices as opportunities to shape their network by naming executors, guardians and heirs, bequeathing property, making final requests, accepting inheritances, and even contesting inheritances in court.

Exploring the lives of free women of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana forces historians to redefine the boundaries between slave and free. Over the course of a lifetime, women enslaved in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana could become free, and free people could also be of African descent. Delving into the role kinship and property played in the lives of free women of African descent in eighteenth-century Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana reveals ways the experience of freedom changed across time and place. Free women of color gave meaning to their freedom by cultivating overlapping networks of kinship and property. Their determination to thrive and the strategies they employed shaped communities of African descent taking shaping in the French Atlantic world.

Chapter 2

Free People of Color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana

> Pour ces femmes, comme pour les esclaves à talents, devenir libre n'implique pas une lutte collective mais l'utilisation rationnelle de leurs possibilités individuelles.
> -- Arlette Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclavage aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (2004)[1]

During the long eighteenth century, free women of African descent created networks of kinship and property in the slaveholding societies of the French Atlantic world. Free women of color, among the first property-owners and entrepreneurs in the francophone black Atlantic, invested time and money building their families, and slowly grew in wealth and power. Their status did not guarantee free women of color access to rights, safety, or peace. It also did not shield them from the caprice of the slave trade, French imperialism, or the day-to-day brutalities of white domination. However, free women of African descent survived and even thrived in a myriad of ways. In comparing free communities of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana, similarities and differences in their experiences become clear.

Free communities of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana developed from a patchwork of circumstances common to free people of color throughout the Atlantic world. Contemporaries dubbed them *mulâtres*, *nègres libres*, *habitants*, and *gens* or *femmes de couleur libres*, and noted, sometimes with

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[1] Arlette Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclavage aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Caribénnes, 1985), 178.

great contempt, the ways they negotiated relations between slave and free.[2] Some migrated from other regions, many were of mixed-race, and nearly all shared a history of complex interactions with Europeans and enslaved blacks.

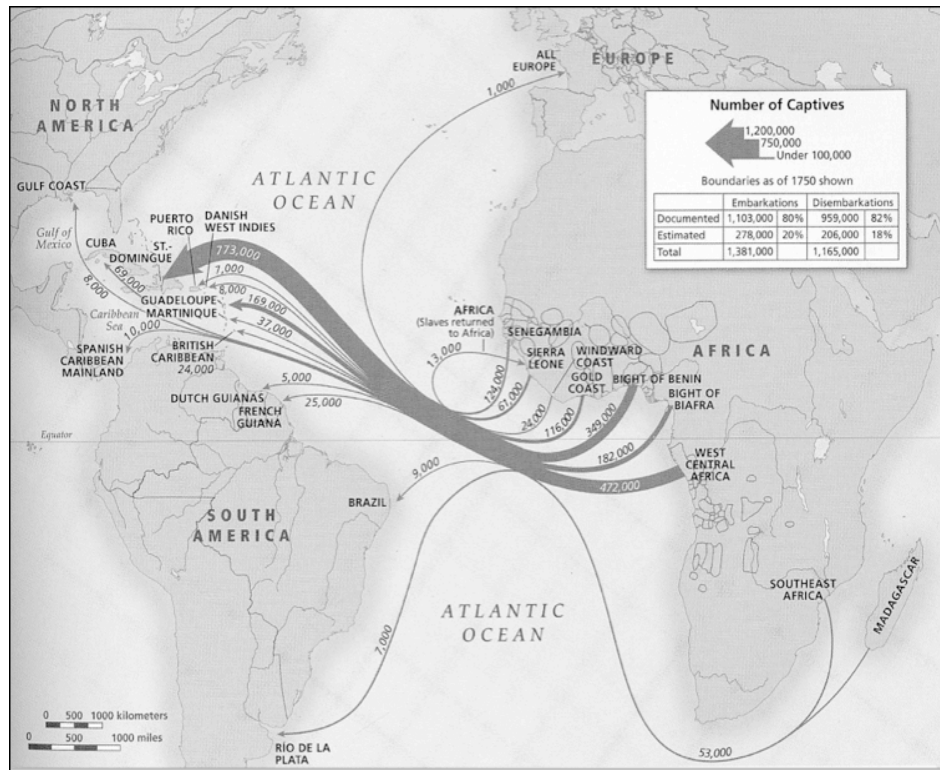

Figure 2.1. The French Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1643-1831. Source: David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), map 19. Permission: Yale University Press.

Freedom and Slavery in the Atlantic World

Near the end of the seventeenth century, the forced migration of Africans to American colonies intensified, ushering in a gendered racial order unseen before or

[2] For a description of terms used in this study, see preface, glossary, and Appendix C.

since. French traders and their ships entered the Atlantic slave trade in increasing numbers, vying with the British, Dutch, and Spanish for plantation outposts overseas. Race, ethnicity, lineage, color, and gender became intertwined with ideas of freedom and independence, labor and bondage. Along the African coast, African interaction with Europeans created new race-based identities and offered new opportunities for wealth and social status. In the Americas, the distinction between enslaved Africans and free Europeans relied on black women's symbolic labor as colonial administrations created laws to ensure the perpetual enslavement of children of women of African descent.[3]

Not all black people were slaves and not all free people were white. Along the African coast, freedom and slavery held a different meaning, and blackness was not immediately equated with bondage. As Africans were enslaved and forcibly transported to the Americas, Europeans and Euro-Americans secured monopolies of power, passing laws declaring status to follow that of the mother. Free people of color in the Americas emerged as slaves were legally freed from slavery by their owners, freed themselves by their own efforts, or as children were born to free mothers in slaveholding societies. Living as free people of African descent on the African coast or in the Americas, women, men, and children experienced the changes

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[3] Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France:' Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2004): 439-478; Maria Elena Martinez, "The Black Blood of New Spain: Limpieza de Sangre, Racial Violence, and Gendered Power in Early Colonial Mexico," *William and Mary Quarterly* 61 (July 2004), 479-520. On the "symbolic weight" of black women's bodies and their importance to ideologies of slavery see Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 27. On race and gender becoming entwined with bondage in the Chesapeake, see Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton Press, 2003).

occurring throughout the Atlantic world in particular ways. Local authorities from Gambia to Mobile labeled them in a variety of ways: *affranchis*, freed people, free people of color, free coloreds, *libres*, *gens de couleur libres* and ex-slaves. By whatever names they were known, free people of color worked, fought, and made love creating translocal and transnational communities across the slaveholding societies of the Atlantic world. As free women and men, they claimed the product of their own labor, accumulated property, secured and passed down wealth to their heirs, fostered kinship networks, and founded institutions for their spiritual and civic well being. But as descendants of slaves, free people of color grappled with race-based discrimination, capricious legal protection, and threats of re-enslavement.

In Africa and the Americas, slavery and freedom held varied meanings. In Africa, slavery's antithesis was lineage and belonging not freedom and independence. Free Africans enjoyed distinct privileges, including the ability to draw on kin as resources, while slaves were incorporated into lineages as kinless dependents.[4] Until the nineteenth-century, formal release from bondage was not common.[5] Slaves could be freed by marrying a freeborn person, through extraordinary acts of courage and heroism, and through self-purchase. However, in practice, the boundary between

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[4] See discussion in Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality," in *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives,* eds. Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977), 3-84.

[5] During the nineteenth century, slaves took advantage of Europeans' professed support for emancipation and sought manumission at European enclaves where and when they could. See Emily S. Burrill, "'Wives of Circumstance:' Gender and Slave Emancipation in Late Nineteenth-Century Senegal," *Slavery and Abolition* 29, (2008): 49-63; Martin A. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Suzanne Miers, "Slavery and the Slave Trade as International Issues 1890-1939," in *Slavery and Colonial Rule in Africa,* eds. Suzanne Miers and Martin A. Klein (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999); Bernard Moitt, "Slavery and Emancipation in Senegal's Peanut Basin: the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 22, (1989): 27-50.

slave and free was less formal than in the Americas. It was possible for slaves to escape the obligations of bondage, even if descent continued to impact their 'free' lives.[6] Raising their social position by securing wealth in land and people allowed slaves to live as free within eighteenth-century slaveholding African societies.[7]

In the Americas, slaves gained formal freedom in a variety of ways. Some slaveowners found it profitable to release old and infirm slaves from bondage or allow their slaves to purchase freedom. Slaveowners also freed slaves for exemplary service unrelated to intimate connections, manumitting domestics, healers and even artisans out of gratitude and affection. Civil authorities rewarded slaves who served as executioners, slave catchers, police or in the militia with freedom. During times of war, military officials offered freedom to slaves who enlisted. And just as slave status followed the mother, children born of white or free women of color shared in their mother's free status. Gender impacted access to manumission. Slaveowning men were known to free their female consorts or their own offspring born to enslaved women.

In the Americas, slaves did not wait for manumission to be bestowed upon them; wherever and whenever possible slaves pursued their own freedom. Some used official channels. In post-Revolutionary United States, slaves filed freedom suits

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[6] Alice Bellagamba, "Slavery and Emancipation in the Colonial Archives: British Officials, Slave-Owners, and Slaves in the Protectorate of the Gambia (1890-1936)," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 39, (2005): 13; Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, 12-3 and throughout text; Miers, "Slavery and the Slave Trade," 31-2; G. Ugo Nwokeji, "The Slave Emancipation Problematic: Igbo Society and the Colonial Equation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 2 (1998): 324-9.

[7] Jane I. Guyer and Samuel M. Eno Belinga, "Wealth in People as Wealth in Knowledge: Accumulation and Composition in Equatorial Africa," *Journal of African History* 36, no. 1 (1995): 91-120.

against their owners and the state.   Throughout the Caribbean and along its littoral, slaves purchased freedom from their owners.   In Cuba and Puerto Rico, slaves took advantage of *coartación,* a system of court-approved self- and third-party purchase.[8] Opportunities for manumission fluctuated. Successful freedom suits and traditions of *coartación* disappeared and reappeared as laws were rewritten or officials friendly to slave manumission were reassigned elsewhere. Administrations tended to outlaw manumission when the size of the free population of color threatened slaveowners. But slaves continued to twist free of slavery. Running away as far as Europe, men and women took on new identities, found allies to protect them from former owners, and raised free children on free soil. In regions with prohibitive manumission taxes, including the French Atlantic, some slaves lived *de facto* free, protected by community approval or a well-placed patron.

In general, free populations of color proliferated in slaveholding societies before, after, or without large-scale plantation economies requiring slave labor. In these societies with slaves, property owners drew on a range of labor types including white, indigenous or black servants, and indigenous or black slaves.[9] In societies with slaves, slaveowners did not control the political, legal and religious structures.

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[8] Alejandro De La Fuente, "Slaves and the Creation of Legal Rights in Cuba: Coartación and Papel," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 87 (2007), 659-692.

[9] Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 7-13. According to Berlin, "slave society" is one in which commodity production fueled by slave labor is the central, organizing principle of the society. All social relations stem from the fundamental relationship between slaveowner and slave, master and subordinate, because all economic relations stem from the production of a single commodity for the Atlantic market (e.g. sugar in 1740s Barbados). A "society with slaves" is one in which slaves are present but the relationship between slaveowner and slave does not structure all other relations and the economy is not driven by any single Atlantic product (e.g. the homesteads and workshops of New England up to the American Revolution). During the period of Atlantic slavery, the transition from slave society to society with slaves was often cyclical, evolving and devolving as events unfolded over time.

Without the profits staple commodities such as sugar, coffee, rice, cotton or tobacco produced, slaveowners were also less inclined to enact and enforce rigid racial hierarchies. Free people of color also lived and worked in mature slave societies, or ones with large-scale staple production and wide slave to free ratios. Fearing slave uprisings and suspicious of the few white laborers in the population, slaveholding elites relied upon, rewarded and trusted free men of color as soldiers, drivers, skilled labor and local police. Some slave societies with large free populations of color, like late eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue, were also home to generations of free people of color who never knew slavery.

Free people of African descent gravitated towards opportunities for employment, safety, and autonomy. In West Africa, opportunities to trade with Europeans along the coast attracted Africans wishing to accumulate goods and wealth.[10] In the Americas, commercial centers and undeveloped frontier attracted free people of color as the areas furthest—both physically and ideologically—from slaveowner influence. The *libres* of Cuba and Puerto Rico composed approximately one-fifth of the population and at the end of the eighteenth century, free blacks and *morenos* were almost forty percent of the non-white population and twenty percent of the total population.[11] But the vast majority of *libres* lived in the cities or worked in ranching, out of the reach of sugar agriculture. In late eighteenth-century Cuba, as sugar developed in Matanzas and South Villas, the west and the south, free people of

[10] See, for example, Walter Hawthorne's discussion of Balanta "insiders" (women, youth) seeking out trade opportunities with Europeans. Walter Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves: Transformations Along the Guinea-Bissau Coast, 1400-1900* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003).

[11] Jay Kinsbruner, *Not of Pure Blood: Free People of Color and Racial Prejudice in Nineteenth Century Puerto Rico* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996).

color quickly migrated east toward Camaguey and Oriente, or the city of Havana.[12] As undeveloped became developed and borders changed, so did the geography of free black settlement. Accordingly, regions where free populations of color had established a critical population mass—such as the northern United States after the American Revolution— attracted like migrants from across the Atlantic world.[13] Free people of African descent regularly sought hospitable areas and crossed imperial boundaries to form new communities.

The lives and labor of free people of color were shaped by local and imperial politics. As European powers jockeyed for control of colonies abroad, competing imperial priorities sometimes prevented slaveowners from controlling opportunities available to non-whites. For example, Spain's effective occupation of lower Louisiana in 1769 introduced a legal structure favorable to manumission and the rights of free people of color.[14] But slave revolts in the 1790s and the outbreak of the Haitian Revolution reversed the more liberal impulses. Spanish officials in Louisiana capitulated to planters who preferred to constrain free people of color in their midst.[15]

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[12] Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slave Law and Claims-Making in Cuba, 11-12.

[13] Ira Berlin, *Slaves without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: New Press, 2008), 15; Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1965), 249.

[14] Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803* (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997). In 1762, Louis XV transferred Louisiana to Spain but French law (and French control) continued until Spanish administrators took definitive, military control in 1769, crushing a small revolt by French planters. Thomas N. Ingersoll, "Free Blacks in a Slave Society: New Orleans, 1718-1812," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (April 1991): 173.

[15] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995); James T. McGowan, "Creation of a Slave Society: Louisiana Plantations in the Eighteenth Century" (University of Rochester, 1976).

Atlantic warfare also caused spikes in migration patterns. After the Seven Year's War, the Caribbean was flooded with French refugees who supported legislation limiting the wealth and autonomy of the self-sufficient *gens de couleur libres* on the islands.[16] Civil unrest in West Central Africa thrust veterans of war into the slave trade where they became instrumental in supporting the 1791 slave revolt in the North Province of Saint-Domingue.[17] The introduction of new kinds of crops and innovations in farming technology also altered local dynamics. The rise of coffee and cotton as Atlantic commodities in the nineteenth-century matured slave societies in the southern United States, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. Free people of color in these places found their freedoms increasingly circumscribed.

The life histories of Rosalie Vincent, Anna Kingless, and Domingos Álvares attest to the difficulty and danger of navigating rapidly changing social and political landscapes as a free person of African descent. Originally "Rosalie of the Poulard Nation," Rosalie Vincent was most likely enslaved in Africa and sent to Saint-Domingue in the 1770s. She secured her freedom but the legality of her papers fell into question during the confusion of the Haitian Revolution. The search for security and autonomy took Vincent and her descendants first to Cuba then to New Orleans and finally as far as France. Anna Madgigine Jai Kinglsey of Wolof descent was captured as an adolescent and sold to Florida slaveowner Zephaniah Kingsley in 1810. She became Kingsley's consort, and she and her children fought to maintain

[16] John D. Garrigus, "Redrawing the Colour Line: Gender and the Social Construction of Race in Pre-Revolutionary Haiti," *Journal of Caribbean History* 30, (1996): 28-50.

[17] John K. Thornton, "'I Am the Subject of the King of Congo:' African Political Ideology and the Haitian Revolution," *Journal of World History* 4, no. 2 (1993): 181-214.

their freedom, family and property in the wake of the Haitian Revolution, Florida's Seminole Wars, and the U.S. Civil War. In 1710, Domingos Álvares was born in present-day Benin. Captured during the rise of Dahomey, Álvares worked as a slave in Brazil, earned a reputation as a spiritual practitioner, and purchased his freedom. In the 1740s, the Holy Office accused him of witchcraft and he was deported to Portugal to stand trial, completing a triangle of forced migration.[18]

Complex power relations prevented whites from fully accepting free people or viewing them as equals. European officials on both sides of the Atlantic suspected free people of African descent of possessing reflexive allegiances to slaves, even slaveowning free people of color who displayed no such tendencies. In the Americas, white slaveowners feared free people of color's very existence represented a refutation and threat to their absolute power over all black people. Despite their apprehension, free people of color also served as a buffer between white slaveowners and slaves. For struggling non-landowning and non-slaveholding whites, free blacks were easy scapegoats. During the years of the Haitian Revolution these anxieties increased in intensity. United States lawmakers greeted the migration of wealthy *gens de couleur libres* via the Saint-Domingue refugee diaspora with outright panic,

[18] Rebecca J. Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, "Rosalie of the Poulard Nation: Freedom, Law, and Dignity in the Era of the Haitian Revolution," in *Assumed Identities: The Meanings of Race in the Atlantic World*, edited by John D. Garrigus, Christopher Morris, Franklin Knight, Rebecca Goetz, and Trevor Burnard (Arlington: University of Texas Press, 2010), 116-144; Daniel L. Schafer, "Shades of Freedom: Anna Kingsley in Senegal, Florida and Haiti," in *Against the Odds: Free Blacks in the Slaves Societies of the Americas*, edited by Jane Landers (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1996), 130-154; James H. Sweet, "Mistaken Identities? Olaudah Equiano, Domingos Álvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the African Diaspora," *American Historical Review* 114 (April 2009): 279-306.

fearing that "French Negroes" would incite mainland slaves.[19] After 1805, Spain passed immigration laws discouraging black relocation to their Caribbean holdings. In 1810, Spanish officials in Cuba retaliated against Napoleon's invasion of Spain by expelling all French refugees, white and black, from the island.[20]

To many slaves, people with free status represented privilege, power, and position. Enslaved men and women, with good reason, regarded all potential slaveowners with suspicion no matter their race or origins. At the same time, slaves maintained close kinship ties to free people of color. In societies where free communities of color were newly formed, free families often included free and enslaved members as spouses, siblings, dependents, and godchildren. Religious and secular institutions like churches, *cabildos* and mutual aid societies became spaces for free and enslaved to work in concert and build ties across distinctions in status. Slaves also sought the protection of free people of color, and in reciprocating, free people of color created unique communities.

For free people of African descent forming kinship and community ties with slaves or whites was complicated. Some free people of color owned slaves, even family members, while others acknowledged wealthy, landowning whites as patrons or kin. Many free people of color married among themselves or formed ties with whites, even in smaller communities.[21] Free women of color entered or were

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[19] Ashli White, "The Limits of Fear: The Saint Dominguan Challenge to Slave Trade Abolition in the United States," *Early American Studies* 2 (Fall 2004), 362-397.

[20] Jorge L. Chinea, "Race, Colonial Exploitation and West Indian Immigration in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico, 1800-1850," *Americas* 52 (April 1996), 510-513.

[21] H. Sophie Burton, "Free People of Color in Spanish Colonial Natchitoches: Manumission and Dependency on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1766-1803," *Louisiana History* 45 (Spring 2004), 172-197; Elizabeth Shown Mills, "Marie Thérèse Coincoin: Cane River Slave, Slaveowner, and

compelled into relationships with white. However, free people of color also married and created families with enslaved men and women. Free kin worked tirelessly to purchase freedom of parents and children who remained slaves.

Born into heterogeneous communities, subsequent generations of free people of African descent formed ties to each other, slaves and whites. Free communities of color were diverse and age, ethnicity, generation of freedom, language, and religion created tensions within them. These affiliations and divisions could stretch across entire societies. Free blacks in the northern United States recognized themselves as descendants of slaves, and organized against the slave trade and slavery in a common struggle for abolition and equality.[22] In contrast, the *gens de couleur libres* of Saint-Domingue envisioned themselves as true *Américaines,* separate and distinct from both slaves and *affranchis* because of their generations of freedom, formed from fortuitous unions between French men and African women.[23]

Free people of color survived and prospered in the face of tremendous hardship. Many searched for employment and companionship in urban areas, attracted by the presence of cosmopolitan men and women of all colors. Using credit and capital accumulated from myriad personal relationships and work opportunities, some began businesses or contracted with former owners. Litigious and aggressive in

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Paradox," in *Louisiana Women: Their Lives and Times*, edited by Janet Allured and Judith F. Gentry (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 10-29; Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 89-108.

[22] Eddie S. Glaude, *Exodus! Religion, Race, and Nation in Early Nineteenth-Century Black America* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2000); Patrick Rael, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[23] Mercer Cook, "Julien Raimond," *The Journal of Negro History* 26 (April 1941), 139-170; John D. Garrigus, "Opportunist or Patriot? Julien Raimond (1744-1801) and the Haitian Revolution," *Slavery and Abolition* 28 (April 2007), 1-21; Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

pursuit of a livelihood, free people of color sued contemporaries, appealed to governors and intendants, sent letters to monarchs and presidents, and registered all manner of protests with local constabularies and notaries when their access to resources was challenged. If official channels failed, free people of color asked influential business partners, family members, or former owners to represent their interests. Free people of color also founded, funded, and administered religious, political, educational and mutual-aid institutions when made to feel unwelcome in majority white establishments.

Free people of color exploited their interstitial status where they could. Free Africans and Eurafricans served as interpreters, pilots, and traders along the African coast. On plantations in the Americas, free people of color served as slave drivers, staffed sugar cane mills and other enterprises, and manage households and businesses. Free people of color also labored as barbers, blacksmiths, carpenters, cooks, cobblers, hairdressers, laundresses, masons, and seamstresses. Most often, labor available to free people of color was differentiated by gender. Some free men of color found a livelihood as sailors and privateers. Other men served or were drafted as slave-hunters and into raiding parties, and as soldiers in local musters and imperial armies. Many free women of color labored and staffed markets that fed the entire population, or bartered their wares from door to door. Even where the work was menial, dangerous, and difficult to obtain, many free people of color survived.

Figure 2.2. Coast of Senegal, circa 1718. Source: Guillaume Delisle. "Carte de la Barbarie, de la Nigritie, et de la Guinée [Detail]," 1718. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g8220.ct001447> [accessed 9 April 2012). See Appendix A for full map.

Merchant Islands: Saint-Louis and Gorée

The *comptoirs* or trading enclaves of Saint-Louis and Gorée occupied two islands along Senegal's Atlantic coast. In 1659, French soldiers and traders drove the Dutch from the mouth of the Senegal River and founded Saint-Louis. In 1677, the French again expelled the Dutch and muscled aside the British to establish a second *comptoir* at Gorée, an island off the Cape Verde peninsula. The islands lacked fresh water and fertile land, but for French traders, preoccupied with Atlantic trade, they provided other amenities. From Saint-Louis and Gorée, French slave traders gained access to gold, gum, ivory and slave trades of the Senegal River. European traders traveled inland as Fort St. Joseph at Galam, where Atlantic trade met North African

caravans of goods and slaves on the way east across the Sahara. Travel south brought traders to the coastal *escales* or trading posts of Rufisque, Portudal, and Joal, as well as Albreda on the Gambia River. Saint-Louis and Gorée were safe harbors for French ships to restock with water and foodstuffs, and a base to fortify against African and European rivals' raids and attacks.

Interloping, disorderly European men accompanied the arrival of French trading companies. Primarily French, the trading companies employed European men of all nationalities as staff, artisans, soldiers, and *engagés* or indentured servants. Along with company employees, itinerant traders, sailors, and occasional missionaries found temporary residence at Saint-Louis or Gorée before continuing travel down the coast or to the Americas. French trading companies provided African slaves to slavers for sale to the French colonies in the Americas, including Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana. French trading companies intermittently monopolized slave trading, sold contracts to merchants, and taxed slave traders per slave.[24]

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[24] For material related to the French slave trade to the Americas, see Appendix B. See also David P. Geggus, "The French Slave Trade: An Overview," *William and Mary Quarterly* 58 (January 2001), 119-138. As Geggus notes, French trading companies were hard pressed to fill plantation needs. French colonists in the Americas often purchased slaves from British, Dutch and Portuguese traders. Moreover, particularly in Saint-Domingue, contraband trade between the British, Dutch and French colonies was common. Senegambia was only a fraction of the eighteenth-century French slave trade to the Americas (See Table B.2). Ships embarking from Ouidah in the Bight of Benin, and Malembo and Loango in West Central Africa dominated the French slave trade. But it was at Saint-Louis and Gorée that the French institutionalized and monopolized trade networks for the longest period of time.

Table 2.1: Troop Population at Gorée, 1692-1776

Year	Regiment	Officers
1692	35	--
1723	10 to 40	--
1725	25	1
1734	40	--
1736	39	--
1741	112	--
1755	40	--
1758	210	7
1763	126	6
1767	100	--
1774	100	--
1776	100	3

Source: Adapted from Marie-Hélène Knight-Baylac, "La Vie À Gorée De 1677 À 1789," Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer 57, no. 4 (1970), 388.

Note: For charts and tables throughout this study, "--" indicates data did not exist or was unavailable.

Arriving at Saint-Louis and Gorée, the French entered a complex web of social and commercial relations created by Africans and Eurafricans. Three African polities—the Wolof kingdoms of Cayor, Bawol, and Waalo—claimed jurisdiction over Saint-Louis and Gorée.[25] The *damels* or rulers blocked French merchants from trading beyond the coast, taxed trading companies for their use of the islands, and

[25] James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 93-164; Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 78; George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 61.

charged traders duties on items exchanged.[26] Along the coast, Lebou fishermen traded with the French as well, providing provisions for the growing communities at Saint-Louis and Gorée and piloting goods between the islands and the coast.[27]

The two *comptoirs* were also part of a network of Eurafrican traders and commercial agents living and working along the coast. As early as the 1460s, Portuguese *lançados* and *tangomãos* exploring the Atlantic islands of Madeira, São Tomé, the Azores, and the Cape Verde archipelago traded with Africans along the coast from Senegal to Sierra Leone. [28] The Dutch and British followed. Many of these men entered into unions with African women.[29] Their mixed-race Eurafrican descendants, described at different times and by different European groups as Crioullos, métis, and Portingalls, created trading enterprises throughout the West African coast. Eurafrican men and women lived and worked in communities created around the mouths of Senegal and Gambia Rivers, in Sierra Leone, and as far south as the Gold Coast.[30]

African and Eurafrican women who distinguished themselves in commerce became known within the region by the honorific *ñhara*, a shortened version of the

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[26] Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 61.

[27] Ibid., 207.

[28] Brooks defines *lançados* as Portuguese men living within African communities and *tangomãos* as *lançados* who participated even more fully in African "lifeways" such as clothing, systems of belief (amulets, divination), rites of passage (circumcision, scarification), and as well as marriage. Ibid., 50.

[29] Ibid., 59. See also Jean Boulégue, *Les Luso-Africains de Sénégambie, XVI-XIXème siècles* (Dakar: Universite de Dakar, 1972).

[30] Ibid., 50; Richard Jobson, *Discovery of the River Gambia and the Golden Trade of the Aethiopians*, ed. Charles G. Kingsley, (England: Teignmouth, 1904), 35-40.

word *señora*.[31] West African commerce depended as much on good diplomatic relations as good kinship connections. European traders and company officials could not penetrate the dense trade networks without entering into kinship and social relations with Africans and Eurafricans. Lacking the appropriate filial ties, French trading company officials relied on Africans and Eurafricans for their commercial expertise, but prohibited employees from entering into unions with African and Eurafrican women themselves.

Disregarding Company directives, employees and African and Eurafrican women entered into liaisons. By the 1730s, officials of the Compagnie des Indes openly complained of sexual relations between Eurafrican women and company employees.[32] Formal Catholic marriage was rare. From 1730 to 1819, only thirty-one Catholic marriages were registered at Saint-Louis, and from 1777 to 1824, only nineteen at Gorée.[33] African women engaged in a range of formal and informal liaisons with European men. Some women claimed to be and were claimed as

[31] George E. Brooks, "The Signares of Saint-Louis and Gorée: Women Entrepreneurs in Eighteenth-Century Senegal," in *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change,* eds. Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna G. Bay (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 19-44; Philip J. Havik, *Silences and Soundbites: the Gendered Dynamics of Trade and Brokerage in the Pre-Colonial Guinea Bissau Region* (Münster: Lit Verlag Münster, 2004), 148-198; Bruce L. Mouser, "Women Slavers of Guinea-Conakry," in *Women and Slavery in Africa,* eds. Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1983), 320-339.

[32] George Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 210-11. Michel Jajolet de la Courbe expressed concern over the latitude allowed African women at the slave posts but it was not until Governor Julien Dubellay (1722-25) that Company officials offered the more aggressive solution of sending young French women, ages 15-16 from metropolitan France every year to serve as wives to employees. This solution was rejected.

[33] Between 1730-183, only 12 marriages were recorded in Saint-Louis' parish registers. and only 19 marriages but 790 births recorded at Saint-Louis from 1783-1809, 1818-19. 5 marriages were recorded in Gorée from 1777-1824. Naissances, Mariages et Décès, 1730-1782, État Civil de Saint-Louis du Sénégal (hereafter État Civil SEN), CAOM, Aix-En-Provence, France; Michael David Marcson, "European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: Saint Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1976), 19; Marie-Hélène Knight-Baylac, "La vie à Gorée de 1677 à 1789," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 57, no. 4 (1970), 414.

"spouses" by European men. Over time, these ties transformed into *marriage à la mode du pays*, a unique institution through which European men married African and Eurafrican women following the marriage customs of either Wolof or Lebou society. Bridewealth was offered and the marriage celebration included a feast thrown by the husband and the talents of the *griots*. Women married *à la mode du pays* multiple times as Europeans arrived and departed or died.[34] *Mariage a la mode du pays* was more common than Catholic marriage until the nineteenth century and was recognized as a legitimate conjugal institution by whites and blacks.[35]

African and Eurafrican women and men were among the first residents at Saint-Louis and Gorée, engaging in trade with and provisioning the company in exchange for transatlantic merchandise. As the eighteenth century proceeded and Eurafrican daughters followed in their mother's footsteps, a new generation of mixed-race traders and commercial agents sprang up along the West African coast. African and Eurafrican women traders participated in commercial exchanges with Europeans, and used the wealth earned to acquire slaves, purchase European goods, and expand their property holdings at the *comptoirs*. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, African and Eurafrican women played a critical role facilitating trade between the French and later the British on the coast and the Wolof kingdoms of Waalo, Kajoor and Bawol on the

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[34] Brooks, "The Signares of Saint-Louis and Gorée," 34-6; Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 211-2. In 1685, while touring the Gambia, de la Courbe recorded the tale of an Englishman, Captain Hodges, who killed the child of a woman he was living with but would not leave her "because she had brought much wealth and, moreover, she was his wife *á la mode du pays*." Michel Jajolet de la Courbe, *Premier voyage du sieur de la Courbe fait a la coste d'Afrique en 1685*, ed. Prosper Cultru, (Paris: E. Champion, 1913), 204.

[35] See discussion in Hilary Jones, "From *Mariage à la Mode* to Weddings at Town Hall: Marriage, Colonialism, and Mixed-Race Society in Nineteenth-Century Senegal," *African Historical Studies* 38, no. 1 (2005): 27–49

mainland. Labor ranged from provisioning company employees and slaves, to securing slaves awaiting transit to the Americas, and maintaining fortifications and sailing vessels. As residential population on the islands grew, cleaning, cooking, washing, and general domestic labor such as chopping wood and drawing water became daily concerns.[36]

Saint-Louis and Gorée were bases for African and Eurafrican women's commerce and property-ownership. Alliances between free women of African descent and Europeans put them in a position to shape trade between the Senegambia mainland, the Americas, and France. As residents of the islands, African and Eurafrican women supported trade between the garrison and the coast, furnishing officers, soldiers, and traders with provisions from the hinterland. African and Eurafrican women appropriated trading company resources to establish households, purchase slaves, and secure their position within the hierarchy developing on the island. African and Eurafrican women traveled to Europe, the Antilles, and the Gulf Coast as the wives of Company employees, and sent their children to France to be educated. As mothers, godmothers, and *habitants* or heads of household living at French mercantile outposts and in the shadow of Atlantic trade, African and Eurafrican women accrued a novel array of opportunities and responsibilities.

Although early eighteenth-century population counts for Saint-Louis and Gorée were uneven and inconsistent, by the 1750s censuses document a resident population of African descent. In 1755, a partial census of Saint-Louis counted over seven hundred and fifty African men, most enslaved, and over fifteen hundred women

[36] Searing, *West African Slavery*, 96-8.

in an island population of about twenty five hundred.[37] In 1776, over fifteen hundred "mulattoes" and "free blacks," lived at Saint-Louis and some nine hundred were women. In 1785, only seven hundred Europeans were counted at Saint-Louis, mainly soldiers, in contrast to over three thousand Africans and people of mixed-race.[38] At Gorée, from an estimated sixty-six free Africans and Eurafricans in 1749, the number of people of African descent increased to over three hundred in 1767.[39]

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[37] Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Supplementary Evidence* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 39. Curtin estimates 86% of the men were slaves. The race of the women is not given but it can be safely assumed they were African and Eurafrican. During the eighteenth century, the white female population at Saint-Louis and Gorée was negligible. A small handful of women appear in marriage records of the État Civil, and are listed as natives of Paris and Bretagne. These women may have arrived as servants. In 1758, John Lindsay, traveling through West Africa and remarking on married life at Saint-Louis and Gorée, noted that "the French suffer'd no white women to be sent thither.—Nor do I think it would be wrong to follow their example" as African and Eurafrican women were more pleasing. John Lindsay, *A Voyage to the Coast of Africa in 1758* (London: S. Patterson, 1759), 78. The absence of even white female missionaries suggests he may have been correct. Not until after 1817, and the arrival of missionizing European women through orders like the Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de Cluny, did a white female presence become significant. Jones, "Mariage à la Mode," 41, 67; Mamadou Diouf, "The French Colonial Policy of Assimilation and the Civility of the Originaires of the Four Communes (Senegal): A Nineteenth Century Globalization Project," *Development and Change* 29, no. 4 (1998), 681. On the Soeurs and their founder, see Geneviève Lecuir-Nemo, *Anne-Marie Javouhey: Fondatrice De La Congrégation Des Soeurs De Saint-Joseph De Cluny, 1779-1851* (Paris: Karthala, 2001). It did not help that Saint-Louis and Gorée were garrisoned French outposts, not settled French colonies (as in the Americas), and less attractive to voluntary settlement by both individual women and whole families.

[38] Curtin, *Supplementary Evidence*, 40.

[39] Ibid.

Table 2.2 Population of Gorée and Saint-Louis, 1685-1810

	Year	Europeans	Free Africans & Eurafricans	Slaves	TOTAL
Gorée	1688	--	--	--	220 [a]
	1749	--	66	131	--
	1763	--	--	--	257
	1767	--	326	718	1,044
	1776	139	230	1,200	1,569
	1785	--	--	1,044	--
	1810	10	992	2,226	3,268
Saint-Louis		--	--	--	--
	1685	60	--	--	--
	1755	--	--	648	2,500
	1758	--	593	808	2799[b]
	1763	--	--	--	3,000
	1776	--	1,541	3,108	--
	1779	--	--	1,858	3,018
	1790	700	2,400	2,000	5,000
	1785	700	3,300	2,000	6,000
	1786	660	2,400	2,400	5,460
	1810	--	2,200	3,200	--

Source: Data as compiled from Prosper Cultru, Histoire Du Sénégal Du Xv Siècle À 1870 (Paris: Emile Larose, 1910), 15; Philip D. Curtin, Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Supplementary Evidence (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 39-43; Michael David Marcson, "European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: Saint Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1976), 38-9; Alain Sinou, "Saint-Louis du Sénégal au début du XIXe siècle: du comptoir à la ville (Saint-Louis of Senegal at the Beginning of the 19th Century: From Trading Post to City)," Cahiers d'Études Africaines 29, no. 115/116 (1989), 378; "Dénombrement General des Habitants de l'Isle de Gorée," 11 July 1767, 3G2/123, ANS; Marie-Hélène Knight-Baylac, "La Vie À Gorée De 1677 À 1789," Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer 57, no. 4 (1970), 402; Charles Becker, Victor Martin, Jean Schmitz, Monique Chastanet, Les Premiers Recensements Au Sénégal Et L'Évolution Démographique (Dakar: Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique d'Outre-Mer, 1983), 2-4.

[a]This number includes Galam, Mauritania, Joal, Portudal, Bintam, Albreda on the Gambia and Gorée.

[b]This was the total population after British occupation. Total population before British occupation was 2,923

By the second half of the eighteenth century, a distinct cohort of women emerged: the *signares*, whose name, like the *ñharas*, derived from the honorific *senhora*. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, the *signares*, as traders and property-owning women, acquired slaves and assigned them household labor.[40] *Signares* distinguished themselves from unpropertied women of African descent, and not all female traders became *signares.* Less wealthy or less well connected African and Eurafrican women found employment with trading companies alongside enslaved women as bakers, cooks, gardeners, laundresses, nurses, seamstresses and general domestics.[41] Just as on the mainland, grinding millet, laundering, and cooking were the primary occupations for women of color who were not householders or were unable to defer such labor to their female slaves.[42]

After the Seven Years War, the French and British battled for control of the coast. Both Saint-Louis and Gorée experienced several administrative changes. In 1758, the British captured Saint-Louis and Gorée. The end of the war in 1763 restored Gorée to France, but the British held Saint-Louis and created the Province of Senegambia. The American Revolution sparked a new war with France. In 1779 the French recaptured Saint-Louis, reuniting two *comptoirs* until the British captured Gorée later that year. The French did not return to Saint-Louis and Gorée until late 1783. The Napoleonic Wars began a new round of imperial shuffling: The British

[40] Ibid.

[41] "Rolle general des Blancs et Nègres au service de la Compagnies des Indes a la concession du Senegal les 1 May 1736," 1 May 1736, C6 11, Centre des Archives d'Outre Mer (hereafter CAOM).

[42] Searing, *West African Slavery*, 93.

captured Gorée in 1800 and held it until the French recaptured the island in 1804. The British retook it later that year. In 1809, Saint-Louis surrendered to the British. The French did not formally reoccupy the two islands until 1817, after Napoelon's defeat.

Figure 2.3. French and British Occupation of Saint-Louis and Gorée, Senegal, 1758-1817

Africans and Eurafricans with commercial knowledge, homes, and slaves took advantage of the changes that occurred. The British-French tug-of-war over the *comptoirs* led some *habitants* and company employees to migrate to France, while others traveled south to British-controlled Gambia. But by 1764, Saint-Louis and Gorée were dominated by wealthy Eurafrican trading families and their domestic slaves. Free African women and men who remained in British Saint-Louis demanded the British hire their slaves as laborers, respect their property rights including their slaveownership, and allow freedom of religion.[43] Renewed French presence at Gorée also brought changes. The Crown took over from the Compagnie des Indes, annulling the Company's monopoly.[44] African and Eurafrican residents at Gorée also

[43] Brooks, "The Signares of Saint-Louis and Gorée," 42; Michael David Marcson, "European-African Interaction," 27; Searing, *West African Slavery*, 106.

[44] Curtin, *Supplementary Evidence*, 9.

pressured the French governor to hire their slaves, permit slave trading, formalize property holdings, and protect slaveownership.[45] By the 1780s, Eurafrican mayors headed both island's local administrations, and Eurafricans continued to dominate trade networks and politics in the region.[46]

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, revolution in France, slave revolt in the Caribbean, and antislavery fervor from Britain and the United States was moving French trade and African society at Saint-Louis and Gorée in new directions. The Haitian Revolution decimated plantation production at Saint-Domingue, and the demise of slavery eliminated it as a market for slaves. Numbers of slaves leaving Saint-Louis and Gorée did not exceed more than a few hundred per year, but pressure to end Atlantic slave trading encouraged French mercantile interests to transition to "legitimate trade" in gum and peanuts.[47] As French economic priorities shifted, African and Eurafricans at Saint-Louis and Gorée lost some of their position. Gum found its way to the coast through Mauritania and North African routes, instead of through connections cultivated by Saint-Louis and Gorée *habitants*.[48] Saint-Louis and Gorée merchants found themselves in a struggle with

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[45] Searing, *West African Slavery*, 108-112.

[46] Brooks, "The Signares of Saint-Louis and Gorée," 40-41.

[47] European, African and Eurafrican traders based at Saint-Louis participated in the gum trade as early as the 1720s, but it wasn't until the 1790s that trade in gum arabic began to take priority over trade in slaves. James L. A. Webb Jr., "The Trade in Gum Arabic: Prelude to French Conquest in Senegal," *Journal of African History* 26, no. 2 (1985), 152-3. By the 1850s, peanuts were outpacing gum.

[48] Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, 216-7.

legitimate trade enthusiasts for control of commercial networks.[49] In 1817, when the French formally returned to govern Saint-Louis as well as Gorée, African and Eurafricans were well respected but their role had changed. French governors initiated plans to end Atlantic slave trading and replace slavery in the region with free labor and legitimate trade. Free African and Eurafrican men and women denounced legitimate trade and emancipation, even as Senegal marched inexorably towards both.

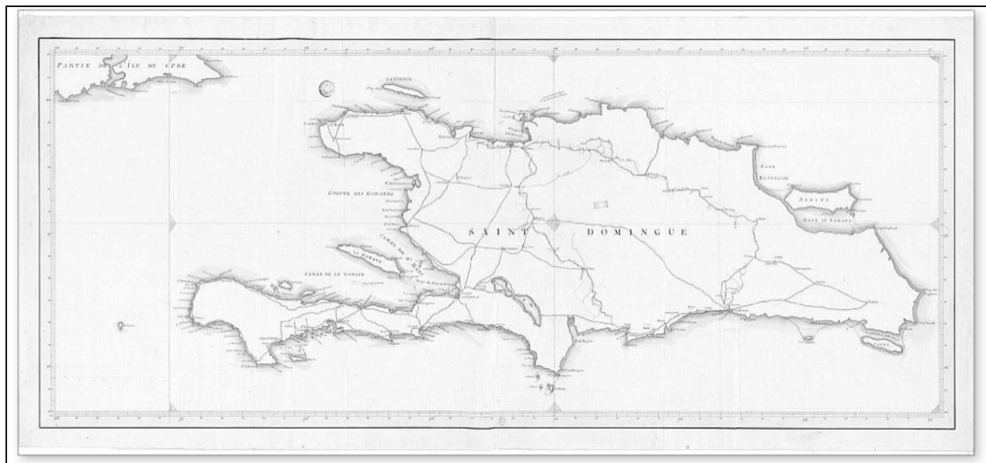

Figure 2.4. Map of Saint-Domingue, 1780. Source: "[Carte routière de l'île de] Saint-Domingue," [map]. 1780. Bibliothèque nationale de France. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b59726557> [accessed 9 April 2012).

Brutality and Decadence: Pre-Revolutionary Saint-Domingue

The island of Hispaniola lay south of Cuba and east of Jamaica in the Caribbean Sea. In the fifteenth century, Spain claimed the entire island as part of Christopher Columbus's early ventures. By the seventeenth century, French

[49] See Trevor R. Getz, *Slavery and Reform in West Africa: Toward Emancipation in Nineteenth-Century Senegal and the Gold Coast* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004), 28-53; Martin A. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, 94-107.

buccaneers and freebooters harassed Spanish settlers through raids and pillages. In 1625, Pierre Belain, sieur d'Esnambuc, a buccaneer and privateer sailed to St. Christophe with a royal patent to establish a French colony.[50] In 1629, French interlopers, many from nearby St. Christophe, used the western half of Hispaniola and the nearby island of Tortuga as a base for contraband trade in cattle, hides and slaves.[51] French buccaneers raided and pillaged from St. Christophe, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and a nascent Saint-Domingue, stealing cattle and slaves from the British and Spanish outposts on surrounding islands.[52]

In the 1660s, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, King Louis XIV's new Finance Minister, took over direction of France's colonial ventures. Colbert began to establish imperial institutions and standardize commercial policies to address the problems of expansion. Rangling disorderly whites into obedience to the Crown became one of his goals. The Compagnie des Indes Occidentales was formed with this in mind, and to encourage slave trade and plantation production in the Caribbean.[53] In 1664, Saint-Domingue joined Martinique and Guadeloupe as proprietary holdings under the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales. Slave trading and colonial enterprise brought a

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[50] Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (New York: Verso, 1998), 280.

[51] Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 6; Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 23-9.

[52] Philip D. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History* 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 95; Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*, 3-6. See also Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: the Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 21-42.

[53] Philip P. Boucher, *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent?* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 169-175. The Compagnie des Indes managed trade and governed residents of the islands but with the oversight and assistance of a lieutenant-general appointed by the Crown. Boucher, *France and the American Tropics*, 249.

disproportionate number of young and unruly European men to the Caribbean in a skirmish for land, cattle, and slaves.[54] These settlers entered a world of banditry and ribaldry, and contraband trading continued in defiance of Company attempts to enforce a trade monopoly. Rebellions against company and Crown authority were common. In 1670, Saint-Domingue settlers mutinied when trading company officials attempted to stop them from trading with the Dutch.[55] In 1674, after mismanagement led the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales to go bankrupt, the French Antilles was united under Crown jurisdiction. Imposition of royal rule signaled the Crown's renewed commitment to asserting control over white and black populations, and determination to make a profit overseas.

The Crown continued to grant charters to trading companies, but company officials failed to administer and support slave trading at Saint-Domingue, and were unable to provide the colony with slaves. Nevertheless, the potential for plantation production drew the attention of the Crown. In 1685, the French at Saint-Domingue established more formal colonial rule with the formation of a Superior Council at Petit-Goave, south and west of what would become Port-au-Prince. Spain and France battled for control of the island until the 1697 Treaty of Ryswick settled the dispute

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[54] Philip D. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, 95; Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*, 3-6. See also Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 21-42.

[55] Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, 283.

by ceding the western half to France as Saint-Domingue.[56] By 1701, to support its growing population, a second council was established at Cap-Francais (Le Cap).[57]

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[56] Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*, 6; Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 16.

[57] "Edit du création et établissement du Conseil Supérieur du Cap, et Procès-verbal d'installation de cette Cour par M. de Galiffet, Commandant et Chef par interim, de la Colonie, June, November 1701," in *Loix et constitutions*, 1:666.

Table 2.3. Population of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Domingue, 1664-1699

	Total	Whites	Slaves	Free Non-Whites
Martinique				
1664	15,401	2,681	12,704	16
1696	20,066	6,435	13,126	505
Guadeloupe				
1670	8,696	1,227	5,267	47
1699	10,111	3,687	6,076	349
Saint-Domingue				
1681	6,648	4,336	2,312	--

Source: Adapted from Orlando Patterson, Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 148-151; Guy Lasserre, La Guadeloupe: Etude Géographique (Bordeaux: Union Française d'Impression, 1961), 284, 297 as cited in Jan Rogozinski, A Brief History of the Caribbean: From the Arawak and Carib to the Present Penguin Group, 2008), 78.

With Crown support, white emigration, slave trading and plantation agriculture increased and the numbers of slaves and free people of color skyrocketed. Slave trading and plantation production expanded as settlers spread across the fertile plains of the Northern Province, establishing sugar plantations and mills. In the Western and Southern Provinces, sugar plantations and mills appeared, as did coffee and indigo plantations. As a result of the buccaneer generation's clandestine maritime commerce at Tortuga, and with the northern coast's proximity to favorable trade winds and ocean currents, Le Cap became a favorite destination for ships arriving from Africa and Europe.[58] Port-au-Prince, in the center of the colony, emerged as the second busiest port and the island's administration center. On the southernmost end, freebooters traded with Jamaica and the British Caribbean from the port of Les Cayes.

[58] Geggus, "The Major Port Towns of Saint Domingue," 91, 93. In 1788, 35% of the exports to France and 38% of ships arriving in Saint-Domingue went through Le Cap; the same year Port-au-Prince handled 26% of the exports to France and received 25% of the ships to the island.

The three ports became coastal enclaves supporting the plantation hinterland. At each, petty commerce, provision agriculture, and skilled labor proliferated.

The spread of staple agriculture across the colony transformed Saint-Domingue. The colony received greater attention from Crown officials and eager absentee landlords. In 1715, Saint-Domingue officially surpassed Martinique as the primary destination for French slave ships.[59] The brutality of slavery in Saint-Domingue defied imagination. Slaves were worked to death at a yearly mortality rate of 5 to 6 percent but exhibited a birthrate of about 3 percent.[60] As a result, the vast majority of slaves in the colony arrived from Africa and died before they could reproduce. Maroon societies developed in the hills of the Western Province and along the border with Spanish San Domingo.[61] By the mid-eighteenth century, a high rate of African slave importation, a dizzyingly high mortality rate, and a low fertility rate revealed Saint-Domingue's arrival as a mature slave society.

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[59] David P. Geggus, "The French Slave Trade: An Overview," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (2001), 126. See Appendix B for slaves landed at Saint-Domingue in the eighteenth-century.

[60] Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 40.

[61] Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution From Below* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 50-6. See also Jean Fouchard, *The Haitian Maroons: Liberty Or Death* (New York: E. W. Blyden Press, 1981).

Table 2.4. Population of Saint-Domingue, 1681-1788

Year	Whites	FPC	Slaves	TOTAL
1681	4,336	210	2,000	6,546
1754	12,859	4,732	164,859	182,450
1775	20,438	6,897	287,806	315,141
1780	20,543	10,427	--	30,970
1788	27,723	21,813	455,089	504,625
TOTAL	85,899	44,079	909,754	1,039,732

Source: Stewart R. King, *Blue Coat Or Powdered Wig: Free People of Color in Pre-Revolutionary Saint Domingue* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 42; Thomas N. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans: The First Slave Society in the Deep South, 1718-1819* 1st ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 123.

Table 2.5. Slaves Landed at Saint-Domingue, 1711-1790

Year	Sum of Slaves Disembarked
1711-1720	23,966
1721-1730	26,236
1731-1740	52,052
1741-1750	55,013
1751-1760	54,629
1761-1770	99,073
1771-1780	125,096
1781-1790	215,282
TOTAL	651,347

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1710&yearTo=1850&mjslptimp=36400] (accessed May 26, 2012)

Imperial law, local custom, and relations between slaveowners and slaves impacted opportunities to escape from slavery. The 1685 *Code Noir* defined the status of free black people and the policy whereby slaves gained their freedom. But if the *Code Noir* announced the King's policy towards blacks on paper it hardly clarified black life in practice. Manumission laws were ambiguous, subject to local

authority and customs that favored the authority of the slaveowner over the cause of the slave. Categories of unofficial freedom existed alongside formal manumission. Slaveowners who wished to manumit but wanted to avoid the cumbersome and expensive legal process allowed slaves to live like free people but without formal documentation as *affranchi sans l'être*, *libres de fait* or *libres de savanne*.[62] *Affranchi sans l'être, libres de fait*, and *libres de savanne* were free in practice but not by law. Unofficial freedom was especially prevalent at Saint-Domingue. Saint-Domingue's free population of color, most numerous in the late eighteenth century, was comprised of *affranchi*, *née libres* or born free, and *affranchis sans l'être* or descended from slaves manumitted or living as free long before documentation became necessary.[63] Without legal freedom, *affranchi sans l'être* remained vulnerable to expulsion, dispossession, and re-enslavement.

Whether manumitted through adherence to the amendments of the *Code Noir*, with the aid of white consorts or kin, or through their own legal appeals and self-purchase, free people of color fought to escape from servitude. Saint-Domingue's free population of color rose from a couple hundred in 1681 into the thousands during the first half of the eighteenth century. By 1754, over forty seven hundred free

[62] Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*, 172; Bernard Moitt, "In the Shadow of the Plantation: Women of Color and the *Libres De Fait* of Martinique and Guadeloupe, 1685-1848," in *Beyond Bondage: Free Women of Color in the Americas,* eds. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 35-40. A smaller number of slaves, *libres de voyage,* remained free as long as they remained in France. On slaves, race and freedom in metropolitan France, see Sue Peabody, *"There Are No Slaves in France": The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, MA: Oxford University Press, 2002)

[63] Geggus, "The Major Port Towns," 103; Bernard Moitt, "In the Shadow of the Plantation," 37-59.

people of color resided in Saint-Domingue.[64] In 1775 over six thousand free people of color resided in Saint-Domingue. By 1780, about one-tenth of the colony's free people of color lived in or around Cap Français and over half were female property owners.[65] In 1788, the number of free people of color in Saint-Domingue passed twenty thousand and rivaled the white population.[66] In 1789, in the Northern Province, almost four out of five manumitted slaves were female, almost two out of three in the Western and Southern Province.[67]

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[64] Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon, eds., *Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 206; Thomas N. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 123.

[65] King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 46; Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women," 270; Socolow, "Economic Roles of the Free Women of Color," 282.

[66] Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon*, 123.

[67] Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women," 269.

Table 2.6. Slaves Manumitted in the Northern and Western Provinces by Sex/Age, 1776-1789

Adult Female	46%
Adult Male	15%
Children	39%

Source: Adapted from Stewart R. King, *Blue Coat Or Powdered Wig: Free People of Color in Pre-Revolutionary Saint Domingue* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 44. Sample of 984 manumission acts from Cap Français, Fort Dauphin, Limonade, Port-au-Prince, Mireblais, and Croix des Bouquets.

Table 2.7. Slaves Manumitted in the Southern Province by Sex/Age, 1760-69

Adult Female	33.5%
Adult Male	15.7%
Children	41.5%

Source: Adapted from John D. Garrigus, "A Struggle for Respect: The Free Coloreds of Pre-Revolutionary Saint Domingue, 1760-69" (Ph.D. diss, Johns Hopkins University, 1988), 422-3. Sample of 236 manumission acts from three parishes in the Southern Province: Les Cayes, Nippes, and Saint-Louis.

Table 2.8: Slaves Manumitted in Port-au-Prince by Sex/Age, 1776-1789

Adult Women	49%
Adult Men	15%
Children	36%

Source: King, *Blue Coat and Powdered* Wig, 49. Sample of 202 manumission acts.

Table 2.9. Percentage of Female Slaves Among Total Slaves Freed through Official Manumission Acts in Saint-Domingue, 1785-1789

Year	Female
1785	65%
1786	64%
1787	--
1788	67%
1789	63%

Source: Adapted from David P. Geggus, "Saint-Domingue on the Eve of the Haitian Revolution," in *The World of the Haitian Revolution,* eds. David P. Geggus and Norman Fiering (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 10. Percentage breakdown based on 1,976 official manumissions.

Over the course of the eighteenth century, as the port cities of Saint-Domingue transitioned from hubs of Caribbean piracy to commercial centers of a slave society, free women of color filled important commercial and domestic labor roles. Studies of manumission in Saint-Domingue, though inconsistent across time and place, demonstrate enslaved women and children were most likely to be freed from bondage (Tables 2.6-2.9).[68] As free women of African descent secured their freedom, they became active in the intra-Caribbean contraband trade and used the profits to establish indigo, coffee, and tobacco plantations. At Cap Français, Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes, free women of color ran retail shops buying and selling basics like bread, dry goods, clothing, vegetables, cooking oil and luxury items like wigs

[68] Data on manumission in Saint-Domingue is most readily available for the period after 1760, when record keeping became more commonplace due to the reassertion of Crown rule and reforms in manumission law. However, Gautier's study of manumission acts in the Southern Province parish of Nippes suggests similar trends throughout the colonial period. Between 1720 and 1770, in a sample of 238 acts, 35% of those freed were women and 44% were mixed-race children. Men were 9% of those freed and "negrillons and negrittes" or 'black' children were 11% of the sample. Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*, 172-4.

and sweets.[69] Others rented stalls in the markets or plied their wares in the streets as petty merchants. A few free women of color participated in the transatlantic and intra-Caribbean trade of slaves and manufactured goods from Europe. Others ferried goods between the three ports or took their business into the rural districts. Free women of color also figured prominently as owners and employees of boarding houses, taverns, and inns.[70] While free men of color served in militias and the *maréchaussée* or local police force, and free women of color were employed as slave drivers and household managers.

Ties to whites were especially strong within the Saint-Domingue free community of color. In Saint-Domingue, few Catholic mixed-race marriages were recorded, all from the earliest periods of settlement. Regardless, interracial unions formed and gifts of money and land were bequeathed to mixed-race children.[71] Free women and men of color in Saint-Domingue used inheritances or pooled their earnings to purchase enslaved family members. By the mid-eighteenth century, the free population of color was already self-perpetuating and practicing a fierce endogamy that incorporated white men and women as patrons and kin. The ritual of gift giving was crucial to maintaining internal kinship networks. Fathers of both races provided their daughters with dowries to support lucrative marriages and

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[69] Socolow, "Economic Roles of the Free Women of Color," 281-2; Dominique Rogers, "Réussir dans un Monde d'Hommes: les Stratégies des Femmes de Couleur du Cap-Français," *The Journal of Haitian Studies* 9 (Spring 2003), 40-51, 43.

[70] In the 1730s, Anne Dominique Acquiez operated a tavern out of Aquin, dealt in contraband from Curaçao and resold goods from French ships. In the 1770s, Anne Rossignol, a native of Saint-Louis and merchant, lived in Le Cap and married Sieur Guillaume Dumont, a surgeon. Women like the two Annes appear throughout the ports. Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 26; King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 188-9.

[71] Garrigus, "Redrawing the Color Line," 28.

presented their sons with gifts when the boys reached adulthood. In Saint-Domingue, residence in France for education or religious training was a rite of passage for the male and female children of prosperous free families of color, and was also accompanied by parties and gifts. Death provided a final opportunity free families of color to distribute wealth among kin, including land, furniture, livestock, and slaves.[72]

At the end of the eighteenth century, when Saint-Domingue's white colonials threatened to exclude free men of color from citizenship in the new French Republic, free men of color demanded equal rights. Those demands helped spark the Haitian Revolution. In 1791, a massive slave revolt in Saint-Domigue's northern plain signaled the beginning of the Haitian Revolution and created a new francophone African diaspora as refugees scattered throughout the Atlantic. Free women of color supported households, joined war and subsistence efforts, and became part of the Haitian Revolutionary diaspora. The war resonated throughout the Atlantic. White and black, free and slave escaped the violence of Saint-Domingue for France or the less tumultuous refuges of Jamaica, Cuba, Louisiana and along the eastern seaboard of the United States. After years of tumult, in 1804, Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared Saint-Domingue independent from France, forming the first black republic in the New World under a new name: Haiti.[73]

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[72] John Garrigus does not describe the process of gift-giving as an institution. However, it would appear that the importance attached to finding suitable unions, the amount of property and assets exchanged, and the rituals involved (group visits to the notary, public declarations of the amount and types of gifts) may imbue these transactions with more importance. This importance can best be seen if these unions are understood in concert with economic and kinship relations in Louisiana (minor gifts were exchanged in comparison; the most important gift was often manumission) and Senegal (where, in addition to the gift of kinship-trade networks, similar gift-giving was the custom when French married Wolof women outside the Catholic church and *a la mode du pays*).

[73] Studies of the Haitian Revolution abound. See Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*; Fick, *The Making of Haiti*; David P. Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ

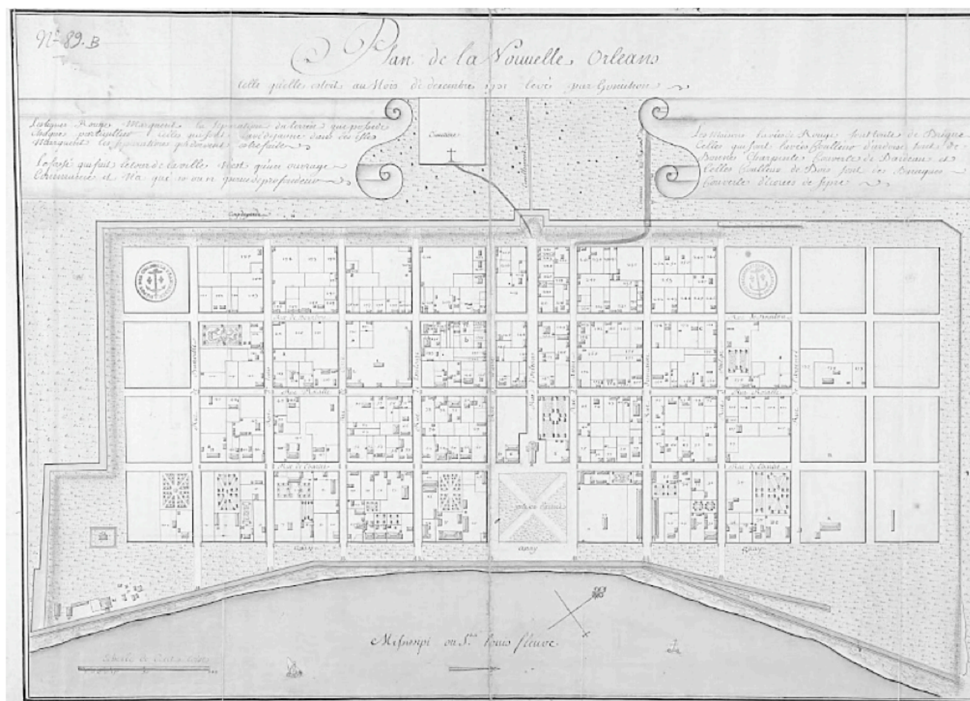

Figure 2.5. New Orleans, 1731. Source: Gonichon, "Plan de la Nouvelle Orléans telle qu'elle estoit au mois de décembre 1731 levé par Gonichon," [map]. 1731. Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer. <http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/sdx/ulysse/notice?n=1&id=FR%20CAOM%2004DFC89B&qid=panier&p=1> [accessed 9 April 2012).

Frontier-Exchange Society: Gulf Coast Louisiana

The French settled Gulf Coast Louisiana or lower Louisiana as a string of tiny, strategic forts along mainland North America's Gulf Coast.[74] In 1699, French-

Press, 2002). This study does not explore women during the revolt itself, but for a short analysis see Philippe Girard, "Rebelles With a Cause: Women in the Haitian War of Independence, 1802-4," *Gender and History* 21, no. 1 (2009): 60-85 and Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*, especially 238-257. For the tumultuous period after the revolution, see David Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour, and National Independence in Haiti* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996).

[74] For the purposes of this study, Gulf Coast Louisiana or lower Louisiana is bounded in the east by Pensacola, in the south by the Gulf of Mexico, in the west by eastern Texas, and in the north by

Canadian explorers Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville and Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville sailed down the Mississippi River from New France and founded Biloxi near its mouth. In 1702, the contingent of explorers founded Fort Louis on the Mobile River as the capital along the coast. Occupying the coast allowed France to control all riverine trade into the Gulf of Mexico and limited Spanish territorial claims.[75] The Crown promoted a French presence on the coast as a military counterbalance to British and Spanish forts in the Carolinas and Florida, respectively, not as an economic enterprise. Supplies from the metropole were late and lacking. French slave ships spurned the Gulf Coast for more lucrative slave markets in the French Antilles, principally Saint-Domingue.

Natchez (Fort Rosalie). See Le Page du Pratz, *The History of Louisiana* (London: T. Becket, 1774), 107, 118. The north and west boundaries were under constant dispute throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the geography of the Mississippi delta and the geo-politics of French, British, and Spanish interaction created a Gulf Coast society roughly conforming to these limits. Gulf Coast in this study is also distinguished from "Gulf South" which includes Florida to the east, Texas as far as San Antonio and Laredo to the West, and Charleston, South Carolina to the north. See Richmond F. Brown, "Introduction," in *Coastal Encounters: the Transformation of the Gulf South in the Eighteenth Century,* ed. Richmond F. Brown (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 1-6.

[75] After war broke out between Spain and France, then Governor Bienville mobilized colonists and attacked Pensacola from New Orleans. Charles Gayarre, *History of Louisiana* (New Orleans: F. F. Hanswell & Bros., 1903), 242-9

Table 2.10. Census of Louisiana, with Occupations, 1708

Officers	14
Soldiers	76
Sailors	13
"Canadiens"	2
Valet	1
Priests[a]	3
General Laborers	6
"Canadien" Interpreter	1
Cabin Boys	6
TOTAL	119
Planters	24
Women	28
Children	25
Slaves	80
Canadiens	60
TOTAL	336

Source: Adapted from "Denombrement de chaque sorte de gens qui composent la colonie de la Louisiane, fait au Fort de la Louisiane, le 12 aout 1708, signe De la Salle, "CAOM C 13A 2, fol. 225-28; *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

[a]Includes one chaplain.

Plantation agriculture was encouraged, but the Crown focused much of its attention and investment on supporting plantation production in the Caribbean. Slave traders privileged the islands as well, choosing to direct their ships toward the capital-rich landowners and plantation managers working out of Cap Français or Havana. The Gulf Coast's would-be planters complained often and loudly about the need for

slaves to increase staple production. In 1712, the Crown leased the colony to Antoine Crozat, but he did little to develop it and returned it in 1717. As a result of prejudicial business practices, development stalled, and the meager fur trading and indigo or sugar production was left to a handful of concessionaires. To survive, the two settlements formed a coastal-riverine network with each other and Native American tribes of the southeast, and purchased contraband goods from American and Caribbean traders.

In 1718, the Crown granted the colony to the Compagnie d'Occident. Two years later, the Compagnie d'Occident was absorbed into the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales. To secure a profit, the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales established an administrative structure to govern the colony, support plantations and slaves,. The Crown granted the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales the monopoly on slave trade from Sengeambia. In 1719, the first Africans arrived, purchased by landowners eager to begin staple production in the region. In 1721, Bienville was appointed governer and formed a Superior Council. A year later the capital was moved to New Orleans, a crescent strip of land at the mouth of the Mississippi River.[76] Initial forays in tobacco farming met with early, violent resistance from Natchez Indians. In 1729, the Natchez Uprising and Samba Bambara conspiracy threw the colony into chaos. Led by Natchez Indians and insurgent slaves, the revolt disturbed plantation production above New Orleans for years. After 1731, the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales lost its monopoly and Louisiana was placed under royal administration until 1763.

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[76] Henry P. Dart, "The Legal Institutions of Louisiana," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 2 (1919), 92. Bienville founded New Orleans in 1718 with 68 colonists.

Table 2.11: Percentage of Female Slaves Among Total Slaves Manumitted per Decade in Gulf Coast Louisiana, 1720-1810

Year	Female
1720	50%
1730	41%
1740	70%
1750	47%
1760	63%
1770	67%
1780	64%
1790	62%
1800	60%
1810	65%

Source: Adapted from "Freed Slaves, Louisiana, Gender Percent by Decade," *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

Authorities in Louisiana remarked on a free black presence as early as 1725. In 1725, Louis Congo was appointed the colony's executioner. In return he was granted his freedom, a parcel of land, rations of alcohol, and "full time use" of his partner "who remains a slave of the Company of the Indes."[77] In 1729, to curb the Natchez Uprising, Governor Etienne de Périer offered freedom to enslaved men who fought on behalf of the French. Fifteen men were freed as a result. In 1731, colonial officials counted eight *mulâtres* living in New Orleans. These may have been free people of color, although free people of color were not counted separately in the

[77] "Delibérations de Conseil Supérieur de la Louisiane," 24 October 1725, C13A 9, Historic New Orleans Collection (hereafter HNOC), New Orleans, Louisiana, 267-8.

censuses.[78] Counted or uncounted, the free population of color continued to grow and play a role in the colony's development. In 1739, Governor Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville led one hundred and seventy blacks, including fifty *nègres libres*, against the Chickasawn Indians.[79]

The undermanned and under supplied settlement relied on petty commerce propelled by African and Native American women, as well as the skilled labor of people of color, to survive long months between shipments of supplies. At the ports of New Orleans and Mobile, free people of African descent participated in the frontier exchange economy from markets in the corner of the city.[80] Slaves, the vast majority arriving on ships from Saint-Louis and Gorée, and a handful of free people of color filled commercial and domestic roles left vacant by unstable administration and a transient, male white population. Free people of color worked alongside each other in the markets on the levees, managed homes, inns and taverns, with slaves, Native Americans and resident whites. Members of Gulf South Indian groups like the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Natchez, comprised a third population living and laboring along the Coast.[81] The occupations available to free women of color placed them

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[78] Free people of color were not counted separately in censuses until 1763.

[79] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 173.

[80] Daniel Usner describes the frontier exchange economy as an "interethnic web" of "small-scale, face-to-face marketing." Open-marketing by slaves, though prohibited by the 1685 and 1724 *Code Noir*, "benefitted too many people to be forcibly prohibited." Daniel H. Usner, "The Frontier Exchange Economy of the Lower-Mississippi Valley in the Eighteenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 (April 1987), 167; 184-6.

[81] Indians participated in slave trading with Europeans as early as 1650s but Native American slaves were notoriously intransigent, absconding into the frontier. The coast's integration into Mississippian indigenous slave trading networks, dominated by Natchez, Choctaw, and Chickasaw Indians, helped furnish necessary labor but remained unreliable. Their recalcitrance encouraged the transition to slave labor. Daniel H. Usner, *American Indians in the Lower Mississippi Valley: Social and Economic Histories* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 37; Alan Gallay, *The Indian*

shoulder to shoulder with enslaved black and Indian women in the kitchen, at market, in the hospital, and sometimes in the field. As Indian slavery decreased, enslaved and free women of African descent took over their roles.[82]

Slave Trade: the Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670-1717 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 294-5; Patricia K. Galloway, *Choctaw Genesis, 1500-1700* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 200. Indian support was especially important when establishing the post at Mobile, and Indian-African labor led to the survival of the outpost there. See David Wheat, "My Friend Nicolas Mongoula: Africans, Indians, and Cultural Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Mobile," in *Coastal Encounters,* Brown*,* ed., 117-131.

[82] Two-third of Indian slaves living in eighteenth-century Louisiana were female. Kathleen DuVal, "Indian Intermarriage and Métissage in Colonial Louisiana," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (2008), 273. Indian slavery declined rapidly in lower Louisiana, but some of the women who were described as "sauvagesse" or Indian in early eighteenth century documents may have been re-entered as "African" or simply "esclave" in later years.

Table 2.12. Population of Gulf Coast Louisiana, 1708-1763

	Whites	Free People of Color	Black Slaves	Indian Slaves	TOTAL
1708	199	--	25		224
1721-23	1,423	--	819	168	2,410
1726	1,925	--	1,562	161	3,648
1731-32	1,599	--	3,656	54	5,309[a]
1737	1,950	--	3,907	74	5,931
1746	3,790	--	4,118	--	7,908
1763	5,129	82	9,078	60	14,349
TOTAL	16,015	82	23,165	517	39,779

Source: Data compiled from "Dénombrement de chaque sorte de gens qui composent la colonie de la louisiane, fait au fort de la louisiane le 12 août 1708, signé de La Salle," 12 August 1708, CAOM C13A 2, fol. 225-28; Charles R. Maduell, ed., Census Tables for the French Colony of Louisiana (New Orleans, LA: 1971),16-23, 51-76; 113-53; as well as "Récapitulation du recensement général de la Louisiane en 1737," "Colony of Louisiana 1746," and Jacqueline K. Voorhies, *Some Late Eighteenth-Century Louisianans: Census Records, 1758-1796* (Lafayette: University of Southern Louisiana, 1973), 102-105 as cited in *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000). These population counts, gathered by colonial officials, relied on household reporting not official acts, and either discounted the presence of free people of color or severely undercounted their numbers. Hall calculates at least 152 slaves were manumitted during the French regime, and argues only some of these were counted in the 1763 official census.

[a] The census lists 8 inhabitants in New Orleans as "mulatto."

In 1763, Louisiana was transferred to the Spanish and effectively occupied in 1769. Governor Alejandro O'Reilly imposed Spanish law and administrative structure on the colony, keeping the seat of government in New Orleans. O'Reilly's policies, familiar across Spanish America, included opening trade with other European powers, replacing French law and the French Superior Council with the legal structure of the Spanish Cabildo, and outlawing Indian slavery.[83] White

[83] Gilbert C. Din and John E. Harkins, *The New Orleans Cabildo: Colonial Louisiana's First City Government 1769-1803* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 49-50; Stephen Webre, "The Problem of Indian Slavery in Spanish Louisiana, 1769-1803," *Louisiana History* 25, no. 2 (1984), 121-2.

property-owners transplanted from the Superior Council continued to head the Cabildo, but Spanish law led to significant changes.[84]

For Spanish administrators struggling to control a foreign, multi-lingual, multi-racial population, promoting the growth of Louisiana's free people of color, or *libres,* was a matter of good governance. In Spanish-occupied Gulf Coast Louisiana, administrators instituted *coartación*, a more liberal policy of self-purchase that allowed slaves to initiate self-purchase procedures by appealing to the governor's tribunal. Like its Cuban counterpart, *coartación* allowed slaves to petition the Cabildo for a *carta de libertad*. To receive a *carta*, slaves appointed an appraiser to assess their value. The slave could then purchase their freedom by working towards that value or requesting a third-party purchaser. The slaveowner was also allowed to appoint an appraiser. If the two appraisers disagreed on the value of the slave, the Cabildo averaged the amounts and the slave would receive a *carta* reflecting the difference. Slaveowners were no longer required to secure official approval or pay a freedom tax to manumit their own slaves.[85] O'Reilly's abolition of Indian slavery also brought Louisiana into parity with the rest of the Spanish colonies and contributed to friendly relations with their Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez neighbors.

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[84] "Code O'Reilly, New Orleans," 27 August 1769, leg. 131A, Archive General de Indias, Papeles Procedentes de la Isla de Cuba; "Ordinances and Instructions of Don Alejandro O'Reilly," in B. F. French, *Historical Memoirs of Louisiana: From the Earliest Settlement of the Colony to the Departure of the Governor O'Reilly in 1770* (New York: Lamport, Blakeman & Law, 1853), 5:254-291. For more on coartación in Cuba, Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slaves and the Creation of Legal Rights in Cuba: Coartación and Papel," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 87, no. 4 (2007): 339-369.

[85] Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 25. Hanger argues that the Spanish officials brought coartación with them from Cuba. For a detailed study of Cuban coartación, see Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slaves and the Creation of Legal Rights in Cuba," 659-692.

Table 2.13. Population of New Orleans, Louisiana, 1771-1805

	Whites	Free People of Color	Slaves	TOTAL
1771	1,803	97	1,227	3,127
1777	1,736	315	1,151	3,202
1788	2,370	820	2,131	5,321
1791	2,386	862	1,789	5,037
1805	3,551	1,566	3,105	8,222
TOTAL	11,846	3,660	9,403	24,909

Source: Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 72. Again, the free population of color was undercounted. Although numbers for women are unclear, Hanger notes that in 1770, militia rosters listed 61 free *pardos* and 283 free *morenos* bearing arms in and around New Orleans. Ibid., 184n.

After the imposition of Spanish rule in 1769, Louisiana's free population of color, rose steadily, climbing into the thousands by 1805. Between 1771 and 1803, in New Orleans alone, slaveowners freed over five hundred women of color through donations or testamentary bequests.[86] Enslaved women secured their freedom through self-purchase, third-party purchase, and *coartación*. However, most freed female slaves were manumitted *'graciosa'* or without compensation by their owners, in individual acts before a notary.[87] Once removed from slavery, Gulf Coast Louisiana *libres* served as godparents for slaves and free family members, building community across race and status. Free women of color, especially in New Orleans, speculated in real estate and leased slaves for their income. Many free women of color worked as domestics or servants. Many labored to free others, pooling their

[86] Ibid., 34. Between 1771 and 1803, New Orleans slaveowners freed 1,921 slaves through manumission acts registered before a notary: 516 were women, 282 were men, and 1123 children.

[87] Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 27-9.

earnings or offering their own labor to slaveowners in exchange for the manumission of enslaved family members. Free women and men of color also asked godparents and other wealthy patrons to support the purchase of kin still in bondage.

In 1791, the Haitian Revolution shifted the dynamics of slavery and colonialism once again. In 1803, the United States purchased Louisiana from France. United States slaveowners brought plantation slavery, strict racial ideologies, and a terror of free people of color into the region with them.[88] At the time of the first American census in 1805, New Orleans' free population of color totaled over fifteen hundred and two-thirds were free women of color.[89] A year later, the free population of color passed twenty-three hundred.[90] Between 1791 and 1810, Saint-Domingue refugees inundated the Gulf Coast. The largest influx occurred between 1809 and 1810, with whites, free people of color, and slaves arriving by way of Cuba. The significant economic and social resources they carried, including slaves, forever changed the dynamics of the free community of color in New Orleans.[91] A tiny

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[88] White, "The Limits of Fear," 362-397; Shirley Elizabeth Thompson, *Exiles at Home: The Struggle to Become American in Creole New Orleans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Joseph G. Tregle, "Creoles and Americans," in *Creole New Orleans*, 131-188; Joseph Logsdon and Caryn Cossé Bell, "The Americanization of Black New Orleans, 1850-1900," in *Creole New Orleans*, 201-261; Alfred N. Hunt, *Haiti's Influence on Antebellum America: Slumbering Volcano in the Caribbean* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

[89] Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 42.

[90] Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon*, 248. The free population of color of New Orleans in 1806 was 2,312.

[91] Saint-Domingue migrants to Louisiana caused a 43% increase amongst whites, a 38% increase in the enslaved population, and a 134% increase in the free population of color. Nathalie Dessens, *From Saint-Domingue to New Orleans Migration and Influences* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 32. Over the next several years, other refugees, white and black, would find their way to Louisiana's shores, adding to the numbers. Ibid, 32.

trickle of free people of color would eventually return to the Republic of Haiti but most migrants created new lives in a rapidly Americanizing New Orleans.[92]

Free People of Color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana

Slave trading and slaveholding outposts in Senegal, Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana needed free people of color to function successfully. French overseas schemes did not generate a voluntary migration of metropolitan whites across the Atlantic. Unlike in Great Britain, neither poverty nor landlessness created the great need for trans-Atlantic migration. And unlike the Spanish and Portuguese, a massive bureaucratic apparatus did not support French imperial endeavors, and the French Crown found it difficult to fully police their overseas holdings. Instead, white emigrants to French outposts comprised a motley group—artisans, soldiers, sailors, administrators, and involuntary migrants from France often without families or resources of their own. In the vacuum created, free Africans, Eurafricans and people of color found a niche.

Economies of slavery and slave trading emerged and operated differently at each outpost. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, plantation agriculture was neither a possibility nor a priority. Trade drove the economy in the region and French companies made commerce their primary goal. Not so in Saint-Domingue.

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[92] Loren Schweninger, *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 95-96. Schweninger refers specifically to 291 émigrés who went to Haiti from New Orleans in 1859 and 1860, but Saint-Domingue refugees, including many free people of color, migrated to United States cities along the entire Atlantic seaboard. Baltimore, Philadelphia, Charleston, and New York all boasted sizable populations of white and colored refugees. It is possible that free men and women of color participated in or even organized various nineteenth-century emigration schemes.

Following the colony's brief buccaneer period, plantation production developed quickly. As a result, free people of color contended with increased discrimination and oppression by slaveowning elites as well as non-slaveowning whites. In Gulf Coast Louisiana, the plantation mode of production was attempted but failed.[93] Instead petty commerce, provisioning and a local trade-barter system prevailed, all requiring the involvement of free people of African descent.

Over the course of the eighteenth century, strategies for securing manumission—in fact, the very meaning of freedom—also differed in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, a systematic process of manumission did not develop until the nineteenth century, but a resident population of slaveowning, property-holding free African and Eurafrican women did. In Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana, enslaved women escaped bondage through official decree by civil authorities, manumission by slaveowners, self-purchase, and third-party purchase. At times, the manumission process was costly and time consuming, but enslaved women pursued their freedom with the help of other kinsfolk, wealthy and influential patrons, and even their former owners.

Likewise, the administrative and demographic shifts occasioned by the Seven Year's War created different possibilities and hazards for free women of color on both sides of the Atlantic. For free Africans and Eurafricans at Saint-Louis and Gorée, the arrival of new officials became an opportunity to renegotiate privileges and secure their livelihoods. At Saint-Domingue, some of the reforms introduced by colonial governors after the war clarified the terms of manumission while others

[93] Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 100-110.

discriminated against the existing free population of color. Prejudicial legislation of the 1770s set the stage for *gens de couleur libres* participation in the Haitian Revolution at the end of the century. At New Orleans and Mobile, the arrival of the Spanish led to more access to manumission, the right to inherit and donate property, and access to the courts. Free people of color exploited these opportunities to secure manumission for family members, expand their own support networks, and bequeath property.

Despite the differences between Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana, kinship and property continued to be two primary strategies free women of African descent used to mobilize resources and increase their status at each locale. In Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana, free women of African descent became heads of households and property-owners. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, African and Eurafrican women created a society at the two *comptoirs* that included Europeans at the forts, slaves, unpropertied men and women of color, and Africans in Wolof and Lebou societies along the coast. At Saint-Domingue and along the Gulf Coast, free women of color labored to create and sustain kinship ties At all three sites, free women of color raised families and formed communities through the rituals of baptism, attending mass, witnessing marriages, births and deaths, and standing as godparents.

Free women of color accumulated wealth and credit, investing in property—land, homes, and stores, or laboring in markets and participating in frontier economies. By buying, selling, and renting real estate, or by purchasing and leasing

slaves, free women of color guaranteed themselves a regular income.[94] Again, not every woman met with the same economic success and the most common occupations for free women of color at each locale continued to be work familiar to enslaved women: laundresses, cooks, domestics, and general labor.[95] Regardless, free women of African descent struggled to acquire property for themselves and pass the same on to their progeny. Finally, at all three, there were free women of African descent who did not hesitate to assert their freedom and express their sense of justice if they believed themselves wronged. Free women of color demonstrated their displeasure and exploited the privileges of free status by petitioning authorities and taking men and women of all races and statuses before public officials.

The interconnectedness of the ports gave free people of color in one place access to those in the other French ports. Free and slave circulated between French Atlantic ports, seeking new opportunities and escaping threats. The common wind of news, rumor, and gossip also circulated between the ports, bringing even immobile residents into direct contact with Atlantic society and culture.[96] Census records for the earliest periods of the French Atlantic are crude and unreliable, but available data suggests modest free populations of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue and Louisiana eventually grew into self-sustaining communities.

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[94] Rogers, "Réussir dans un Monde d'Hommes," 43.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Common wind reference is from Julius Scott: "By the 1790s, larger cities like Kingston, Cap François, and Havana could properly be termed capitals of Afro-America." Julius Scott, "'A Common Wind:' Currents of Afro-American Communication in the Era of the Haitian Revolution," Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1986, 29. This list could easily include the Atlantic cities of Saint-Louis, Ouidah, Lagos and Luanda; New York City, Philadelphia and Charleston, and the cities that are the subject of this dissertation.

Chapter 3

Intimacy, Service, and the Legal Culture of Manumission

> Octroyons aux affranchis les mêmes droits, privilèges et immunités dont jouissent les personnes nées libres; voulons que le mérite d'une liberté acquise produise en eux, tant pour leurs personnes que pour leur biens, les mêmes effets que le bonheur de la liberté naturelle cause à nos autres sujets.
>
> -- Article 59, *Edit du Roi, touchant la discipline des esclaves négres des Isles de l'Amérique Française,* (1685).[1]

As slavery and slave trading spread across the Atlantic, French officials attempting to grapple with intimacy between races shaped the development of official policy toward manumission and the practice of manumission itself. Historians have linked French officials' attempts to regulate intimacy—or what one scholar has described as matters of "sex, sentiment, domestic arrangement, and child rearing"—to efforts to maximize profits, control bonded labor, and subdue the subjects under French law.[2] Historians have also argued that women and mixed-race children were

[1] *Le Code Noir, ou recueil des règlements rendus jusqu'à présent concernant le gouvernement, l'administration de la justice, la police, la discipline et le commerce des nègres dans les colonies françaises et les conseils et compagnies établis à ce sujet* (Paris: Chez Prault, 1788), as cited in Louis Sala-Moulins, *Le Code Noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan* (Paris: Quadrige, 1987), 200.

[2] See Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France:' Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2004): 439-478; George E. Brooks, "The Signares of Saint-Louis and Gorée: Women Entrepreneurs in Eighteenth-Century Senegal," in *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change,* eds. Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna G. Bay (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 19-44; Joan Dayan, "Codes of Law and Bodies of Color," *New Literary History* 26, no. 2 (1995): 283-308; Dayan, "Erzulie: A Women's History of Haiti," *Research in African Literatures* 25, no. 2 (1994): 5-31; and Jennifer M. Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008). For definition of "intimate domains" and discussion of intimacy and imperialism, see Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: the Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," in *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History,* ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 23.

among those most likely to be freed from bondage.[3] But fewer historians have explored manumission in the French Atlantic as distinct from other aspects of slave law and plantation management, or compared French manumission policy in the Americas and Africa.[4] Exploring both manumission and its relationship to the intimate encounters of French men and women of African descent on both sides of

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[3] For Saint-Domingue see Stewart R. King, *Blue Coat Or Powdered Wig: Free People of Color in Pre-Revolutionary Saint Domingue* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 41-44, 49, 108; Arlette Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclavage aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Caribénnes, 1985), 173-5; David P. Geggus, "Saint-Domingue on the Eve of the Haitian Revolution," in *The World of the Haitian Revolution,* eds. David P. Geggus and Norman Fiering (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 9. For Gulf Coast Louisiana, see "Freed Slaves, Louisiana, 1720-1820," *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 27-31.

[4] Jennifer Spear's discussion of the 1685 Code Noir and the 1724 Louisiana Code Noir addresses matters of race and sex on legislating slavery more broadly, in lower Louisiana, and was not specific to manumission. Manumission as a process remains understudied. See Robin Blackburn, "Introduction," in *Paths to Freedom*, 1-3. For an analysis of manumission across the Americas, see Orlando Patterson, "Three Notes of Freedom: the Nature and Consequences of Manumission," in *Paths to Freedom*, 15-30. Hans W. Baade, "The Gens De Couleur of Louisiana: Comparative Slave Law in Microcosm," *Cardozo Law Review* 18, (1996): 535–586. Kimberly Hanger has discussed "avenues to freedom" offered by the implementation of Spanish law in Louisiana. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 17-54. Few scholars have explored manumission in Saint-Louis and Gorée, or attempted to compare processes for securing manumission there to processes in the Americas. Work by scholars like Jean Hébrard promises to provide fruitful comparisons between manumission in Africa and the Americas. For current work on manumission in nineteenth-century Senegal see Emily S. Burrill, "'Wives of Circumstance:' Gender and Slave Emancipation in Late Nineteenth-Century Senegal," *Slavery and Abolition* 29, (2008): 49-63; M'baye Gueye, "From Definitive Manumissions to the Emancipation of 1848," in *The Abolitions of Slavery: From L. F. Sonthonax to Victor Schoelcher, 1793, 1794, 1848,* ed. Marcel Dorigny (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 318-329; Bernard Moitt, "Slavery and Emancipation in Senegal's Peanut Basin: the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 22, (1989): 27-50. For a comparison with the British in the Gambia see Alice Bellagamba, "Slavery and Emancipation in the Colonial Archives: British Officials, Slave-Owners, and Slaves in the Protectorate of the Gambia (1890-1936)," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 39, (2005): 5-41. Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff have explored the meaning of "freedom" in an African context, and have argued against imposing a slavery-freedom binary on slaveholding societies of the continent. See Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality," in *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives,* eds. Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977), 3-84. See also sources cited in the methodology section of Chapter One.

the Atlantic reveals differences and similarities in implementation and enforcement, and the complex links between intimacy, service, and formal freedom.[5]

Different patterns can be found in Saint-Louis and Gorée, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana. Slavery at Saint-Louis and Gorée was influenced by customs of slaveholding within the region. French officials at the African *comptoirs*, operating with limited authority, did not distinguish enslaved from free Africans except for those they intended to sell across the Atlantic. Officials did, however, enact regulations against interracial marriage, concubinage, and cohabitation with varying results. Across the Atlantic, manumission policy developed in conjunction with official attempts to regulate intimacy between the races. In Saint-Domingue, manumission regulations emerged from Lesser Antilles ordinances freeing the children of enslaved women by white men and codes on slave management issued by the Crown. As slavery deepened in the colony, access to manumission tightened but metropolitan and colonial officials became more explicit about prohibiting reproduction, marriage, and concubinage between the races. Manumission in Gulf Coast Louisiana drew on the precedent set by Saint-Domingue. By the time slaves began to arrive in lower Louisiana, even intimacy between free people of color and slaves was a matter of law and regulation.

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[5] My thanks to Elsa Barkley Brown and Aisha K. Finch for pushing me to explore the links between intimacy and service, and intimacy, bondage, and empire.

Intimacy and Commerce at Saint-Louis and Gorée

Slavery at Saint-Louis and Gorée integrated multiple systems of coerced labor. The two *comptoirs* lay under territorial reach of the kingdoms of Waalo, Cayor and Bawol, three Wolof states familiar with slaveownership. In Wolof society, slaves existed as part of an elaborate hierarchy that included aristocratic elites, marabouts, griots, and a variety of occupational castes, peasants, and slaves.[6] Slaves were employed in a variety of ways within their master's households and fields. Enslaved men labored in administrative positions and were drafted into the *ceddo* or royal slave army. Enslaved women served as wives and concubines, domestics, *pileuses* or pounders of millet, and other household related labor. By 1720s, slaves were also used to harvest gum, grain, and manage livestock like cattle and horses, all as part of the spreading influence of Atlantic trading in the region.[7]

Slave status in Wolof society followed generational lines, but the tie between perpetual bondage and maternity or paternity was ambivalent. Enforcement of status, even status following the mother, would have strained the resources of slaveowning

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[6] Jean Boulégue, *Les Luso-Africains de Sénégambie, XVI-XIXème siècles* (Dakar: Universite de Dakar, 1972), 24; George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 213; James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 39.

[7] Searing, *West African Slavery*; Walter Hawthorne, "Nourishing a Stateless Society during the Slave Trade: The Rise of Balanta Paddy-Rice Production in Guinea-Bissau," *The Journal of African History* 42, no. 1 (2001): 1-24; James L. A. Webb Jr., "The Horse and Slave Trade between the Western Sahara and Senegambia," *The Journal of African History* 34, no. 2 (1993): 221-246; Martin A. Klein, "Slaves, Gum, and Peanuts: Adaptation to the End of the Slave Trade in Senegal, 1817-48," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (2009): 895-914; James F. Searing, "Aristocrats, Slaves, and Peasants: Power and Dependency in the Wolof States, 1700-1850," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21, no. 3 (1988): 475-503.

elites.[8] Over the course of their lifetime, slaves could gain and lose social status in ways similar to free persons. Slaves could secure leadership roles and grow more independent. Slaves could also be re-sold, pawned and captured by rival polities. Highly valued slaves served as managers within the agricultural complexes of the elites. Slaves serving in the *ceddo* or royal army could advance up its ranks.[9] Islamic precedents influenced institutions of slavery and slave trading in Senegal. The enslavement of prisoners of war and non-Muslims, and the sale of enslaved women to traders for sale along trans-Saharan slave trade routes were common.[10] Masters acquired slaves by purchase, rather than by reproduction. War, trade, and pawnship were the most common ways of obtaining slaves.

Differences between purchased slaves and slaves born within households were important. Jaam-juddu or "*captifs de case*" were slaves who worked within households and on agricultural complexes. Even among jaam-juddu, those born within households or complexes received more privileges than newly purchased slaves, such as land ownership and opportunities to buy their labor.[11] Jaami-buur or "*captifs de la couronne*" were royal slaves. Many royal slaves became part of the *ceddo* or slave army.[12] Among the Wolof, it was taboo for masters to sell slaves born

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[8] Martin A. Klein, "Women in Slavery in the Western Sudan," in *Women and Slavery in Africa,* edited by Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1983), 72-73; 50.

[9] Searing, "Aristocrats, Slaves, and Peasants," 480.

[10] Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 31-33.

[11] Searing, "Aristocrats, Slaves, and Peasants," 480; Mamadou Diouf, *Le Kajoor Au XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Karthala, 1990), 57-9; David P. Gamble, *The Wolof of Senegambia* (London: International African Institute, 1967), 44-6.

[12] Boulègue, *Les Luso-Africains*, 24.

within households, offering the men, women, and children a sense of security and space to gain wealth of their own.[13] Some elites owned thousands of slaves who formed and occupied entire villages of their own. Whether as part of the *ceddo* or within households, slaves held by Wolof masters were able to build autonomous, prosperous lives that belied their status. Nevertheless, slaves did not own their labor and remained kinless subjects incorporated into someone else's household, unable to create or draw on their own kinship lineages for protection.[14] When slaves died, any wealth they accumulated during their lifetime passed to their owner.[15]

As the numbers of French, African, and Eurafrican women and men at Saint-Louis and Gorée grew, they obtained slaves of their own, hiring them to trading companies and employing them within their households. Many of the slaves were identified as or identified themselves in the parish registers as *mahometantes* or Muslim.[16] Others were identified as or identified themselves as Bambaras and may have been non-Muslims or ethnic Bambaras from beyond the coast. The term "Bambara" was used by the French to describe a particular cohort of slaves employed by the Company, generally as soldiers.[17] However, especially after the 1712, the

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[13] Klein, "Women in Slavery in the Western Sudan," 78.

[14] On slavery and kinship, see Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality," in *Slavery in Africa*, 3-84; Joseph C. Miller, "Domiciled and Dominated: Slaving as a History of Women," in *Women and Slavery: The Modern Atlantic,* eds. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 284-312.

[15] Boulègue, *Les Luso-Africains*, 63.

[16] The introduction of this dissertation discusses information available and unavailable in French Atlantic parish registers.

[17] Raina Croff, "Village des Bambaras: An Archaeology of Domestic Slavery and Urban Transformation on Gorée Island, Senegal, A.D. 17th--19th centuries" (Ph.D. diss, Yale University, 2009), 1;

same slaves may have found their way to Saint-Louis and Gorée as Bambara sold or captured in the expansion of Segu Bambara.[18] In the parish registers, *mahometant or mahometante* slaves did not provide additional ethnic information, except at times to identify or be identified as "*mahometante de Senegal*." Domestic slavery that emerged at Saint-Louis and Gorée among French employees and free African and Eurafrican households mirrored slavery at ports and towns across the Atlantic. The French recognized slaves as property and trade items, even awarding slaves to traders for work completed.[19] Slaves at the *comptoirs* enjoyed considerable independence. They resided in the household of their owner, in the household to which they were

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[18] Peter Caron, "'Of a Nation Which the Others Do Not Understand:' Bambara Slaves and African Ethnicity in Colonial Louisiana, 1718-1760," *Slavery and Abolition* 18, no. 1 (1997), 101-102; Searing, *West African Slavery*, 107; André Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français au Sénégal entre 1713 et 1763* (Dakar: Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, 1952), 103-101. See as examples of French discussion of Bambara slaves Julien Dubellay to Messieurs le Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 25 May 1724, C6 8, CAOM, fol 5; Pierre Charpentier to Nicolas Deprès de St. Robert, 12 October 1722, C6 7, CAOM, fol. 4; "Facture des marchandises, estancils et autres effets chargez du magasin du Senegal par ordre de Monsieur Julien Dubellay, Directeur et Commandant General sur le Brigantin Le Fier Capitaine Mr. La Rue pour porter a Arguin et remettre au Sr Delamotte garde magasin au d. lieu," 20 August 1724, invoice, C6 8, CAOM, fol 3. Caron notes that even among so-called Bambara slaves, identity was elastic. Bambara integrated and adopted members into their society, especially men, women, and children captured during raids and war. It may be impossible to prove or disprove biological claims of "Bambara" ethnicity. Caron's article is meant as a challenge to Gwendolyn Midlo Hall's assertion that Bambara identity played a role in organizing Africans enslaved in Louisiana. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 43-46; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 97-100. Scholars of African diaspora and African history have also countered attempts to prove or disprove African ethnicities as Western preoccupation that do not fit the elasticity and fluidity of identity in an African context or the self-identification of individual Africans, whether on the continent or in the Americas. See as examples James H. Sweet, "Mistaken Identities? Olaudah Equiano, Domingos Álvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the African Diaspora," *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009): 279-306; Randy J. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); and work compiled in Paul E. Lovejoy and David V. Trotman, eds. *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora* (London: Continuum, 2003).

[19] Pierre Charpentier, Company Director at Galam, paid merchant Etienne La Rue one slave for work completed. Pierre Charpentier to Nicolas Deprès de St. Robert, 12 October 1722, C6 7, CAOM, fol. 2.

hired or in separate "villages" distributed throughout the island.[20] Bambara slaves were stationed as soldiers at trading posts throughout the region.[21] Opportunities for advancement also existed, especially for enslaved men employed in commerce.

For the French, the autonomy slaves exhibited made free status difficult to discern much less regulate. Blackness could not be equated with bondage and the French assigned labels of slave and free, based on a complicated mixture of characteristics including racial designation, ethnicity, occupation, and religion. The French presumed *laptots* to be "noirs libres" who worked only during the trading season, while *gourmettes* were free laborers stationed on the islands and working for the company.[22] But *laptots* and *gourmettes* may also have been slaves of habitants hired out to the trading company or, as traveler and naturalist Michel Adanson noted, the mixed-race children of French men by enslaved or free African and Eurafrican women.[23] European, African and Eurafrican residents assumed Bambaras were slaves, but were also employed as soldiers and trusted to defend French interests as

[20] M. Wallons, "Profile et Plan de l'isle de Gorée," March 1723, DFC 24PFB No. 22, CAOM; Croff, "Village des Bambaras."

[21] André Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français au Sénégal entre 1713 et 1763* (Dakar: Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, 1952), 130-131; "Facture des marchandises," fol 3.

[22] "Memoire sur la concession du Senegal: Nouvel arrangement touchant la concession du Senegal," 8 October 1734, C6 11, fol. 47, fol. 11. Officials observed some seventy Africans and Eurafricans worked for the company as *nègres domestiques, compagnons, ouvriers, ou gens de peine*. Notes that some Africans and Eurafricans working for the company are called *gourmettes*, while the others are called Bambara but those "are mainly slaves." In addition to *gourmettes* and *Bambaras*, 4-5 months of the year, the islands hosted some 230 *laptots* who worked the trade, and also were understood to be free.

[23] Michel Adanson, Charles Becker, and V. Martin, "Mémoires d'Adanson sur le Sénégal et l'île de Gorée," *Bulletin de Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire* 42, no. B4 (1980): 736.

far as Ouidah in the Bight of Benin.[24] The French presumed *nègres chrestiens* or Christian blacks to be free people of color. In 1686, two *nègres chrestiens*, Sala and Jasmin, warned Michel Jajolet de la Courbe, future commandant of Saint-Louis, of an attack from Waalo. As de la Courbe scrambled to fortify the island, he relied on two other *nègres chrestiens,* Yemsec and Jean Bare, to lead patrols and investigate the threat.[25] Christian or not, some of these men may have been slaves. The strongest distinction was made between slaves owned by habitants and employed on the islands or near the coast and slaves purchased specifically for the Atlantic trade and imprisoned in the *captiveries* of the islands.

Trading company officials instituted neither a manumission policy nor a slave code at Saint-Louis and Gorée until the nineteenth century.[26] In 1688, Louis Chambonneau, trading company director at Saint-Louis, cautioned against exploiting the labor of "*nègres captifs*…for fear that in this country they will kill all the whites."[27] Chambonneau believed it would be possible to send French men and women to Senegal "to settle and be given plots as it was done in the Americas in order to plant tobacco, indigo, cotton, and sugar cane."[28] However, it was trade, he

[24] Nicolas Deprès de St. Robert to Messieurs le Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 18 June 1725, C6 9, CAOM, 20. Robert ordered some 20 "Bambaras" embarked on *L'Afriquain* on a trading expedition to "Judah." Judah or Ouidah was conquered by the kingdom of Dahomey in 1727 and became one of the most important slave trading ports in West Africa. See Robin Law, *Ouidah: the Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port', 1727-1892* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004).

[25] Michel Jajolet de La Courbe, *Premier voyage du Sieur de la Courbe fait a la coste d'Afrique en 1685*, ed. Prosper Cultru, (Paris: E. Champion, 1913), 109, 111.

[26] M'baye Gueye, "From Definitive Manumissions to the Emancipation of 1848," in *The Abolitions of Slavery: From L. F. Sonthonax to Victor Schoelcher, 1793, 1794, 1848,* ed. Marcel Dorigny (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 318-329.

[27] Abdoulaye Ly, *La Compagnie Du Sénégal* (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 261.

[28] Ibid., 257, 259-60. These plans never came to fruition.

stated, not plantation agriculture that would be key to the French imperial venture at Saint-Louis and Gorée. Regardless of French imperial designs in Africa, the French were minorities living on small islands in the shadow of powerful African states. Company officials lacked the monopoly of power needed to formalize boundaries between slave and free among African and Eurafrican residents. Quelling rebellious employees, maintaining good diplomatic relations with African traders, and defending commercial interests from rival European entities occupied company officials. Company directors even discouraged employees from involving themselves in contests over property. In 1721, company officials were even forbidden from freeing slaves without the consent of Company Directors in France.

Officials tried to protect African traders and allies from accidental enslavement and forced deportation to the Americas. In 1721, the Compagnie du Sénégal directors in France issued regulations outlining proper employee conduct in the *comptoirs*. Soldiers were prohibited from assaulting or otherwise mistreating *nègre libres* and *captifs*. Employees could not send *nègres chrestiens*, *gourmettes*, or the slaves of either to the Americas.[29] The same protections were extended to "*nègres* of the Kings" and "*nègres* of the country" who came to Saint-Louis and Gorée to trade. These rules were directed at employees themselves, and passed to protect the mercantile interests of the trading company by promoting good diplomatic relations between the garrison and its local allies.[30]

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[29] "Règlements de la Compagnie Royalle du Senegal et Costes d'Affrique," 14 March 1721, C6 6, fol. 4, 6, 9. The règlement also punished French who caused slaves' injury or death with a fine.

[30] Ibid., fol. 9; Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français*, 97. The règlement does not specify what would constitute "better" slaves. It is possible non-Catholic (Muslim, slaves practicing traditional religions) may have been more attractive to company directors as captives than Catholic or Christian slaves.

At Saint-Louis and Gorée, freedom as autonomy became entangled with freedom as lineage and property rights. For African and Eurafrican women, subject to fathers, husbands, and masters, these conflicts could directly affect their daily lives. In 1722, Samba Bambara, a former interpreter working for the Company des Indes at Galam, asked Pierre Charpentier, company director there, to "prevent the marriage of his wife Yecam-Galé with the *marabout* of Grande-Terre." If Yecam-Galé, who resided at Saint-Louis, was "absolutely set on it," Samba Bambara asked Charpentier to "cast her from the island, along with a half blind slave woman who belongs solely to her." The rest of her possessions, Samba Bambara claimed, "should remain because they belong to him." [31] Samba Bambara was a long-time employee of the Company and Charpentier agreed to do what he could. As a result, both Yecam-Galé, who may have been "free" and her female slave faced expulsion.

However, claims of free status could also be invoked. In 1724, Dubellay sent several Bambara slave soldiers on a mission for the company but their wives chose to remain at Saint-Louis. Dubellay was unable to compel them to follow their husbands, claiming he had no authority to do so since "the wives of the Bambaras are free and can't be made to go."[32] Whether the women were "free" and not enslaved by the Company, or were not enslaved at all, their status as free women was relevant to company officials. The choice made by wives of the Bambara contingent also demonstrated how free status existed in an uneasy tension with other social relations. The soldiers were slaves of the Company and the French may have found it easier to

[31] Pierre Charpentier to Nicolas Deprès de St. Robert, 12 October 1722, C6 7, CAOM, fol. 4.

[32] Julien Dubellay to Messieurs le Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 25 May 1724, C6 8, CAOM.

ignore their claims to their wives than the claims of a former employee and intermediary like Samba Bambara.

Slavery, property, and lineage became further entangled as sexual liaisons occurred between African and Eurafrican women and European men. Company officials did not welcome intimate relations between African or Eurafrican women and employees. As early as 1685, Michel Jajolet de la Courbe, agent of the Compagnie du Sénégal, was ordered by company directors in France to stop unions between what they termed African "femmes de mauvaise vie" and employees. When he arrived at Saint-Louis, de la Courbe expressed shock at the corruption of employees and priests, who "each had a wife" of African descent and "each had his share to eat," living in part off of rations distributed by the Company. De la Courbe's description of European men "living as liberally and overtly with the négresses as if they are their legitimate wives" likely reflected his own prejudices. But his worry that their "scandalous pleasure" led employees to satisfy the African and Eurafrican women with "the most beautiful and the most precious merchandise of the Company" was symptomatic of general Company distrust of local women and insurgent employees.[33] The Company feared illicit consumption of company goods would be a by-product of these intimate encounters. Trading company officials had reason to be concerned. Some of the most prominent traders at nearby Rufisque, Joal, and Portudal were widows of Portuguese men and women descended from Portuguese-African unions. One of the wealthiest, "Seignora Catti," was the widow of a Portuguese trader and an *alcaide* or commercial agent for the damel of Cayor. In

[33] Courbe, *Premier voyage*, 26, 1n.

1700, André Brue, an agent of the Company, described Catti as a "mulâtresse," a landowner and merchant who employed several slaves in the trade of goods and slaves.[34]

Officials also viewed children of such unions as a potential barrier to imposing French authority on the region. In 1688, Chambonneau warned that if the French wished to establish themselves in Senegal, they must "rigorously prohibit" interracial unions. He asked company directors in France to send French women to prevent employees from forming unions with African and Eurafrican women. Otherwise, the Company would "risk repeating the experience of the Portuguese at Gambia" whose children "have made the country even more black."[35] Chambonneau expressed a bias based on culture, religion, and used color as the way to understand both. He noted, for example, some of the "Mores [Moors]" were "as white as we are" and "the Europeans in the Company of Négresses" have "blans mestis" or white-looking mixed-race children. But he expressed approval for "the moresses who were Christian."[36]

By 1721, Company regulations discouraged white and black residents from socializing. Officials forbade commerce and intimate relations ("*une vie débauchée*") with *négresses*. Employees were prohibited from living with Africans or away from

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[34] André Brue, "Premier voyage du Sieur André Brüe au long des Côtes Occidentales d'Afrique (1697)," in Histoire Générale Des Voyages, ed. C. A. Walckenaer, (Paris: Lefèvre, 1826), vol. 2:91; Searing, *West African Slavery*, 100; Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 132-4. Seignora Catti had several contemporaries including Senhora Philippa at Rufisque and Bibiana Vaz on the Gambia. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 92, 147-150.

[35] Ly, *La Compagnie du Sénégal*, 260.

[36] Carson Ritchie, "Deux textes sur le Sénégal (1673-1677)," Bulletin de I.F.A.N. 1 B, (1968), 309-310. "Mores," derived from "Moors," was a generic term that referred to either North Africans or Muslims or both. In the seventeenth century, "mestis" connoted mixed-race and later came to have more specific, racialized definitions.

the *comptoir*.[37] Africans and Eurafricans were barred from attending gatherings with white employees.[38] These regulations failed in part because attempts to enforce them led to revolts among employees. In 1724, perhaps viewing such prohibitions as futile, Julien Dubellay, *commandant* at Saint-Louis, suggested providing relief to employees. Of marriageable women at the *comptoirs*, he noted there were only "five young *mulâtresses*, twelve to fifteen years of age." Like Chambonneau, he asked Company Directors in Paris to send young French women "not just for the captains of the ships and sailors but also for the workers and others." This, Dubellay argued, "would prevent young men from returning to France faster and get the good will of the sailors especially, who are needed for the trade."[39] Directors in France refused.

By the 1730s, Company directors in France openly tied preventing intimate relations between European men and African and Eurafrican women to preventing "the particular commerce which the husbands will do much easier with the help of their wives and the contacts [their wives] have." In 1737, members of the Superior Council at Saint-Louis argued for lifting the prohibition on marriage in part to allow the Council to better legislate such commerce.[40] Lifting the ban would also promote Christian ideals of chastity and charity. For African and Eurafrican women, "many women and girls would retire from the crime" of living in sin and African and

[37] Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français*, 95, 98. Drinking, quarreling, and slander were prohibited.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Julien Dubellay to Messieurs le Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 25 May 1724, C6 8, CAOM, fol. 5; Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français*, 123.

[40] Conseil Supérieur to Messieurs les Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 2 August 1737, C6 11, CAOM, fol. 22.

Eurafrican men "would cease living off of the goodwill of the whites."[41] Council members added that lifting the ban would encourage good workers to settle down and remain in Senegal. The Council finished by reassuring directors in France that they would "use all necessary discretion" when allowing marriages to proceed, to avoid allowing "bad subjects" to enjoy the privilege. The Company does not appear to have responded, and formal unions between whites and blacks appear to have been banned into the 1750s. Michel Adanson, a naturalist and traveler who voyaged to Senegal's coast between 1749 and 1753, commented that French men continued to be prevented from marrying the *négresses* or from bringing wives from France.[42]

Influenced by extant customs of bondage, lineage, and property, free status under the French at the *comptoirs* did not have clear legal outlines. French trading company officials could not and did not attempt to enforce clear boundaries between slave and free as doing so might have harmed trading relations with African intermediaries. Company directors and officials on the ground expressed more concern over intimate relations between Europeans and African and Eurafrican residents. Anxious to protect trade and assert authority over recalcitrant employees and life on the islands, officials distrusted interracial socializing at the *comptoir*. Try as they might, company directors in France could do little to prevent the unions that occurred. Realizing their plight, company directors on the islands were more pragmatic and encouraged providing relief to employees in the form of young Parisian women or loosening the guidelines on marriage. Attempts to legislate

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Adanson, Becker, and Martin, "Mémoires D'Adanson," 736.

intimate relations between white men and African women at Saint-Louis and Gorée were emblematic of a wider French Atlantic discourse tying intimacy between the races to economic processes, and relations between white men and black women in particular to services exchanged.

Manumission and Intimate Relations in Saint-Domingue

Across the Atlantic, the ultimate logic of Atlantic slavery—the status of the child follows the mother—did not hold during the first decades of French expansion. Initially, colonial officials used paternity and race-mixture to determine status, declaring the children of French men by African women or women of African descent to be free.[43] At times, this freedom was deferred. In 1664, the children of enslaved women by French men in Martinique and Guadeloupe served their mother's masters until they were 20 years of age, but were free thereafter.[44] Colonial officials condemned the improprieties of slaveowners who fathered children by their slaves. In 1667, one commentator, Jean-Baptiste du Tertre wrote that colonial governors freed the children of mixed-race unions "who were unfortunate enough to carry on their brows and in the color of their faces, the opprobrium of their birth." In Du Tertre's judgment, the children were punished enough by being physical proof of the liaison "without adding slavery as punishment for a crime they are innocent of." As a

[43] Léo Elisabeth argues that the focus was on the children and only later on the mothers. Léo Elisabeth, *La société martiniquaise aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: 1664-1789* (Paris: Karthala, 2003), 240.

[44] John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (New York: Macmillan, 2006), 41.

result, governors ignored "the axiom of the law, which passes to the child the condition of the mother, *partus sequitur ventrem*, and declared them free to punish the sins of the fathers."[45] In 1672, mixed-race slaves were declared free at age twenty-four.[46]

Some commentators implicated white men as aggressors and abusers of enslaved women. Du Tertre made a point of condemning white slaveowners and their overseers for abusing their power and taking advantage of enslaved women. Du Tertre described their predatory behavior. Slaveowners and overseers chose adult women in known partnerships "instead of young girls, the better to hide their crime, although the fruit of their sin appears more often due to the fecundity of the first."[47] Du Tertre also addressed issues of consent. He noted enslaved women allowed ("laissent") slaveowners and overseers to assault them "out of fear of bad treatment, in terror of threats [the men] horrify them with and the force of the men's passion, they avail themselves to be corrupted."[48] Other contemporaries charged enslaved women with pursuing interracial liaisons. In 1673, M. du Ruau Palu, *agent-general* of the Company of the Indies Occidentales, declared slave status should follow the mother. He argued the previous custom of freeing mixed-race children encouraged

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[45] Jean-Baptiste du Tertre, *Histoire generale des Antilles habitées par les françois* (Paris: chez Thomas Iolly, 1667), 2:512-2:513; Léo Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," in *Neither Slave nor Free: The Freedman of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World,* eds. David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 139.

[46] Jean Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau voyage aux Isles de l'Amérique contenant l'histoire naturelle de ces pays, l'origine, les moeurs, la religion et le gouvernement des Habitans anciens et moderns* (La Haye, France: Chez Husson, 1724), 2:133-2:135. In 1674, when the French Antilles was united under a single governor-general, the crown ruled that status following the mother would apply to the children of all slaves.

[47] The term Du Tertre actually uses is "femmes mariées."

[48] Du Tertre, *Histoire general des Antilles*, 2:512.

enslaved women to purposely have children with French men so their children would one day be free.[49]

In 1674, the Crown ordered its colonies to follow *partus sequitur ventrem* or "status following the mother."[50] Until 1674, the French Antilles had been governed as proprietary holdings under the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales. In 1674, after mismanagement led the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales to go bankrupt, the French Antilles was united under Crown jurisdiction. Imposition of Crown rule signaled a renewed commitment to asserting control over white and black populations, and determination to make a profit overseas. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, King Louis XIV's new Finance Minister, aimed to reaffirm Crown authority overseas by formalizing and standardizing laws across the colonies. Requiring slaveowners in the Caribbean to enforce *partus sequitur ventrem* would also secure black labor for Antillean plantations.

With slave labor becoming more central to island economies some colonial officials readily complied. In Guadeloupe, officials justified the transition to "condition follows the mother" by arguing freeing mixed-race slaves caused owners to lose property and lose profits. A shift in blame accompanied the shift in policy. In 1680, the Guadeloupe edict which declared children would follow their mother into lifelong bondage also described the "wickedness of the *négresses*" who ensnared French men not to marry and create settled families but to give birth to free children

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[49] Léo Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," 139; Elisabeth, *La société martiniquaise*, 466; Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France:' Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2004), 462.

[50] Labat, *Nouveau voyage*, 2:133-2:135. In 1674, when the French Antilles was united under a single governor-general, the crown ruled that status following the mother would apply to the children of all slaves.

of color.[51] Enslaved women would "debauch themselves to free men without considering the horrible sin they commit in the hopes of having free children." Their actions were a "disservice to those the slaves belong to" because slaveowners lost both the slave and the profits to be gained from a lifetime of their labor.[52] Under the new law, such attempts would be curtailed. However, enforcement was not uniform. Into 1681, in Martinique, mixed-race slaves continued to be freed; women at age fifteen and men at age twenty.[53] Also inconsistent were attempts to blame enslaved women for the incidence of mixed-race children. In 1681, in Martinique, whites that fathered a mixed-race child were still fined one thousand livres and required to pay another thousand if they wished to purchase the child from their owner.[54]

Table 3.1. French Slave Trade: Region and Sum of Slaves Disembarked in Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Saint-Domingue, 1651-1710

Year	Martinique	Guadeloupe	Saint-Domingue	TOTAL
1651-1675	1,361	801	--	2,162
1676-1700	5,341	241	2,713	8,295
1701-1710	4,128	--	1,693	5,821
TOTAL	10,830	1,042	4,406	16,278

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&natinimp=10] (accessed April 30, 2012)

[51] Aubert, "'The Blood of France," 461.

[52] Elisabeth, *La société martiniquaise*, 241.

[53] Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," 139; Aubert, "'The Blood of France,'" 463n.

[54] Ibid., 461.

During the 1680s, the number of slaves arriving in the Americas on French ships skyrocketed. Between 1671 and 1710, ships flying the French flag shipped over ten thousand slaves from Senegambia, far outstripping some eight hundred slaves exported in previous decades.[55] Before 1710, most Africans transported on French ships disembarked in Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Saint-Domingue.[56] Martinique, then the seat of the French Antilles government, received over ten thousand slaves from French slavers, the largest share of slave imports during these years. Saint-Domingue received almost five thousand, the second largest proportion, and Guadeloupe just over one thousand. Planters did not limit themselves to patronizing French traders or wait for French slave ships to arrive. Although most enslaved Africans arriving in the French Antilles arrived on French ships, Great Britain, Dutch, and even Portuguese slave ships sold slaves to colonists as well.[57]

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[55] Voyages Database. 2010. *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&natinimp=10] (accessed April 30, 2012).

[56] Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&natinimp=10] (accessed April 30, 2012). See Appendix B for full chart. French Guiane temporarily surpassed Guadeloupe in imports during these years. However, by 1800 French Guiane had peaked at a little over five thousand slave imports. French slave ships also transported almost ten thousand Africans to the Spanish Americas including 6,865 to Spanish Central America and 2,773 to Rio de la Plata. Other regions patronized by French ships include to France, Cuba, Barbados, Grenada, Bahia, and the Bight of Biafra.

[57] Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&mjslptimp=33500.36100.36200.36300.36400.36500] (accessed April 30, 2012).

Table 3.2. Slave Trade to the French Caribbean: Region and Sum of Slaves Disembarked in Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Saint-Domingue, 1651-1710

	Martinique	Guadeloupe	Saint-Domingue	TOTAL
1651-1675	5,782	2,535	--	13,075
1676-1700	6,192	432	2,954	13,671
1701-1710	6,705	180	1,699	11,730
Totals	18,679	3,147	4,653	38,740

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&mjslptimp=33500.36100.36200.36300.36400.36500] (accessed April 30, 2012)

Slave populations grew rapidly. Between 1664 and 1681, two to four thousand slaves lived and labored in Martinique, Guadeloupe and Saint-Domingue. In these years, Guadeloupe led its neighbors with over four thousand slaves. By 1686, Martinique's slave population rose to over eleven thousand. By 1699, the enslaved black population dwarfed the white population, which hovered near three to four thousand. In 1700, fourteen thousand slaves labored in Martinique, almost seven thousand in Guadeloupe, and just over nine thousand in Saint-Domingue.[58]

[58] Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 78 as cited in Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*, 25; Charles Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches à Saint-Domingue aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: L'Ecole, 1975), 138-139; Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (New York: Verso, 1998), 295.

Table 3.3. Slave Populations of the French Caribbean, 1664-1739

Year	Martinique	Guadeloupe	Saint-Domingue	TOTAL
1664	2,700	--	--	2,700
1671	--	4,300	--	4,300
1681	--	--	2,000	2,000
1686	11,100	--	--	11,100
1690	--	--	3,358	3,358
1696	15,000	--	--	15,000
1700	14,600	6,700	9,082	30,382
1710	--	9,700	--	9,700
1715	--	13,300	--	13,300
1720	--	17,200	--	17,200
1736	55,700	--	--	55,700
1739	--	--	117,400	117,400
TOTAL	320,100	169,600	1,930,940	2,420,640

Sources: Adapted from Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 78 as cited in Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 25; Charles Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches à Saint-Domingue aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: L'Ecole, 1975), 138-139; Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (New York: Verso, 1998), 295.

With a constellation of colonial enterprises moving towards enslaved black majorities, the Crown decided it was time to craft an official slave code. In 1681, Colbert turned to the highest-ranking officers overseas Charles de la Roche, Courbon de Blénac, Governor-General of the Antilles, and Intendant Jean-Baptiste Patoulet for advice on composing a uniform slave code.[59] In drafting a series of provisions on

[59] Vernon V. Palmer, "Essai sur les origines et les auteurs du Code Noir," *Revue internationale de droit comparé* 50, no. 1 (January-March 1998): 117; Aubert, "'The Blood of France," 461. In 1661, Louis XIV appointed Jean-Baptiste Colbert as Finance Minster. Colbert took the reins of France's colonial ventures, developing institutions like the Minster of the Marine, which would become the masthead of the overseas empire. Colbert, said to be the true author of the *Code Noir*, was not concerned with the freedom, liberty or humanity of slaves but with securing the products of the colonies for the profit of France. Colbert also solicited advice from the Superior Councils of St. Christophe, Martinique and Guadeloupe. Philip P. Boucher, *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent?* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 28; Jerah Johnson, "Colonial New Orleans: A Fragment of the Eighteenth-Century French Ethos," in *Creole New*

manumission, Blénac and Patoulet espoused opposing views on the status of mixed-race slaves and free people of color on the islands.[60] Blénac proposed cultivating a population of mixed-race free people of color as a buffer between free whites and black slaves. As an intermediate population, free people of color would serve as allies of the Crown, "as they easily adopt our manners, our language, and our religion, and they are accustomed to the climate."[61] An intermediate free population of color would curb the possibility of revolt by either white colonists or slaves. Blénac suggested declaring all mixed-race slaves free at age twelve, but requiring them to serve their owners for an additional eight years to cover the loss of labor and property. Their fathers would also have the option of purchasing their freedom, freeing them from slavery.[62] Patoulet, concerned it would foster crime and disorder, disagreed with developing any such free population of color.[63]

In 1685, King Louis XIV signed an "edict concerning the enforcement of order in the Islands of the Americas" or the *Code Noir*. A collection of legal proscriptions, the "black code" was the Crown's first comprehensive attempt to

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Orleans: Race and Americanization, eds. Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 16-18.

[60] The crown was concerned about security and order overseas in regards to slaves and free people of color, but was also concerned about the independence of colonial councils, enforcement of Catholic doctrine (or at the very least, subjection of French Huguenots overseas), and the incorporation of French settlements into the body politic. For one interpretation of how codes of law performed imperial order, see Joseph Roach, "Body of Law: The Sun King and the Code Noir," in *From the Royal to the Republican Body: Incorporating the Political in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century France,* eds. Sara E. Melzer and Kathryn Norberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 116-117.

[61] Aubert, Guillaume. "'The Blood of France,'" 463.

[62] Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," 139; Aubert, "'The Blood of France,'" 463n.

[63] The superior councils of the islands were also asked for advice as the Code Noir was being developed; they argued for partus sequitur ventrem as well. Palmer, "Essai sur les origines," 127.

regulate slavery in the French Atlantic. The *Code Noir* institutionalized slaves as property, declared their status would follow their mothers, and to some extent acknowledged their humanity. Articles attempted to curb slaveowner excess by requiring owners to baptize slaves, provide a modicum of subsistence, and support elderly and infirm bondspersons. The Code also prohibited slaves from laboring on Sundays and forbade slaveowners from separating slave families by sale or forcing slaves to marry against their will.[64]

But even as the *Code Noir* acknowledged slaves' humanity, it institutionalized slavery and mastery in the French colonies. It forbade priests from performing marriages rites for slaves without their owner's permission. Slaves could not bear arms or gather in public without written permission. The punishment for slaves who assaulted their masters, mistresses or children was death. Corporeal punishment awaited runaway slaves, if they should be captured, and was described in graphic detail.[65] Colonial authorities were given leeway to punish masters who maimed or killed their slaves, encouraged only to judge them "according to the circumstances of the atrocity."

When addressing manumission, the Code combined both Blénac and Patoulet's recommendations, drawing on local practices and Roman antecedents, but leaned towards perpetual enslavement.[66] The *Code Noir* placed restrictions on how

[64] Articles 44, 12-13, 2, 22-26, 27, 5-6, 47, 11, *Le Code Noir.*

[65] Articles 11, 15-16, 33, 43, 38, *Le Code Noir.*

[66] Roach, "Body of Law," 130. There is an on-going debate on whether or not the Code Noir was based on customs developed in the Antilles or crafted in the context of Roman and common law in France. While many of the articles of the Code Noir appear to have combined imperial needs with colonial advice and realities, for the articles on manumission and free people of color, the Crown appears to have relied on Roman law. The rest of the Code adjusted to Caribbean practices in regards

slaveowners could manumit their slaves.[67] Slaveowners of at least twenty years of age could free their slaves without cause and without paying a tax. Freedom was bestowed on slaves "declared sole legatees," "named executors of their wills," or guardians of the slaveowner's children.[68] The Code also gave unmarried men in concubinage with enslaved women an opportunity to free them through marriage. The Code did not incorporate previous practices of granting mixed-race slaves freedom or requiring their fathers to purchase and free them. Children of enslaved women were declared slaves, regardless of parentage or race-mixture.

The 1685 *Code Noir* punished reproduction between free men (*hommes libres*) and enslaved women. Free men who fathered children with enslaved women and the enslaved woman's owner were fined two thousand livres in sugar. If the father was also the master, the *Code Noir* empowered authorities to confiscate the slave and any children for the profit of the hospital, but "never to regain their

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to justice, punishment, and slave labor into the body of the code. Vernon V. Palmer, "The Origins and Authors of the Code Noir," *Louisiana Law Review* 56, (1995): 363-390; Alan Watson, "The Origins of the Code Noir Revisited," *Tulane Law Review* 71, no. 4 (March 1997): 1041-1072.

[67] Article 59, *Le Code Noir*. A number of restrictions present in imperial and colonial law, and in the *Code Noir* itself, also contradicted Article 59, restricting in law and in practice the "rights, privileges, and immunities" of both freeborn and freed people of color in the French empire. Article 39 singled out freed slaves and fined any who harbored fugitives 3000 livres of sugar. Article 58 required freed slaves to respect the authority of their former masters, and ordered them to be punished more severely for crimes. Sala-Moulins, *Le Code Noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan*, 168, 198-201. Frank Tannenbaum pioneered the comparison between the treatment of free people of African descent in the British and French colonies (the North Atlantic) and the Spanish and Portuguese colonies (the South Atlantic). However, Tannenbaum argued that the French colonies were more similar to the British in opportunities for manumission, racial ideology, and populations of free people of color. In reality, the French Atlantic lay somewhere between. Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1946). For more on race in the South Atlantic see Carl Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986).

[68] Article 55-6, *Le Code Noir.*

freedom."[69] The enslaved women's children, whether mixed-race or not, were summarily declared slaves. No longer would paternity or race-mixture play a role in freeing slaves from bondage. The days of punishing white men for their sexual indiscretions with enslaved women by forcing them to manumit their enslaved children were over. Under the Code, men were still punished and could even lose their property, but by keeping both the woman and her children enslaved, the Crown continued to benefit from their productive labor, in perpetuity. Men who fathered children with slaves would not be able to purchase the slave's freedom. Unsurprisingly, the Code declared all children born outside of Catholic marriage, including concubinage, to be bastards.

By punishing fathers, slaveowners, and enslaved women themselves, the Crown implicated slaveowner, slave, and fornicator, if different from owner, in the sexual act and the sin of sex outside of marriage. By moving away from mandatory manumission as punishment but keeping the woman and offspring enslaved, the Crown undercut slaveowner's right to property and affirmed its own. It protected its investment, securing black women's labor for the colony and the profit for the empire.

The Code also stigmatized intimate relations with enslaved women and, by implication, women of African descent. Only women of African descent were enslaved. Only they and their children were consigned to perpetual slavery for sex across the color line. Free women, who in 1685 were more likely to be of European descent, were neither punished nor enslaved for sexual relations with enslaved men,

[69] Article 8-9, *Le Code Noir.*

and their children were declared free.[70] The Code made no provisions for and did not distinguish between consensual sexual activity or non-consensual. There was no stated punishment for "free men" in sexual relations with enslaved women that did not produce offspring. Reproduction outside the bounds of marriage and which crossed lines of status, and, by implication, race was singled out for special punishment..

For free people of color already in the colonies, the Code accepted their presence but as a subordinate population.[71] Free people of color born in the colonies and slaves freed from slavery (*affranchi* or *affranchie*) became French subjects regardless of their place of birth. Article 59 of the Code further entitled them to "all the same rights, privileges, and liberties enjoyed by persons born free."[72] Regardless, free people of color were singled out from whites for harsher punishments. Article 39, which targeted those who harbored fugitive slaves, singled out freed slaves for a special tax of three thousand livres of sugar if found guilty. Freed slaves were admonished to "maintain a particular respect for their masters, their widows and to their children," and officials were empowered to punish *affranchis* more severely if found guilty of any crimes.[73]

By introducing the 1685 *Code Noir*, the Crown marked the beginning of imperial France's investment in slavery as an institution. The Code itself was only a

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[70] The Code addressed intimate relations between married free women (*femme libre*) and enslaved men affirmed that the children would follow the condition of the mother and be free. Article 13, *Le Code Noir*.

[71] Roach, "Body of Law," 130.

[72] Article 58- 59, *Le Code Noir*.

[73] Sala-Moulins, *Le Code Noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan*, 168, 198-201.

fantasy of control but with it the Crown claimed authority over the most personal aspects of white and black residents' lives and telegraphed its priorities. Intimate relations between white men and slave women were to be punished, but in ways that ensured the Crown would not lose slave labor. Free people of color were French subjects, but subordinate to whites. The *Code Noir*, described by Louis Sala-Moulins as the "most monstrous legal document of modern times," was unique to the Atlantic. The first slave code specific to the Americas, it marked the beginning of an era where bondage and blackness could be joined together and codified in law.[74] At the same time, application and enforcement was limited. The *Code Noir* had no jurisdiction in French outposts in West Africa, like Saint-Louis and Gorée.[75] Even in the Caribbean, royal ordinances were not considered local law until registered by each islands' legislative council. Councils often protested regulations they found offensive by refusing to register them or petitioning for changes. Strict adherence to the 1685 *Code Noir* was non-existent and the Code became a dynamic document, subject to constant revision.

This was especially true in Saint-Domingue. In 1685, when the *Code Noir* was drafted, the French illegally occupied the western half of Spanish Hispaniola. In 1690, three years after the legislative council of Petit-Goave registered the Code,

[74] Sala-Moulins: "Mon affair est le Code Noir…que je considère comme le texte juridique le plus monstrueux qu'aient produit les Temps modernes et préservé pourtant tout un demi-siècle l'être contemporaine." Sala-Moulins, *Le Code Noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan*, 9. Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg note the Code Noir "was the first integrated slave code written specifically for the Americas." Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg, eds., *Slavery, Freedom, and the Law in the Atlantic World: A Brief History With Documents* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin's Press, 2007), 13. See also Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, 290-291.

[75] Neither France nor West African were mentioned in the creation of the original document or believed to be under its jurisdiction. Peabody, "*There are no Slaves in France,"* 154n.

some three thousand Africans and people of African descent were enslaved on the island.[76] By 1700, Saint-Domingue's slave population nearly tripled. Colonial officials and slaveowners on the ground were apprehensive about the growing numbers of free people of color, especially their potential for encouraging slave revolt. Both officials and slaveowners blamed free people of color for contributing to the rising numbers of fugitive slaves, accusing *nègres libres* of harboring fugitives and frustrating their attempts to retrieve them. In 1705, France issued a royal ordinance re-enslaving *nègres libres* who harbored fugitive slaves. Under the ordinance, even members of the household could lose their freedom and be sold for the profit of the royal treasury.[77]

Colonial officials' fear of a growing free population of color led them to undercut slaveowner's authority themselves. In 1711, Saint-Domingue's governor required manumissions to be justified and approved by him.[78] When a slaveowner named Geoffrey freed multiple slaves in his will, the Council at Le Cap annulled the testament, declared such behavior "prejudicial to the Colonie," and re-enslaved

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[76] In August 1685, the Superior Council at Petit-Goave was the established at Saint-Domingue. It was the first council to be formed in the colony. The Petit-Goave council was later moved to Léogane, and then Port-au-Prince. A second conseil was established at Cap-Français in June 1701. Saint-Domingue registered the *Code Noir* on May 6,1687. *Recueils des règlemens, edits, declarations et arrets: Concernant le commerce, l'administration de la justice, et la police des colonies françaises de l'Amérique avec le Code Noir et l'addition au dit Code* (Paris: Chez les Libraires Associez, 1745), 3.

[77] "Ordonnance du Roi, contres les Nègres libres, qui facilitent aux esclaves les moyens de devenir marons, June 10, 1705," in *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises* (hereafter *Loix et constitutions*), ed. Louis-Élie de Saint-Méry Moreau (Paris: Chez l'Auteur, 1784-1790), 2:36-2:37.

[78] Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 42; "Ordonnance du Roi, concernant l'affranchissement des esclaves, 24 October 1713," *Loix et constitutions,* 2:398.

them.[79] In October 1713, responding to appeals from the Superior Council of Saint-Domingue, the Crown issued an ordinance requiring slaveowners to have justification and receive written permission from the Governor or presiding Intendant to manumit slaves.[80] The 1713 provision officially distanced slaveowners from the power to grant freedom to slaves, restricting final approval to the highest authorities of the Antilles. In 1721, a royal ordinance raised the age limit of slaveowners who wished to free their slaves to twenty-five years of age, claiming the former limit allowed minors to "abuse the right emancipation gives to dispose of their blacks."[81] By the 1740s, manumission dues added another burden on slaveowners who wished to free their slaves. In 1745, the Minister of the Marine added a manumission tax of one thousand livres per slave, to vary in practice among the islands. In Saint-Domingue, manumission taxes rose as high as eight hundred livres by 1765.[82]

Saint-Domingue officials devised harsher punishments for liaisons between white men and slave women. In December 1713, colonial officials were so incensed

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[79] "Arret du Conseil d'Etat, qui casse celui du Conseil Superieur du Cap, qui avoit declare esclaves les nègres du nomme Geoffroy, affranchis par son Testament, 29 October 1713," *Loix et constitutions*, 2:399.

[80] "Ordonnance du Roi, concernant l'affranchissement des esclaves, 24 October 1713," in *Loix et constitutions*, 2:398.

[81] *Recueils des règlemen*, 128; Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," 140. The age of adulthood was twenty-five.

[82] Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*, 173; Elisabeth, "The French Antilles," 144; Sue Peabody, "Négresse, Mulâtresse, Citoyenne: Gender and Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1650-1848," in *Gender and Slave Emancipation in the Atlantic world,* eds. Pamela Scully and Diana Paton (Duke University Press, 2005), 61. In Martinique, for example, the manumission tax was 1,000 livres for men and 600 for women. In 1765, the new royal governor Charles d'Estaing complained that 800 livres was too high for a manumission tax. He lowered it to 300. "Ordonnance des Administrateurs, qui fixe à 300 liv. le prix de la ratification des Libertés par le Gouvernement," in *Loix et constitutions*, 4:798.

about interracial liaisons, they re-circulated the *Code Noir*'s statutes on concubinage, drawing attention to the fines to be levied against men who fathered children with slaves. Officials remarked on the "infamous prostitution" occurring between white men and slave women "to the great scandal of the Christian religion." The ordinance admonished men who "have in their houses their concubines and the children" as setting a bad example, and remarked on the widespread "libertinage and corruption across the island." The re-circulated edict noted children of such unions were to be confiscated and serve in the hospital at Léogane or Le Cap for the duration of their lives. In addition, Saint-Domingue officials adjusted the fines to two thousand livres of sugar or two hundred and fifty livres of gold.[83] A 1736 royal ordinance reiterated the sanction against freeing slaves without official permission. The ordinance prohibited priests "and all other religious authorities" from baptizing the children of women of color without documentation confirming their free status. Officials claimed slave mothers used baptism to secure freedom for their children by having the priests enter the baptized child's name in the registers for free persons. The priests and chaplains were authorized to baptize at will, but unless the free status of the mother was proven, priests could only register the children of women of color in the book of baptized slaves.[84] Free people of color without approved manumission papers and slaves baptized as free people of color without the same were sold as

[83] "Ordonnance des Administrateurs, concernant le Concubiange avec les esclaves, 18 December 1713," *Loix et constitutions*, 2:400.

[84] "Ordonnance du Roi, concernant l'Affranchissement des Esclaves des Isles; et Ordonnance des Administrateurs en consequences, 15 June 1736," *Loix et constitutions*, 3:453.

slaves for the profit of the colony. With the 1736 royal ordinance, all people of African descent were presumed to be slaves unless proven otherwise.

In the 1730s, Saint-Domingue officials broadened their reach to penalize formal unions between white men and women of African descent, a break from punitive ordinances of the past which had prohibited concubinage but allowed Catholic marriage. In 1733, colonial officials barred whites that married a *négresse* or *mulâtresse* from serving as officers or having any employment in the colony.[85] With the 1733 ordinance, officials discouraged any and all intimate relations between white men and women of color, whether sex, informal partnerships, or formal unions sanctioned by the Catholic Church. In 1746, the Council at Le Cap annulled one such marriage, demonstrating their willingness to enforce the laws.[86]

By removing manumission from individual slaveowner's grasp, designating manumission taxes, and penalizing interracial marriages, colonial officials made it difficult for intimate relations between white men and enslaved women to result in free status. Enslaved women trying to secure their freedom were forced to appeal to multiple authorities, much like enslaved men and children. But even liaisons with the potential to turn into long-term unions were to be punished. In Saint-Domingue, through fines and other measures, white men risked their own economic security if they formalized unions with enslaved women. Laws left little space for enslaved women's consent, choice, or pleasure. Enslaved women, especially vulnerable to

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[85] "Lettre De M. Le Général au Gouverneur du Cap, touchant les Sang mêlés et les mésalliés, 7 December 1733," in Loix et constitutions, 3:382; Aubert, "'The Blood of France,'" 474. "Sang mêlé" inhabitants were barred from the same.

[86] "Arrêts Du Conseil Du Cap, 2 May 1746 and 13 June 1746," in *Loix et constitutions*, 3:846.

violence from slaveowners were penalized for giving birth to children conceived in assaults over which they had not control. Certainly, a gap existed between laws made by officials in Saint-Domingue and France. However, even occasional enforcement reinforced the growing stigma associated with such liaisons, tainting the formation of intimate ties between white men and all women of color. [87]

The time, funds, and effort needed to manumit slaves contributed to manumissions by slaveowners with personal ties to the slaves themselves. In 1722, the Conseil de Marine set a precedent for such manumissions when it recommended freedom be awarded "only to those slaves who, by acts of devotion, had saved the lives of their masters, mistresses, or the children of their owners." Men were especially well positioned to take advantage of manumission by extraordinary service to the colony but slaveowners also manumitted their bondspersons in reward for personal service to themselves or their families.[88] As domestics, laundresses,

[87] In 1746, the legislative council of Le Cap annulled a marriage between a "Habitant Blanc avec une Mulâtresse Libre." The justification was family protest. "Arrêts du Conseil du Cap, qui, en infirmant une Sentence du Juge du Fort-Dauphin, sans s'arrêter aux oppositions d'un neveu et d'un cousin-germain, ordonne qu'il sera passé outre à la publication des bans, et à la célébration du mariage d'un Habitant Blanc avec une Mulâtresse libre; enjoint au Curé d'y procéder, à peine d'y être contraint par la saisie de son temporel," in *Loix et constitutions*, 3:846.

[88] Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 43. The tradition of offering enslaved men manumission as a reward for extraordinary service to the colony developed early. In 1697, when the French attacked Spanish Cartagena, they recruited enslaved men with the promise of freedom. Slaves who participated in (and survived) periodic searches for runaway slaves could also be granted their freedom. In 1707, Louis la Ronnerie, a slave, was granted his freedom after seizing and killing two other rebellious slaves. "Arret du Conseil du Cap, qui declare un Nègre libre pour service rendu a la Colonie, et ordonne une taxe general pour en payer le prix a son Maître, 6 August 1708," *Loix et constitutions*, 2:127; "Ordonnance des Administrateurs, confirmative de la Liberté donnée par le Conseil du Cap à un Esclave, pour un Service rendu à la Colonie, 10 February 1710," *Loix et constitutions*, 2:180. In 1705, the Council at Léogane organized a unit of thirty-six men who would search for fugitive slaves regularly and on demand, and be paid on yearly and per slave bases. Known as the *maréchaussée*, this policing unit would widely employ free and enslaved men of color. "Arret de règlement du Conseil de Léogane et en fin, enjoint e fourner à ce dernier un récensement fidele, 16 March 1705," *Loix et constitutions*, 2:25. Manumission through service to colony appears to have been unavailable to women. There is no evidence women served in Atlantic military campaigns, militia musters, or government-sanctioned hunts for fugitive slaves.

managers, medical workers, nursemaids, and even concubines, daughters, and companions to their owners, enslaved women lived and labored in close quarters with their owners. The justification for such acts fell under the ambiguous heading "good and agreeable" services.

Slaveowners in Saint-Domingue used "good and agreeable services" as a justification for particular manumission acts, many describing a personal service the slave provided their owner. Certainly, "good and agreeable" services could be and, at times, were also intimate. But manumissions for "good and agreeable services" also referred to labors that were health-related. In 1758, Pierre Vallon, planter from Isle-à-Vache, freed Madelaine, a *mulâtresse creole*, François Creole, and a twelve year old girl named Elizabeth for "service during my present illness."[89] Marie Rose, *négresse creole* and her one year old daughter Marianne, *mulâtresse*, were freed for the "good and agreeable services" they provided Simon Longue, a surgeon in Les Cayes.[90] In 1768, Les Cayes habitant Pierre Baldaza freed Renette, a twenty year old *négresse criolle* and Pierre, a *mulâtre creole* about twenty-one years of age. Renette provided "countless services" over many sicknesses to Baldanza, and he wished to repay her with her freedom.[91] Françoise, a forty-year-old "*négresse* de nation Criolle," was also freed for "many services she offered" including care of her owner,

[89] "Liberté par le S. Grinon à la nommée Magdalene mulâtresse," 24 November 1768, SDOM NOT 1223, CAOM. In 1768, Vallon's heir, Jean Grinon, formalized the act under the new system. In the formal act, Madelaine was freed but it is unclear whether François or Elizabeth ever escaped slavery. It is also possible they passed away.

[90] "Liberté par l. S. Longuedom à Marie Roze négresse et Marianne mulâtresse libre," 3 January 1767, SDOM NOT 1223, CAOM.

[91] "Liberté par le S. Balsar à la nommé Renette négresse et son esclaves," 13 November 1768, SDOM NOT 1223, CAOM.

Jean Guichard, a Les Cayes merchant, during his long illness.[92] Both Madelaine and Renette cared for their owners during times of sickness, while Marie Rose and her daughter worked for a surgeon.

Periodically, the intimate nature of the "good and agreeable service" was implied in the justification of the act. In 1764, Claude Bin, a habitant in Les Cayes declared he "frees and liberates voluntarily" his slave Marie Magdelaine ditte Marion. Marion was a forty-four year old, *négresse*, "native Senegalese" who had been branded with the word "BIN." Bin freed her for the "bon et agreables" services she had given him and for the "affection" which he had for her.[93] Pierre Bautier of Les Cayes freed three slaves, Marie François dit Saville, Jean Baptiste, and Clotilde without giving a clear reason. However, all three slaves were the children of the Congo *négresse* Françoise, and all were *mulâtres* or *mulâtresses creole*, suggesting there may have been a kinship tie between the owner and the freed slaves. In 1777, while on his deathbed and so ill he was unable to sign his will, the planter Louis du Verger freed Marguerite ditte Guitte, a twenty-four year old *négresse creole* and laundress.[94] Verger noted he was negligent and should have freed her long ago, but he intended to declare her free now. Some slaveowners who emancipated their slaves also provided their former bondspersons with property or resources. In 1784, in Saint-Domingue, when S. Pierre Michel, living near Jérémie, freed Marie Thereze, a

[92] "Liberté par S. Guichard à la nomme Françoise négresse," 1768 November 1, SDOM NOT 1223, CAOM.

[93] Claude Bin, 21 October 1764, SDOM NOT 319, CAOM.

[94] "Liberté par Monsieur Louis du Verger à Marguerite dite Guitte, négresse creole," 6 January 1777, SDOM NOT 524, CAOM.

négresse, and her children Olive, a *mulâtresse*, and Bertrand, a *mulâtre*, he also provided each with their own slave.[95]

Over the first half of the eighteenth century, Saint-Domingue officials passed regulations against intimate relations between the races, especially intimacy between white men and enslaved women. They also placed increasingly strict restrictions on manumission, making it more difficult for slaveowners to do with their property what they wished. However, manumissions continued and women continued to benefit. A discourse around "good and agreeable services" rewarded slaves for a range of personal services they were compelled to provide their owners. The reward was freedom from slavery. These services included a range of intimate labor often performed by women included health and healing services, child care, child rearing, domestic work, as well as sexual relations between slaveowner and slave. The gendered nature of these occupations positioned women to benefit from manumission for "good and agreeable service." At the same time, "good and agreeable services" blended intimate relations with bonded labor performed for households.

Intimate Relations and Service in Gulf Coast Louisiana

By 1719, Gulf Coast Louisiana inherited a French Atlantic legal culture that presumed slavery to follow the mother, viewed free people of color as threatening to the institution of slavery, and punished intimate relations between white men and women of color with the force of law. Slaveowners and large landowners who served

[95] "Acte de liberte par le Sieur Dubernaud," 26 April 1784, SDOM 585, CAOM. The slaves were Adoumadou, Cjamy and Diamacou.

on the newly formed Louisiana Superior Council, all with a significant investment in land, were well aware of the profits to be made from sugar and the need to manage slaves. The Compagnie des Indes Occidentales, determined to make a profit, invested in transforming the Gulf Coast into a plantation society. Crown and colonial officials emigrating to the colony expressed the need for a slave code and used the 1685 *Code Noir* to draft Louisiana's own.

Table 3.4. Slaves Landed in Gulf Coast Louisiana[a] by Origin and Year, 1719-1743[b]

Year	Senegambia and offshore Atlantic	Bight of Benin	West Central Africa and St. Helena	TOTAL
1719	--	450	--	450
1720	127	--	--	127
1721	196	834	294	1,324
1723	185	--	--	185
1725	222	--	--	222
1726	616	--	--	616
1727	569	--	--	569
1728	1,010	464	--	1,474
1729	746	--	--	746
1730	325	--	--	325
1743	190	--	--	190
TOTAL	4,186	1,748	294	6,228

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1768&mjslptimp=21600] (accessed May 3, 2012)

[a]The data includes slaves landed at New Orleans, La Balise, Louisiana, Biloxi, Mississippi, and Mobile.

In 1724, the Louisiana Superior Council promulgated its own version of the *Code Noir*.[96] The 1724 Louisiana Code emerged a generation into full-scale slave trading and slavery by the French in the Americas, long after the brutalities of racial slavery and inevitability of a free population of color were well known. Like the 1685 *Code Noir*, the Louisiana Code was written by metropolitan authorities far removed from the everyday realities of enslavement, but incorporated restrictive statutes that had appeared in the colonies during the intervening years. It required slaveowners

[96] "Edit concernant les Nègres Esclaves à la Louisiane," (hereafter Louisiana *Code Noir*) *Publications of the Louisiana Historical Society* 6, (1908): 76-90. See also notes on "Code Noir B" throughout Sala-Moulins, *Le Code Noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan*; Hans W. Baade, "The Gens de Couleur of Louisiana," Thomas N. Ingersoll, "Free Blacks in a Slave Society: New Orleans, 1718-1812," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (April 1991): 173-200.

seeking to manumit their slaves to be twenty-five or older. Manumissions also required the permission of the Superior Council.[97] Slaves could no longer be freed by being declared heirs in or executors of their owner's will, although the Louisiana Code continued to allow slaves named as guardians of their owner's children to be freed. However, the Louisiana *Code Noir* did more than its predecessor to protect slaveowners' property rights. No manumission tax was implemented and owners did not need to provide justification or secure additional official permission from the Governor and Intendant for their manumission to be approved.[98]

With the Louisiana *Code Noir*, the Louisiana Superior Council codified a comprehensive and deliberate attack on sex across the color line.[99] It discarded race-neutral terminology to outright "forbid our white subjects of either sex from contracting marriage with the Blacks," and ordered all religious authorities to comply. The Louisiana Code took its prohibition against concubinage a step further when it forbade "the same to the Noirs affranchis or born free from living in concubinage with the slaves." As a result, even concubinage between those of different status was outlawed. Masters of enslaved women who produced mixed-race children were fined three hundred livres, and the father, if he was not the owner, was fined as well. The woman and child were seized to labor in the hospital, never to be freed. Whereas the 1685 *Code Noir* waived the fine and seizure if the father was unmarried and married

[97] This change in the Louisiana *Code Noir* led to the royal ordinance of 1726.

[98] Article 50-1, Louisiana *Code Noir* .

[99] The Louisiana *Code Noir* discarded race-neutral terms like "*hommes libres*" and even "esclaves," replacing them with "*blancs*" and "*esclaves* nègres."

the slave, freeing both mother and child, in the Louisiana Code, only free men of color were allowed the same exception.[100]

The Louisiana *Code Noir* further circumscribed the liberty of free people of color. It forbade them from receiving donations or inheritances from whites, confiscating any property received for the profit of the hospital.[101] While the 1685 *Code Noir* levied a tax on free people of color who harbored fugitive slaves, the Louisiana *Code Noir* ordered those unable to pay the tax to be sold for the profit of the colony and re-enslaved.[102]

In Gulf Coast Louisiana as in Saint-Domingue, manumission continued despite the law and acts of extraordinary service continued to be opportunities to secure freedom. Enslaved men were rewarded with manumission for military and civil service to the colony. In 1729, slaves who aided the French subduing the Natchez were freed, with the encouragement of one official who suggested doing so "will give others a great desire to deserve similar favors by material services." These opportunities continued to be unavailable to women.[103] But slaveowners along the

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[100] Article 6, Louisiana *Code Noir*.

[101] Article 52, Louisiana *Code Noir*.

[102] Article 34, *Le Code Noir*; Sala-Moulins, *Le Code Noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan*, 168-169.

[103] Thomas N. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans: The First Slave Society in the Deep South, 1718-1819* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 365n; Heloise Cruzat, "Sidelights on Louisiana History," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (1918): 132-3; "Freed Slaves, Louisiana, 1720-1820," *Afro-Louisiana History* (2000). According to Dumont de Montigny's, Périer accused New Orleans slaves of being traitors and asked volunteers to step forward and prove their loyalty. Jean-François-Benjamin de Montigny, "History of Louisiana," in *Historical Memoires of Louisiana,* ed. B. F. French (New York, NY: Lamport, Blakeman & Law, 1853), 5:99-102. After the uprising, Jacques de la Chaise, commissary general, sent a memorial to the Superior Council. He encouraged them to free the slaves who served and suggesting a militia unit could be formed from said men, a company "which is to be always ready to march on short notice." "Sidelights," 132.

Gulf Coast also justified freeing their slaves by citing the "good and agreeable service" provided them. Just as in Saint-Domingue, "good and agreeable service" in Gulf Coast Louisiana designated a range of personal services slaves provided or were compelled to provide for their owners.

In 1732, Jean-Baptiste Chavannes, secretary for the Superior Council, freed Marie Angelique dit Isabelle, *négresse*, for her "fidelity, services, and in payment."[104] A year later, Governor Bienville freed Marie and her husband Jorge for "good and faithful service." In 1735, Marie Charlotte and her daughter Louise, both *négresses*, were freed for "good and agreeable services" rendered. Janeton, a *négresse* slave, was freed for serving François Trudeau "with zeal and fidelity" for twenty-three years. She was also twenty-three years old. In 1736, Calixte Descairac was left an enslaved Indian woman and her children on the condition he free them. Descairac did free them, and later may also have freed Catherine, a slave belonging to a man named Coustilhas, for her "faithful service."[105] In 1744, a veteran of the Chickasaw war named Joseph died. His slave Françoise and her son were both freed "for care given during his illness."[106]

Occasionally, slaveowners manumitting slaves along the Gulf also provided resources to support women they were freeing. In 1729, Viard freed an Indian slave woman of the Osage nation. In addition to her freedom, Viard left her a hundred

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[104] "Petition to Manumit Slave, 15 February 1738," Records of the Superior Council, Louisiana Historical Quarterly (hereafter RSC LHQ) 9, no. 4 (1926), 722.

[105] "Freed Slaves," *Afro-Louisiana History*; Thomas N. Ingersoll, "Slave Codes and Judicial Practice in New Orleans, 1718-1807," *Law and History Review* 13, no. 1 (1995): 37.

[106] "Emancipation Paper, 1 October 1733," RSC LHQ 5 (1922), 250; "Freed Slaves," *Afro-Louisiana History* ; "Petition to Emancipate Slave, 11 July 1737," RSC LHQ 5 (1922), 403; "Manumission, 28 March 1736," RSC LHQ 8 (1925), 287.

pistolles and requested she be taught Catholicism.[107] In 1738, after purchasing Françoise, a *mulâtresse* slave, and her son and daughter from La Forest, Captain Jean Berry left two thousand livres to Françoise and each of the children, and sent them to France aboard *le Comte de Maure* "to give them all possible education and every advantage."[108]

Slaveowners sent on military campaigns sometimes chose to manumit their slaves before their departure. Their decision to do so also suggested ways personal service intersected with other relations. In 1736, Joseph Meunier freed Marie, an eleven year old slave, for "good services" and because he was leaving for the Chickasaw War and did not know when he would return. Meunier freed Angelique, a *négresse* slave and her two children for the same reason. In the event of his death, Meunier asked his executor to "raise them in the fear of God, with the greatest possible gentleness" until the children were old enough to survive on their own. Jacques Coustilhas drew up his will upon departing for the Chickasaw wars and freed Catherine, a thirty-five year old Wolof slave, Catherine's husband, and her four children. He left the family three arpents of land to be divided equally between the children.[109]

In Gulf Coast Louisiana, military service, personal service, and intimate relations also intersected when a number of women were freed as the lovers and

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[107] "Petition for Emancipation of Indian Slave, 22 October 1729," RSC LHQ 4 (1922), 355. Colonial officials approved the manumission and she was sent to the Ursulines for schooling. Technically, slaves were not allowed to receive inheritances, and the pistolles were confiscated and donated to the hospital.

[108] "Freed Slaves," *Afro-Louisiana History*.

[109] "Proceedings to Confirm Manumission of Slaves, 6 March 1739," RSC LHQ 6 (1923), 304.

wives of men of color. Some free men of color negotiated the purchase of their wives from their slaveowners, or arranged to work in exchange for their wives' freedom. In 1725, Louis Congo was appointed colonial executioner, a distasteful job no one wanted. In return he was granted his freedom, a parcel of land, rations of alcohol, and "full time use" of his wife "who remains a slave of the Company of the Indes."[110] Louis Congo's wife was not formally freed as a result, but was granted to Congo by the Company in return for his labor for the colony. In 1727, in New Orleans, Therese, wife of Jean Mingo, was also on the path to freedom. Her husband contracted to work off her price himself.[111] Jean Mingo, a free *nègre* asked the director of the Compagnie des Indes Occidentals for permission to marry the *négresse* slave Thereze, and for any children of the union to be declared free. Mingo agreed to work in exchange.[112] In addition, enslaved men who served under the French during the Natchez Uprising were granted their freedom and became especially active in securing freedom of their wives and lovers. Marie Aram's husband, François Tioucou won his freedom helping the French subdue the Natchez and indentured himself to the hospital for seven years to secure her freedom. Venus's husband, Jean Baptiste Marly, did the same. Military work provided many free men of color the

[110] "Délibérations du Conseil Supérieur de la Louisiana," 21 November 1725, C13A 9, CAOM, fols. 267-268; "Freed Slaves, Louisiana, 1720-1820," *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860* (hereafter *Afro-Louisiana History*), CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

[111] "Marriage License, Free Negro and Slave, 18 Nov 1727, Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* (hereafter RSC LHQ), 4 (July 1922), 236.

[112] "Marriage License, Free Negro and Slave, 28 November 1727," RSC LHQ, 4 (1921), 236; "Decision Between Mingo and Darby, 25 November 1730," RSC LHQ 5 (1924), 103.

support needed to help free their own loved ones—and it also may have raised their social standing as potential suitors.[113]

During the first half of the eighteenth century, intimate relations between European men and women of African descent were part of the discourse of commerce and slavery across the French Atlantic. From the perspective of French metropolitan authorities and colonial officials overseas, intimate relations, especially those occurring between white men and women of African descent, threatened the kind of mercantile and colonial societies France hoped to build. Officials regulated intimate relations and manumission differently in different parts of the French Atlantic. In Saint-Louis and Gorée, the practice of manumission did not emerge with attempts to regulate interracial unions, although company officials did seek ways of bringing sexual relations under their authority. In Saint-Domingue, royal ordinances and local legislation on manumission developed out of punishment levied against slaveowners for fathering children with their slaves. Officials along the Gulf Coast inherited this legal regime. With the promulgation of the 1724 Louisiana Code, Crown and colonial officials articulated in no uncertain terms that manumission would be restricted and intimate relations across status and across race in the form of reproduction, marriage, or concubinage would not be condoned.

Exploring the intersection between intimacy, service, and manumission untangles women's disproportionate access to freedom from slavery in the French

[113] "Petition of the Directors of the Charity Hospital of New Orleans to Grant Freedom to Maria Aram, a *négresse* slave, 6 March 1744," RSC LHQ 7 (1924), 552; see also Henry P. Dart, ed. "Emancipation of Marie Aram, a Slave," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1920): 551-553; "A Free Negro Agrees to Serve As Cook," RSC LHQ 14, no. (1931), 594.

Atlantic world. Despite Crown and colonial officials concern, slaves continued to gain their freedom by the hand of their owners. Manumission was viewed as a reward, though for labor slaves were compelled to provide their owners. Slaveowners granted freedom to their slaves for these “good and agreeable services.” These services were sometimes described as “in payment” for affection, filiation, and labor like health care that placed slaves in close, personal, physical contact with their masters. In granting manumission for "good and agreeable services," slaveowners described manumissions that rewarded services ranging from intimate relations to intimate care. Such acts suggest intimacy between slaveowner and slave could be found in a range of sexual, filial, and labor relations, and played a role in determining how slaves secured their freedom. While not alone in securing manumission of this kind, and while such labor was often coercive, women were well positioned to access freedom through these complex intimate encounters.

Table 3.5. Gulf Coast Population: Mississippi River, New Orleans, Illinois Country, 1731-32

	Whites						Black Slaves				
	Men	Women	Children	Orphans	Engagés	TOTAL	Adults	Children	Indian Slaves	Mulâtres	TOTAL
Mississippi River	369	208	388	--	114	1,079	2,558	846	45	--	4,528
New Orleans	228	167	182	46	--	623	183	69	9	9	892
Illinois	112	71	170	22	--	375	103	65	109	--	652
TOTAL	709	446	740	68	114	2,077	2,844	980	163	9	6,072

Source: Adapted from Charles Maduell, Early Census Tables of Louisiana (1972), pp. 113-53 as compiled in "Census Tables for the Banks of the Mississippi River in 1731 and New Orleans and the Illinois Country in January 1732," *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

Chapter 4

Free Women of Color and Kinship

> La Galatée est arrivée a l'Embouchure du fleuve le 18 de ce mois avec 260 nègres restant de 400 quelle à pris à Gorée.
>
> — Jacques de la Chaise, New Orleans (1729)[1]

Crown, colonial, and trading company officials attempted to institutionalize differences of race, sex, and status. But on the ground, where French men required food, clothing and intimate companionship, subsistence needs and commercial imperatives led officials, soldiers, and traders to defy directives against trade and concubinage. During the first decades of the eighteenth century, free women of African descent formed communities based in commerce and Catholicism. Forming unions with European soldiers, sailors, and traders, despite the provisions against it, integrated women of color into networks of commerce and kin stretching across the Atlantic to Saint-Domingue and Gulf Coast Louisiana. Participation in Catholic rituals of baptism and godparentage was a distinct feature of these networks. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, African and Eurafrican women saw their networks expand as geographies of social responsibility and customary relations exploded across the ocean. As the French Atlantic network of trade and slaves continued to make even freedom a dangerous terrain for all people of color, free women of African descent drew on kinship ties as security and support.

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[1] "Perier and De La Chaise to the Minister of the Marine," 30 January 1729, C13A 11, Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer (hereafter CAOM), f. 305.

Until the seventeenth century, residents of Senegal's Atlantic coast had little need of residing at Gorée. The tiny island lay a kilometer from the mainland, measuring about eight hundred meters from northeast to southwest and three hundred meters at the widest point. From a modest, flat-topped cliff in the southwest, Gorée's terrain sloped toward sandy flatland on the northern end of the island. The northern half of the island curved around a deep-water cove that faced northeast end, toward the Cape Verde peninsula. There was no fertile land or fresh water outside of the rainy season, but the time and distance required to sail between the island and the coast for supplies, while difficult, did not discourage the growth of a resident population.[2] Residents of coastal societies occasionally migrated to the island, where fish and shell seafood remains, stone tools, and pottery hint at a "permanent settlement by a small-scale society" established in the northwestern end, [3] In 1444, with the arrival of the Portuguese, and in the seventeenth century, the Dutch, English, and French, this indigenous population remained on the island. They served as free and enslaved laborers, translators, and traders. Others migrated back to the mainland.[4]

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[2] Derwent Whittlesey, "Dakar and the Other Cape Verde Settlements," *Geographical Review* 31, no. 4 (1941): 619. On Gorée: "It is only 850 meters long and 300 meters wide in the widest part. A quarter of its 16 hectares is a bare, basalt mesa, 30 meters high. The remainder is a platform a few meters above sea level, leading gently up from the cove to the base of the cliff. It has no source of water except rain, no wood for building or fuel, no sand for masonry, and no arable soil."

[3] Ibrahima Thiaw, "Every House Has a Story: the Archaeology of Gorée Island, Sénégal," in *Africa, Brazil and the Construction of Trans-Atlantic Black Identities,* ed. Livio Sansone, Elisée Soumonni, and Boubacar Barry, (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2008), 52-53.

[4] Thiaw, "Every House Has a Story" 53. Thiaw's work in this and with the Gorée Archaeological Project, corrects previous work that suggested Gorée lay uninhabited prior to European arrival. See James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 94; Whittlesey, "Dakar and the Other Cape Verde Settlements,"

However, Gorée was critical to European commercial relations with Senegambian power brokers. Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French ships used the Gorée's natural harbor to restock with water, food and trade goods—including slaves—before continuing down the coast. As early as 1606, the island hosted "two Dutch, three French and five English trading buildings." Local rulers taxed each for the cost of anchoring at the island.[5] By the 1640s, European and Eurafrican merchants sent expeditions from Gorée inland along river and overland trade routes. Trading companies hired local women and men to serve as *laptots* and *gourmettes*, employing them in variety of tasks including guides, informants, translators, guards and sailors.[6] Traders also employed free black sailors drawn from the growing resident population of sailors living on the island.[7]

The inhabitants of Saint-Louis, France's trading company headquarters for coastal Senegal, most closely resembled the resident African population at Gorée.[8] In 1659, the French founded Saint-Louis following two decades of raids and warfare. Like Gorée, the island lay within the territorial reach of a Wolof state, Waalo, whose

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620. Wood describes Gorée as an "open island" until 1617. W. Raymond Wood, "An Archaeological Appraisal of Early European Settlements in the Senegambia," *The Journal of African History* 8, no. 1 (1967): 51.

[5] Wood, "An Archaeological Appraisal," 51.

[6] Jean-Claude Nardin, "Recherches sur les 'gourmets' d'Afrique occidentale," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 53 (1966): 215-244.

[7] George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 61.

[8] The garrisoned *comptoirs*: Saint-Louis, Gorée and Albreda on what would become James Island on the Gambia. Unlike the *escales* (like Rufisque), at the *comptoirs*, the French built forts, established geographic and administrative control, and otherwise maintained armed defenses against rival European powers and African polities. This kind of mobilization was prohibited elsewhere along the coast

damel rented space to European traders, charged them for provisions like millet, water, and firewood, and negotiated annual dues and customs through intermediaries.[9] Also as on Gorée, trans-Atlantic trade brought a resident population of European officials, soldiers and traders who "married" African and Eurafrican women and began to transform the island into what one historian described as a "full scale *entrepôt* for slaves."[10]

Between 1645 and 1677, the French expelled the Dutch and the English to win control of trading points throughout the Senegal coast.[11] By 1680, the French emerged as the principal European trader power in coastal Senegal. From Gorée, the French traded with coastal *escales* or smaller trading posts at Rufisque, Portudal, and Joal. These *escales* bordered the states of Waalo, Cayor, Bawol and Siin, all Wolof principalities, whose rulers regulated trade through the *comptoirs* and *escales,* and along trade routes in the region. From Saint-Louis, the French extended their commercial influence along the Senegal River as far as its height to Galam (Fort St. Joseph).[12] However, French influence could not spread further than African polities were willing to allow—especially the Wolof.

French trading at Gorée and Saint-Louis coincided with the growth of the Wolof states of Waalo, Cayor and Bawol as the primary political entities along the coast. In the sixteenth century, Waalo, Cayor and Bawol seceded from the Jollof

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[9] Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 207.

[10] Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 49.

[11] The Portuguese, well situated at Congo and Angola, moved south toward the Southern Rivers to avoid increased competition and the British settled along the Gambia.

[12] Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 47.

Empire to form independent monarchies of their own. Though separate and distinct, these newly autonomous Wolof kingdoms remained linked to each other through strong political and cultural ties. Wolof society was hierarchical and patriarchal, with many subjects practicing some form of Islam.[13] The *damels* regulated trade in the region by charging customs, granting passports to the interior, and maintaining order. To extend their jurisdiction over Saint-Louis and Gorée, the *damels* sent *alcaides* to communicate with Europeans on behalf of the Wolof monarchy.[14] But neither Waalo nor Cayor nor Bawol showed interest in occupying the islands, preferring to lease them to Europeans instead.[15] As a result, control over commerce in the region fell more and more to a generation of free African and Eurafrican women and men residing on the coast, especially those at Saint-Louis and Gorée.

On Gorée and Saint-Louis, at the intersection of French and Wolof imperial ambitions, polyglot and cosmopolitan Franco-African societies formed. At Gorée, a small cohort of Eurafricans, descended from generations of trade and kinship between Portuguese traders and African women, chose to remain after the arrival of the French. A somewhat larger Eurafrican population already resided at Saint-Louis. These long-established families peddled their knowledge of the terrain and

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[13] Searing, *West African Slavery,* 410.

[14] Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa*, 59-60.

[15] The damel would have liked to allow all European powers equal rights to Gorée and the French demanded a monopoly. In 1697, Faal clashed with Director-General of the reorganized *Compagnie du Senegal*, André Brue. Brue attempted to dictate new trade agreements between the Company and the coast, including modified duties and a monopoly on all trade between Saint-Louis and Rufisque. When Faal refused and Brue persisted in seizing a British ship on the charge of illegal trade, Faal seized Brue and held him under guard at Gorée. The Damel-Teeñ then ordered all trade with the Company to cease, including provisions to the island, before he sacked Gorée, releasing Brue only after the Company agreed to pay even higher customs and at a loss of 6,000 livres worth of merchandise. Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 83.

commercial contacts to the French.[16] By 1688, Louis Chambonneau, commandant for the Compagnie du Sénégal at Saint-Louis, wrote his superiors in France about the possibility of founding an agricultural colony in the region similar to the plantation complex of the French Antilles.[17]

Opportunities for trade created by French military occupation attracted Africans from the coast and the interior. Some were independent *mahometantes* or Muslims of Senegal looking for new opportunities. Others were emissaries of Wolof rulers, sent to do trade on their behalf. Eager to do business with the garrison, African women and men furnished many of the goods and labor required to make Gorée and Saint-Louis habitable. Both settlements also had large numbers of domestic slaves. Africans and Eurafricans, familiar with slavery as a caste-system within Wolof hierarchy, did not equate bondage with perpetual enslavement. Large plantations did not yet exist and it was not necessary to create and subordinate a population of bonded laborers. Nonetheless, slave life at the Gorée and Saint-Louis was grueling. Comprised of Bambara, Mandingo, Sereer and Wolof slaves drawn from as far as Futa Toro and as near as the coast itself, women disproportionately filled the ranks of resident slaves.

Late seventeenth-century maps and military plans for Gorée suggest the impact of the developing resident population. In 1677, the most significant structures on the island were defensive: Fort Orange and Nassau, the forges, powder magazine,

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[16] Michel Jajolet de la Courbe, *Premier voyage du sieur de la Courbe fait a la coste d'Afrique en 1685*, ed. Prosper Cultru, (Paris: E. Champion, 1913), 193.

[17] Even at the time, his suggestions were untenable and underestimated the strength of the Wolof empire. Chambonneau would return to France in 1688.

hospital, and alarm system with a single road running between the two forts.[18] While the only mention of slaves or free Africans describes the location of the "*cases de nègres qui sont faites en maniere de glassiere*" or the cabins of Africans trained to use the canons, it was unlikely the roads or fortifications were built without their forced and voluntary labor.[19] The islands relied on Africans to build the structures and maintain the garrison.

By 1698, at least three different populations of color were present on the island.[20] Near the middle of the island, southeast of Fort Saint-François, were the *captiveries* or slave pens, "two parallel rectangular buildings separated by a central square, situated to the W-SW of the garden." Across the island and north of the Fort

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[18] n.a. "Plan de l'isle de Gorée avec ses deux forts et le combat que nous avons rendu le premier du mois de novembre 1677," [map]. November 1677. Scale not given. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Cartes et plans. Gallica: Bibliothèque Numérique. <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb40604619j> (July 22, 2011). Alarm systems included a pigeon house and a bugle horn.

[19] Raina Croff describes slave marked for transit employed as laborers on the island before they embarked. Their labor included cleaning ships and breaking rocks for roads and other projects. Raina Croff, "Village Des Bambaras: An Archaeology of Domestic Slavery and Urban Transformation on Gorée Island, Senegal, A.D. 17th--19th Centuries" (Yale University, 2009), 13. There is a possibility the map is also describing "the huts of Africans trained to use the sliding compass" but as the homes are located next to the powder magazine and on the road to Ft. Orange, it is more likely the Dutch West India Company situated or employed Africans as a first line of defense.

[20] Raymond Mauny, "Un plan de Gorée de la fin du XVIIe siècle," *Notes africaines: Bulletin d'information et de correspondence de l'Institut français d'Afrique noire* no. 41 (January, 1949): 18-19; Djibril Samb, ed., *Gorée et l'esclavage: Actes du Séminaire sur "Gorée dans la Traite Atlantique: Mythes et réalités" (Gorée, 7-8 avril 1997) (Gorée, 7-8 Avril 1997)*, (Dakar: IFAN, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, 2000), 123. Samb dates the map as between 1682 and 1687, but there is no documentation to confirm this. Mauny uses the "ruins of the old Fort Orange" to date the map as having been created between 1677 and the construction of Fort Saint-Michel at the site now known as Castel in 1689 by the Compagnie du Sénégal. A map of Gorée in 1695 supports this assertion. Mauny's text is the most detailed modern description of the map available. Hinchman and Croff also reference the map in their work on architecture and archaeology at Gorée. Hinchman: "Although Gorée was significant for trade in the seventeenth century, this did not immediately result in impressive architecture. In the early period, the populations--permanent and visiting--were served by a large fort that dominated the island and a cluster of temporary buildings, such as tent and modest straw structures, that no longer exist." Mark Hinchman, "House and Household on Gorée, Senegal, 1758-1837," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 65, no. 2 (June 2006): 166.

Saint-François were the "*cabins d'habitants*," the householders of the island, in "two groups of cabins, one of eight and the other of five." The "cabins of the *lapteaux*" lay south and west of the fort, "a group of eight huts and one small, rectangular, flat-roofed house" housing African and Eurafricans employed by the Company as laptots.

French cartographic plans must be taken with some latitude, as they describe officials' vision of transforming Gorée and Saint-Louis into overseas outposts. In 1688, only some two hundred Europeans resided in the entire Senegal concession, including officials, soldiers and *engagés* or indentured servants.[21] Living conditions were miserable. Over a decade after ousting of the Dutch at Gorée, Fort Saint-Michel remained in ruins. In a 1698 survey, Jacques de Laubiat, royal engineer, described the dismal state of the buildings.[22] Fort St. François, a stronghold from the outside, was "not supported by more than a thickness of brick, lacking mortar." Parts of the building "would need to be destroyed to make more rooms" and "entering rain had [saturated?] the walls and columns." Throughout the 1740s, fewer than forty troops remained stationed at forts like Gorée's, and mortality was high.[23] Many Europeans who arrived died within a few years of their arrival.[24] Missionaries found the population intransigent and returned to France.

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[21] Prosper Cultru, *Histoire du Sénégal du xv siècle à 1870* (Paris: Emile Larose, 1910), 115. Chambonneau defines the Senegal concession as including the comptoirs and escales mentioned, along with Désert (or French allied parts of Mauritania), Galam, and Albreda on the Gambia river.

[22] Raymond Mauny, *Guide De Gorée* (Dakar: Institut français d'Afrique noire, 1954) as cited in Marie-Hélène Knight-Baylac, "La vie à Gorée de 1677 à 1789," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 57, no. 4 (1970): 377-420, 388. In 1692, 35 troops resided at Gorée. Jay Jacques de Laubiat, "Procès verbal de l'état des forts de Gorée du 20 janvier 1698," 20 January 1698, Procès verbal, DPFC XIV Mémoires 76 No. 13, CAOM, 1-6.

[23] Knight-Baylac, "La vie à Gorée," 377-420, 388.

[24] In 1686, four Franciscans arrived at Saint-Louis: Pères Gaby, Tartary, Nison and de la Chaise. One remained at Saint-Louis for about a year before returning to France. The missionary

By the 1720s, networks of trade, intimacy, and bondage brought seemingly disparate peoples together as residents and workers on the islands. A 1723 map of Gorée differentiated the population of color into slaves marked for transit: *habitants*, *gourmettes chrestiens*, and *Bambaras*.[25] Deep within Fort Saint-François, in the shadow of military officials, sat the *captiverie* where slaves marked for Atlantic transit were contained until departure. Outside and beside the barracks, sat the homes of the *habitants* or householders of the island, primarily free people of African descent. From the entrance of Fort Saint-François, a road wound past a cemetery and a slaughterhouse toward the *village des gourmettes chrestiens* where men of color employed by the company lived. Furthest from the main fort sat the *village des Bambaras*, or, to the French, the village of slaves who did not live with their owners but were still employed on the island.[26]

priest they were replacing was on the verge of death himself. Priests and missionaries continued to arrive and fall ill or return to France within a year over the fifty years that followed. In all, sixteen missionaries or priests served in the entire Senegal concession. Joseph-Roger de Benoist, *Histoire de l'Église catholique au Sénégal: du milieu du XVe siècle à l'aube du troisième millénaire* (Paris: Karthala, 2008), 64-65.

[25] M. Wallons, "Profile et plan de l'isle de Gorée [Map]," March 1723, DFC 24PFB No. 22, CAOM.

[26] Croff, "Village Des Bambaras," 12-13; Searing, *West African Slavery*, 107; Thiaw, "Every House Has a Story," 54. See also Ousmane Sene, "Urbanisation, urbanisme et architecture dans l'île de Gorée aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles" (Universite de Dakar, 1972).

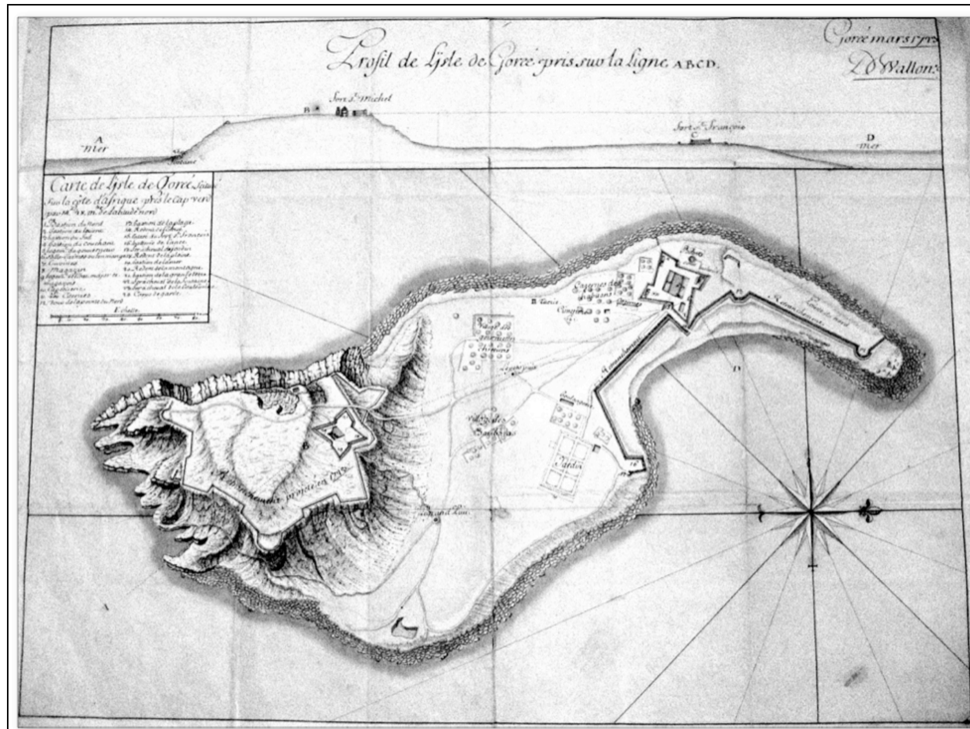

Figure 4.1. Gorée, 1723. Source: M. Wallons, "Profile et Plan de l'îsle de Gorée," March 1723, DFC 24PFB No. 22, Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer.

The neatly segregated population plotted on the 1723 map hint at the social fissures developing on the island as a result of French administration, Wolof hegemony, and Eurafrican commercial enterprise during the first decades of the eighteenth century. Each group lived in "villages" located at progressively greater distances from the main fort, parodying real or imagined social boundaries. The French also linked religious affiliation with status and labor: Free laborers were Christian while "Bambaras" were either Muslim or enslaved or both. In reality, as Ibrahima Thiaw has noted, "there are very few clues indicating such differentiation in archaeological patterns of uses of space or in the material record."[27] Instead, these

[27] Thiaw, "Every House Has a Story," 54.

divisions signaled the manner by which the French defined the African and Eurafrican communities developing on the islands, drawing distinctions along lines of status, religion, property-ownership, and color. The French, in seeking out potential political and commercial allies, gravitated toward Africans and Eurafricans who were not enslaved, who professed even nominal Catholic faith, and who had accumulated some property on the islands. These distinctions also portend ways the communities would define themselves as Atlantic Senegal and French Atlantic society intersected.

By the 1720s, the resident African population at Gorée and Saint-Louis was well situated and growing. African and Eurafrican women and men began to appear on trading company employee rolls. In 1720, the Compagnie des Indes paid François Aubin, a mulatto carpenter, one hundred and fifty *livres* for work completed.[28] In 1724, Antoine Le Bilan, *nègre libre*, worked for the company as a caulker while Malietal and another man, both *nègre libres*, were employed as translators.[29] Employees built families who resided at the *comptoirs*. After Pierre Charron, a sailor working for the company at Saint-Louis, passed away, his daughter, Marie Charron, *mulâtresse*, received his wages. Marie Thereze Yecam Semaine, *négresse*, received back wages after her husband, Joseph de Gorée, a *maître de barque*, passed away.[30]

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[28] Saint-Robert, "Estat de ce que les dits Employez doivent a la dit Compagnie par les comptes attestez par le dit Sieur Brue le 30 Avril 1720," April 1720, C6 6, CAOM, fol. 2.

[29] "Facture des marchandises, estancils et autres effets chargez du magasin du Senegal par ordre de Monsieur Julien Dubellay, Directeur et Commandant General sur le Brigantin Le Fier Capitaine Mr. La Rue pour porter a Arguin et remettre au Sr Delamotte garde magasin au d. lieu," 20 August 1724, C6 8, CAOM, fol. 3; "Facture des Marchandises chargées du Magazin du Senegal par Orde de Monsieur Julien Dubellay, Directeur," 28 October 1724, C6 8, CAOM, fol. 2.

[30] André Brue, "Estat des appointements qui sont deüs aux Employez de la Compagnie des Indes à la Concession du Senegal par les Comptes arrestez par Mr. Brüe Directeur et Commandant general le 30 Avril 1720 dont le montant à ete portés à leur credit par Mr. de Saint Robert dans leurs comptes nouveaux," 30 April 1720, C6 6, CAOM, fol. 3.

In 1724, Julien Dubellay, then Governor of Saint-Louis, sent a detachment of Bambara soldiers to Galam while their wives remained behind at Saint-Louis.[31] Others, like Michel de Gorée and Dominique, *nègres chrestiens*, traveled back and forth to France, following routes being created by Atlantic trade networks.[32]

African and Eurafrican women played a central role in the formation of Afro-Atlantic society at Gorée and Saint-Louis. Flouting regulation, company employees and soldiers eschewed lodging in the humid, drafty fort to live with African women in modest straw cabins around the island. Some hired African and Eurafrican women to work as domestics, cooks, laundresses, and millet pounders.[33] While the company purchased some provisions from the *damels* and received meager supplies from France, African women formed impromptu markets near the main fort and in common areas. The trade and hospitality of African women was such an important part of military life, soldiers mutinied when company officials attempted to expel their African and Eurafrican spouses and domestics from the island by enforcing the company ban on cohabitation.[34]

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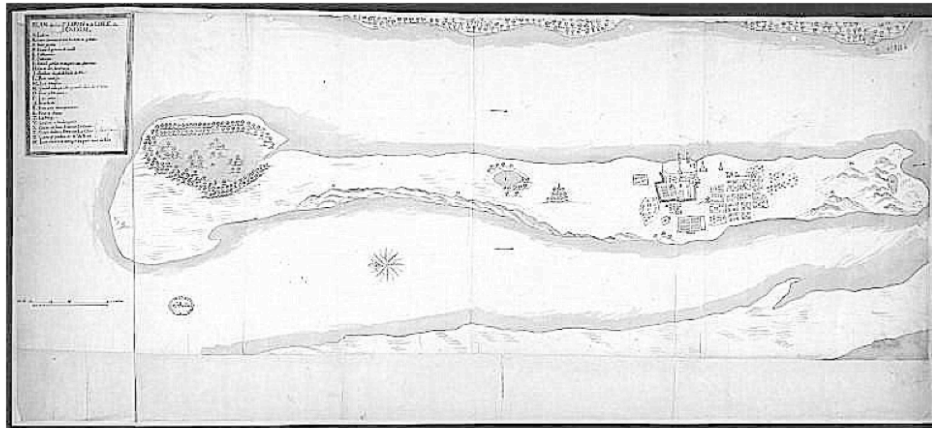
[31] Julien Dubellay to Messieurs le Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 25 May 1724, C6 8, CAOM.

[32] Julien Dubellay, "Rolle des passagers venus de France par la frigatte Le Prothée commande par Monsieur Hautier arrivée au Senegal," 16 November 1724, C6 8, CAOM, fol. 2.

[33] Abdoulaye Ly, *La Compagnie Du Sénégal* (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 263-264. The Compagnie du Sénégal issued regulations for its *comptoirs* in January 1688 that included prohibitions against living with *négresses*, going to their homes, letting them enter theirs, going to their villages and internal trade. Courbe, "Premier voyage," 26, 28, 105.

[34] A small showdown between de la Courbe and Chambonneau occurred when de la Courbe at Saint-Louis in 1685. de la Courbe expressed concern at the number of employees living with African women and possibly stealing the "best merchandise" of the Company for themselves. He confiscated the goods and expelled the women. While the goods (and presumably the women) were restored, the incident underscores women's vulnerability in these early decades of engagement. Courbe, "Premier



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Figure 4.2: Saint-Louis du Sénégal, Eighteenth Century. Source: “Plan du fort Saint-Louis et de l’isle du Sénégal,” [map]. 17--. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Cartes et plans. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b77594501> (accessed 26 June 2012).

Free African and Eurafrican women’s liaisons connected communities of color developing at Saint-Louis to those forming at Gorée and vice versa. In 1720, Marie Thereze Yacam Semaine resided among men and women working for the company at Saint-Louis. She was the *négresse* widow of Joseph de Gorée. Michel de Gorée, her son with Joseph, lived and worked at Saint-Louis. Gorée and Saint-Louis became hubs for African and Eurafrican women in liaisons with company employees, attracting women in similar relationships from the surrounding coast. In 1720, Paula, an older Eurafrican woman and the widow of company employee Charles Cavillon was also living at Gorée.[35] Paula was originally from Rufisque.

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voyage,” 25; Carson Ritchie, “Deux Textes Sur Le Sénégal (1673-1677),” *Bulletin de I.F.A.N.* 1 B, (1968): 294-298.

[35] Saint-Robert, “Estat de ce que les dits Employez doivent a la dit Compagnie par les comptes attestez par le dit Sieur Brue le 30 Avril 1720,” April 1720, CAOM, C6 6, folio n. 2-3. Also cited in Léonard Sainville, *Histoire du Sénégal depuis l'arrivée des Européens jusqu'à 1850* (Saint-Louis du Sénégal: C. R. D. S. Senegal, 1972), 71.

Forming unions with European officials, soldiers and traders, African and Eurafrican women integrated networks of kinship stretching beyond the coast. Michelle Bertin, *mulâtresse,* was the wife of Pierre LeLuc, a shipmaster at Saint-Louis. Michelle's *mulâtresse* sister, Anne Bertin, was the wife of a company clerk named Nicolas Robert. These liaisons between free African women and French men created a new generation of female habitants with direct links to France. In 1736, Anne Bertin followed her husband to France. The Bertin sisters joined women like Angelique Bottement as part of a generation of women building their lives at Saint-Louis. Bottement, a native of Paris and who may have been one of the few white women at Saint-Louis, engaged in a liaison with Jean Boutilly dit Le Rouge, a soldier employed by the Compagnie du Sénégal. Jean may have met Angelique in France, where she had been born, or in Senegal and the formal nature of their relationship remains unknown. After Jean's death in 1730, Angelique claimed to be Jean's widow.[36] In June 1731, Angelique remarried in Saint-Louis to Pierre Anger, a carpenter. While African women and French men entered into a range of partnerships, most remained unrecognized by Catholic officials until the nineteenth century. The marriage between Angelique Bottement and Pierre Anger was only one of a handful of official Catholic marriages listed in the civil registers.

In the absence of a recognized marriage, free African women used other religiously sanctioned familial affiliations, namely baptism and godparentage, to draw European, African, and Eurafrican women into dense webs of kinship. Five months after Jean's death, Angelique gave birth to a son. Friar F. Baston, priest at

[36] Act de Naissance, November 5, 1730, 16, État Civil de Saint-Louis du Sénégal, CAOM (hereafter Etat Civil SEN); Act de Mariage, June 12, 1731, 55, Etat Civil SEN.

Saint-Louis, baptized the boy Jacques Sebastien Boutilly.[37] Standing as godfather and godmother were Jacques Collé, native of France, and Michelle Bertin, *mulâtresse*. Michelle sponsored at least one other child baptized at Saint-Louis: Michelle, her namesake and the daughter of Marie Bertiche, *négresse chrestien*, and Mathurin La Place, *maître de barque.*[38] Through the 1730s, free women of African descent used Catholic ritual to cement ties and create sponsors, primarily choosing women of color as godmothers and white company employees as godfathers.[39] In sponsoring Jacques, Michelle added the boy to her filial responsibilities, the same obligations she extended to her other godchildren. Sponsoring multiple children was also commonplace for African and Eurafrican women on Gorée and Saint-Louis during the eighteenth century. Anne Bertin sponsored three children in the same year.

The ties free African and Eurafrican women created using baptism and godparentage included Muslim women and men, as well as African and Eurafricans of various racial designations. *Mahometante* mothers and fathers baptized their children and selected sponsors from among resident Eurafricans. Anne sponsored Jeanne, the daughter of Senegal *mulâtresse* Catin Magdeline; Hiarac, the ten-year old son of Hiarac and Circa, *mahometantes* or Muslims of Senegal, and Olimpiate

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[37] Act de Naissance, March 10, 1731, 49, État Civil SEN; Benoist, "Histoire de l'Église catholique au Sénégal," 63.

[38] Sadly, Bertiche's daughter died only a few days later

[39] This pattern mirrors patterns of baptisms seen in New Orleans during the second half of the eighteenth century. For New Orleans, Hanger argues that the goal may have been to "find godparents of equal or preferably higher status for their children and thereby gain privileges for those children." Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 105.

Radegonde, daughter of Catherine Andrieu and Jean Jacques Souttron, a company medic.[40] Christine Barthelome, *négresse libre*, sponsored Anne Magdeline Christine, daughter of Samague and Cafsou. Her father, Cafsou, declared he was a *mahometant*.[41] Some of these children were the products of the racial and cultural fusion occurring on the islands. Marie Baude, a *mulâtresse* born at Gorée but living at Saint-Louis, also sponsored multiple godchildren, including Catherine, the child of André Stuard Calfat, *nègre libre* and Guette, a *mahometante.* Anne Cornier, *mulâtresse*, and wife of a shipmaster named Jacques Arnaud, sponsored Anne, the daughter of Mousée, a *nègre mahometant* and Anne Combaquerel, a *négresse chrestien.*[42]

Free African and Eurafrican women also sponsored the children of slaves, creating kinship ties that transcended status. Along with Michelle and Catherine, Marie Baude stood as godmother for Marie, the daughter of Fatimah, a *mahometante* slave, and Charles, a slave belonging to Sebastien Devaulx, company director at Saint-Louis.[43] Marie Bartheleme was the godmother of Barbe, daughter of Mathilde who was a négresse *mahometante* and a slave belonging to Louison Marcher.[44] Anne

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[40] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, 18 November 1730, 22; Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, October 20, 1731, 76; Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, April 15, 1732, 97. Olimpiate's baptism not only included Anne and Nicolas as godparents but Pierre Aubry and Marie Baude, *mulâtresse*, served as witnesses.

[41] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, June 22, 1732, 104.

[42] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, June 22, 1732, 105.

[43] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, January 27, 1731, 87; Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, April 25, 1732, 95, 226. Guette also spelled Guet.

[44] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, October 13, 1730, 2.

Manbouë, a *négresse*, sponsored one-month old Pierre, the child of unnamed *mahometantes* and a slave.[45]

Even as they engaged in sponsorships and the cementing of fictive kinships, free African and Eurafrican women were not adverse to slaveownership and acquired bonded property of their own, including enslaved women. Owning slaves allowed free women of African descent to free themselves from household labor. Free African and Eurafrican women earned income by hiring their slaves to the trading companies and to company employees. Their slaves also served as conspicuous markers of wealth and status, distinguishing free African and Eurafrican women as property-owners and women of distinction. For enslaved women within multi-racial households like the Bertins, the everyday labor of cooking, cleaning, and maintaining households on the island subsumed their daily lives. They faced coercion and violence of the sort that played a role in the lives of all enslaved women. In 1725, Nicolas Després de Saint Robert, governor at Saint-Louis, threw a soldier named La Vigne into irons for raping and beating a young woman. The woman was a slave belonging to the Eurafrican spouse of a *maître de barque*. La Vigne was sentenced to "passer par les baquettes," a kind of military gauntlet "as an example for all others."[46] Threat of punishment did not halt assaults on black women, who remained fair game for men who arrived to labor for the trading companies.

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[45] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, October 19, 1731, 75. Pierre's godfather was Charles Thevenot.

[46] Nicolas Després de Saint Robert, "Nicolas Després De Saint Robert to Messieurs Les Directeurs De La Compagnie Des Indes," 18 June 1725, letter, CAOM, C6 9, f. 30-1.

Slaveownership complicated kinship ties by allowing free African and Eurafrican women to elevate their status and distinguish themselves from enslaved and property-less women. The religious rites of baptism could not compensate for the fissures that developed between women of African descent in disparate social statuses as Afro-Atlantic society formed at Gorée and Saint-Louis. Anne sponsored several children, but she did not sponsor the children of two of her own slaves, Alquemon and Bassé.[47] Alquemon became pregnant while hired to Charles Thevenot, a mixed-race sailor and trader at Saint-Louis. Instead, of Anne, Alquemon chose Catin Magdeline, *mulâtresse,* to sponsor her daughter Angelique. When Anne's other slave Bassé became pregnant in the service of M. Aubrey, a *garde magasin* or store keeper, Bassé asked Marie Baude to godmother her son Louis. At the same time, free African, Eurafrican and enslaved women continued to be tied together in a variety of ways. Abla, a *mahometante* and slave of Marie Harnagey, while hired out to Charles Thevenot, *mulâtre*, sailor and company employee, had a daughter by him named Anne.[48] Abla did not become a spouse of Thevenot and does not appear to have been freed. But she did have at least two daughters by him, both recognized by their father and baptized.[49] These myriad links of kinship, intimacy, and patronage occurring at

[47] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, February 16, 1732, 91; Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, February 24, 1732, 92.

[48] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, August 1, 1732, 107.

[49] Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, 19 December 1735, 290. Thevenot goes on to marry Marie-Isabelle Baude. By 1779, they were present at the marriage of their son, Jean-Jacques Thevenot to Marie Madeleine Estoupan de St. Jean, the daughter of Blaise Estoupan de St. Jean, a governor of Gorée and Louison Kiaka, his spouse a la mode du pays. Acte De Naissance, État Civil SEN, 23 April 1779, 685.

the *comptoirs* suggest tensions inherent to slaveownership and life in a slaveholding society.

Until the 1730s, the African and Eurafrican community at Saint-Louis and Gorée was open and fluid. While a social hierarchy did exist, it was possible for women and men to rise and fall within its ranks. Slaveownership spread along all tiers of society, preventing the rise of a dominant class. From Eurafrican women in relationships with European men to *mahometantes* and *nègres chrestiens* without other property, African and Eurafrican women and men of all social, religious, and economic backgrounds owned slaves. The boundary between free and slave was also porous. Occupation did not determine social position, as both free and enslaved women and men were spread across a range of vocations from traders to translators to cooks. Free African and Eurafrican women appeared on census rolls as bakers, gardeners, cooks, and healers.[50]

At the same time, French imperial dominion, slavery, patriarchal social relations, and chattel bondage colluded to constrain the lives of Africans and Eurafrican women living and working at the *comptoirs*. Trading company provenance gave local administrators the power to evict African women from their homes, destroy their markets, remove them from official buildings, and even expel them from the island. Employees, soldiers, and traders died or departed Gorée and Saint-Louis when reassigned to other parts of the empire, leaving the families they created to fend for themselves. Ongoing conflicts between English, Dutch, French and Wolof traders also disrupted women's lives on the islands. Desertion and

[50] "Rolle general des Blancs et Nègres au service de la Compagnies des Indes a la concession du Senegal les 1 May 1736," 1 May 1736, C6 11, CAOM; Searing, *West African Slavery*, 93.

widowhood, forced evacuations, narrow escapes, and the violence of eviction became a part of African and Eurafrican women's Atlantic encounter.

Caught between the desire of trading company authorities to cultivate good business relationships and the Company's codified disdain for residents of color on the islands, free African and Eurafrican women at Gorée and Saint-Louis navigated life at the *comptoirs* carefully. For free African and Eurafrican women with property, maintaining their status required them to form liaisons with European, African, and Eurafrican men, and to create links of kinship and patronage with European, African, and Eurafrican women. Baptism, godparentage, and slaveownership provided free African and Eurafrican women at Gorée and Saint-Louis an opportunity to participate in Catholic ritual and display their status using markers even the French would understand. African and Eurafrican women sought powerful allies and patrons in their everyday lives, but even within these relationships, some held more power and privilege than others. Trading company employment was offered to women and men of color, but women's sex dictated the labor roles available to them.[51] The work available was rigorous and exhausting, employing free women with no property and enslaved women who labored in households across the islands. The search for opportunity may have led Madam Pinet to follow the gunsmith Jean Pinet across the Atlantic to the newly christened port of New Orleans.

Nonetheless, for free women of color, traveling the French Atlantic was a danger in and of itself. Women of African descent moving across the Atlantic

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[51] Michael David Marcson, "European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: Saint Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854" (Princeton University, 1976), 23-24. By the late eighteenth-century, the rags-to-riches uplift vision of the *laptots* was quite clear.

journeyed through a world populated by hostile colonial administrations, and faced the possibility enslavement. They moved through the Atlantic for different if intersecting reasons, and their experiences of travel varied according to markers such as status, race, and color. For the vast majority of African women leaving Saint-Louis or Gorée, the experience of Atlantic travel involved enslavement, sale, and the confinement of slave ships. For free women of color, travel between colonies and *metropoles* of the Atlantic world was more varied. Free women of color traveled the Atlantic world as labor, in particular as domestics, and as wives, consorts, and daughters sent to reunite with—or on behalf of—other kin. Freedom of movement, even when traveling with free status, did not prevent free women of color from being subject to the sexual and racial violence implicit in the slave societies they traversed.

A handful of free and enslaved women of African descent also traveled the Atlantic world as part of the colonial enterprise.[52] They labored on ships and at forts along trade routes that emerged between France, Senegal, and throughout the French Atlantic and were employed as domestic help when colonial officials, traders and slaveowners traveled. When the Crown passed a royal ordinance barring slaves from traveling to France with their owners, he targeted the movement of enslaved

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[52] For a discussion of women and the slave trade see Barbara Bush, "'Daughters of injur'd Africk': African women and the transatlantic slave trade," *Women's History Review* 17, no. 5 (2008): 673-698; Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, eds., *Women and Slavery in Africa*, (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1983). For discussions of the French slave trade see David Geggus, "The French Slave Trade: An Overview," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (2001): 119-138; David Geggus, "Sex Ratio, Age and Ethnicity in the Atlantic Slave Trade: data from French shipping and plantation records," *The Journal of African History* 30, no. 1 (1989): 23-44; Jean Mettas, Serge Daget, and Michelle Daget, eds., *Répertoire des expéditions négrières françaises au XVIIIe siècle*, 1 (Paris: Société française d'histoire d'outre-mer, 1984); Robert L. Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century: An Old Regime Business* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979).

women.[53] But regardless of the royal edict, elite travelers continued to employ women of color in a service capacity. In 1725, Dibor, a *négresse* slave, was sent from Saint-Louis to L'Orient to attend André Berou, a *mulâtre* child of seven years old, at the request of M. Franquerie Brue.[54] Free women of color also traveled as part of their own commercial enterprises. This travel was most often local, as women facilitated and managed their own underground economies. Marie Françoise, *mulâtresse* based at Saint-Louis and the wife of Jean Baptiste Soupin, a *maître de barque*, found herself implicated in illegal contraband company trading when the Company seized a number of goods traded illegally to Galam.[55]

As the kinship networks that women of color had built expanded beyond their locale, free women of African descent began to travel the French Atlantic as wives and kin. Imperial needs and local demands brought officials, soldiers and traders to Saint-Louis and Gorée. Those men who did not succumb to disease and disorder in coastal Senegal were often reassigned throughout the colonies or recalled to France. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, many free African and Eurafrican women married several times as employees were replaced and they were left or themselves decided to remain behind. But some, like Anne Bertin and, a woman named Madame Pinet, decided to follow their husbands to new lands.

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[53] "Lettre du Ministre sur les Nègres Amenés en France, June 10, 1707," in *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises de l'Amérique sous le Vent* (hereafter *Loix et constitutions*), ed. Louis-Élie de Saint-Méry Moreau, (Paris: chez l'Auteur., 1784-1790), 2:99.

[54] Julien Dubellay to Messieurs les Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 21 January 1725, C6 9, CAOM, fol. 22.

[55] Julien Dubellay, "Procès verbal de confiscation de deux milles trois onces quatre gros d'or et des appts et billet des hardes et effets particuls sur la Compagnie de Indes du S. Pierre Charpentier Directeur, et commandant au Fort St. Joseph au Galam," 27 November 1724, Procès verbal, C6 8, CAOM, fol. 1.

One woman's story, while unique, demonstrates the ways French Atlantic commercial and labor networks being creating also generated novel transoceanic kinships ties. It also demonstrates how freedom changed as free women of African descent traveled the Atlantic world. In 1729, a Eurafrican woman crossed the Atlantic from Gorée to Gulf Coast Louisiana. She arrived at Balize, a tiny French outpost on the mouth of the Mississippi River. Like so many Africans crossing the Atlantic in the first decades of the eighteenth century, she arrived on a *négrier*, a French slave ship, in the company of over two hundred shackled men, women, and children. Like them, she endured a grueling journey that many of her shipmates did not survive. However, and unlike the majority of the Africans making the same voyage to Louisiana, she did not arrive enslaved. Madame Pinet was a slaveowning free woman of color, a *mulâtresse* whose free husband awaited her arrival in Louisiana.[56] Her journey from Gorée to New Orleans, with stops at Saint-Louis in Senegal and Les Cayes on Saint-Domingue's southern coast, occurred as the dramatic forces creating the early French Atlantic began to transform the lives of women of African descent in these three places.[57]

During the 1720s, amid the turbulent press of conflicting cultures and peoples that characterized Saint-Louis and Gorée, a *mulâtresse* of unknown forename formed

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[56] Madame Pinet's first name is never revealed.

[57] The mulâtresse wife of Jean Pinet was introduced into the scholarly record by Gwendolyn Midlo Hall. Since then, she's appeared in work by Peter Caron, Shannon Lee Dawdy and Jennifer Spear as mentions. This is the first attempt at a gendered analysis of her world at the time she made her journey across the Atlantic. See Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 128; Peter Caron, "'Of a nation which the others do not understand:' Bambara slaves and African ethnicity in colonial Louisiana, 1718-1760," *Slavery and Abolition* 18, no. 1 (1997), 11-12; Jennifer Spear, M., *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 80, 90.

a liaison with Jean Pinet, gunsmith for the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales.[58] It is unclear where the *mulâtresse* first encountered the gunsmith and when they became a couple. However, Madame Pinet and her husband lived on the African coast during the years the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales administration controlled the islands. At that time, Gorée and Saint-Louis suffered from revolts, mutinies, and desertions by both black and white. In 1724, fifty-five slaves rose up, broke out of the *captiverie,* and killed a guard before French soldiers could quell the insurrection. Two slaves were killed, twelve were wounded.[59] Soldiers were almost as disorderly as slaves. Company officials complained of deserting, defiant soldiers. In 1725, Nicolas Després de Saint Robert, company director at Saint-Louis, reported tensions developing between company employees and black men and women residing on the island. Disorder was as common at the top of the social hierarchy as at the bottom. In 1726, Simon Lafore, then governor of Gorée, stole a ship with forty slaves on it, and deserted the island for Rufisque, accompanied by a chaplain and a company clerk.[60]

The French colonial order gave company officials, religious authorities, and artisans privileges above those offered soldiers, engagés, and slaves. As an artisan, Jean Pinet's training as a gunsmith earned him wages and some small distinction within the island's hierarchy. In 1725, when the Company expelled him from the

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[58] Brue, "Estat des appointements qui sont deüs aux Employez de la Compagnie des Indes," 30 April 1720, C6 6, CAOM, fol. 3.

[59] Julien Dubellay, "Procès verbal de la Revolte des Captifs arrivée a Gorée le 19 8bre 1724," 19 October 1724, Procès verbal, C6 8, CAOM, 2.; Hall, "Africans in Colonial Louisiana," 68.

[60] Plumet to Messieurs les Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes en leur hotel à Paris," 7 July 1726, C6 10, CAOM, fol. 2-6.

Senegal concession and forbade him to return, his training served him well. A year later, Jean Pinet secured employment in New Orleans, another rugged French colonial outpost in dire need of his skills.[61] Pinet worked as a gunsmith and was required to take on an apprentice as part of the terms of his employment.[62] Pinet received three hundred *livres* for this work. Pinet also found occasional work for the Company as a *Bambara* translator.[63] Though expelled from Senegal, Pinet appears to have prospered on the other side of the Atlantic.

In 1728, Madame Pinet followed Jean across the Atlantic. Why it took two years for Madame Pinet to accompany her husband remains a mystery. The state of the Pinet union and whether they were married *a la mode du pays*, in the Catholic tradition, or at all is as impossible to determine, as is any levels of coercion or consent in their relationship.[64] While frustrating, these silences reveal the ambiguities of Atlantic slaving and life at Atlantic ports. As a free African woman in a relationship with a company employee, Madame Pinet was a member of a distinct cadre of free African and Eurafrican women participating in multiracial intimate relations at Saint-Louis and Gorée. At the same time, she may have chosen to depart Gorée because she lacked the ancestral commercial connections of women like Marie and Anne Bertin. But Madame Pinet was a person of standing, as indicated by her ownership of slaves. Alongside her relationship with Jean, slaveownership almost certainly played

[61] "Délibérations du Conseil Supérieur de la Louisiana," 26 January 1726, C13A 9, CAOM, fol. 329.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Caron, "'Of a nation which the others do not understand,'" 107-108.

[64] No marriage record was found.

a role in her daily life and status at Gorée. And unlike Anne Bertin, Madame Pinet was unwilling to leave her human property behind when she traveled to Louisiana, and boarded *La Galathée* in the company of her slaves. By the fall of 1728, she and her slaves were en route to "Mississipi."[65]

[65] Cdt. Préville-Quinet, Journaux du Bord de La Galathée, Archives de la Marine, Service Hydrographique, 4 JJ 16: 35 bis, Louisiana Colonial Records Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC..

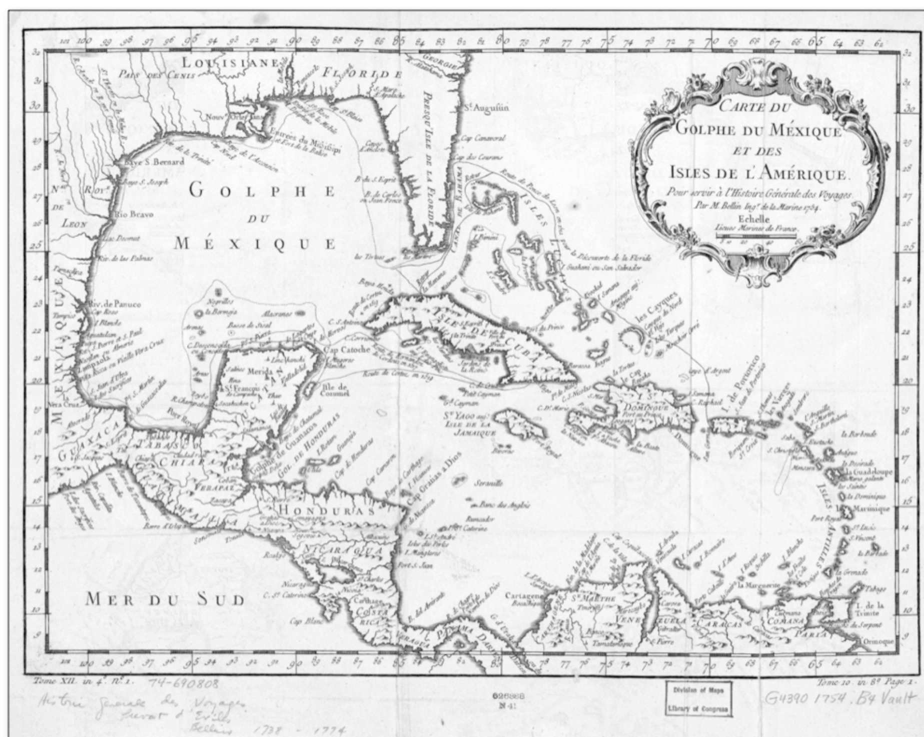

Figure 4.3. Gulf of Mexico, 1754. Source: Jacques Nicolas Bellin, "Carte du Golphe du Méxique et des isles de l'Amerique," [map]. 1754. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4390.ar168300> [accessed 9 April 2012).

Departure protocols on board *La Galathée* pointed to the new terrain Madame Pinet entered.[66] In the margins of his ship log, Captain Préville-Quinet wrote, "Took on one *mulâtresse* passenger bound for Mississippi." Thus identified, *la femme* Pinet stepped onto the ship a free woman of color of possibly mixed racial origins traveling by choice. Pinet's wife was conspicuous on a ship of slaves, a prelude to free black

[66] Gilroy: "Marked by its European origins, modern black political culture has always been more interested in the relationship of identity to roots and rootedness than in seeing identity as a process of movement and mediation that is more appropriately approached via the homonym routes." Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Verso, 1993), 19.

life across the Atlantic.[67] At Gorée and Saint-Louis, free status and race mixture were familiar and unremarkable given both the motley community in formation and the absence of chattel slavery on the African coast. On the slave ship, black bondage dominated and the contrast was both harsh and abrupt.[68] On *La Galathée,* the majority of the travelers, white and black, were also men. Madame Pinet was the only free person of color referenced.

If status, property, and commercial acumen signaled the rise to power of free women of color at Gorée and Saint-Louis, voyages on slave ships offered a glimpse into the subterranean depths of bondage. Atlantic travel meant journeying through a world characterized by profound uncertainty of all kind, exposing women of African and Eurafrican decent to the possibility of enslavement or forced servitude, threats posed by pirates, imperial warfare and sexual violence, disease, and the suddenness of hurricanes and floods throughout their travels.[69] The slave ship was a brutal a

[67] The mystification of the slave ship stems from the horror its technology embodies but also from its ability to be both mobile and immobile, historical and ahistorical, all at once. Gilroy described slave ships as "the living means by which the points within the Atlantic world were joined. They were mobile elements that stood for the shifting spaces in between the fixed places that they connected. Accordingly, they need to be thought of as cultural and political units rather than abstract embodiments of the triangular trade. They were something more--a means to conduct political dissent and possibly a distinct mode of cultural production." Marcus Rediker emphasized the technology, political economy and carceral elements of the slave ship and named those "cultural and political units" Gilroy mentioned: "What each of them [a captain, a sailor and an African captive] found in the slave ship was a strange and potent combination of war machine, mobile prison, and factory." Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 16; Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Viking Press, 2007), 9. At the same time, while speaking more broadly of the middle passage and the transatlantic slave trade, Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods return to the last point made by Gilroy--the question of dissent and black cultural production. Centering black geographies and seeing "the Atlantic Ocean as a geographic region that can also represent the political histories of the disappeared." Katherine McKittrick and Clyde A. Woods, "No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean," in *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place* (New York: South End Press, 2007): 4.

[68] The slaves were "naigres" or "naigresses."

[69] Maritime histories of the Atlantic world have generated much attention over the last decade. See Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001); Stephanie E.

landscape built on discipline, punishment and surveillance.[70] It was also "cultural and political units," maritime territories ruled by captains, and populated by heterogeneous crews, occasional passengers, and enslaved Africans seized for sale across the Atlantic.[71] For captains, crews and passengers, the voyage across the Atlantic was a violent and terrifying affair through rough seas rife with sickness, dangerous weather, and the possibility of slave revolt. For the enslaved, the Middle Passage was a traumatic forced migration every day of which was meant to commodify, humiliate, and dehumanize.[72] The slave ship's itinerary provided everyone on board a practicum in the ambiguities of transforming human beings into chattel and the problematic and complicated nature of defining freedom.

The voyage of *La Galathée* was especially fraught. *La Galathée* left L'Orient in May 1728 and arrived at Saint-Louis near the end of June.[73] The frigate loaded

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Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage From Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Viking Press, 2007); Sowande' Mustakeem, "'I Never Have Such a Sickly Ship Before:' Diet, Disease, and Mortality in 18th-Century Atlantic Slaving Voyages," *Journal of African American History* 93, no. 4 (2008): 474-496; Bush, "'Daughters of injur'd Africk;'" Philip D. Morgan, "Maritime Slavery," *Slavery and Abolition* 31, no. 3 (2010): 311-326. Although there is much less work on the French slave trade and fewer maritime histories focusing on French enclaves in West Africa like Saint-Louis and Gorée, a few scholars discuss the slave trade and African ethnicity between Senegal and New Orleans including Thomas N. Ingersoll, "The Slave Trade and the Ethnic Diversity of Louisiana's Slave Community," *Louisiana History* 37, no. 2 (1996), 133-161; Caron, "'Of a nation which the others do not understand;'" Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[70] Rediker, "The Slave Ship," 6, 8.

[71] Gilroy, "The Black Atlantic," 16.

[72] Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage From Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[73] The Compagnie des Indes Occidentales was based at L'Orient. Préville-Quinet, Journaux du Bord de La Galathée, May 27, 1728. See also Voyages Database, 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&shipname=galathee] (accessed January 28, 2012).

131 *nègres*, *négresses,* and *negrillons* at Saint-Louis before proceeding to Gorée. Death stalked the ship. One sailor drowned and a slave man died of unspecified causes. At Gorée, *La Galathée* embarked with some four hundred "*nègres, négresses, negrillons, rapasses, and rapadilles*" for sale in Louisiana, along with water and food supplies. Ship-wide illnesses like scurvy were a further danger, attacking travelers regardless of race, sex or status.[74] Two days after leaving Senegal's coast, men, women and children began to die in ever-increasing numbers. A slave or crew member died nearly every day of travel between Gorée and the port of Les Cayes on Saint-Domingue's southern coast, where the ship stopped to rest.[75]

In the 1720s, Les Cayes was the center of commerce in Saint-Domingue's Southern Province. Les Cayes location gave traders an opportunity to build commercial networks between Jamaica to the east and southern Cuba to the north. Contraband sugar, slaves, cattle, and subsistence products circulated between the three colonies openly, and the illicit exchange became crucial to the survival of residents of the southern coast. Les Cayes, and its satellite settlements of Jacmel and Saint-Louis du Saint Domingue were isolated, and the ports received only sporadic supplies from France. But in 1698, the king granted the southern province to the Compagnie de Saint-Domingue. Company officials hoped to capitalize on the trade with the English and Spanish and provide African slaves to the rest of the colony.

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[74] By the time Préville-Quinet arrived in Louisiana, he was also too ill for the return voyage to France.

[75] Préville-Quinet, Journaux du Bord de La Galathée, August 21, 1728, November 15, 1728. While anchored, a sailor named Henry Pischot from Dieppe died, most likely from drowning, and one of the male slaves died.

The efforts of the Compagnie de Saint-Domingue attracted settlers from France and around the Caribbean. By 1713, over six hundred settlers had migrated to the southern coast as soldiers, traders, and laborers.[76] In addition, this company tenure led to the growth of a diverse population of color. The population of color in and around Les Cayes included free people of color migrating from other parts of the Caribbean and portions of the Spanish mainland, as well as enslaved women and men who arrived via the Atlantic and Caribbean slave trades. In 1703, four free people of color, including one woman, owned enough property to be counted in a Company census.[77] Fifteen years later, across the *quartier* or principality of St. Louis, officials counted twenty-five free men of color old enough to bear arms.[78] By 1730, free people of color were building lives for themselves in the southern province. At least thirty-two marriages with people of color were contracted, along with ninety-seven recorded births. Additionally, some thirty free men of color and nearly as many children made Les Cayes their home.[79] The Compagnie de Saint-Domingue eventually failed, but it left behind a fort, administrative buildings, churches, and a distinct, multi-racial population.[80] The Compagnie de Saint-Domingue's license was

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[76] "Recensement general de la colonie de la Compagnie Royalle de St. Domingue," 15 May 1713, CAOM, G1 509, 12.

[77] "Recensement general de la colonnie de la Compagnie Royalle de St. Domingue fait au mois de may 1703," 15 May 1703, G1 509, CAOM.

[78] "Etat des hommes, garçons, engagés, mulâtres, et nègres libres portants armes tiré des recensements du commence de Janvier 1718," January 1718, CAOM, G1 509.

[79] Jacques Houdaille, "Trois paroisses de Saint-Domingue au XVIIIe siècle," *Population* 18, no. 1 (1963 Jan/Mar): 96, 98; "Récensement Général des Dependances des Resources des Conseils Superieurs du Petit Goave et du Cap pour l'Année 1730," 1730, CAOM, G1 509. According to Houdaille, some 11% of these marriages were illegitimate and may have been interracial.

[80] Pierre de Vaissière, *Les origines de la colonisation et la formation de la société française à Saint-Domingue* (Paris: Bureaux de la Revue, 1906), 28-30. The Company failed in 1724.

transferred to the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales, making Les Cayes a welcome stop for ships traveling between Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana.

In December 1728, *La Galathée* stopped at Les Cayes to recover from the debilitating illnesses and mortality rate, drawing on company resources to house, treat, and serve the sick crew. Captain Préville-Quinet complained, "All of the crew are ill and in the Company building with all of the sick blacks."[81] Scurvy, drowning, and general sickness killed many of the slaves and much of the crew. Forty-five slaves and seven crew members were too sick to continue and remained at Les Cayes.[82] Préville-Quinet rested at Les Cayes for several days, choosing from among sailors and laborers residing there to replenish his crew. Madame Pinet and her slaves may have disembarked, taking the opportunity to rest and interact with the community. The respite, however, was short, and by mid-December, *La Galathée* was back at sea and headed to the Gulf Coast.

As Préville-Quinet proceeded towards Louisiana, those onboard on *La Galathée* continued to fall ill. Desperation may have led five slaves to attempt to steal food from the stores, despite risk of capture and punishment.[83] When *La Galathée* arrived at Biloxi, just over two hundred slaves remained. Not even the captain survived unscathed. In New Orleans, Préville-Quinet was forced to relinquish command of the ship to a new captain because he was too sick to proceed.

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[81] Préville-Quinet, Journaux du Bord de La Galathée, December 1, 1728.

[82] The seven crew members who disembarked were replaced by ten new ones. The name of at least one replacement sailor, François Sauvage of St. J--, suggests the possibility some of the new crew members were of mixed race. At least one other, Bernard Rivière of Quebec, hailed from France's colonies in the New World.

[83] The night of January 7, 1729, the captain caught five slaves stealing from the store room. He ordered one hung and the other four keelhauled.

By the time Madame Pinet arrived on the Gulf Coast, she had witnessed and experienced the wide range of women's suffering aboard slave ships. Women's misery aboard ships like *La Galathée* was acute. Ship-wide illnesses like scurvy caused great distress. At least nine of the thirty-three slaves who died during the first crossing between Gorée and Les Cayes were women. Along with illness, the ocean was a constant threat. Drowning claimed the life of one *négresse*. Children also succumbed to the dangers of the Middle Passage. At least two deaths were suckling infants, and their loss would have had a deep impact on everyone on board.

Madame Pinet may also have witnessed the wide range of women's resistance on board slave ships. Black women were active in resistance and revolt on Atlantic slave voyages. Women often remained segregated but unchained on board slave ships, making their role in shipboard revolts a crucial one. Although no outright revolt occurred, the terrible conditions on board *La Galathée* made it likely at least one of the slaves who participated in the raid on the ship's stores was female.

Madame Pinet's voyage across the Atlantic was less than pleasant. Her arrival in Louisiana would be no less fraught. Established in 1718, on a crescent strip of land near the mouth of the Mississippi River, New Orleans began as a swampy outpost populated by primarily by French colonial officials, soldiers and traders.[84] Just as at Saint-Louis and Gorée, the French chose to establish themselves at the location for strategic purposes.[85] France's first priority was securing the Gulf Coast

[84] "…in 1718, the regency government of the duke of Orléans established the town of Nouvelle Orléans one hundred miles above the mouth of the Mississippi River." Thomas N. Ingersoll, "Free Blacks in a Slave Society: New Orleans, 1718-1812," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (April 1991): 174. Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville was named company director.

[85] Craig E. Colten, *An Unnatural Metropolis: Wresting New Orleans From Nature* Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 3.

against European rivals and creating commercial ties between New France and French colonies in the Caribbean. New Orleans was not the first garrisoned post established by the French along the Gulf Coast, but its proximity to the Gulf increased its significance to France.[86] The site, however, was marshy and intemperate. The high ground along the river created a natural levee against the river's seasonal floods, but the storms themselves should have discouraged the creation of a permanent settlement. Unruly French-Canadian *coureur-de-bois* or fur traders, merchants, and sailors also found their way to the outpost, circling through New Orleans to barter and trade. Tensions between Native Americans and French colonists contributed to a charged atmosphere. The Natchez, Chickasaw and Choctaw polities split their loyalties between the French, British, and Spanish, respectively—trading, raiding, and forming alliances that transformed over time.

Of the early Gulf Coast outposts established by the French, Mobile most closely mirrored New Orleans. Like New Orleans, Mobile was a strategic encampment. Founded in 1702, as the French Fort Louis on the Mobile River, Mobile was meant to replace the first French outpost at Biloxi Bay, and serve as a permanent settlement supporting commercial interests at Pensacola, while connecting the French interest at Dauphine Island. But also like New Orleans, the settlement was environmentally unstable. In 1711, the entire garrison was forced to move the

[86] Pierre Margry, *Découvertes et établissements des français dans l'Ouest et dans le Sud de L'Amérique Septentrionale (1614-1754)*, (Paris: D. Jouaust, 1883), 5:5:599-5:5:608; Thomas N. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon in Early New Orleans: The First Slave Society in the Deep South, 1718-1819*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 6. Beginning in 1699, with a French outpost at Biloxi Bay, the French established a series of forts were founded along the Gulf Coast, led by French-Canadian explorers like the brothers Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville and Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville. New Orleans was especially attractive because of "an old Indian portage to a series of huge lakes" linking the Gulf to the delta. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon*, 6.

location to "New Mobile," which was less prone to floods.[87] Finally, like New Orleans, the town itself lay within the shadow of Native American polities, the closest being the Mobilians, and the largest being the Choctaw and Chickasaw. Mobile was also populated by a mélange of ungovernable characters including colonial officials, soldiers, and fur traders.

The dismal conditions at New Orleans and Mobile helped discourage large-scale migration from France. As a result, French colonization of New Orleans and Mobile mirrored French migration to Saint-Louis and Gorée—the first arrivals were primarily white men, and employed by or indentured to the company.[88] Few women arrived. A significant number of those who disembarked were prisoners, orphans, and impoverished persons forcibly swept from the cities of France itself.[89] Even as colonists arrived, death and out-migration plagued the population. Poverty and drudgery claimed lives and drove colonists back to France. A number of inhabitants, men in particular, shunned life at the outposts, lodging instead among the Indian villages, marrying indigenous women. A 1708 general census at Mobile recorded almost three hundred officials, soldiers, and traders in all, including Indian slaves.[90]

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[87] Jay Higginbotham, *Old Mobile: Fort Louis de la Louisiane, 1702-1711* (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1991).

[88] Jerah Johnson, "Colonial New Orleans: a Fragment of the Eighteenth-Century French Ethos," in *Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization,* edited by Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 12-57.

[89] Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 5; Johnson, "Colonial New Orleans," 32-33. One exception to the gender distribution of settlers was the famous "casket girls."

[90] "Recensement de la colonies de la Louisiane (garnison, habitants, bestiaux)," 12 August 1708, census, C13A 2, Historic New Orleans Collection (hereafter HNOC), fol 225-228.

About sixty French-Canadians were listed as living a "*mauvaise vie libertine avec les sauvegesses*."

After 1719, African slaves began to arrive in great numbers, a majority from Senegambia. Prier to 1743, all of the slave ships disembarking in Louisiana sailed under the French flag. Of those, sixteen purchased or loaded their slaves at either Gorée or Saint-Louis, often both.[91] Twenty-one of twenty-three arrived before 1730, creating an immediate and concentrated critical mass of Bambara, Wolof, Sereer, and Kongo or Angolan slaves. Slaves at New Orleans and Mobile were put to work constructing buildings, reinforcing fortifications, and maintaining the levees that protected the towns from flooding. Even though several large landowners did request slaves to grow cotton, rice and sugar on surrounding concessions, subsistence work took precedence over plantation work. African women and men became farmers and traders, participating in the frontier-exchange economy with *coureur-de-bois* and Indian agents, selling goods in small markets along the levee and forming commercial ties across race and status with colonists.[92]

At New Orleans and Mobile, the turbulence of frontier life created dynamics of race mixture, negotiation, and confrontation that mirrored those at Saint-Louis and Gorée. Like Gorée and Saint-Louis, indigenous populations surrounding New Orleans and Mobile capitalized on opportunities to trade with the French, purchase

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[91] Daniel H. Usner, "From African Captivity to American Slavery: The Introduction of Black Laborers to Colonial Louisiana," *Louisiana History* 20, no. 1 (1979): 25-48; Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 59; Voyages Database, 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mjslptimp=21600] (accessed January 30, 2012).

[92] Daniel H. Usner, "The Frontier Exchange Economy of the Lower Mississippi Valley in the Eighteenth Century," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (April 1987): 166-192.

slaves, and acquire goods. Natchez, Choctaw and Chickasaw cultivated trade relationships with the French and defended their alliances with the British and Spanish by raiding settlements. Also like Gorée and Saint-Louis, labor at New Orleans and Mobile often consisted of construction, farming and general domestic duties.

Of course, the coastal Senegal and Gulf Coast enclaves were not identical. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, the majority of Africans and Eurafricans living around the islands were not enslaved, while the vast majority of people of African descent were enslaved at New Orleans and Mobile.[93] The officials at Gorée and Saint-Louis failed to systematize racial difference. The provenance of free Africans surrounding the slaveholding *comptoirs* and the proclivity of whites to revolt against enforcement prevented concerted regulation until the second half of the eighteenth century. At New Orleans and Mobile, however, the formation of the Superior Council as early as 1712 and the promulgation of regulations like the 1724 *Code Noir* signaled early and institutional enforcement of status and race along the Gulf Coast.[94]

Company employees of color, the Natchez veterans, their wives, and other people of color who secured their freedom in the first decades of the eighteenth century, immediately began to establish themselves within Gulf society through the property acquisition. In 1727, the free wife of Louis Congo lived with her husband

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[93] Plantation agriculture would not develop in Senegal until the nineteenth century.

[94] Hans W. Baade, "The Gens de Couleur of Louisiana: Comparative Slave Law in Microcosm," *Cardozo Law Review* 18, (1996), 541. Also see Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon*.

and another couple on Bayou Road.[95] In 1731, Marie, a *négresse*, owned property on Bourbon Street, between Anne and Dumaine.[96] Another free person of color, Xavier, is listed as living on Bourbon a year later. Simon and Scipion, free men of color, owned property along the banks of the river just outside of town.[97] Other people of color resided in households adjoining their employers. A domestic of M. Duoy secured ownership of a residence on Rue Royale.[98] Finally, and similar to Gorée and Saint-Louis, some slaves lived with the independence of free people of color. A slave belonging to Mezelliers inhabited property on Rue Royale, down the street from the domestic of Monsieur Duoy.

The presence of a small population of free people of color meant that officials in New Orleans were familiar with free women of color when *la femme* Pinet arrived. *La Galathée* anchored as so many ships had done; first at Balize to wait for a company official to meet the ship in a river boat and secure the remaining 273 slaves for their journey to New Orleans.[99] But all did not go routinely for Madame Pinet. Having seen and perhaps experienced the widest range of illness, punishment and rebellion available in the world of Atlantic slavery, the *mulâtresse* Pinet survived her

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[95] "Census of New Orleans as Reported By M. Périer, Commandant General of Louisiana, July 1, 1727," in *Census Tables for the French Colony of Louisiana,* ed. Charles R. Maduell, (New Orleans, LA: 1971), 2:A-27-14.

[96] Bienville et Salmon, "Plan de la Nouvelle Orléans telle qu'elle estoit au mois de décembre 1731," December 1731, [map], 1974.25.18.135, HNOC; "List of Property Owners of New Orleans on the Map Published By Gonichon in 1731," *Census Tables*, 3: A-31-1-5.

[97] "Census of Inhabitants along the River of the Mississippi Dated 1731," *Census Tables*, B-31-8.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Préville-Quinet, Journaux du Bord de La Galathée, 18 January 1729. The slaves, sick and well, would go to auction in three days time.

voyage across the Atlantic, only to be immediately arrested by company officials. Madame Pinet was held at Balize and forbidden from continuing on to New Orleans. The Superior Council claimed she owed a tax on the slaves she transported from Gorée. The Superior Council allowed Madame Pinet to remain in New Orleans instead of deporting or re-enslaving her. But officials confiscated her three adult slaves, leaving her with the child.

Months passed. In June 1730, Jean Pinet petitioned the Superior Council to review the matter, "asking the company to allow his wife and her slaves to pass into the colony." In his appeal, Pinet argued that forcing him to pay the tax would leave him destitute. The Superior Council responded by requiring Pinet to pay the tax by selling the three slaves to the company, with the profit to go toward the Gorée tax and Madame Pinet's passage to Louisiana.[100] The Company's success in stripping Madame Pinet of her enslaved property suggests an important transition occurred in her journey across the Atlantic. Settled in New Orleans, Madame Pinet was no longer a propertied, free, African woman in a community of women of similar wealth, race, or status. She was now a property-less free woman of color in a French colony where the majority of people of African descent were enslaved, and the majority of free women of color owned little or no property. Madame Pinet retired with Jean Pinet to a home he built for them. In 1731, Jean Pinet, his wife, five black slaves or servants and one white servant resided downriver from the city.[101] Madame Pinet disappears from the historical record thereafter.

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[100] "Deliberations prives en l'Assemblé des Directeurs," 29 June 1729, C13A 11, CAOM, fol. 349-fol. 350.

[101] "Census of Inhabitants along the River of the Mississippi dated 1731," *Census Tables*.

Over the next few years, Jean continued to labor in the city. In 1735, former Governor Perier asked then Governor Bienville to nullify Jean's compulsory service out of respect for his "infirmities." Bienville agreed and sometime in the two years afterward, Jean Pinet passed away.[102] Of the slaves living in the Pinet household, at least one, Louise Bertiche, reappears in New Orleans. In November 1737, Louise, a *négresse* who was "confiscated to Charity Hospital" in compliance with a ruling of the Superior Council, was purchased from the hospital by a 'M. de Belille.'[103]

As free women of African descent secured position and accessed free status on both sides of the Atlantic, they formed kinship ties and created multi-layered communities. At Saint-Louis and Gorée kinship moved beyond unions formed with trading company employees, traders, settlers, and slaveowners themselves, as women of African descent exploited Catholic rituals of filiation and service. Through baptism and godparentage, free women of color linked and were linked to Europeans and people of African descent, and their interpersonal ties crossed lines of race, status and religious affiliation. Communities created were not without their own hierarchies, especially as they formed in the midst of French slavery and imperial endeavors. But kinship and the propagation of interpersonal ties became such an important feature of women's lives that some women traveled the Atlantic to maintain them. Moreover, the support of kin and the ability to draw on husbands, godparents,

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[102] Bienville et Salmon to Ministre de Marine, 1 May 1735, C13A 20, CAOM, fol. 80r

[103] "Sale of Slave Recorded, 20 November 1737," Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 5 (July 1922), 422.

and others for support played a role in women's ability to maintain the position and freedom they secured.

Madame Pinet’s unique journey across the Atlantic and her less than successful arrival in New Orleans reveal the complicated ways free women of color’s kinship relations interacted with the formation of the French Atlantic. Madame Pinet's journey across the Atlantic to New Orleans likely occurred due to her relationship with Jean Pinet. When she was detained, her release was facilitated by Jean Pinet's appeal to the Superior Council, and may have been further aided by his appeal as a husband, his position as a valued employee. Her voyage provides a rare glimpse at the ways free women of color experienced kinship and freedom in the early eighteenth century.

Chapter 5

Free Women of Color, Property, and Inheritance

> …Because of the deceit enacted by Petrona Mulata…I request the court place me in possession of the effects of the deceased Moris, which the citizen Petrona still possesses….
> —"Court Testimony, Maria Tereza, grifa libre v. Perine Demazillier, parda libre," New Orleans, 1789[1]

In the process of cultivating kinship ties, free women of African descent created distinct lineages around themselves. To ensure those lineages would survive and thrive, free women of color carefully transferred property amassed over their lifetimes to members of their community. From furniture, to homes, to slaves— the amount and type of goods ranged, but the desire to retain wealth within households and families prevailed. Free women of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana appropriated the social, economic and legal hierarchies of the Atlantic world to defend themselves and their children. Inheritance laws, determined by imperial precedent, were part of that legal hierarchy. As residents and free people in the French Atlantic, free women of color viewed inheritance as a customary right.

Inheritances practices—the writing of wills, the transfer of property, the naming of guardians, executors, and heirs, or petitions of protest against the same—were contested terrain.[2] As generations of freedom emerged within communities of

[1] "Diligencias practicadas por Maria Thereza, Grifa Libre, Contra Perine Demasilier, Mulata Libre cobranza de los bienes que dado por fallecimiento de Pedro Moris, Mulato Libre," 1789-1793, Doc. No. 1988, Box 53, File No. 2272, LHC (hereafter "Diligencias").

[2] Vincent Brown has noted the same in eighteenth-century Jamaica: "The living expected legacies, and the dead, through their bequests, expected to wield continued influence in the society they left behind." Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 92.

color, divisions developed. Even in individual households, protecting property and protecting kin did not always go hand in hand. By designating legatees, women who passed away established links to living kin and continued to shape the composition of the community long after their deaths. In turn, by challenging testaments and disputing bequests, free women of color asserted their claims to property, kin, and the memory of the deceased.

Between the 1730s and the 1750s, the port towns of Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana were increasingly integrated into the imperial structures of the French Atlantic. In Senegal, Atlantic slave trading faltered, but the trading companies showed no sign of abandoning the *comptoirs*. In 1734, the Compagnie des Indes created three legislative councils for Senegal and placed two at Saint-Louis and Gorée.[3] The islands also continued to rely on each other. When famine hit the region in the 1720s and again in the 1740s, Gorée helped support Saint-Louis' growing population with reserves of millet.[4] In Saint-Domingue, after the failure of the Compagnie de Saint-Domingue, the Crown extended its authority of the entire colony. As a result, in the 1730s, Les Cayes, along with the rest of the Southern Province, joined the Western Province as territory administered by the Council at Léogane. At the same time, plantations expanded across the west, and Port-au-Prince

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[3] "Memoire sur la concession du Senegal: Nouvel arrangement touchant la concession du Senegal," 8 October 1734, C6 11, CAOM, fol. 24-fol. 27. The third was at Galam. The Superior Council was at Saint-Louis.

[4] James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 134; Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 110-111.

outstripped Petit Goave and Léogane as an urban hub. By 1752, the Council at Léogane moved to Port-au-Prince, and Port-au-Prince joined Cap Français as a political center.[5] The Natchez Uprising and Samba Bambara rebellions also prompted France to reassert its authority over the Gulf Coast. In 1733, the Crown appointed a royal governor, based at New Orleans, to oversee all of lower Louisiana, including its holdings along the Gulf Coast. In all three locales, incorporation into the French Atlantic came with its own positives and negatives, and included struggles over property, inheritance and community.

Slave exports from Saint-Louis and Gorée began to fall even as the number of slaves owned by free African and Eurafrican residents increased. At Saint-Louis and Gorée, *mulâtresse* householders like Anne Larue, Marie Térèse, Charlotte, Cati Louette, and Penda Kassano distinguished themselves from unpropertied women—many of them described as *négresses*—by owning homes, goods and slaves.[6] At least one Eurafrican slave trading family, the La Rues, owned a ship and traded for slaves along the Senegal River. In 1735, Anne La Rue, living in Saint-Louis, owned a slave woman named Antagaye. In 1749, free African and Eurafrican women owned ten of thirteen households at Gorée. Almost ten years later, free African and Eurafrican women at Gorée managed expansive households of children, unpropertied free people of color, and as many as twenty or thirty slaves.[7] By 1755, African and Eurafrican

[5] Médéric Louis-Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie francaise de l'île Saint-Domingue* (Philadelphia: Chez l'Auteur, 1797), 2: 342.

[6] Michel Adanson, Charles Becker, and V. Martin, "Mémoires d'Adanson sur le Sénégal et l'île de Gorée," *Bulletin de Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire* 42, no. B4 (1980): 738-741.

[7] Adanson, Becker, and Martin, "Mémoires d'Adanson," 738-741.

residents at Saint-Louis owned over five hundred slaves, while the Company held only ninety-eight of the island's slaves.[8]

Inheritances allowed free African and Eurafrican women to acquire and retain property within their families. When company employees, especially white men, succumbed to disease, migrated away from Saint-Louis and Gorée, or returned to France, they most often left their African and Eurafrican spouses behind, as well as any property exchanged between them. While Madame Pinet and Anne Bertin resettled with their husbands in places beyond the coast, the majority of free African and Eurafrican women did not accompany their spouses. Those who remained fought to retain possession of wealth and goods they acquired during the course of their relationships. The amount left behind was sometimes minuscule. Marie Charron, *mulâtresse,* illegitimate daughter of Pierre Charron, a Company sailor, received 321 livres after his death. Maria Teresa Yacam Semaine, the widow of Joseph de Gorée, a *maître de barque*, received 447 livres from the Company and their son, Michel, received 410 livres.[9] In contrast, Anne Bertin's mother owned enough slaves to concern the Superior Council. The *négresse*, "quite advanced in age," noted the Council, owned or was in possession of several slaves left in her possession by her daughters, Anne and Michelle. Michelle was the widow of Pierre Le Luc and Anne lived in France with her husband, Nicolas Grobert. According to the Council,

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[8] Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Supplementary Evidence* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 39. There is no comparable figure for Gorée. However, in 1767, a census counted 326 free and 768 slaves at Gorée. Curtin, *Supplementary Evidence*, 41.

[9] André Brue, "Estat des appointements qui sont deüs aux Employez de la Compagnie des Indes à la Concession du Senegal par les Comptes arrestez par Mr. Brüe Directeur et Commandant general le 30 Avril 1720 dont le montant à ete portés à leur credit par Mr. de Saint Robert dans leurs comptes nouveaux," 30 April 1720, C6 6, CAOM, fol. 2.

Michelle and Anne acquired some of the slaves through their marriages, but came into the possession of others after they were married. Because it was unclear who owned which property and when it came into their possession, if the *négresse* died, the Council was unsure whether all of the property would pass to the daughters.[10]

Trading companies long resisted free African and Eurafrican residents' desire to keep hold of property of deceased employees. In 1734, as part of a new set of company regulations, officials declared persons who died while employed by the company must "give up their effects that are not declared."[11] In 1736, the Superior Council at Saint-Louis asked company directors in France to confirm the rules on inheritance, stating that it was customary for the wives and lovers of company employees and their children to inherit any of the employees effects. Company directors in France did not agree. The Company refused to allow the illegitimate children of company employees to inherit property, stating the effects of men who died in Senegal should go to their closest living relatives, not to their "bastards." After 1736, directors encouraged company officials at Gorée and Saint-Louis to confiscate the goods of those who died, including any slaves, and credit the heirs with items of equal value.[12]

Free African and Eurafrican women at Gorée and Saint-Louis resisted company policies that barred them from claiming their property. In 1737, Anne Gusban, a Gorée *négresse,* petitioned company officials to reinstate her daughter

[10] Messieurs les Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes to Conseil Supérieur du Senegal, 6 September 1736, C6 11, CAOM, art. 28.

[11] "Memoire sur la concession du Senegal: Nouvel arrangement touchant la concession du Sénégal," 8 October 1734, C6 11, fol 57.

[12] Messieurs les Directeurs to Conseil Supérieur, 6 September 1736, C6 11, art. 28.

Anne's inheritance. The Compagnie of the Indes employed Gusban, a mulâtre anglois sailor and Anne's father, on the Gambia River.[13] Gusban named ten-year old Anne as his beneficiary. Among Gusban's effects was a seventeen-year old girl, an older woman, and a young boy, all slaves. The Council of Gorée confiscated the slaves and compensated the Gusbans with glass jewelry, but Anne declared them "*merchandises basses*," worthless compared to the slaves themselves. Anne asked the Company to return her daughter's slaves or replace the confiscated slaves with ones of equal value. Anne also accused the Company of preferential treatment, arguing that officials allowed white employees to pass property to their mixed-race children without dispute. "Under what pretext," she admonished, "would you take the slaves of my daughter for the company[?]"[14]

While wrangling over property, free African and Eurafrican women were not afraid to assert themselves. African and Eurafrican women used assumptions of identity, property, and belonging against officials. Anne Gusban justified her request by stating that Gusban's legacy was her daughter's birthright—both as his daughter and as a Eurafrican of Gorée. "My daughter," she wrote, "is born of this place; it is not the same with the whites who come to serve the company and who are forbidden from keeping their slaves; her father gave you good service, Messieurs."[15] Anne Gusban identified her daughter and her deceased partner as productive members of Gorée society. Free African and Eurafrican women were also aware of the important

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[13] André Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français au Sénégal entre 1713 et 1763* (Dakar: Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, 1952), 121.

[14] Anne Gusban to Messieurs des Conseil de Gorée, 6 July 1737, C6 11, CAOM.

[15] Ibid., fol. 2.

role residents of color played in trade and defense at the *comptoirs*. In a subtle warning, Anne Gusban suggested it would be best if the company respected Eurafrican property and inheritance rights as "we will not be able to [then] tell the countryside that the company is just like the Roy Damsel and is in favor of pillaging."

Inheritance allowed free women of color to assemble sprawling kinship groups within their own lifetime and maintain those units across generations. In 1758, Michel Adanson described the households of thirteen of the wealthiest free African and Eurafrican residents of Gorée.[16] In these compounds, free African and Eurafrican women managed women, men and children of all statuses. Of the households, ten were headed by women, three by men. Only six lived with their own sons or daughters, but almost all of Gorée's prominent householders supported either their own or someone else's children. The household of Gracia, a thirty-five-year-old *négresse*, was the only one explicitly *"sans enfants."* At least one of the thirteen householders supported elders as well. Penda Kassano, a forty-five-year-old *mulâtresse,* lived in a brick house with her mother, and her grandmother, a *négresse* about seventy-five years old. Spouses were sprinkled through out. At least one of the men, Fatman Nègre, had two wives. Charlotte Mulâtresse's household included her daughter Angelique and her son-in-law Louis Kabass, a skipper. The households employed between six to twenty slaves, often with more than one owner between them. The slaves in Maria Teresa's household were split between herself, Isabel Morin, and Terese Duma. Finally, Adanson also counted about thirty "interloper or refugee" men, women, and children residing among the householders, seeking

[16] Adanson, Becker, and Martin, "Mémoires d'Adanson," 738-741.

protection from a range of ills.[17] When Jacques Doumet de Siblas, described the black population of Gorée as having "hardly any masters or heads of households" save "the women [*maîtresses*] who are called by the Portuguese name *Signara*," he was describing expansive, multi-generational households like these.[18] As heads of households or *habitants*, free African and Eurafrican women understood retaining property as the key to wealth accumulation and family security.

At the same time, inherited property and wealth also deepened divisions among residents at Saint-Louis and Gorée. Contests over property ownership and succession demonstrated how vulnerable slaves and free Africans and Eurafricans without property could be. In 1736, an unnamed slave-owning *négresse chrestien* died at Saint-Louis. She did not leave any known heirs but she left behind seven slaves and at least one dependent, an unnamed *négresse affranchie* or freed woman of color. Apparently, the Company did not consider this unnamed free woman of color next of kin but they did not disinherit her completely. The Company confiscated five of the deceased's slaves and sold them into the Atlantic trade. Two of the slaves, described by officials as "defective," were left in the hands of the *négresse affranchie* and the matter appeared to be settled.[19] A year later, however, the free woman of color risked losing her property when Antoine Grenier, the deceased woman's

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[17] Michel Adanson, "Pièces instructives concernant l'île Goré voisine du Cap-Verd en Afrike, avec un Project et des vues utiles relativement au nouvel établissement de Kaiene," May-June 1763, C6 15, CAOM, fol. 6v. Adanson notes that slaves seeking protection among the habitants may have been escaping famine, slavery in other parts, or simply hoping to alleviate their circumstances for a time.

[18] Jacques Doumet de Siblas, Charles Becker, and Victor Martin, "Mémoire inédit de Doumet (1769)," *Bulletin de Institut Fondamendal de l'Afrique Noir* 36B, no. 1 (1974), 34.

[19] It is unclear what became of the deceased woman's home.

grandson and a *mulâtre* living in Nantes, wrote to the director-general to claim his inheritance.[20]

The *négresse affranchie* did not lose her slaves. The company credited Grenier 1,560 livres for the five slaves it confiscated and sold, and made no mention of the slaves left with the *négresse affranchie*. The Company also noted that it was compensating Grenier "per the custom on this coast," suggesting a marked change in either local or metropolitan policy from a year earlier, when Anne Gusban railed against "*merchandise basses*." However, given the complicated dynamics of kinship and bondage within households of color at Saint-Louis and Gorée, it is likely that the slaves sold were more than property. Ranging from forty years of age to only five, their sale across the Atlantic was also the dissolution of a kinship unit. Meanwhile, while the *négresse affranchie* who remained was not likely to be re-enslaved, it is unclear what support she would be able to garner or provide in the deceased woman's absence. Free African and Eurafrican women's property and status extended to their dependents, but only so far. Adanson observed that Eurafrican boys hired out to the company as sailors and laborers were treated as free regardless of whether their mother was a slave. As long as their father was French, he remarked, they were considered "masters."[21] Whether this was true or not, Company regulations protected the slaves of African and Eurafrican residents from mistreatment and sale across the Atlantic. The Company allowed the unnamed *négresse affranchie* to keep the two

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[20] Conseil Supérieur de Senegal to Messieurs le Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, 25 May 1737, C6 11, CAOM, fol. 23.

[21] Adanson, Becker, and Martin, "Mémoires d'Adanson," 736.

least healthy slaves. Nevertheless, unpropertied free persons of color were forced to fend on themselves and look to wealthier *habitants* for protection and support.

In Saint-Domingue, the French slave trade and rapid expansion of staple production across the colony transformed the ports. Le Cap grew into the commercial heart of the Northern Province, receiving nearly 40 percent of the slave ship traffic. Free people of color owned property throughout the town, and slaves working in the city lived in the neighborhood of Petite Guinée, away from the town center. Le Cap was also the social and cultural center of the colony, attracting social and cultural institutions like opera houses, theatres, billiard halls, and *salons* from France. In 1749, Port-au-Prince was founded. As the second largest port, Port-au-Prince was less connected to the colony's social life and received fewer of the slave imports. Port-au-Prince was also prone to natural and man-made disaster. Two years after its founding, an earthquake struck, and a fire in the 1780s destroyed parts of the town. Further south, Les Cayes was the least developed of the three ports. Free people of color and slaves in Les Cayes were deeply involved in indigo production of the surrounding district and inter-Caribbean trade with Jamaica and Cuba.[22]

Just as in Senegal, inheritance was an important part of the lives of free women of color in the ports of Saint-Domingue. Over the first half of the eighteenth century, as enslaved women found ways out of bondage, free women of color became part of commerce, retail, and property-ownership in Le Cap, Port-au-Prince, and Les Cayes. The number of free women of color increased, even if slowly. Officials reported some twelve women living in Le Cap as early as 1730. By 1739, the number

[22] Moreau, *Description topographique*, 2: 342.

of women in the city increased to forty, and ten years later the number had doubled.[23] By mid-century, free women of color had accumulated property and wealth. In 1753, in Les Cayes, free women of color owned 40 percent of the plantations.[24] They acquired portions of their wealth through the business of commerce and transportation between the three ports. From Les Cayes, in particular, free women of color participated in commerce between Jamaica, Cuba, and Curaçao.[25] In 1768, Marion ditte Bin, a *négresse libre* and resident of Les Cayes, purchased a small boat from Pierre Cornier, *mulâtre libre*, for use in inter-island commerce.[26] Another Les Cayes resident, Marie Louis dit Ruiq, *négresse libre*, sold fabric in a retail shop in the city.[27] Free women also passed on property and wealth bequeathed to them. In Le Cap, for example, by the 1770s, much of the property free women of color owned had been passed on to them by "grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, and godparents."[28]

Unlike Saint-Louis and Gorée, Saint-Domingue officials did not restrict free people of color’s right to leave property to family members. The much-revised 1685

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[23] “ Récensement Général des Dependances des Resources des Conseils Superieurs du Petit Goave et du Cap pour l'Année 1730,” 1730, G1 509, CAOM; “ Recensement general de l'Isle de St. Domingue,” 1739, G1 509, CAOM; “Recensement du Quartier de la ville du Cap et dependances pour la present année,” 1749, G1 509, CAOM. The 1730 census counted twenty-three men and twelve women in Le Cap, more free men or women than any of the surrounding parishes. The 1739 census counted thirty-one men and forty-eight women.

[24] “Etat present du Quartier du Fonds de l’Isle à Vache, compris en trois paroisses dont une aux Cayes,” 1753, G1 509, CAOM; John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (New York: Macmillan, 2006), 72-73.

[25] Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 72-73.

[26] “Vente De Canot,” 12 February 1768, SDOM NOT 1221, CAOM.

[27] Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 74.

[28] Dominique Rogers, “Réussir dans un Monde d’Hommes: les Stratégies des Femmes de Couleur du Cap-Français,” *The Journal of Haitian Studies* 9, no. 1 (2003): 42.

Code Noir allowed slaves and free people of color to be named sole legatees, executors of estates, or guardians of children. Slaves so-named gained their freedom.[29] In 1726, the Crown revised the Code to prohibit free people of color from receiving bequests from whites, and declared property passed onto them subject to seizure.[30] Saint-Domingue officials appear to have ignored these restrictions.[31] Free people of color continued to receive gifts, donations, and property from white residents and residents of color, as property-ownership among residents of African descent spread.

By the 1750s, free women of color in the lower Mississippi Valley were acquiring small amounts of property, but with difficulty. In 1731, eight free people of color were listed owning property in New Orleans and its close vicinity, out of over six hundred free persons, black and white.[32] Marie, a *négresse*, was among the recorded owners. Free property-owners of color were almost certainly undercounted, but it is evident that colonial officials also prevented free people of color from claiming property. The 1724 Louisiana Code forbade outright any gifts, donations or inheritances between whites and free people of color. Any property bequeathed to

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[29] *Le Code Noir, ou recueil des règlements rendus jusqu'à présent concernant le gouvernement, l'administration de la justice, la police, la discipline et le commerce des nègres dans les colonies françaises et les conseils et compagnies établis à ce sujet* (Paris: Chez Prault, 1788), Article 56.

[30] "Déclaration du Roi, Touchant les Libres qui Recèlent Des Esclaves, et les Donations Faites aux Gens De Couleur par les Blancs, 8 February 1726," in *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises de l'Amérique sous le Vent* (hereafter), edited by Louis-Élie de Saint-Méry Moreau (Paris: chez l'Auteur, 1784-1790), 3:159-160.

[31] Garrigus, *Before Haiti*, 42.

[32] "Census of Inhabitants Along the River Mississippi, 1731," in *Census Tables for the French Colony of Louisiana,* edited by Charles R. Maduell (New Orleans, LA: 1971), B-31.

free people of color were "sent to the nearest hospital" as charity.[33] With the new laws, if any inheritance passed to free women of color, there was no guarantee they would be able to possess it. Officials were also concerned about free Indian women receiving inheritances. In 1728, Louisiana's Superior Council barred Indian widows and their families from receiving inheritances French men left them.[34] In 1731, the Crown took possession of the colony, and the royal governor appointed slave-owning whites from the plantation areas around the city to the Superior Council. With the colony's white elite leading the council, opportunities for formal property ownership diminished even as numbers of free people of color continued to grow.

In 1763, at the end of the Seven Years War, England, Spain, and France reorganized their imperial holdings. As a penalty for losing the war, England claimed Saint-Louis and Mobile. France signed New Orleans and the rest of lower Louisiana over to the Spanish.[35] English and Spanish administrators began governing their new territories with enthusiasm, almost immediately revising or eliminating French regulations. France's remaining territories were also affected. Wishing to expand control over its remaining overseas settlements, France placed Gorée, Cap-Français, Port-au-Prince, and Les Cayes under Crown control. The Crown appointed royal governors and instituted new ordinances of its own. The governors, in turn, were encouraged to take more effective control of the colonies and to strictly enforce

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[33] *Code noir ou Loi municipale, servant de règlement pour le gouvernement et l'administration de la justice, police, discipline et le commerce des esclaves négres, dans la province de la Louisiane* (New Orleans: Antoine Boudousquié, 1788). The 1724 Louisiana law against donations, gifts and inheritances inspired the 1726 royal ordinance.

[34] Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France:'" Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2004): 42.

[35] The English held Mobile until 1779.

Crown directives. By 1769, the response to the Seven Years War had changed the French Atlantic world.

At both Saint-Louis and Gorée, residents used the English and French administrations as an opportunity to formalize customs of trade and property ownership common under the French. At Saint-Louis, African and Eurafrican householders organized a delegation to approach the officials. By convincing the new administration that succession was among a series of customary rights enjoyed by the *habitants* under French rule, free residents of color gained new property rights in English Saint-Louis.[36] Although local merchant and wealthy Eurafrican Charles Thevenot mediated negotiations and became the first "mayor" of Saint-Louis, most of the residents who approached the English were women. At Gorée, French officials sought allies among the free African and Eurafrican residents of the island. In a similar fashion, residents at Gorée used the appointment of a royal governor, and the presence of a rival imperial presence, to request officials formalize property ownership and inheritance practices.

By formally recognizing free African and Eurafrican property rights, English and French officials paved the way for women on the islands to amass wealth. After 1767, more and more free African and Eurafrican women at Saint-Louis and Gorée were being described as *signares*. Much of this wealth was in slaves. In 1779, the four of the five largest slaveowners on the island were women: Louison Kiaka, Marie

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[36] John D. Hargreaves, "Assimilation in Eighteenth-Century Senegal," *Journal of African History* 6, no. 2 (1965), 200; Marcson, "European-African Interaction," 57-58; Searing, *West African Slavery*," 106.

Yasin Sade, Marie Gonefall, and Suzanne D'Etegueye.[37] Each owned twenty or more slaves, Louison Kiaka owned forty-six.

At Le Cap, Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes, where free people of color already enjoyed succession rights, free women of color continued to receive and give gifts through testaments. After the Seven Years War, the newly appointed royal governors recognized free people of color as contributing, if inferior, members of Saint-Domingue society. Between 1764 and 1773, Charles d'Estaing and the Prince de Rohan-Montbazon reformed the process of manumission and passed legislation meant to humiliate free people of color by subordinating them to whites.[38] However, successions continued unabated.

Free women of color, through their wills, intended to contribute to loved ones after their death. In Le Cap, free women of color found creative ways of freeing friends and family members still enslaved, even after their own death. In 1777, as part of her will, Marie Juanita, *mulâtresse libre*, charged her heir, Guillaume Pourveur, *mulâtre libre* and mason, to purchase her son, Pierre, a *griffe* slave also in the city. Maria Juanita, cognizant of how quickly time could pass and events could shape enslavement and manumission, included several provisions. If Pierre died before the will went into effect, Maria Juanita charged Guillaume with securing the freedom of Pierre's three children by the *négresse* Dédé: Martine, Pierre Louis, and

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[37] "Dénombrement des habitants natifs du Senegal et de ceux de Podor, Galam et Grande Terre," July 1779, 22G1, ANS. The fifth, "the habitants Pellegrin" was likely the Eurafrican family Pellegrin.

[38] "Règlement des Administrateurs concernant les gens de couleur libres," *Loix et constitutions*, 448-449. See John D. Garrigus, "Redrawing the Colour Line: Gender and the Social Construction of Race in Pre-Revolutionary Haiti," *Journal of Caribbean History* 30, (2006): 28-50 for a detailed analysis of D'Estaing's time in Saint-Domingue.

another *petite fille*. Maria Juanita included a provision revoking Guillaume's inheritance should he fail in his mission and Pierre Marion, Nâgo *nègre libre*, naming a new executor and heir. As the new heir, Maria Juanita required Pierre Marion to secure the requested manumissions in Guillaume's place. In case either Guillaume or Pierre Marion was deceased by the time the will went into effect, or died in the process, Maria Juanita added one more provision, asking that the *nègre libre* Blaise Breda be charged with securing the manumission of her son or grandchildren.[39]

Another Le Cap free woman of color, Louison Fournier, also used her will to demand freedom for her kin. Louison left everything to Marie Françoise, *négresse libre* and daughter of Genevieve Sorazin. Louison required Marie Françoise to use her inheritance to buy Colin, her *nègre* son still enslaved in the countryside. Like Maria Juanita, Louison added that if Colin was already dead, Marie Françoise would secure the freedom of Colin's *négresse* daughter, also named Louison.[40]

Free women of color also chose executors, guardians, and heirs carefully. Both Louison Fournier and Maria Juanita named more than one executor in their wills and incorporated provisions in the event of their first choice's death. Executors' duties grew over years. In Le Cap, Margueritte Laville, *mulâtresse libre*, ask Jean François Jolly to pass her effects on to Margueritte Mestive, the natural daughter S. Paul Laville and Perine Fontaine, both free people of color. When Margueritte reached adulthood, Jolly was to provide her with a *negritte* slave. Free women of color also charged executors, guardians, and heirs with securing freedom for enslaved

[39] "Testament de la nommée Marie Jemita," 25 March 1777, SDOM NOT 173, CAOM.

[40] "Testament de la nommée Louison Fournier, *négresse libre*," 14 March 1777, SDOM NOT 173, CAOM.

family members or serve as guardians over free children of color. Despite careful planning by free women of color, there was no guarantee property transferred or manumission occurred once they passed away. But by choosing executors, guardians, and heirs, free women of color continued to play an active role in determining community composition and the roles of members in them.

In New Orleans, Governor Alejandro O'Reilly imposed Spanish imperial law, which allowed free people of color to receive and transfer property. Spanish administrators turned to the free population of color as a potential buffer against the hostile French population in the colony. Along with outlawing Indian slavery, loosening restrictions on manumission and instituting *coartación*, Spanish law allowed free people of color or *libres* to receive gifts, donations, and inheritances through notarized documents. French heirs challenged the changes but failed. In 1774, when Juan Perret left clothes, linen, and furniture to Angélica, *négresse libre*, Perret's white grandchildren contested the will. Angélica brought her case before the New Orleans Cabildo, the legislative body that replaced the French Superior Council after the transition. In their defense, the white Perret's argued the 1724 Louisiana *Code Noir* prohibited even free people of color from inheriting property from whites. The Cabildo decided in Angélica's favor, dismissing the Perret's complaint and citing the newly introduced Spanish legal code.[41]

As the Cabildo legitimated the succession rights of free people of color, a diverse free population of color emerged. New Orleans *libres* were overwhelming female and overwhelmingly young. In 1785, over nine hundred free people of color

[41] "Angélica, Negra Libre vs. Heirs of Juan Perret," Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* (hereafter RSC LHQ) 10, (1927), 440.

or *libres* resided in and immediately around New Orleans, a community roughly one-fifth of the free population in the city and two-thirds the colony's free population of color.[42] Almost 70 percent of the *libres* in New Orleans were free women and girls of color.[43] A large number of female slaves were freed without conditions as the legitimate children or consorts of white men; and, their former owners sometimes endowed them with real and personal property. The population of free people of color rose alongside numbers of free property-owners of color. Those freed during the first half of the eighteenth-century used the new guidelines to secure and expand their property holdings. In 1796, the property on Rue Bourbon once occupied by Marie, a *négresse* was officially registered to Nanette, a *negra libre*. Nanette stated her mother Marie Paquet passed on the property to her.[44]

Property ownership allowed free women of color to create new links among themselves and distinguish themselves among members of the community. Free women of color transferred property and wealth between each other, and petitioned the Cabildo when they were prevented form doing so. By leasing land and property, converting buildings into shops and taverns, and purchasing slaves, free women of color could also earn income and establish credit. At the same time, property ownership was not widespread and free people of color who did not own property

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[42] "Census of Louisiana in the year 1785, Appendix No. 2 to the Digest of the Laws of Louisiana Communicated to Congress, November 29, 1803," in *American State Papers, Miscellaneous,* (Washington, D. C.: Gales and Seaton, 1834), 1:381; Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places, 1769-1803* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 57.

[43] Thomas N. Ingersoll, *Mammon and Manon*, 155; Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 27; "Freed Slaves, Louisiana, 1720-1820," *Databases for the Study of Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1699-1860*, CD-ROM (New Orleans, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2000) (hereafter *Afro-Louisiana History*).

[44] "Sale of Property Petit Bautista Lemelle to Pedro Marin Argote," 14 June 1796, Acts de Pedro Pedesclaux, NONA, fol. 276.

struggled. Without external support, unpropertied free women of color labored as cooks, domestics, and laundresses, marketplace sellers and peddlers, or as laborers. In the 1780s, as the free population of color established it, it remained difficult to discern whether wealth would create divisions within the population.

On May 27, 1787, Pedro Maurice Dauphine, *pardo libre* passed away in New Orleans.[45] Maurice died without leaving a written will, but his consort Maria Teresa, *grifa libre* claimed he left a nuncupative will bequeathing all of his property to their three children. According to Maria Teresa, Maurice named Don François Demasillier, a white New Orleans householder, the executor of his "will by voice." Unfortunately, the same year Maurice died, Demasillier followed.[46] To further complicate matters, in March 1788, a huge fire swept the city destroying a number of homes and administrative buildings. As a result, the documents describing Maurice's last moments were lost in the disaster. In Demasillier's absence, ownership and use of Maurice's estate fell to Maurice's sister, Pelagia "Perine" Dauphine dit Demasillier, and a *parda libre* who also happened to be the late François Demasillier's consort. Early in 1789, Maria Teresa, *grifa libre*, appeared before the New Orleans Cabildo and filed a civil suit against Perine, alleging that Maurice's

[45] "Diligencias," 4.

[46] "Testamento de Don Francisco Emanuel Dusceaux de Mazillier," 6 Dec 1787, Rodriguez, New Orleans Notarial Archives (hereafter NONA), fols. 1143-51.

bequest to her children remained unfulfilled because Perine "against the natural law and will of the testator" refused to part with the inheritance.[47]

Maria Teresa, *grifa libre* brought her suit against Perine Dauphine, *parda libre* as free people of color, slaves, French, Spanish, and Native American residents clashed and established social rankings in the late eighteenth-century New Orleans. After 1769, Spanish laws and liberal manumission policies created opportunities for the free population of color to grow in size, but mere numbers did not lead to a unified community. Maria Teresa, an unmarried *grifa* and mother of three did not own property or wealth in comparison to the wealthier and lighter-skinned Perine Dauphine. However, Maria Teresa invoked her right to Maurice's inheritance based on her customary rights as his former lover and as the mother of his children. Perine Dauphine's resistance to Maria Teresa's claim challenged both Maria Teresa's right to the property and the implied kinship. Maria Teresa and Perine Dauphin's court feud was demonstrative of conflicts emerging in the second half of the century, as property and inheritance revealed the differences within free communities of color.

The conflict between these two women also reflected ways free women of color managed property, inheritance, and community ties across francophone slaveholding societies. In Senegal and Saint-Domingue, matters of property and wealth were also matters of kinship and community membership. As free women of color accrued economic resources, they created families and manipulated local circumstances to protect and advance themselves and their kin. Property and

[47] "Diligencias," 1-4

inheritance became ways of defining the boundaries of communities and the priorities of the women within them.

Maria Teresa's racial designation, *grifa libre*, identified her as a woman of possible Native-American and African descent. Maria Teresa may have gained her freedom through one of the thirteen successful Indian-slavery related lawsuits filed before the New Orleans Cabildo. Spanish imperial law forbade Indian slavery, but the prohibition was never applied outright to Louisiana, so authorities ignored the law. As enslaved women and men petitioned for manumission, slaves began to appear before the Cabildo claiming Native American heritage. In one extreme case, Cecilia, *india libre*, filed petitions seeking to emancipate herself, her sister, her sister's six adult children and their offspring.[48] Many Indian slavery lawsuits remained in dispute for years.[49]

Although it is unlikely, Maria Teresa may once have been Maurice's slave. Slaveownership among free people of color expanded, a signal of the growing presence and wealth of some free families of African descent. While slaveowning was ubiquitous among free people of color in the coastal areas of Senegal and Saint-Domingue, along the Gulf Coast, an increasingly exclusive segment of the free population of color owned slaves. Many free slaveowners of color were descended from long-term unions between white men and women of African descent who received their property from white patrons.[50]

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[48] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 339.

[49] Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 336. Stephen Webre, "The Problem of Indian Slavery in Spanish Louisiana, 1769-1803," *Louisiana History* 25, no. 2 (1984): 125-126.

[50] Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 100.

The Dauphines were one such family. In the 1770s, three white Dauphine brothers, Joseph, Juan Pedro, and Santiago, manumitted several enslaved women they formed liaisons with, and their mixed-race children. Between 1775 and 1799, Martona gave birth to eleven children by white slaveowner Juan Pedro Dauphin. Joseph, Juan Pedro's brother, also lived with a free black consort--perhaps the thirty-five year old creole slave Maria Teresa that he freed in 1779 for "much love and affection and many services." The *parda* Maria produced five children with Santiago, another white Dauphine brother, Santiago and lived in long-term liaison with him. In 1779, Santiago Dauphine freed Maria, a thirty-six year old creole slave, and her three daughters: Maria Teresa, who was five years old; Margarita, who was ten years old; and Maria, who was only two. This gratuitous manumission "for good service of the Mother and particular love," suggested that Santiago Dauphine was the elder Maria's consort and the younger girls were possibly his daughters.[51] Perine herself may have been descended from the children of Martona and Juan Pedro Dauphine. In her 1814 will, Perine described herself as the daughter of "Marie Daupaine," a *négresse libre,* and "M. Daupaine," stating the two never married.[52] Perine's relationship with the white property-owner Don Francisco Demasillier elaborated on this pattern of white male-female of color unions. Her liaison was serious enough that Demasillier named her one of his beneficiaries in his will.[53]

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[51] Ibid.

[52] "Pelagie Dauphaine ditte Perine Demasillier, f. m. l.," 19 April 1814, Recorder of Wills, Will Books, vol. 1, NOPL.

[53] "Testamento de De Mazillier," 6 Dec 1787, Acts de Rodriguez, NONA. Demasillier left her and Jacinta, another free woman of color, leaving two hundred *moneda corriente* to each of them.

Over time, intermarriage linked the Dauphines to other wealthy, mixed-race, free families of color like the Hisnards, Grondels and Vidals. The Hisnard-Grondels emerged from the union of New Orleans merchant Don Francisco Hisnard and his consort, the free *morena* or *mulâtresse*, María or Mariana Grondel. The Vidals joined with the Hisnards through the children of Don Nicolás María Vidal and Eufrosina Hisnard. Eufrosina and her family moved to Pensacola in 1806 when Vidal died and could be found there into the 1840s.[54] In 1801, Mariana Hisnard, the daughter of Don Francisco Hisnard and the elder Mariana, married Francisco Dauphine, joining the Hisnard-Vidals to the colored Dauphine family. In 1805, Francisca Larase, the *mulata libre* daughter of Juan and Maria Juana Larase, married Jean Baptiste Dauphine, *mulato libre*, while Francisco Marco, Francisco Dauphin, Bazile Demazilière and Pierre Colvis stood as witnesses.[55]

In 1789, when Maria Teresa took Perine took court, it was not clear what men of wealth, power and privilege Perine Dauphine could draw on to defend her case. Perine's brother Maurice and a third brother named Eugenio were more active in commercial transactions of the 1780s than Perine, who stepped in only after Maurice's death. In 1786, Eugenio and Maurice appeared alongside Don Pedro Dauphine as creditors of Don Antonio Babini.[56] Before his death, Maurice was

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[54] Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, 99; Ruth B. Barr and Modeste Hargis, "The Voluntary Exile of Free Negroes of Pensacola," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (1938), 13.

[55] Roulhac Toledano and Mary Christovich, *New Orleans Architecture: Faubourg Tremé and the Bayou Road* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing, 2003), 93.

[56] "Proceedings Instituted by the Creditors of Don Angelo Babini," 2 September 1786, Doc. No. 1368, File No. 2817, Box 46, LHC, fol. 1-2, 14-15.

building a house in the city and owned at least one slave.[57] When he died, Maurice owned a modest amount of property, including a house at the corner of Rue Dauphine and Conti, land about four leagues north of the city, and a *grifo* slave, "something of a carpenter," named Silvestre.[58] Perine, however, was a free woman of color with her own responsibilities, entering a tradition of dense kinship networks, interracial *ménage*, and property ownership. Her patriarch and her brother had passed away in the same year. For her part, Maria Teresa was an impoverished, unmarried mother of three. Both free women of color faced the reality of life in a patriarchal slaveholding society where sex and property configured patronage and protection.

Maria Teresa's request to the Cabildo seemed simple. In early 1789, represented by Don Antonio Menendez, Maria Teresa, *grifa libre* claimed that Perine Dauphine was not Maurice Dauphine's rightful heir. In 1787, when Maurice passed away, he drew up a nuncupative will and left everything to Maria Teresa's three children— Pedro, Margarita and Sesamie. Three white New Orleans householders, Don Juan Bautista Rio Seco, Don Luis Mollier, and Don Geronimo Lachiapella, witnessed the "will by voice." Perine knew all of this, Maria Teresa claimed, because Maurice also named Perine's deceased consort, Don François Demasillier, the executor of his estate. In 1788, when Demasillier died, he left Maurice's effects in

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[57] "Nicolas and Francisco Rixner, negros libres v. Estate of Mauricio Daupeine, mulato libre," 14 March 1788, Doc. No. 1758, File No. 2586, Box No. 50, LHC; "Testimonio de los autos practicados por Pedro Moris, Pardo Libre contra Don Juan Pousou," 8 November 1787, Doc. No. 1650, File No. 162, Box 49, LHC. The house was finished by order of Don Francois Demasillier after his death. The slave, Eufrosina, was epileptic and Maurice instituted proceedings before his death to have her returned to its original owner and the amount he paid returned. Perine and Eugenio continued the proceedings after his death and won the case.

[58] "Diligencias," 317, 320, 337, 339. It would make sense that Maurice, who appears to have been worked in construction, would own a slave with carpentry skills.

Perine's power, including Maurice's final wishes.[59] Maria Teresa noted that she initiated proceedings to recover her children's inheritance immediately after Demasillier's died, but those proceedings were destroyed in the March 1788 fire. Maria Teresa asked Don Almonester y Rojas, the presiding judge, to call the three original witnesses and Don Fernando Rodriguez, *escribano* or Cabildo clerk at the time of Maurice's death, to testify to the truth of her claim.

A month later, and without an attorney, Perine responded, and a small exchange ensued through the Cabildo clerk. Perine argued Maria Teresa did not file the correct documents and that she was not the guardian of the three children. Therefore, according to Perine, Maria Teresa had no right to bring this suit against her. Perine insisted the case should be immediately dismissed. Maria Teresa responded, sidestepping Perine's concern with her guardianship, by asserting she simply wanted the best for her children. Complying with Maurice's last wishes honored him and put the children in the best position possible. She asked the court to dispense with Perine's argument as rooted in "avarice" and compel Perine to secure an attorney so they could proceed with the case.[60] Almonester y Rojas apparently agreed with both women. Rojas officially declared Maria Teresa the "*tutora*" or guardian of her three children and required Perine to respond to the accusations against her.[61]

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[59] Charles E. Nolan and Dorenda Dupont, eds., *Sacramental Records of the Roman Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of New Orleans: 1804-1806* (New Orleans: Archdiocese of New Orleans, 2002), 3:89; "Diligencias," 180.

[60] "Diligencias," 9-10.

[61] Ibid., 9.

The Cabildo's willingness to examine an inheritance suit involving the illegitimate children of a free man of color who left no written will was not exceptional. By 1789, the free colored community had grown increasingly litigious and the Cabildo grew familiar with people of color defending their rights. In January 1789, Elena, a free woman of color, petitioned Governor Don Esteban Miro to honor a promissory note of five hundred pesos issued by the deceased free man of color, Juan Paquet.[62] The Cabildo supported Elena's claim and instructed Paquet's properties seized to pay the claim. In such a context, Maria Teresa's appeal was not unusual.

In the meantime, Perine relied on a combination of temporizing and technicality to circumvent Maria Teresa's claim. Maria Teresa repeated her petition twice before Perine even hired a legal representative. Near the end of March 1789, Perine again asked the case be dismissed. In May, when Perine presented Don Estevan de Quinones as her *procurador*, she again protested Maria Teresa's false claim to the goods and insisted Maurice bequeathed his property to her.[63] For all of the delay, in June, when it appeared Maria Teresa would not make her deadline to present her case, Perine immediately admonished her, noting only nine days remained for her to gather her evidence.

Nine days later, Maria Teresa appeared before the Cabildo with Don Geronimo Lachiapelle, one of the witnesses to the will. Almonester y Rojas asked Lachiapelle a series of questions including whether he knew the parties involved,

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[62] "Elena, Free Négress v. Succession of Juan Paquet," 26 January 1789, Doc. No. 1989, File No. 2272, Box 53, LHC.

[63] "Diligencias," 22-24.

whether what Maria Teresa claimed was true, whether the evening proceeded as she claimed, and, finally, whether Maurice named the three children his universal heirs.[64] Lachiapelle corroborated Maria Teresa's testimony and stated Maurice did intend the inheritance for her children by him.

Perine attempted to cast doubt on Lachiapelle's testimony. She questioned Lachiapelle judgment, and asked him why he would witness the will, when Rodriguez authorized it after Maurice's death. She also challenged the validity of the will, especially because "the great debilitation of his accident and quasi-consciousness" meant Maurice could not have been of sound, mind, and body. In a written response, Lachiapelle confirmed that he was called to the house of the "mulato Maurice and in the company of Don Francisco Rodriguez, the recently deceased [Rio Seco] and the witness Don Louis Mollier." And although he and the other witnesses arrived to find Maurice unable to complete a written testament because of his condition, "Don Fernando Rodriguez repeated three times…who did he [Maurice] wanted to name his heirs" and each time Maurice repeated that it was "to my children." Rodriguez asked a fourth time whether the testament was in the form that Maurice wished and Maurice confirmed that it was. "And thus," stated Rodriguez, "I can state what was repeated by the deceased Maurice, that he is four times sure and was seen by the witnesses that this is the testament [and the testament] is in the state he wished."[65]

Maria Teresa also introduced testimony from Don Fernando Rodriguez. According to Rodriguez, four or five days before Maurice passed, he sent a *negra* to

[64] Ibid., 70.

[65] Ibid., 65-7, 135.

summon Rodriguez from his home. Rodriguez arrived and "found him in his bed." Maurice, according to Rodriguez, explained, "I called you to authorize my will but I don't want anyone to know [until after my death]." As *escribano* or royal notary of the Cabildo, Rodriguez's duties included authorizing and recording testaments, but he told Maurice he could not do so without any witnesses.[66] "Seeing that the declared was sick," Rodriguez suggested a provisional session by "finding three witnesses close to the house of this Maurice." Rodriguez confirmed the rest of Maria Teresa's claim. Yes, he stated, Maria Teresa's three children were named his universal heirs. In fact, when the children were called into the room, Rodriguez stated Maurice "knew the three as his children and when called 'Father' he responded."[67] Because Rodriguez chose to regard the gathering as a provisional meeting, and given the secrecy of Maurice's request, he did not catalog the proceedings as was customary for *escribano*. Instead, he struck the meeting from the record and left Maurice's home with the witnesses.[68]

The second living witness, Don Luis Molière, was also asked to describe Maurice's last moments. Molière stated that Maurice called the three children to him on his sickbed and, before the witnesses, "declared them his legitimate, or natural children." He did this although "the sickness was plainly immobilizing." Mollier stated that "these were his last wishes to give his inheritance to the three children,

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[66] Gilbert C. Din and John E. Harkins, *The New Orleans Cabildo: Colonial Louisiana's First City Government, 1769-1803* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 75-78.

[67] Ibid.

[68] "Diligencias," 135, 87, 53-55.

which he did not name, but who after were called to the room of the sick man and declared so in the presence of the eyewitnesses as was custom."[69]

Over the next month, Maria Teresa asked several of New Orleans most distinguished white gentlemen to verify both the veracity of the will and the "paternal love and affection" Maurice showed towards his three children. Maria Teresa traveled from the countryside to the royal barracks soliciting testimony and from interviewees including Don Santiago Hubert, Don Pedro Caselard, Don Augustin Macarty, and Don Nicolas Favre Daunois. At least two, Caselard and Macarty, openly engaged in liaisons with Carlota Wiltz and Céleste Perrault, both free women of color.[70] All of the men testified the same: Maria Teresa and Maurice participated in a public, long-term relationship, produced three children together, and Maurice acknowledged their children. When the children called him "Father," he responded. Maurice also provided them with "all that was necessary for life and also necessary after his death." Some of the men interviewed issued their own opinion on the matter. In his testimony, Macarty described the relationship between Maurice and Maria Teresa as a "public and notorious concubinage." However, none of the witnesses doubted the veracity of the nuncupative will, the paternity of the children, or, ultimately, the legitimacy of Maria Teresa's claim.[71]

Faced with witness testimony from some of New Orleans wealthiest landowners, and sensing the direction of the case, Perine submitted a provocative

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[69] Ibid., 135, 73-74.

[70] Glenn R. Conrad, *A Dictionary of Louisiana Biography* (Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies), 529-530.

[71] "Diligencias," 31-2, 44-45, 43-44, 42-43.

counter-argument to Almonester y Rojas. On July 29, Perine requested the presence of three New Orleans doctors: Don Estevan de Pellegrue, doctor of the Royal Hospital; Don Santiago Le Luc, surgeon for Charity Hospital; and the surgeon Don Juan Cenas. These doctors, Perine stated, "know the three children." More important, the doctors would be able to expound "on the knowledge that they have of the natural course of procreation" to show "that the union of a mulato with a grifa does not produce a negro." Perine, drawing on Atlantic-wide assumptions of race, color, and legitimacy, stated that the doctors would prove that "the three referred to bastards are naturally distinct one from the others in color, fashion, semblance, and hair." The union, Perine continued, of a mulato with a grifa should create a "mulato claro" or light-skinned mulatto, but not *negros* "or others that resemble those that have been made from very inferior unions." As Maria Teresa had not produced any such *mulato claros*, these could not be the children of her brother, they did not have a claim to his estate, and the case should be dismissed with Maria Teresa ordered to pay the court costs.[72] To better prepare their testimony, the doctors were authorized to collect the children and examine them.

By asserting that she could prove the parentage of the three children under discussion based on their physical characteristics—phenotype, hair texture, facial features, and body composition—Perine drew on an Atlantic-wide legacy of race and gender tropes. More important, Perine's decision to present an argument for paternity based on purity of race, even though she herself was a *parda libre*, suggests she possessed a striking awareness of the boundaries race and gender in New Orleans

[72] Ibid., 75-76.

society. The whispered suggestion in her statement that the mixture among Maria Teresa's children made them inferior to her brother, and by association herself, may also explain, much less comfortably, a larger tension between all three parties. As a *parda*, Perine may have felt less threatened by categories of race than a *negra* or *mulata*, and therefore more willing to use those categories in pursuit of her claim. There is also no reason to doubt Perine believed her statements were true. Regardless of her motivation, Perine was willing to manipulate the boundaries of race and color in the interest of her property and kin.

On August 17, the doctors Pellegrue, Le Luc, and Cenas appeared before the Cabildo. The surgeons began by commenting on the general facts of the case. Pellegrue, Le Luc, and Cenas condemned all acts of concubinage because paternity "questions are always difficult to resolve." Because the children were illegitimate, the doctors "cannot say in this circumstance, *without father or marriage declared*, who their father is." The doctors emphasized the importance of honoring God "who blessed the human species with infinite variety" but further noted that the laws of legitimacy and reproduction are "inflexible." The sacraments of marriage defined fatherhood; and "without the sacrament of marriage or approval of the Religion," neither Pellegrue, Le Luc, nor Cenas could state for certain that the three children were not Maurice's. The doctors also scolded Maria Teresa for having "created the scandal" in the first place by flouting the sacrament of marriage and behaving "without appreciation" for racial boundaries.[73]

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[73] Ibid., 67-80.

The surgeons viewed the inheritance case as part of a much larger social problem. Pellegrue, Le Luc, and Cenas described the mixing of the races as “horrible plagues on the society” that create “inflexible” racial anomalies. As a consequence, the doctors noted “ a mulato does not produce a negro in their union with a negra grifa, but definitely a grifo much lighter than that grifa, less light than the mulato that is the father of a purer state, proceeding the mother, and of hair like the father”[74] The doctors expounded on the physical characteristics of Maria Teresa’s children by scrutinizing each child by body part, noting Pedro and Sesamie’s hair texture, skin color, body type and features as being, in Pedro’s case, of a *mulato*, and in Sesamie’s, of a *negra.*[75] The third Margarita, was described as not resembling the first two at all, having skin color akin to Sesamie but much darker than Pedro. Agreeing that Maria Teresa, and in consideration of her *negra grifa* racial designation, the doctor’s concluded that the race of the fathers in fact differed. Margarita was the daughter of a *mulato*, while Pedro was the son of a white, and Sesamie was the child of a *negro*.[76] However, the doctors finished by reminding the Cabildo that, regardless of their racial composition, three children remained “bastards” by virtue of their conception outside of “holy matrimony.”

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[74] Ibid., 78-80.

[75] Ibid.,, 79-80. “…Thus it is seen that of the three bastards, Pedro and Sesamie are different in color and in hair [texture], and the first for having the color and hair of a mulato and the second the…color of a negra, in this I can definitely say they are the children of their mother….”

[76] Ibid. “Whereupon I can conclude that the difference is that Margarita is the daughter of a *mulato,* Pedro [the son of] a white, and Sesamie is that of a negro and knowledge also the declarations that they have of their legitimacy, believe that it is true that the Negra Grifa is the mother of all three but none can say for certain the identity of the father.”

Maria Teresa wasted no time calling her next witness—the defendant Perine Dauphine, Maurice's sister. Under Maria Teresa's questioning, Perine's testimony added another layer to the debate over paternity and kinship. Since the March 1788 fire, Perine admitted, the three children had been living with her and continued to do so until the day she was ordered to produce them for the doctors' examination.[77] On that day, she sent the children to their mother, Maria Teresa. When asked why she allowed the children to remain with her, Perine answered she did it "because she is their godmother; and also for charity." By getting her to acknowledge her responsibilities as a godmother and as a charitable member of New Orleans society, Maria Teresa forced even Perine to acknowledge the complicated layers of kinship at work between them and in the case. By incorporating the children into her home after a city-wide disaster, and agreeing to stand as godmother, Perine, Maria Teresa suggested, had accepted a role in a kinship network that included Maria Teresa and her children. Charity, Catholic rituals of belonging, and sharing a household, all appeared to work against Perine's claim that Maria Teresa's children were not her brother's, and cast doubt on Perine's attempts to avoid relinquishing the inheritance her brother left.

Three days later, Maria Teresa asked Don Juan Cenas to testify again. On August 20, Maria Teresa asked Cenas whether it was true that Maurice Dauphine brought him his sick children, whether the children he had treated were the same ones in question, and whether he could confirm that the deceased had paid for the work and any medicines Cenas found necessary to prescribe. Cenas did not deny any of the

[77] Ibid., 60-62.

statements, and also added that, "just as a father would, and that he [Maurice] called them his children, and that he knew them, worked with them and assisted them as though they belong to him."[78]

Maria Teresa and Perine Dauphine both built cases for Maurice's inheritance by making various assumptions about the relationship between property and kinship. Maria Teresa constructed an understanding of kinship rooted in provisioning, property ownership, and legacy. According to her, Maurice was their father because he publicly claimed them and provided for them on a regular basis. Through his willingness to provide financially for the children, he was claiming them as his; they should, therefore, receive his inheritance. In addition, by mobilizing a community of testimony in her favor, and by choosing wealthy, property-owning white men, Maria Teresa also showed a keen comprehension of the significance of property, wealth, status, and race in legitimating the children. For Maria Teresa, and for the purposes of her case, the sacraments of marriage were not the primary determinant of kinship and responsibility. Maria Teresa hoped that by demonstrating the paternal love and affection Maurice gave his children in life, Rojas would assume that such sense of responsibility would continue after death.

Perine Dauphine, in contrast, relied on more conservative understandings of paternity and race to defend her case. Where Maria Teresa's argument for the inheritance relied on the experiential struggle of maintaining family and community, Perine's counter arguments relied heavily on legal precepts meant to disenfranchise and disinherit free people of color and women. From her first response that Maria

[78] Ibid., 58-59.

Teresa's lawsuit was "groundless," to the questions of paternity and race—Perine Dauphine used the tools of the slaveholding regime to retain possession of her brother's effects. Perine's refusal to provide or share Maurice's inheritance with Maria Teresa suggests she, too, was using succession to draw boundaries and maintain connections between kin. Perine Dauphine, however, did not include Maria Teresa or her children in her own circle of kinship.

Maria Teresa lost her case. On December 11, 1789, Don Almonester y Rojas ruled that Maria Teresa did not prove the paternity and legitimacy of her children, invalidating the claim of her children to Maurice Dauphine's estate. However, "to best administer justice" Almonester y Rojas ordered a public auction of Maurice's goods, one-sixth of which would be paid to Maria Teresa as guardian of her three illegitimate children. Almonester y Rojas also ordered Maria Teresa to pay all court costs and fees. Maria Teresa requested to appeal the case to the tribunal in Havana. Perine issued her customary protest, but Almonester y Rojas allowed the appeal to proceed.

Over the following year, Maria Teresa's appeal stalled. According to Menendez, Maria Teresa fell "gravely ill of labor and fatigue," attempting to care for herself and her three children. Maria Teresa requested more time to appeal and relief from court costs, claiming insolvency.[79] She was granted both. In August 1791, with no word from the appellate court in Havana, Perine began petitioning the court for a resolution. In response, Menendez admitted that Maria Teresa had been absent from the city for several months and he had no correspondence from his client. He asked

[79] Ibid., 125.

Don Pedro de Marigny, the new *alcalde de segundo voto*, to enforce the original decision and proceed with the auction of the estate.[80] On May 12, 1792, Marigny agreed. Maria Teresa, last seen at the post in Mobile, was ordered by the commandant to comply with the court-ordered action.

Maria Teresa reappeared in June to name Don Antonio Budanquier and a local artisan named Josef Fernandez as her representatives for the appraisal. Maria Teresa did not remain for the final auction; but afterwards, she petitioned the Cabildo to charge Perine and Eugenio with more subterfuge. Maria Teresa claimed the Dauphine siblings did not include Maurice's furniture or his land outside of the city in the auction.[81] On the same day, Eugenio Dauphine registered a receipt for the land, naming himself as the owner.[82]

As a free mother of color and guardian of three children with no property to speak of, Maria Teresa could mobilize neither the energy nor the resources to continue pursuing her case. She moved with her children to Mobile, perhaps following her own kinship networks or in search of employment and a home. She may never have received her percentage of the estate sale. In contrast, while Perine Dauphine was forced to sell her brother's property at public auction, she also purchased it back at the same auction. Her brother Eugenio purchased Silvestre, the *grifo* slave. Neither the furniture nor the land along Bayou St. John went to public

[80] Ibid., 132-133.

[81] Ibid., 177.

[82] Ibid., 178.

auction, and the Demasillier-Dauphin property continued to expand, partly in that direction.

In April 1814, an ailing Perine Dauphine wrote her last will and testament. Perine described herself as "Pelagie Dauphine" also known as "Perine Demasilliere," a "femme de couleur libre" of the Catholic Apostolic religion, and a native of the province of Louisiana. Her mother was Marie Dauphine, a négresse libre now deceased, and her father was "M. Daupaine." Marie and M. Daupaine never married. Perine's property consisted of a house in New Orleans, a dwelling outside of the city, slaves, furniture, and housewares, some of it left over from her previous marriage. Perine named M. Dominique Mayromme the executor of her estate, and proceeded to distribute her goods among her slaves and dependents.

She freed her slave Sophie, in return for her "*bons services*" and left one thousand *piastres* to Sophie's daughter, a *mulâtresse libre*. She also freed Joseph, a black slave, about fifteen years of age, and obliged him to serve Sophie's daughter until he reached the age required for manumission in Louisiana. She declared her slave Pierre, a *nègre* about thirty years old, freed, but only after he served Sophie's daughter for a period of six years. Finally, Perine named Silvanne, a fifteen year old *quarteronne libre*, and eleven year old Thomas, *quarteronne libre*, both children of Marie Maurice Thomas, *mulâtresse libre*, her universal heirs, requiring them to divide the property equally "with the Benediction of God and myself."[83] By February of the next year, Perine had passed away.

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[83] "Pelagie Dauphaine ditte Perine Demasillier, f. m. l.," 19 April 1814, Recorder of Wills, Will Books, vol. 1, NOPL.

Over the course of the eighteenth century, free communities of color in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana, solidified into cohesive, political units. Free women of color accumulated property, supported complicated configurations of kin, and demanded the right to pass on their property to future generations. French colonial officials responded to their requests in various ways, calculating issues of trade, diplomacy, and slave management. The dispute between Maria Teresa and Perine Dauphine offers a glimpse at the role property, inheritance and status played in the lives of free women of African descent. Free women of color like Maria Teresa and Perine Dauphine found creative ways of protecting and distributing property, even drawing on assumptions of race and gender. At the same time, property was enfolded with kinship. In bequeathing and receiving inheritance, and in contesting the same, free women of color sought to maintain networks of kinship and support. They were also determined to define kinship on their own terms and used property to do so.

Conclusion

Femmes de Couleur Libres and the Nineteenth Century

> The abjection of the captive body exceeds that which can be conveyed by the designation or difference between 'slave' women and 'free' women.
> -- Saidiya Hartman, "Seduction and the Ruses of Power" (1996)[1]

Between 1792, when Perine Dauphine secured her legal victory over Maria Teresa, and Perine's death in 1815, the meaning of freedom in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana changed a great deal. In 1791, slaves in Saint-Domingue's Northern Plain rose up, throwing plantation production and civil governance into disarray. Thousands of men, women, and children fled the island in the ensuing struggle. The flow of Saint-Domingue residents, both black and white, created a refugee triangle between revolutionary Saint-Domingue, the island of Jamaica just west of Les Cayes, and Cuba's eastern province, Santiago de Cuba, north of Port-au-Prince. The refugee diaspora did not stop in the Caribbean, as Saint-Domingue refugees migrated as far as France and New York, seeking safe harbors and opportunities to begin their lives again.

This paroxysm of violence coincided with the revolution in France and the subsequent rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1801, Bonaparte negotiated the return of Louisiana to France, but when slave and colonial revolt in the Antilles continued, Bonaparte sold Louisiana to the new American Republic. In 1803, Louisiana was

[1] Saidiya V. Hartman, "Seduction and the Ruses of Power," *Callaloo: A Journal of African-American and African Arts and Letters* 19, no. 2 (1996), 541.

formally transferred to the United States, and less than a year later slavery was abolished in Saint-Domingue, and the colony became the free republic of Haiti. In Senegal, France reclaimed Saint-Louis near the end of the eighteenth century, but the *comptoirs* continued to play a diminished role in Atlantic commerce. When the Haitian Revolution destroyed France's most lucrative overseas venture, slave trading from Senegal all but ceased. After 1808, England deployed its considerable navy to enforce a ban on Atlantic slave trading, and over the next decade, the last vestiges of French slave trading from Senegal to points west trickled to an end. Economic ventures in peanuts and gum replaced Atlantic trading, but the position of the *habitants* as favored traders and diplomats within the region began to fall.

While the Haitian Revolution certainly marked an end to the colony of Saint-Domingue as a French imperial center, and a source of plantation production, slaveholding did not end throughout the Atlantic world. The migrations of free people of color, sometimes with slaves and property in tow, to Jamaica, Cuba, the Gulf Coast and the United States proved that there were ways the system of slavery would reinvent and remake itself in new places. Even in Senegal, slaveowners turned to slave labor to produce staple goods for sale in Europe and slavery grew more entrenched and more Atlantic in orientation. Instead, the Haitian Revolution marked the beginning of a long and protracted struggle against forced labor and the systematic brutality of enslavement.

Perine's New Orleans was now a different city for free women of color. As a francophone city with close ties to Saint-Domingue, New Orleans received a large number of émigrés during the first decade of the nineteenth century. In 1808,

Bonaparte invaded Spain and the Cuban government retaliated. In March 1809, Cuba issued a proclamation expelling all French citizens without Spanish spouses from the island. Between May 1809 and January 1810, over nine thousand men, women, and children arrived in New Orleans. Over the course of the next year, the number of refugees in the city would surpass ten thousand.[2]

The composition of the 1809-1810 migration to New Orleans was distinctive. The majority of refugees arrived from southeastern Cuba, embarking from the ports of Santiago de Cuba and Baracoa.[3] The balance of whites, free people of color, and slaves was dramatically different. By January 1810, over six thousand free people of color and slaves arrived in New Orleans, compared to less than three thousand white refugees.[4] The 1809-1810 migration to New Orleans from Saint-Domingue by way of Cuba also included a large number of free and enslaved women of color and their children. In fact, among refugees of color, adult women, free and enslaved predominated, and more free women of color arrived than any other demographic making their way to the city. It is likely that more free men of color and enslaved men were drawn into the conflict in Saint-Domingue and remained, or were killed on

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[2] The 1809 migration to New Orleans has been discussed in some detail. See Paul F. Lachance, "The 1809 Immigration of Saint-Domingue Refugees to New Orleans: Reception, Integration and Impact," *Louisiana History* 29, no. 2 (1988): 109-141; Nathalie Dessens, *From Saint-Domingue to New Orleans Migration and Influences* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007); Thomas Fiehrer, "Saint-Domingue/Haiti: Louisiana's Caribbean Connection," *Louisiana History* 30, no. 4 (1989): 419-437; Charles Gayarre, *History of Louisiana* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1999), 4: 204-205; Luis M. Perez, "French Refugees to New Orleans in 1809," *Publications of the Southern Historical Association* 9, no. 5 (1905): 293-321.

[3] Mayor's Office, "An Extract from the Lists of Passengers reported at the Said Office by the Captains of Vessels who have Come to this Port from the Island of Cuba, July18-August 7, 1809," in *Official Letter Books of W. C. C. Claiborne, 1801-1816,* edited by Dunbar Rowland (Jackson, MS: State Department of Archives and History, 1917), 4:381-382 (hereafter *Claiborne Letter Books*). Only one ship arrived from Havana.

[4] Lachance, "The 1809 Immigration," 111.

the island, contributing to the gender imbalance among migrants. In New Orleans, official anxiety over the in-migration of free black men contributed to the female majority as officials did their best to enforce laws requiring free men of color and boys over the age of fifteen to leave the territory.[5] Some free men of color needed no official encouragement to leave.[6] In comparison, among white refugees, men outnumbered women nearly two to one, and more white men arrived than white women and children combined.

At the same time, New Orleans was an Americanizing city. Wealthy francophone women and men vied with English and English-speakers for political, economic, and social dominance. The privileges accrued by free people of color during the Spanish regime began to erode as territorial officials rewrote laws to tighten manumission, restrict mobility of free people of color, and otherwise limit free people of color's independence.[7] This process did not occur all at once. In 1809, in *Adele v. Beauregard*, the New Orleans Supreme Court ruled that "mulattoes" were to be regarded as free while "negroes" were to be presumed slaves, unless proven otherwise. By 1812, however, the independence of free people of color in New Orleans had deteriorated.

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[5] "Letter to James Mather from W. C. C. Claiborne, New Orleans, 9 August 1809," *Claiborne Letter Books*, 4:401-402.

[6] "Extract of a letter from the Mayor of the City of New Orleans, dated March 28, 1810," in *Claiborne Letter Books*, 4:381-2. After seven or eight months in the city, over a dozen free men of color left New Orleans on the schooner *Lenora*, bound for St. Bartholomew, in search of work.

[7] Judith K. Schafer, "Roman Roots of the Louisiana Law of Slavery: Emancipation in American Louisiana, 1803-1857," *Louisiana Law Review* 56, (1996), 410. See also Judith K. Schafer, *Becoming Free, Remaining Free: Manumission and Enslavement in New Orleans, 1846-1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003).

And yet, women like Perine Dauphine continued to cultivate kin and property. Perine owned three slaves, a home and land when she died. It was property enough for her heirs to remain self-sufficient. Perine died without claiming any natural children of her own, but like free women of color before her, her kinship networks survived her death. In 1816, Perine named Silvaine, the daughter of another free woman of color, one of her heirs and filed a petition to possess the land above the city.[8] Perine also left behind a namesake, her goddaughter Pelagia Marta Dauphine, to carry on in her stead.

"Freedom, Kinship, and Property: Free Women of African Descent in the French Atlantic" unravels the lives of free women of African descent in the French Atlantic as they grappled with the rise of Atlantic slave trading and the development of slavery in all three locales. Between 1685 and 1795, the French Atlantic world grew, developed, and began to constitute a whole. The spread of plantation slavery across the French settlements overseas coincided with the settlement of slave trading posts on the west coast of Africa and the introduction of black laborers into the Americas. French imperial provenance relied on enslaving African women, men and children, forcibly transporting them overseas, and maintaining people of African descent in subordinate positions relative to whites. French colonial officials, trading company administrators, and slaveowners were ruthless and used every means available to create legal, political, and conceptual linkages between blackness and

[8] "Petitions de Fergus Duplantier de Cette Paroisse," 16 February 1816, Recorder of Wills, Will Books, vol. 1, New Orleans Public Library (hereafter NOPL).

bondage. From the 1685 *Code Noir* to restrictions on property ownership, the French Atlantic officials never fully welcomed free people of color.

But the eighteenth century also saw the rise of free populations of color throughout these same places due in no small part to the determination and creativity of free women of African descent. In Saint-Louis and Gorée, African and Eurafrican women plied trade, worked for trading companies, and built lives on the *comptoirs*. In Le Cap, Port-au-Prince, and Les Cayes, free women of color emerged from slavery and helped bring others into freedom, participated in inter-island and intra-island trades, also accruing wealth to pass on to their kin. In New Orleans and Mobile, free women of color battled intransigent officials, often accessing freedom through personal relations with slaveowners or well placed patrons, and securing property in part to survive the scarcity of Gulf Coast daily life.

The position of free women of color in the three regions developed unevenly over time and across space but kinship and property played a critical role in maximizing their status. Free African and Eurafrican women participated in trade with Europeans, gaining status and position. Across the Atlantic, enslaved women secured their freedom and as free women of color, participated in Catholic ritual, formed kinship networks, and acquired property and wealth. The lives they created within slaveholding societies in Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana shaped the communities of color created at each place.

From a French imperial perspective, it may be appropriate to argue that the end of French tenure in these places meant the end of their French Atlantic narrative. For free women of color in these locales, everyday life did not collapse as easily as

imperial administrations. As empires changed, people lived on, and the same occurred Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana.

On the frontlines of slave trading, imperial change, and Atlantic warfare, free women of color pursued opportunities that expanded their liberty and bolstered their households. In Senegal, Saint-Domingue, and Gulf Coast Louisiana, free women of color emerged as heads of households and leaders in their own right. Although free men of color eventually assumed the most visible leadership roles at each locale, these men owed their status, position, and wealth to the industry of free women of color who came before them.   In many cases, political leaders like Charles Thevenot, Julien Raimond, and Edouard Tinchant descended directly from such multi-racial, property owning lineages. The kinship and property networks created by free women of color were the foundation of free communities of color forming across the French Atlantic.

Appendix A

Maps

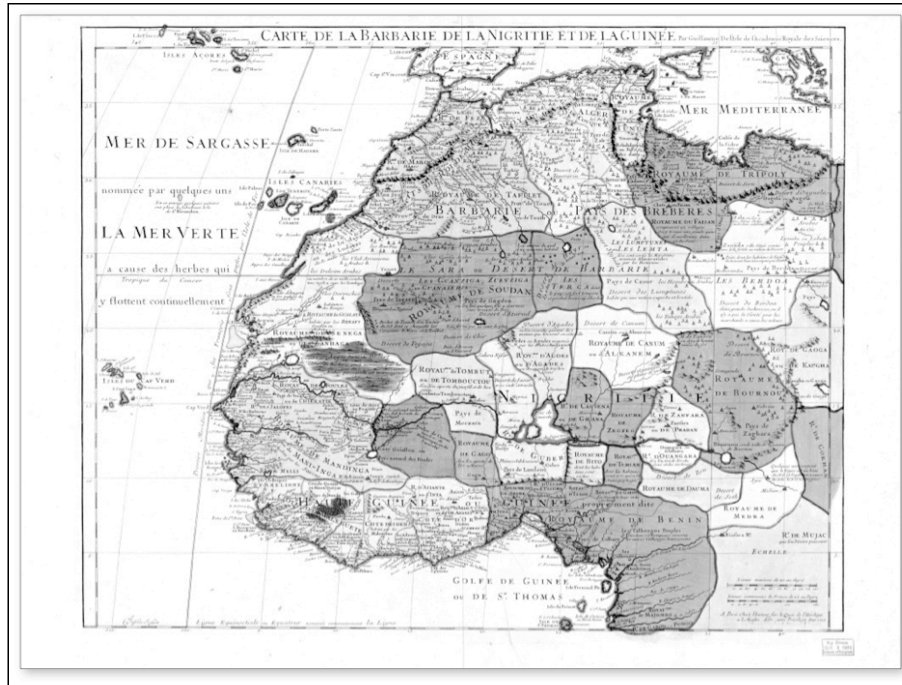
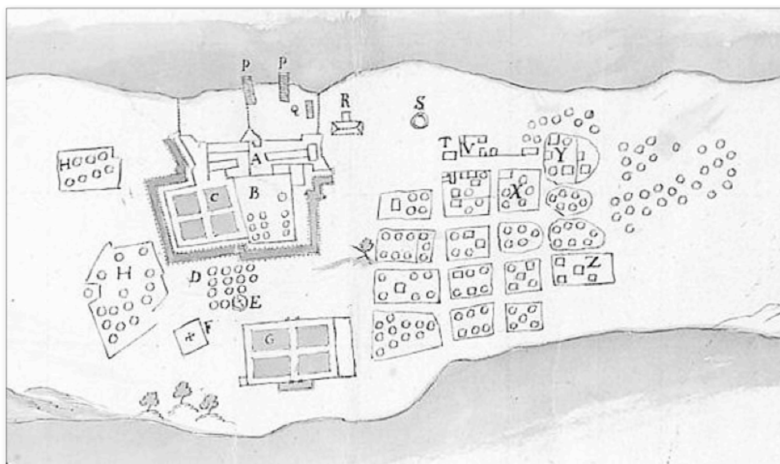


Figure A.2. Coast of Guinée, 1718. Source: Guillaume Delisle. "Carte de la Barbarie, de la Nigritie, et de la Guinée," [map]. 1718. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g8220.ct001447> [accessed 9 April 2012).

PLAN du fort Sr LOVIS & de LISLE du SENEGAL

A. Le fort
B. Court derriere le fort & cazes a gomme.
C. Petit jardin
D. Cazes à gomme & au sel.
E. Collombier.
F. Cimetiere
G. Grand jardin & magasin aux planches.
H. Cazes des bambaras.
I. Buisson du grand bout de lisle.
L. Petit marigot.
M. Les mangles.
N. Grand marigot,
O. Four a briques.
P. Les pons.
Q. Boucherie.
R. Tente aux charpentiers.
S. Four a chaux.
T. La Forge.
V. Le four & boulengerie
X. Cazes du sieur Etienne Delarüe
Y. Cazes du sieur Francois Le Clerc.
Z. Cazes & jardin de Mr de Booz
& Les dunes & marigot au petit bout de lisle



Figures A.2-3. Saint-Louis, Eighteenth Century (with Key) Source: "Plan du Fort Saint-Louis et de l'Isle du Sénégal," [Detail]. 17--. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Cartes et plans. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b77594501> [accessed 26 June 2012).

Appendix B

Charts and Tables Related to the French Slave Trade

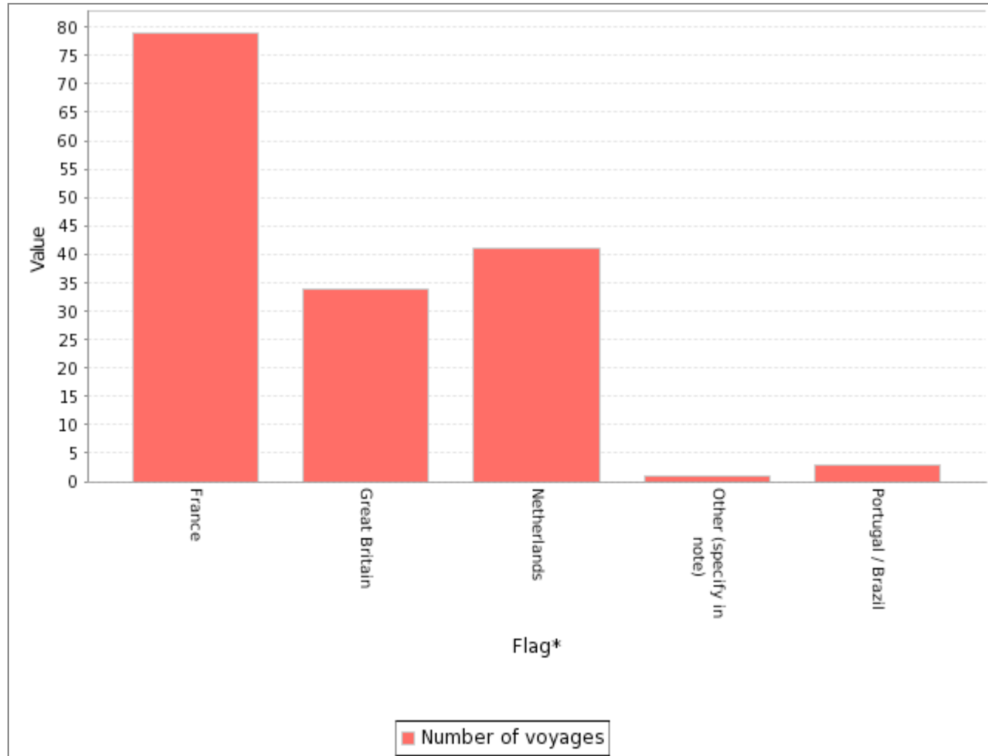


Figure B.1. Flags of Slave Ships Disembarking Slaves in St. Kitts/St. Christophe, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Domingue, French Guiane, and Other/Unspecified French Caribbean

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&mjslptimp=33500.36100.36200.36300.36400.36500] (accessed April 30, 2012)

Table B.1: French Slave Trade: Region and Sum of Slaves Disembarked, 1651-1710

Year	France	Cuba	St. Kitts	Barbados	Grenada	Martinique	Guadeloupe	French Guiane	Saint-Domingue	Other French Caribbean	Spanish Central America	Rio de la Plata	Bahia	Bight of Biafra [a]	TOTAL
1571-1575	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	45	--	--	--	45
1626-1650	--	--	264	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	155	419
1651-1675	--	--	--	244	--	1,361	801	241	--	521	--	--	--	--	3,168
1676-1700	308	--	158	--	--	5,341	241	973	2,713	1,767	820	--	--	--	12,321
1701-1710	--	313	--	--	210	4,128	--	289	1,693	--	6,000	2,773	31		15,437
TOTAL	308	313	422	244	210	10,830	1,042	1,503	4,406	2,288	6,865	2,773	31	155	31,390

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&natinimp=10] (accessed April 30, 2012)

Table B.2. French Slave Trade: Region and Sum of Slaves Embarked, 1644-1710

Year	Senegambia and offshore Atlantic	Windward Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra [a]	West Central Africa and St. Helena	Other Africa	TOTAL
1644-1650	509	--	--	--	806	--	--	1,315
1651-1660	--	316	--	--	--	--	--	316
1661-1670	316	--	--	997	--	316	--	1,629
1671-1680	1,734		696	535	386	--	1,954	5,305
1681-1690	5,343	180	--	2,933	--	--	2,474	10,930
1691-1700	3,117	--	--	666	--	1,051	1,273	6,107
1701-1710	2,348	591	604	9,417	40	1,250	2,131	16,381
TOTAL	13,367	1,087	1,300	14,548	1,232	2,617	7,832	41,983

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. [http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1710&natinimp=10] (accessed April 30, 2012).

[a] Total includes Gulf of Guinea islands.

Table B.3: French Slave Trade: Region and Sum of Slaves Embarked, 1711-1820

Year	Senegambia and offshore Atlantic	Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra and Gulf of Guinea islands	West Central Africa and St. Helena	Southeast Africa and Indian Ocean Islands	Other Africa	TOTAL
1711-1720	5,337	226	435	746	26,198	5,057	6,105	--	2,364	46,468
1721-1730	9,564	60	203	855	38,295	--	11,110	386	1,279	61,752
1731-1740	10,439	177	1,400	9,774	35,349	793	18,930	386	1,385	78,633
1741-1750	6,783	942	3,507	14,823	26,185	1,658	33,613	--	2,857	90,368
1751-1760	5,586	2,400	1,830	1,896	29,215	4,285	34,564	--	1,572	81,348
1761-1770	4,445	7,601	1,415	1,486	20,566	9,819	68,640	1,158	11,360	126,490
1771-1780	6,947	1,953	633	1,059	39,859	8,464	75,313	2,908	11,067	148,203
1781-1790	13,500	9,891	2,010	10,175	39,740	18,023	117,920	26,954	25,281	263,494
1791-1800	2,719	2,232	206	1,523	3,796	8,886	26,221	7,734	6,673	59,990
1801-1804	2,099	--	--	--	1,178	--	3,942	3,111	--	10,330
1804-1810	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	840	--	840
1811-1820	7,050	1828	935	--	183	7184	1,925	244	--	19,349
TOTAL	74,469	27,310	12,574	42,337	260,564	64,169	398,283	43,721	63,838	987,265

Source: Voyages Database. 2010. Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.
[http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1711&yearTo=1850&natinimp=10] (accessed May 26, 2012)

Appendix C

Moreau de St. Méry's Classifications of Race and Race-Mixture for the Colony of Saint-Domingue (1789)

In *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie francaise de l'isle Saint-Domingue* (1797), Moreau de St. Méry included a detailed taxonomy of race, race-mixture, and color classification in pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue. Moreau identified thirteen race "classes" within the population and divided twelve of those classes into a classification system. The system was based around an individual's 'race' having 128 black or white "parts:"

Table C.1. Moreau de St. Méry's Classifications of Race

Race	Parts White	Parts Black
Blanc/Blanche	128	0
Sacatra	16	112
Griffe/Griffonne	32	96
Marabou	48	80
Mulâtre/Mulâtresse	64	64
Quarteron/Quarteronne	96	32
Métif/Métive	112	16
Mamelouc/Mamelouque	120	8
Quartonné/Quarteronnée	124	4
Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée	126	2
Nègre/Négresse	0	128

Source: Médéric Louis-Élie de Saint-Méry Moreau, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie francaise de l'isle Saint-Domingue* (Philadelphia, P.A.: chez l'Auteur, 1797), 1:82-87.

The thirteenth, "zingres," was reserved for "East Indians" whose hair was "long and straight."

Moreau painstakingly elaborated on the race of children born to women and men from each racial designation:

Table C.2. Moreau de St. Méry's Race "Combinations"

Race....	...From combination of...
Blanc/Blanche	Blanc/Blanche + Blanc/Blanche
Nègre/Négresse	Nègre/Négresse + Nègre/Négresse
Mulâtre/Mulâtresse	Blanc/Blanche + Nègre/Négresse
	Nègre/Négresse + Sang-mêlée/Sang-mêlée
	Nègre/Négresse + Métif /Métive
	Mulâtre/ Mulâtresse + Marabou
	Quarteron/ Quarteronne + Griffe/Griffonne
	Quarteron/ Quarteronne + Sacatra
	Métif/Métive + Sacatra
	Mamelouc/Mamelouque + Sacatra
	Quarteronné/Quarteronnée + Sacatra
	Quarteronné + Négresse
	Mamelouc + Négresse

Quarteron/Quarteronne	Blanc/Blanche + Mulâtresse/Mulâtre Blanc/Blanche + Marabou Blanc/ Blanche + Griffe/Griffonne Blanc/Blanche + Sacatra Mulâtre/Mulâtresse +Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée Mulâtre/Mulâtresse + Quarteronné/Quarteronnée Mulâtre/Mulâtresse + Mamelouc/Mamelouque Mulâtre/Mulâtresse + Métive/Métif Mulâtre/Mulâtresse + Quarteron/Quarteronne Quarteron/Quarteronné + Marabou Métif/Métive + Marabou/Marabou Métif/Métive + Griffe/Griffonne Mamelouc/Mamelouque + Marabou Mamelouc + Griffonne Quarteronné/Quarteronnée + Griffe/Griffonne Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée + Marabou Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée + Griffe/Griffonne Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée + Sacatra Marabou (m) + Quarteronne/Quarteronnée
Métif/Métive	Blanc/Blanche + Quarteron/Quarteronne Quarteron/Quarteronne + Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée Quarteron/Quarteronne + Quarteronné/Quarteronnée Quarteron/Quarteronne + Mamelouc/Mamelouque Quarteron/Quarteronne + Métif/Métive
Mamelouc/Mamelouque	Blanc/Blanche + Métif/Métive Métif/Métive + Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlee Métif/Métive + Quarteronné/Quarteronnée Métif/Métive + Mamelouc/Mamelouque
Quarteronné/Quarteronnée	Blanc/Blanche + Mamelouc/Mamelouque Mamelouc + Sang-mêlée Mamelouc/Mamelouque + Quarteronné/Quarteronnée Sang-mêlé + Quarteronnée
Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée	Blanc/Blanche + Quarteronné/Quarteronnée Quarteronné + Sang-mêlée Sang-mêlé + Blanche

Sang-mêlé/Sang-mêlée but "approaching white"	Blanc + Sang-mêlée
Marabou	Nègre + Quarteronne Mulâtre/Mulâtresse + Sacatra Quarteron + Négresse Griffe + Mulâtresse Griffe/Griffonne + Marabou
Griffe/Griffonne	Nègre/Négresse +Mulâtresse/Mulâtre Nègre/Négresse + Marabou Sacatra + Griffe/Griffonne Marabou (m/f) + Sacatra (m/f)
Sacatra	Nègre/Négresse + Griffe/Griffonne Nègre/Négresse + Sacatra

Source: Adapted from Médéric Louis-Élie de Saint-Méry Moreau, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie francaise de l'isle Saint-Domingue* (Philadelphia, P.A.: Chez l'Auteur, 1797), 1:71-5.

Present-day demographer Jacques Houdaille has suggested Moreau included divisions of race colonists did not make use of in everyday life. In reviewing the 1780-1790 parish registers of Jacmel, Cayes-de-Jacmel, Fond-des-Nègres--the decade when racial classifications began to be used most frequently in official records--Houdaille discovered only seven in common usage:

Table C.3. Classifications of Race in Parish Registers of Jacmel, Cayes-de-Jacmel, and Fond-des-Nègres (1780-1790)

Race	% White	% Black
Nègre/Négresse	0	100
Griffe/Griffonne	25	75
Mulâtre/Mulâtresse	50	50
Quarteron/Quarteronne	75	25
Tierceron/Tierceronne	87.5	12.5
Métif/Métive	93.75	6.25

Source: Adapted from Jacques Houdaille, "Trois paroisses de Saint-Domingue au XVIIIe Siècle," *Population* 18, no. 1 (1963 Jan/Mar), 105-6.

The final classification in usage, "sang-mêlé/sang-mêlée," connoted race-mixture but only "a trace of black blood" and "only appeared in the later years." In addition, "tierceron/tierceronne" was not used by Moreau but did appear in registers. Individuals involved in recording births, deaths, and marriages took these designations seriously. In 1783 in Jacmel, one godfather refused to sign a register because the curé declared him a "quarteron" and would not change his race to "tierceron."[1]

Doris Garraway's study of race and creolization in the early French Caribbean supports a reading of Moreau's system as academic in nature. Garraway described Moreau's classification system as a "fantasy" of "a white male coupling with a black female, whose offspring begins a chain of successive coupling, always with the same white male factor crossing with the mixed-race female product of his prior union, to the *n*th degree."[2] Joan Dayan has also argued for viewing Moreau's racial designations as "combinatorial fiction" and "one of the more remarkable legalistic fantasies of the New World," meant to emphasize white male superiority over the "tainted blood" of people of African descent.[3] As his volume was published in the midst of the Haitian Revolution, Moreau's analysis also reflects the nostalgia of a white 'Creole' planter class for plantation society in Saint-Domingue.

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[1] Jacques Houdaille, "Trois Paroisses De Saint-Domingue Au XVIIIe Siècle," *Population* 18, no. 1 (1963 Jan/Mar), 105-6, 11n.

[2] Doris L. Garraway, *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 262.

[3] Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History, and the Gods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 25.

Moreau's classification system was well circulated. *Description topographique* sold all but three hundred copies of its first thousand-copy run, but over the next century, the text endured several printings in multiple languages.[4] As a formula for understanding late eighteenth-century race classification systems in the French Atlantic, Moreau's divisions capture the salience of reproduction, genealogy, and physical characteristics constructions of race.

Classifications of race in the French and Spanish Atlantic worlds have been compared in discussions of French and Spanish Louisiana.[5] In Spanish Latin America, individuals of different race and ethnic origins were divided into *castas*. The *sistema de castas* or *sociedad de castas* emerged in the sixteenth-century. Castas were corporate identities with the weight of law. Identification with or as a particular *casta* determined everything from employment and access to the courts, to privileges within the Catholic Church.[6] According to scholars, over fifty *casta* designations circulated by the late eighteenth-century, helped in part by the circulation of *castas* paintings among the white elite and in Spain.[7]

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[4] Catherine Hébert, “French Publications in Philadelphia in the Age of the French Revolution: a Bibliographical Essay,” *Pennsylvania History* 58)1), (1991), 51.

[5] For the most recent analysis, see Jennifer M. Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[6] Maria Elena Martinez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza De Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 148-52. See also Stuart B. Schwartz, “Colonial Identities and the *Sociedad De Castas*,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 4, (1995): 185-201.

[7] See Nicolás Léon, *Las castas del México colonial o Nueva España* (Mexico City: Talleres gráficos de arquelogia, histoira y etnografia, 1924). Based in part on the *casta* paintings, Mörner identified sixteen *castas*. Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little Brown, 1967), 58. On *casta* painting see Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); Magali Marie Carrera, *Imagining Identity in New Spain: Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).

In Spanish Louisiana, only five frequently used terms describe people of African descent. These classifications broke down roughly by ancestry (see Table C.4) but free and enslaved status, birthplace, acculturation, phenotype, hair texture, status, even patronage and reputation all played a large role in determining "race."

Table C.4. Classifications of Race Used in Spanish Louisiana

Race....	...From combination of...
Blanco/Blanca	Blanco/Blanca + Blanco/Blanca
Negro/Negra	Negro/Negra + Negro/Negra
Moreno/Morena	Blanco/Blanca + Negro/Negra
Pardo/Parda	Blanco/Blanca + Moreno/Morena
Cuarteron/Cuarterona	Blanco/Blanca + Pardo/Parda
Grifo/Grifa	Pardo/Parda + Moreno/Morena or African ancestry + Indian ancestry

Source: Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 15-16.

A final classification, "indio/india" was used to describe individuals of either Native American descent or Native American and African descent.

Glossary

à la mode du pays. In the manner of the country. Also, in Senegal, African-European marriage outside of the Catholic Church but following Wolof or Lebou customs.

affranchi, affranchie. Freed person of African descent. As distinguished from free-born (*née libre*) person of color.

alcaides. African agents who supervised trade, collected tolls, collected tribute from European traders.

arpent. A French unit of length. About 192 feet.

Atlantic World. Geographically the empires, colonies, and societies created through processes of colonialism, slavery, and the slave trade from the fifteenth to the early twentieth century.

captifs de case. Household slaves and slaves owned by residents at Saint-Louis and Gorée.

comptoir. Garrisoned slave trading outposts in West Africa. As distinguished from the escales or slave trading posts with no forts and little permanent European presence.

coureurs de bois. French-Canadian fur traders in New France, Louisiana.

creole, Creole. Native born, native to a place. Also refers to communities claiming French and Spanish descent in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Louisiana.

engagés. Indentured servants in France.

escale. Slave trading posts in West Africa. As distinguished from the comptoirs.

habitant, habitante. Heads of households and residents at French outposts overseas.

intimate relations. The broad spectrum of sexual, affectionate, and romantic relations that can occur between two individuals including marriage, concubinage, and casual sexual encounters.

kinship. Links and relations based on shared affection, obligation, responsibility, and distribution of resources.

lançados. Term used to describe Portuguese traders who adopted African religious, social, and cultural habits. Believed to be less assimilated into African culture than their counterparts, *tangomãos.*

métis, metisse. Mixed-race. Also refers to communities claiming French and other European descent in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Senegal.

Portingall. Seventeenth-century term used to describe Luso-African communities along the West African coast.

signare. Term used to describe the property-owning, Eurafrican woman traders residing at Saint-Louis and Gorée during the eighteenth century.

tangomão. Term used to describe Portuguese traders who adopted African religious, social, and cultural habits. Believed to be more assimilated into African culture than their counterparts the *lançados.*

Bibliography

Abbreviations

4JJ	Journaux du Bord
4Z	Actes notariés du Sénégal
C6	Correspondance: Sénégal et côtes d'Afrique
C13	Correspondance: Louisiane
ANS	Archives Nationales du Sénégal
CAOM	Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer
DPFC	Dépot des fortifications des colonies
État Civil SEN	État Civil: Sénégal
HNOC	Historic New Orleans Collection
LHC	Louisiana Historical Center
LOC	Library of Congress
SDOM NOT	Saint-Domingue Notariat
NONA	New Orleans Notarial Archives
NOPL	New Orleans Public Library

Primary Sources

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1. Saint-Domingue Notariat (SDOM NOT)

Cap Français & Northern Province
Bordier, jeune, 1776-1788
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Dore, Cap Français, 1755-1780

Port-au-Prince & Western Province
Carlet, Port-au-Prince, 1762-1763
Collin, Petit-Goave, 1722
Desnouville, C., Saint-Marc, 1795
Dupaty, Petit-Goave, 1741-1755
Ladvocat, Petit-Goave, 1704
LaFond, Petit-Goave, 1746
Landrin, Léogane, 1766, 1772

Les Cayes & Southern Province
Bugaret, Les Cayes, 1754-1774
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Clouet du Bruc, Les Cayes, 1760-1777
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Contet, Saint-Louis, 1741
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Domergue, C., Les Cayes, 1779-1792
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Langlois, Saint-Louis, 1723
Laroche, Jacmel, 1793, An IV
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Martigniat, Les Cayes, 1774-1783
Girard, Jérémie, 1773-1788
Grandval, Saint-Louis, 1759-1771

2. Correspondence à l'arrivée: Sénégal et côtes d'Afrique (C6)

C6 4-5	Compagnies du Sénégal, de Guinée et de l'Asiento, 1690-1719
C6 6-11	Compagnies du Sénégal et des Indes, 1719-1739
C6 12-14	Compagnies des Indes, Correspondance des directeurs du comptoir du Sénégal: David, La Brue, Estoupan de Saint-Jean, 1740-1757
C6 15	Correspondance des Poncet de La Rivière, Esmenager, La Gastière, Rocheblave, 1763-1768
C6 16	Correspondance des Rocheblave, Montcharton, Boniface, La Brasseur, 1768-1781

3. Correspondence à l'arrivée: Louisiane (C13)

C13A 1	Découverte et premiers établissements, 1678-1706
C13A 2-28	Correspondance des gouverneurs et autres administrateurs: Bienville, La Mothe-Cadillac, L'Epinay, Périer, Bienville

4. État Civil: Sénégal (État Civil SEN)

Saint-Louis	Naissances, Mariages et Décès, 1730-1782 Naissances, 1783-1819 Tables Décennales, 1730-1830
Gorée	Naissances, Mariages et Décès, 1777-1824 Tables Décennales, 1777-1830

5. Récensements (G1)
   Louisiana, 1706-1732
   Saint-Domingue, 1681-1788, 1776

6. Dépot des fortifications des colonies, 1636-1755
   Mémoires 76
   Plans et Cartes, carton 24

B. Archives Nationales du Sénégal

1. Actes notariés du Sénégal
   4Z2 Archives notariées de Saint-Louis du Sénégal, 1786-1789

2. Politique et Administration Général, Series G
   22G1 Dénombrement des habitants natifs, 1779

2. Domaine, Series L
   L3 Concessions à Saint-Louis du Sénégal, antérieur 1790

C. Library of Congress

1. Louisiana Colonial Records Collection
   Archives de la Marine, Service Hydrographique
   4JJ, Journaux du Bord (4JJ)

D. Historic New Orleans Collection (HNOC)

Records of the French Superior Council, 1713-1769
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E. Louisiana Historical Center (LHC)

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