Formidable Rebels

Slave and Free Women of Color in Cuba's Conspiracy of La Escalera, 1843-1844

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Introduction

On May 30, 1844, Cuban Military Commission judges sentenced Antonia, a domestic slave on the Buena Esperanza coffee plantation in the Matanzas district, to be executed for attempting to murder her owner, Pedro Domench, with "poisonous dust" in the Conspiracy of La Escalera (the Ladder).[1] The plot, punctuated by a series of rebellions across western Cuba in November 1843, had been influenced by several processes in the early nineteenth century, including the Haitian Revolution, the abolition of slavery in the British Caribbean, the expansion of slavery in Cuba, and numerous uprisings by slaves and free people of color in the colony. To suppress the revolts, Cuban authorities arrested over 4,000 people and formally charged more than 1,800 individuals, the majority of being men of African descent. Hundreds died during interrogations, and the Military Commission condemned thousands to execution, banishment, and imprisonment.[2] Although officials implicated dozens of women in the Conspiracy of La Escalera, trial records listed Antonia as the only woman out of 78 free people of color and slaves to receive a death verdict. But, in reality, she was not alone. At least two other slave women, Fermina and Carlota, were also executed for leading revolts on neighboring plantations.[3] The general participation of women of African descent, however, has been otherwise obscured within both the contemporaneous and historiographical literature on the Escalera rebellions.

The roles of female insurgents represented a small, somewhat hidden, element in the uprisings. In the official records authorities linked at least 32 other women of African descent to the revolts.[4] For instance, Antonia's name does not appear in the Military Commission documents until session 11 in which she is one among 98 individuals being sentenced.[5] Listings of the punishment categories compiled in the twentieth century referenced her under "executions (including one black woman)," but offered no information on her legal status as enslaved or free, nor her name or her alleged crime.[6] Nevertheless, the violent suppression of the rebellions, followed by the colonial government's wave of arrests, torture, and death prior to the trials and sentencing, suggests that far more women may have been involved than previously thought.

The cursory acknowledgement of Antonia's execution in connection to the Conspiracy of La Escalera and the ungendered accounts of most insurgents accent the silencing of women and the uncritical privileging of men in the

uprisings. The plight of female rebels calls for a deeper investigation into how women of African descent responded to the conditions of chattel servitude and the risks they were willing to take towards overthrowing slavery. Using the Military Commission records from Matanzas as a window into slave rebellion and repression in mid nineteenth-century Cuba, this article explores black women in the Escalera revolts and the consequences of their actions as dictated by the colonial Cuban state. I contend that despite the multiple inequalities they suffered based on race and gender, enslaved and free black women were active, albeit disparate, participants in the Escalera revolts to overthrow slavery and Spanish rule. In many instances, they elected to violently subvert the slave system. At other times, they pursued justice within the colonial legal structure to recoup their losses. Situating these women as insurgents reveals how they claimed power for themselves in both rural and urban locales. It also sheds light on how the state perceived women's involvement in the conspiracy, and how the penalties could mirror or deviate from those of men. By highlighting the range of accusations and verdicts imposed on women of color, I demonstrate how their behavior, networks, and legal understandings influenced rebellion and colonial retribution in nineteenth-century Cuba.

This study joins the expanding scholarship that seeks to lift women out of the historically ungendered quagmire of slave rebellion. Recent works by Mary Kemp Davis, Aisha Finch, Karla Gottlieb, Bernard Moitt, and Teresa Prado-Torreira have placed black women and their actions squarely within the framework of slavery and agitated resistance in the Caribbean region.[7] Moreover, because the Conspiracy of La Escalera has been the subject of extensive scholarly debate over whether or not the conspiracy (or conspiracies) was real or fabricated, a new perspective exploring the gendered dynamics of the insurgency is needed.[8] In this volume, Matthew Pettway and Jacqueline Grant examine how men of African descent forged their own definitions of self in opposition to the colonial Cuban state's perception of black men as powerless. Similarly, this essay expands our understanding of gender by engaging the levels of women's involvement in the Escalera rebellions as expressions of individual agency in collective resistance in both urban and rural landscapes. In doing so, I scrutinize the revolts as sites synonymous with male power only, and shed light on the complex networks that connected slaves and free people of color, male and female, in the struggle to end slavery and colonial authority in Cuba.

Women and Rebellion: From Mythical Figures to Formidable Rebels

Despite the development of studies about African-descended women, both slave and free, there remains a dearth of information on their roles in colonial rebellions. This can be attributed to both the scarcity of sources and the fact that men dominated the planning and execution of these

episodes. However, as Verene Shepherd has noted, it is misleading to conclude that only male insurgents took part in armed slave resistance.[9] Shepherd focused specifically on colonial Jamaica, but her assessment rings true for much of the Americas, especially during the wave of slave rebellions from the late eighteenth to the mid nineteenth centuries. The Haitian Revolution's prolonged and powerful example of forced emancipation inspired the enslaved and provoked fear among planter elites. Within the first half of the nineteenth century, authorities violently suppressed major rebellions in Virginia (1800 and 1832), Barbados (1816), Demerara (1823), Jamaica (1831), Brazil (1835), and Cuba (1812, 1835, and 1843).[10] However, as asserted by Gywn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller, "Scholars have conventionally focused on revolt as the ungendered slave reaction to exploitation. This emphasis on violence has heightened the not fully merited attention given to male slaves."[11]

The unconscious privileging of men in slave insurgencies is reflected both in the historical evidence and scholars' interpretations. Referencing African traditions, some historians have emphasized how customs transferred to the Americas maintained definitions of men as political leaders and warriors, and women as dominating the so-called nonviolent, domestic realm. These cultural understandings and the isolated locales of rural plantations worked to circumscribe women's participation in armed revolt.[12] Indeed, as noted by Doug Egerton and James Sidbury in their studies of the Virginia rebellion in 1800, the leader, Gabriel Prosser, "chose no women" for his inner circle, not even his wife, Nanny. In this instance, the involvement of women was virtually invisible.[13] Similarly, works on slave revolts and conspiracies in the Caribbean and South America occurring in the first half of the nineteenth century brought few women to light for their contributions as rebels. Nevertheless, the social and political realities of European encroachment in Africa, the horrors of New World slavery, and the limits of freedom also worked against these explanations for the assumed absence of agitated female resistance.

A variety of accounts challenge the portrayal of women as passive actors in the midst of armed aggression. For example, as early as 1729, the West African Kingdom of Dahomey (present-day Benin) organized women as soldiers during an attack on Whydah (also in present-day Benin), perhaps as a military tactic to enhance the size of the royal army.[14] By 1764, during warfare between Dahomey and the Kingdom of Asante (present-day Ghana), historian Robin Law emphasized that Dahomey had become "notorious for employing regiments of female soldiers drawn from among the king's wives."[15] A few years later Robert Norris, an English slave trader, witnessed a parade in Dahomey that included "a guard of ninety women, under arms, with drums beating" followed by "six troops of seventy women each," and a final group of "seven troops of fifty women." In all, this totaled 860 female soldiers.[16] African-born former slave Olaudah Equiano

echoed these depictions in his autobiography published in 1794. He characterized the women of his homeland as "warriors" who "march[ed] boldly out to fight along with the men."[17] In the early nineteenth-century, British Captain John Adams wrote of West African women, particularly the Ibo, as 'equally mischievous and ferocious' as men. These examples suggest that West African women had an established practice of group resistance, against both European and African aggressors.[18]

Increasingly throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, historical documents recorded the efforts of African-born and creole women to violently subvert slavery. In the French Caribbean, female rebels in Saint Domingue comprised a portion of the insurgent troops who guarded weapon caches for leaders Toussaint Louverture and Jean Jacque Dessalines. In Guadeloupe, they carried weapons, ammunition, messages, food, and other supplies to the battlefield, and formed part of the forces that fought against French combatants.[19] In Cuba's 1812 Aponte rebellion, authorities detained 32 women of color, including 16 listed as free and 11 slaves, eight of whom were African-born.[20] In Puerto Rico, records noted Marcelina and María Concepción as the only women among 61 slaves arrested in connection to a thwarted conspiracy in Bayamón in 1821.[21] As Joaõ José Reis has asserted for Brazil's 1835 Muslim revolt, despite religious traditions that excluded women from taking part in ritual practices, Brazilian slave society made male followers of Islam inevitably "obliged to make concessions to its female sector." In this case, an enslaved woman named Emereciana (the lover of rebel leader Dandará), along with over 300 predominantly male slaves and freedmen, had been seen taking part in a ceremony distributing Muslim "rings like a general decorating meritorious recruits."[22] Examples of women as guards, messengers, soldiers, and leaders reveal multiple levels of intervention as they endured dangerous and deadly circumstances in the bid to destroy the slave system. In the context of slavery and agitated resistance, women could be just as formidable as men.

Moreover, as Jane Landers and Charles Beatty-Medina have noted in their respective works on resistance and maroon communities, "women had to be almost mythical or supernatural figures" to be recognized for their agency in colonial insurgencies.[23] Queen Nanny of the eighteenth-century Jamaica Maroons has emerged as one of the most prominent examples of a female rebel leader. Scholars have depicted Queen Nanny, an African-born woman of Akan ethnicity, as the military, cultural, and religious head of the Jamaican Maroons as they battled the British from 1725 to 1740. Myths and oral traditions detail Queen Nanny's extraordinary abilities and the use of "supernatural powers" to slay or outsmart her adversaries.[24] For the early nineteenth-century Caribbean, scholars have recognized Nanny Grigg as the "revolutionary ideologue" of the 1816 uprisings in Barbados. Historical accounts characterized her as

an educated and informed woman who advocated a Haitian-style rebellion to obtain freedom.[25] Certainly, the recognized leadership of both of these Nannys, in contrast to the one in Virginia, can be seen as exceptional in the broader context of slave revolt in the Americas.[26] It is more revealing, however, to consider their involvement as one end on a spectrum of agitated female resistance. For every woman who led a revolt, thousands more contributed to individual and coordinated acts of sabotage.

Women, like their male counterparts, suffered extreme consequences for their rebellious activities. Records for the British Caribbean cite instances in Barbados (1686) and Antigua (1736) in which authorities executed female slaves who revolted.[27] After the Aponte rebellion in Cuba (1812), officials had Caridad Echevaria, a free woman of color, put to death for her defiant actions. Others indicted in the Spanish colony suffered a combination of brutal physical pain followed by imprisonment, such as Isabel Infante, who was condemned to endure 150 lashes and six years in prison.[28] After being charged with participating in uprisings in Martinique in 1831, an unnamed enslaved woman was sentenced to 29 blows with the whip.[29] In Brazil, authorities ordered Emereciana, a female slave, to receive 400 lashes for joining in the 1835 revolt.[30] Although executions occurred less frequently for female insurgents, officials made few gendered distinctions when passing out prison terms and whippings to suppress rebels. On his visit to Cuba in the early 1830s, British military captain James Edward Alexander observed inmates of all hues in the Havana prison, which included a separate section for women.[31] These examples of agitated resistance, colonial accusations, and penalties ranging from whipping to capital punishment indicated that the state readily considered women as frightening and mistrustful as men in their opposition to slavery.[32]

Women and Cuba's Conspiracy of La Escalera

Despite British-Spanish treaties abolishing the slave trade in 1817 and 1835, planters in Cuba imported over 180,000 enslaved Africans between 1831 and 1840 to supply the expanding sugar industry. The demand for female slaves over the nineteenth century, particularly in Havana's urban market, ultimately resulted in women comprising 51 percent of slave sales.[33] Furthermore, according to 1841 census data, two years prior to the Escalera revolts, women of African descent represented 23 percent of the total population, and their male counterparts comprised 35 percent of island inhabitants.[34] These figures suggest that women had become an increasingly important feature of Cuban slave society, which may have contributed to the varied rebel positions ascribed to them in historical materials.

In 1843, uprisings peppered various regions of Cuba. In March an estimated 1,000 enslaved workers set fire to crops and buildings on five sugar plantations in the Matanzas region in the west.[35] Revolts in the east, near Santiago de Cuba, broke

out in May. Rebels destroyed property and left numerous planters, overseers, and their families dead or wounded. News reports, which spread from New Orleans to Philadelphia and New York City, claimed that these rebellions "had been much more extensive and deeply organized" than previous outbreaks.[36] Smaller revolts soon returned to the western sugar region, dotting the tropical landscape in the summer and early fall. As the population of African descent grew bolder in its violent, collective protests, each episode heightened colonial tensions over slave rebellion and the fear of "another Haiti."

The final wave of uprisings set the stage for the most infamous response to slave revolt in colonial Cuban history. In November, male and female rebels swept through Matanzas for several days destroying sugar estates, and killing and injuring landowners. Matanzas planter Esteban Santa Cruz de Oviedo linked the disturbances to a larger plot. A woman named Polonia Gangá, an African-born slave and concubine to Santa Cruz de Oviedo, testified that she eavesdropped on discussions of the planned uprising in the slave quarters. For revealing the plan, she received her freedom and 400 pesos.[37] Using Polonia Gangá's testimony, along with additional evidence acquired through coercive methods, investigating authorities invoked slaves' testimonies as proof of a conspiracy led by free blacks, in alliance with slaves and British abolitionists.[38] Armed with their version of the truth, Cuban officials embarked on an intense period of repression to quell the November rebellions.

From January to early April 1844, black residents and foreigners endured excessive searches, incarcerations, interrogations, trials, and abuses. One observer remarked that in some places the streets were "running with negro blood."[39] Officials crisscrossed their jurisdictions torturing and extorting confessions from the African-descended population, and seizing furniture, cattle, and other property from free people of color. The combined rebellions and the ensuing repression became known as the Conspiracy of La Escalera – the Conspiracy of the Ladder – named for the instrument of torture; the accused were tied to the ladder and whipped until they confessed to their complicity or named others involved in the plot.

As one of the few women mentioned by name in the historical literature on the Escalera rebellion, Polonia Gangá represented assumptions about female passivity. However, like all slave testimony in the Escalera trials, Polonia's information was most likely derived under duress. Sexual abuse ran rampant on all three of Santa Cruz de Oviedo's plantations; he had fathered over twenty-six enslaved offspring. His cruel and exploitive sexual power gave slaves, particularly women, sufficient reason to plot revenge.[40] Although Polonia Gangá emerged as an informant against other bondsmen and women, her forced intimacy with Santa Cruz de Oviedo, fear of violent reprisal from her owner, and

an opportunity to obtain freedom may have heavily informed her testimony. Given her harsh treatment as chattel and concubine, she chose to acquire personal freedom and profit, even at the expense of other slaves.[41] Her act of betrayal and self-preservation suggests additional perspectives for understanding the motives of women in uprisings. Most often, however, black women were rarely singled-out in relation to the Escalera rebellions. Rather, they comprised the mass of insurgents, without distinction or analysis.

Scrutinizing the available, yet fragmented data, however, disputes portrayals of women as bystanders of rebellion. They often held essential positions in the Escalera uprisings. In mid March 1844, Cuba's Military Commission began 71 rounds of sentencing for more than 3,000 people. These records list the names, alleged actions, and penalties of over three-dozen enslaved and free women of color in connection to the conspiracy. Although they do not typify the mass of people jailed or sentenced, the women who appear in the historical records shed light on the diversity of their actual or suspected involvement, and the colonial perceptions of them as persistent threats to the colony. By centering black women in the turbulent age of rebellion, they can be assessed more thoroughly as critical agents in efforts to destroy the slave regime.

Three women in particular stood out among the sentencing records: Antonia, Clotilde and María del Pilar Poveda. As noted in the opening of this article, authorities accused Antonia of conspiring with three men to poison their owner. Officials also implicated another woman named Clotilde. Twelve witnesses testified that Clotilde, a Cuban-born slave, had directed the burning of La Purísima Concepción Echeverría sugar plantation, and three also claimed she had been selected to kill the overseer's wife.[42] In addition, judges asserted that María del Pilar Poveda, a free woman of color, had purposefully allowed one of the conspiracy leaders, her son-in-law Plácido, a celebrated Cuban poet, to hold meetings in her Matanzas home. The magistrates insisted that she "could not have ignored the plan and its ramifications."[43] These allegations demonstrate that all three women, and many more, defied lingering stereotypes of enslaved and free women of color as submissive or unconcerned with radical resistance.

The legal and social status of these women within their respective rural and urban settings, no doubt, shaped their actions in the Escalera rebellions. Antonia's position as a cook gave her virtually unlimited access to the slave owner's food in her preparation of daily meals. Her role on the plantation facilitated meetings with fellow slaves for the express purpose of killing their master, which made Antonia a vital factor in the insurgents' goal to topple slavery. Witness accounts condemning Clotilde simultaneously acknowledged her leadership abilities to direct rebels towards which fields and structures to burn. Being appointed with the task of murdering the overseer's wife suggests yet another gendered

layer to the subversion of power on the plantation, as well as a probable antagonistic relationship between the two women. As a legally free person and homeowner, Poveda helped coordinate small gatherings away from the watchful eye of the police, an activity that officials considered highly dangerous. Her prominence as a respected midwife only heightened authorities' concerns that Poveda could inflict additional harm on white mothers and newborns.[44] Regardless of their legal standing, all three women drew upon their expertise, leadership, and trusted positions in the community to agitate forcefully against slavery.

Antonia, Clotilde, and Poveda received the most severe punishments for women charged in the Conspiracy of La Escalera: death, hard labor, and occupational banning, respectively. In Antonia's case, a young slave boy named Matias discovered the plan for poisoning and alerted the plantation owner before it could be implemented. Nevertheless, authorities ruled that Antonia be executed by firing squad. They insisted she had willingly accepted the poison concocted by her fellow bondsmen "with full knowledge of their depraved objective" to have her feed it to Domench.[45] This treatment, although considered unusually harsh for women, was not unprecedented.

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, travelers, planters, and colonial authorities in the Americas frequently blamed "loyal and dutiful" slaves for poisonings.[46] Pierre Labat, a Frenchman visiting Saint Domingue in the late eighteenth century, cautioned that domestic slaves, especially women, schemed to kill their owners.[47] Planters concurred in 1791. Several emphasized how a "negro cook," the rebel ringleader on the Desgrieux plantation in the Limbé district, escaped capture and joined forces with slaves on neighboring estates to spread rebellion.[48] For Cuba, records list the majority of women involved in the 1812 Aponte rebellion as domestics.[49] Their duties provided them with direct access to the slave owner, as well as potential opportunities for introducing toxic substances into household food and beverages. In 1822 elites in Martinique held trusted slaves responsible for conspiring to poison not only their white masters, but also livestock and other bondsmen.[50] In the broader context of slave poisoning in the Caribbean, Antonia's key part in the plot against her master gave authorities just cause for capital punishment.

Furthermore, Antonia's actions, albeit thwarted, struck at the heart of master-slave relationships. The cook held a position of both skill and trust on the plantation. By plotting to kill her owner, in alliance with other slaves, Antonia undermined power relations at the Buena Esperanza estate and throughout the colony. In the context of the Escalera rebellions, authorities could not dismiss Antonia's conspiratorial behavior. Rather, they used her to send a deadly message that would resonate throughout the enslaved population.

In addition to execution, judges frequently ordered women of African descent to hospitals or workhouses where they were compelled to care for the sick and destitute, and perform other types of arduous work. Extracting labor from convicted criminals, as noted by Ruth Pike in her study of the colonial Spanish penal system, emerged as a "guiding principle," both in Spain and in its Caribbean territories, to offset persistent labor shortages for state projects.[51] Brazil had a similar approach. As insurgencies escalated from the 1830s through the 1850s, it was not uncommon for authorities to condemn male and female prisoners to perpetual hard labor on Fernando de Noronha, an agricultural penal site on an archipelago off Brazil's northeastern coast.[52] After Jamaican authorities discovered evidence of a conspiratorial plot among slaves in 1824, they arrested Mary Ann Reid, the only woman among 14 prisoners, with holding unauthorized dances in her home. Officials mandated her to complete four months in a workhouse.[53] Instead of execution, which would have deprived slave societies of valuable property and labor, officials perpetuated the servitude of black women in colonial institutional settings.

Numerous women reaped this type of punitive measure during the Escalera repression. After the Military Commission indicted Clotilde for leading an estate rebellion, they sentenced her to spend the rest of her life toiling in a Cuban hospital.[54] Authorities also impugned Rita Dominguez, a free woman of color, for shouting in a local store that the black population would take over the whites and shoot them. For her "vicious conduct," judges voted unanimously for Dominguez to serve one year in the Hospital de Paula in Matanzas.[55] The alleged actions of Clotilde and Dominguez represented the extremes of subversive behavior and language. From the perspective of authorities, these acts – leading an uprising and making public inflammatory comments – could not go unpunished. Moreover, the rulings effectively disconnected slave and free women of color from networks and allies on the plantation and in the cities.

Holding secret meetings also reaped reprisal. Targeted for hosting conspiratorial gatherings, María del Pilar Poveda suffered a double penalty. First, officials forced her to spend a year doing hard labor in a Havana hospital, then banned her from working as a midwife, one of the few highly skilled occupations available to women of African descent. Authorities cautioned that Poveda could "abuse her position [as a midwife] by harming white women and children" under her care. Furthermore**,** they complained that her "very passive" husband could have done little to stop her.[56] These remarks emphasized both Poveda's crucial midwifery skills and her personal independence. Both of these characteristics conflicted with colonial goals to diminish black women's predominance as midwives, and to control their social behavior in public and private arenas.[57] As such, judges made an example out of Poveda. Commission officers forced her to serve time in Havana, away from her husband and three

children who lived in Matanzas. Furthermore, as a skilled midwife, the occupational ban severely disrupted her economic livelihood. Overall, colonial Cuban authorities sought to diminish Poveda's social status and discourage other free people of color from abusing their skilled positions.[58]

Unlike most of the women convicted in connection to the Escalera rebellions, however, Poveda used her free status, occupational standing, and juridical knowledge to protest the employment ban. In 1845, at the end of her term in the Havana hospital, she petitioned the colonial Cuban government to repeal her job restriction. In it, Poveda highlighted how her children and "ailing husband" had become destitute without her economic support. Moreover, she cited references from her "elite" clients who praised her respectable and professional behavior. Noting her time served and testimonials from Matanzas, officials reversed Poveda's occupational constraint.[59] This turn of events suggests that, from the perspective of the colonial state, Poveda's position had shifted from supplementing her husband's income to one in which she became the primary provider for the family. Her successful reinstatement as a midwife hinged on her ability to produce evidence of past conduct deemed acceptable and respectable for women of color – proof that also worked to distance her from the original conspiratorial claims.

Clearly, authorities took seriously women's ability to subvert slavery and the colonial system. By contributing to the planning and implementation of uprisings and using violent, racially charged language, they undermined gendered understandings of colonial behavior, order, and authority. The volatile colonial reaction led both men and women to suffer similar penalties of hard labor, occupational displacement, and death. The main exception in terms of gender involved the strictly male overseas imprisonment or banishment from Cuba of 435 predominantly free men of color, a punishment authorities applied to allegations ranging from using subversive language to inciting revolts.[60] Although the colonial state stopped short of deporting women associated with the uprisings, they undoubtedly saw enslaved and free women of color as threats to the slave regime. In response, officials imposed execution on some women for their conspiratorial machinations. Meanwhile, hard labor and employment restrictions reduced financial resources and separated families. These material and familial losses ensured that the African-descended community would spend the coming decades struggling to rebuild their social networks and economic base, and from the perspective of authorities and planters, also make slaves and free people of color less likely to foment rebellion in the future.

Confession, Surveillance, and Absolution

The remaining women implicated in the Conspiracy of La Escalera experienced a range of other consequences. Judges accused 15 female slaves for their general participation in the countryside revolts, although not all would be

convicted.[61] To preserve property rights, authorities typically sent these women back to their owners. For instance, for joining in the rebellion on the Buena Esperanza coffee estate and neighboring locales, three women, Juana, Polonia, and Clara, were returned to their owner, Juan Bautista, and sentenced to spend six months in shackles.[62] Officials released Gertrudis carabalí to the proprietors of the Mercedita sugar plantation, where they placed her under surveillance for one year.[63] Mauricio García, an emancipated former slave who purportedly vowed that he wanted to "convert whites into the slaves of the race of color," incriminated eight women in the Escalera rebellions.[64] Ultimately, Military Commission officers determined García had made numerous false claims against these individuals, and decided to postpone a ruling on them until they procured corroborating evidence.[65] Given that authorities remanded García to one of Spain's North African prisons for four years and banished him from Cuba and Puerto Rico, it is conceivable that authorities would have also relinquished these women to the plantation, put them in irons, and called for close vigilance of their activities for several months**.**

The Military Commission also released thousands. Although rulings of absolution brought initial relief, they often carried stipulations of close surveillance, sometimes over multiple years. With the exception of Poveda, most free women of color accused of rebelling received some form of conditional pardon, such as Rita Brune, Antonia Cerero, and Antonia Maria Peñaranda. Officials released these women, but placed them under scrutiny for four, two, and one year, respectively.[66] Although the judges charged Simona, a slave owned by José Govin, with attempting to provoke rebellion among many of the region's powerful plantations, they absolved her with conditions for two reasons. First, she was one of 25 witnesses who testified that José Marrá Mondéjar led the organized revolt in the Sabanilla and Alacranes districts. Second, Mondéjar himself confessed that he had seduced Simona to gain access to Govin's home and kill him.[67] Authorities also planned to subject Isabel Hernández, suspected of attending suspicious meetings, to two months in public works and two years of surveillance – once they found her; she had managed to escape custody.[68] Others managed to avoid restrictions. Judges completely absolved seven women of color. Initially targeted for taking part in uprisings on at least eleven sugar plantations, slaves Matilde Peñalver and Ines Garro secured their unconditional release.[69] In addition, five free women of color also obtained full pardons. The Commission released Bárbara Gonzalez, Maria Jacinta Mendez, Margarita Capote, and Magarita Villavicencio with court fees that had been deemed mandatory for free people of color at the start of the sessions.[70]

Finally, despite validating their innocence, a few women found themselves in yet another precarious situation. For instance, when authorities could not produce any testimonies against Juana Carabalí Tosca, a free woman of

color, they released her to care for her three young children. Just as she embraced her freedom, she discovered her enslaved husband, Pablo Gangá Tosca, had been found guilty of spreading the "malignant and destructive idea of rebellion." In fact, Pablo Gangá had been implicated in an 1825 revolt and narrowly escaped death because he saved the life of his owner's wife. The Commission however, seemed determined to inflict a belated indictment 19 years later. They sentenced him to execution by firing squad and then to have his head mounted on a stick on the main road leading to the San Márcos sugar plantation near Cárdenas. The gory symbol would serve as a menacing omen for slaves in the area.[71] In the ongoing context of brutality, the women absolved of their involvement in the rebellions could be considered among the fortunate. They had been declared innocent and would live another day, although under the continuing system of enslavement.

What resonates among the punishments is the colonial state's use of servile labor to castigate women. With the exception of Antonia, most women were either returned to slavery or mandated to spend anywhere from a year to a lifetime serving in a disease-infested hospital away from their families. Clotilde's life term and Juana, Polonia, and Clara's shared half year in chains became sharp examples for other bondswomen. Coerced testimony against them sealed their fate back into slavery, making it virtually impossible to secure legal freedom. As for those who were released, given the sheer numbers arrested and their extended imprisonment prior to the Military Commission trials, absolution would have been a welcomed respite for many. The surveillance condition, which seemed to be readily applied to women accused of unsubstantiated seditious behavior, formed part of a larger policy authorities and planters sought to enforce after 1844. Fearful of renewed dissidence, the Leopoldo O'Donnell administration specifically revised Cuba's slave codes to restrict the movements of free people of color and their interaction with the slave population.[72] Whether enslaved or free, the alleged crimes of the women discussed in this article help elucidate the many ways in which black women took part directly in uprisings as instigators, facilitators, and insurgents. Moreover, the efforts to restrict these women's social networks and economic outlets reveal the danger they posed to colonial society and slavery.

Conclusion

This examination of enslaved and free black women's strategies of resistance to Cuba's slave system through direct involvement in the rebellions helps us understand the nuances of gender and rebellion in two important ways. First, it highlights the significance of women's collaboration in organizing the revolts and eliminating plantation authority figures. Cooks, who had access to the master's dwelling, could prove particularly threatening. Field slaves, resigned to daily toil and abuse, gave them common cause with their male counterparts to topple slavery. The exploitation these women

suffered cemented their positions at the forefront of resistance efforts. From the accusations assembled from the Military Commission records, it is clear that enslaved women had the ability and community support to express their frustration in deadly ways.

In addition, free women of color in the cities also undermined the colonial social order. Unlike white elite and middle status women, free black women had virtually unrestricted access to the public space of Cuban streets. As midwives, laundresses, seamstresses, and market vendors, they could discreetly pass on messages and information. Those who owned modest homes or operated taverns could facilitate small gatherings away from the watchful eye of local authorities. Furthermore, it is not surprising that some women resisted the ensuing government restrictions. Women, like Poveda, used their knowledge of the colonial legal system to seek retribution for their losses.

Second, analyzing women rebels also unites seemingly disparate streams of rural and urban revolt and resistance. According to officials, the Escalera uprisings, ignited in the heavy slave provinces of western Cuba, comprised a "vast conspiracy that tried to raise a black rebellion" across the island.[73] The networks established by workers in the countryside and in the cities revealed repeated attempts to erode and dismantle slavery throughout the nineteenth century. In the process, black women, whether enslaved or free, engaged actively in subverting Cuba's slave system. Akin to Aisha Finch's trope of the "repeating rebellion," the dozens of women discussed in this essay, especially Antonia, Clotilda, and María del Pilar Poveda, embody a repeating resilience in their opposition to slavery that offers a more accurate articulation of female agency within the landscape of slave rebellion.

As women of African descent negotiated the ensuing repression of the Conspiracy of La Escalera, their understanding of armed revolt as a means to full freedom would prove instrumental in the battle to end slavery and colonialism in Cuba in the second half of the nineteenth-century. The Escalera era (1844-1857) produced an intense period of prohibitive legislation. The restrictions sought to curtail social movement and economic opportunities for enslaved and free people of color, expel foreign-born free blacks, coerce hundreds of Cubans of color to emigrate to Mexico, the U.S., and parts of the Caribbean, and displace the African descended population in favor of European immigrants and Chinese contract workers.[74] The legacy of this period would fuel the mass participation of people of color in Cuba's Ten Year's War, for sovereignty and the abolition of slavery, and the War for Independence, setting the stage for women such as Mariana Grajales Cuello (the mother of Antonio Maceo), María Cabrales (Maceo's wife), and hundreds of other women of African descent to continue their legacy as formidable rebels in Cuba's struggle for freedom and independence.

[1] Cuba, Comisión Militar Ejecutiva y Permanente, *Colección de los fallos pronunciados por una sección de la Comisión militar establecida en la ciudad de Matanzas para conocer de la causa de conspiración de la gente de color* (Matanzas, Cuba: Imprenta del gobierno por S. M. y la Real Marina,1844), no. 11.

[2] Thomas Rodney to U.S. Secretary of State, April 1844, National Archives, Washington, D.C., U.S. Dept. of State Consular Dispatches, Matanzas, Cuba, 1820–1889 (hereafter NADC-DSCD; Paquette, *Sugar Is Made with Blood*, 220, 229, 236; Michele Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash: Free People of Color in Cuba and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 43.

[3] Jose Luciano Franco, *La gesta heroic* del triunvirato (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978), *23*; Aisha Finch, "The Repeating Rebellions: Slave Resistance and Political Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century Cuba, 1812-1844," 13-14 – *forthcoming in this volume.*

[4] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, nos. 1, 11, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 46, 58.

[5] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 11.

[6] Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar is made with Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middleton, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 229.

[7] Mary Kemp Davis, "What Happened in This Place?: In Search of the Female Slave in the Nat Turner Slave Insurrection," in Kenneth S. Greenberg, editor, *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 162-178; Aisha K. Finch, *Rethinking Slave Rebellion in Cuba: La Escalera and the Insurgencies of 1841–1844*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Karla Gottlieb, *The Mother of Us All: A History of Queen Nanny Leader of the Windward Jamaican Maroons* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2000); Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Teresa Prado-Torreira**,** *Mambisas: Rebel Women in Nineteenth-Century Cuba* **(**Gainesville : University Press of Florida, 2005).

[8] Scholars who attribute the colonial state with inventing the conspiracy in order to justify repressing Cuba's free population of African descent include Francisco González del Valle, *La conspiración de la Escalera. I. José de la Luz y Caballero* (Havana, 1925), 29-34; Vidal Morales y Morales, *Iniciadores y primeros mártires de la revolución cubana* (Havana: Avisador Comercial, 1901); José Luciano Franco, "Introducción al proceso de la Escalera," *Boletín del Archivo Nacional* 67 (January-December 1974): 54-63; José Luciano Franco, "La rebeldías negras," in Tres ensayos (Havana, 1951), 88; "Independientemente de la existencia real o no, de la llamada conspiración de la Escalera, su proceso fue la respuesta de la gran burguesía esclavista, a las voces de alerta de los negrófobos." Pedro Deschamps Chapeaux, *El negro en la economía habanera*, (Havana: UNEAC), 24-25; Herbert Klein, *Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 193-222. Klein somewhat revises his view in Herbert Klein*, African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York, Oxford University Press 1986), 212; Franklin W. Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba,* 81, 96. Those who contend there had been a conspiracy among free people of color, slaves, and abolitionists include José Manuel de Ximeno, "Un pobre histrión (Plácido)," In *Primer Congreso Nacional de Historia*, 2 vols. (Havana, 1943); Daisy Cué Fernández, "Plácido y la conspiración de la Escalera," Santiago," no. 42 (June 1981): 145-206 – see reprint in Salvador Bueno, editor, *Acerca de Plácido* (Havana, 1985), 427-83; Rodolfo Sarracino, "Inglaterra y las rebeliones esclavas cubanas: 1841-1851," *RBNJM* 28 (May-August 1986): 81; Jorge Castellanos, *Plácido, poeta social y político* (Miami: 1984); Enildo García, *Plácido: Poeta mulato de la emancipación, 1809-1844:* Walterio Carbonell, "Plácido, ?Conspirador?" *Revolución y cultura* no.2 (February 1987): 57; Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), xxi; 81, 96 200-206 ; Arthur Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886*, (Austin: 1967), 81; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Social Control in Slave Plantation Societies: A Comparison of St. Domingue and Cuba* (Baltimore: 1971), 57-62; ; David R. Murray, *Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Trade* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 172, 178; Paquette, *Sugar is made with Blood*, 248-249.

[9] Verene Shepherd, *I Want to Disturb My Neighbor: Lectures on Slavery, Emancipation and Postcolonial Jamaica* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), 106-109.

[10] For a discussion of major slave rebellions in the Caribbean and the circum-Caribbean, see James Sidbury, *Ploughshares into Swords: Race, Rebellion, and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia, 1730-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Greenberg, editor, *Nat Turner: A Slave Rebellion in History and Memory*; Eugene D. Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern* World (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979); David Patrick Geggus, "Slavery, War and Revolution in the Greater Caribbean," In Gaspar and Geggus, *Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1997); Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Michael Craton, *Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornel University Press, 1982); João José Reis*, Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Douglas R. Egerton, *He shall go out free: The lives of Denmark Vesey* (Madison, Wis. : Madison House, 1999).

[11] Gywn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller, "Introduction," in *Women and Slavery*: *The Modern Atlantic*, Volume 2, Gywn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller, editors, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 8.

[12] Hilary Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 171; Douglas R. Egerton, *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies and of 1800 and 1802* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 53.

[13] Egerton, *Gabriel's Rebellion*, 53; Sidbury, *Ploughshares into Swords*, 221.

[14] Stanley Alpern, *Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2011), 29-31.

[15] Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire, c. 1600-c. 1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford University Press, 1991), 170-171.

[16] Stanley Alpern, *Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2011), 29-31; Robert Norris, *Memoirs of the reign of Bassa Ahádee, King of Dahomy, an inland country of Guiney. To which are added, the author's journey to Abomey (*London, M.DCC.LXXXIX, 1789), 108-109. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*: Range 6234, Brown University, accessed July 21, 2014.

[17] Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of* Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African written by himself (Norwich: 1794) in Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and William L. Andrews, editors, *Pioneers of the Black Atlantic (*Washington, D.C.: Civitas, 1998*),* 208.

[18] Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society* (Bloomington : Indiana University Press), 68.

[19] Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848*, 127-128.

[20] Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba*, 132, Appendix, 190-206. Ethnic affiliations listed for slave women were Mina, Kongo, and Ararra.

[21] Guillermo A. Baralt, *Slave Revolts in Puerto Rico* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2007), 22-27.

[22] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 107, 206-207.

[23] Jane Landers, "Maroon Women in Colonial Spanish America: Case Studies in the Circum-Caribbean from the Sixteenth through the Eighteenth Centuries," in *Beyond Bondage: Free Women of Color in the Americas*, edited by David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 3; Charles Beatty-Medina, "Gendering Resistance and Power in Early Spanish-American Maroon Societies," prepared for Latin American Studies Association Conference, Montreal, September 2007.

[24] Gottlieb, *The Mother of Us All*, xv-xvi, 24.

[25] Hilary Beckles, "Historicizing Slavery in West Indian Feminisms," *Feminist Review*, No. 59, Rethinking Caribbean Difference (Summer, 1998): 46.

[26] Given the multiple occurrences of the name "Nanny" in the cases for Jamaica, Barbados, and Virginia, more study is needed to determine whether all three women were linked to Akan cultural practices in Ghana, highly prevalent in Jamaica, in which the term "Nana" is a title of

leadership and respect, as well as a common expression for grandmother. Werner Zips, "Nanny: Nana of the Maroons? Some Comparative Thoughts on Queen Mothers in Akan and Jamaican Maroon Societies," in Emile Adriaan, Benvenuto van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, and Rijk van Dijk, *African Chieftaincy in a New Social and Political Landscape* (Berlin: LIT Verlag Münster, 1999). 192.

[27] Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, 170; Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 65.

[28] Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba*, 132, Appendix: 190-206.

[29] Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles*,131-132.

[30] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 207.

[31] James Edward Alexander, *Transatlantic Sketches: comprising visits to the most interesting scenes in North and South America, and the West Indies. With notes on negro slavery and Canadian emigration*, (London: Richard Bentley, 1833) Volume 1, 351.

[32] Beckles, *Natural Rebels,* 153.

[33] Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market, 1790-1880* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 29.

[34] Kenneth F. Kiple, Blacks in Colonial Cuba, 1774-1899, (Gainesville, 1976), 88; Spain, Superintendencia General Delegada de Real Hacienda, 1841, Informe fiscal sobre fomento de la población blanca en la isla de cuba y emancipación progresiva de la esclava con una breve resena de las reformas y modificaciones que para conseguirlo convendria establecer en la legislación y constitución coloniales...(Madrid, 1845), 6. Out of the total population of 1,007,624 , the 1841census lists 77,134 free women of color and 155,245 slave women (total 232,379) = 23%; 75,703 free men of color and 281,250 slave men (total 356,953) = 35%.

[35] "Further Particulars of the Insurrection in Cuba," *The New York Herald*, April 18, 1843.

[36] "An Insurrection in Cuba—Important," Pennsylvania Inquirer and National Gazette, June 6, 1843; "Another Slave Insurrection in the Island of Cuba," Emancipator and Free American, June 15, 1843.

[37] Manuel Barcia and María del Carmen Barcia, "La conspiración de la Escalera: el precio de una traición," *Catauro* 2:3 (2001), 201, 204; Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 38; Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*, 214; Manuel Barcia, "Exorcising the Storm: Revisiting the Origins of the Repression of the Conspiracy of La Escalera in Cuba," *Colonial Latin America Historical Review* 15:3 (2006), 319.

[38] Leopoldo O'Donnell, Cuba Captain General to Secretario del Estado y del Despacho de la Gobernación de Ultramar, Havana, 1 December 1843, AGI-AHNU, Leg. 8, Exp. 14, No. 2, folios 1-2; Paquette, *Sugar is made with Blood*, 209, 210, 214-215, 217.

[39] Henry A. Murrray, Lands of the Slave and the Free: or, Cuba, the United States, and Canada, Volume 1 (London: John W. Parker and Son, 1855), 301.

[40] Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*, 214; Barcia and Barcia, "La conspiración de la Escalera," 202.

[41] Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood*, 221; Barcia, . "Exorcising the Storm," 319.

[42] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 29; A similar episode was recorded during the Nat Turner Revolt in Virginia in 1830, see Mary Kemp Davis, "What Happened in This Place?: In Search of the Female Slave in the Nat Turner Slave Insurrection," in *Nat Turner: A SlaveRebellion in History and Memory***,** Kenneth S. Greenberg, editor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 163.

[43] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 15.

[44] For a discussion of tensions over midwives of color in nineteenth-century Cuba, see Michele Reid, "Tensions of Race, Gender and Midwifery in Colonial Cuba,*" Africans to Colonial Spanish America*, Rachel O'Toole, Sherwin Bryant, Ben Vinson III, editors (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 186-205.

[45] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 11.

[46] John Savage, ""Black Magic" and White Terror: Slave Poisoning and Colonial Society in Early 19th Century Martinique," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Spring, 2007), 637.

[47] Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles,* 143.

[48] Saint-Domingue, Assemblée Générale, *A particular account of the commencement and progress of the insurrection of the Negroes in St.*

Domingo, which began in August, 1791: being a translation of the speech made to the National Assembly, the 3d of November, 1791 (London: J. Sewell, 1792), 2-3.

[49] Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba*, Appendix: 190-206.

[50] John Savage, "'Black Magic" and White Terror: Slave Poisoning and Colonial Society in Early 19th Century Martinique," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Spring, 2007), 639.

[51] Ruth Pike, "Penal Servitude in the Spanish Empire: Presidio Labor in the Eighteenth Century," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vo. 58, no. 1 (February 1978), 23.

[52] Peter M. Beattie, "'Born under the Cruel Rigo of Captivity, the Supplicant Left it Unexpectedly by Committing a Crime': Categorizing and Punishing Slave Convicts in Brazil ," *The Americas* Vol. 66, No. 1 (July 2009), 15-16.

[53] Hilary Beckles, "'War dances': Slave Leisure and Anti-Slavery in the British-Colonised Caribbean," in Verene Shepherd, editor, *Working Slavery, Pricing Freedom: Perspectives from the Caribbean, Africa and the African Diaspora* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2002), 240-242.

[54] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 29.

[55] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 19.

[56] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 15.

[57] Reid, "Tensions of Race, Gender and Midwifery in Colonial Cuba,"186-205.

[58] ANC, Instrucción Pública (hereafter ANC-IP), Leg. 40, Exp. 2114, 1845; Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash*, 108.

[59] Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash*, 108; Pilar Poveda to Cuba Captain General, Havana, 27 August 1845, ANC-IP, Leg. 40, Exp. 2114.

[60] Paquette, *Sugar Is Made with Blood*, 229, Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash*, 70.

[61] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 25, 35, 36, 58.

[62] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 11.

[63] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 35.

[64] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 25; The slave women Garía accused are listed as Rosalia Morejon, Isabel, Carlotta, Carolina, Josefa, Manuela, Ursula, and Rita lucumí. The term *emancipado* refers to an African liberated by the British Navy enforcing the abolition of the slave trade treaties throughout the Caribbean. The term *liberto* referred to a slave who had purchased their legal freedom. Thus, an *emancipado liberto* was the term for a liberated African who bought his freedom. For a detailed discussion see Luis Martínez-Fernández**,** *Fighting Slavery in the Caribbean: The Life and Times of a British Family in Nineteenth-Century Havana* **(**Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1998) and Rose Anne Marion Adderly, *"New negroes from Africa": Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean* (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 2006).

[65] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 25.

[66] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 22, 23, 40. One other free woman of color, Candaleria, was also absolved and placed under watch for one year.

[67] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 34.

[68] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 58.

[69] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 36.

[70] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 1, 36, 37, 46.

[71] Cuba, *Colección de los fallos*, no. 18; Manuel Barcia, *The Great African Slave Revolt of 1825: Cuba and the Fight for Freedom in Matanzas* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 146-147.

[72] General Regulations, Articles 5 and 6, Estate Regulations, Article 3. Zamora, *Biblioteca de* legislación, 3:139-141; Paquette, *Sugar is made with Blood,* 273-274.

[73] Leopoldo O'Donnell to Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de la Gobernación de Ultramar, Havana, 30 March 1844, AHN-UGC, Leg. 4620, Exp. 33, folio 1.

[74] See Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash*, 68-97, 146-172.