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Kongolese Sacred Sovereignties and Legalities in the Early Modern Trans-Atlantic

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Abstract: This article draws on political theology to provide a history of sovereignty (law-generating power) and legality (law-maintaining power) across an overlooked early modern trilogy of historical events. (1) The Kingdom of Kongo voluntarily adopted Catholicism in the late 1400s and early 1500s. Catholicism became a core part of its political identity and a major way through which Kongo resisted Portuguese exploitation and enslavement. However, Kongo's compromises with Portuguese power gave rise to a heretical movement that triggered conflict, reforms, and mass enslavement and deportation. Some of those deported found themselves in South Carolina. (2) Deportees may have been part of a ditch-cutting crew at Stono that led the largest slave uprising in England's mainland American colonies. Their Rebellion has many Kongolese characteristics and may have partly been a Kongolese Catholic response to English Protestantism. This is especially so because the rebels apparently meant to reach sanctuary in Spanish Florida. (3) Escapees from enslavement by Protestant rivals inspired Spain to offer freedom to fugitive slaves who converted to Catholicism. While Florida had a racial hierarchy and practiced slavery, its versions of these was somewhat milder due to religious and legal influences. Free Black people, especially escapees from the English, proved loyal subjects and militiamen—and Spain reciprocated with protection and inclusion. Chronicling sovereignty and legality across these three episodes is important for telling the history of how early Americans found the heart they needed to make their world less heartless.

Keywords: history; law; religion; Catholic; Kongo; America; Spain; Florida; sanctuary; migration; refugees; fugitives; slavery; South Carolina; Stono Rebellion; Hispanic; Black; Protestant; England; empires; early modern; militia; race

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1. Introduction

> *"We don't lak slavery. We start to jine de Spanish in Florida. We surrender but we not whipped yet and we is not converted". De other 43 say "Amen".*
>
> —George Cato, Columbia, SC (1930s)[1]

This article explores three connected episodes: (1) the Catholicization of the Kingdom of Kongo and how that society used religion to resist exploitation and enslavement; (2) the 1739 Stono Rebellion, which was led by Kongolese Catholics; and (3) the sanctuary those rebels hoped to reach at Fort Mose in Spanish Florida. This trilogy sheds new light on sovereignty and legality across the early modern trans-Atlantic. In turn, political theology, "the story of the names we give to the law making, law policing, and law destroying work" of sovereignty and legality, offers a new way to understand these Kongolese histories.[2]

Sovereignty is "constituting" and "law-making" power—in contrast to legality, or "constituted" and "law-applying" power.[3] Sovereignty generates political institutions and

erupts to cause radical political change.[4] Sovereignty and legality are inseparable from religion. Sovereignty surges forth as passions that "forge, transform, and police the law".[5] Sovereignty creates legality by combining the following: (1) specific vessels of meaning, like words and concepts; (2) intense emotions associated with these; and (3) political initiative.[6] It "animates a core network of affects, beliefs, and ideas around which polities arise and cohere".[7]

When sovereignty "congeals" into "forms reflecting what a given community holds most sacred", it founds a new legality.[8] That legality is anchored by religious and ideological expressive forms.[9] These reflect something of absolute, transcendent sovereignty.[10] However, they "shift from a creative to a conservative function: policing the boundaries of the forms they have created".[11] Legality's anchoring narratives are sacred, identifying ultimate origins and ends, standards and concerns.[12]

Legality requires commitment from the people living in it.[13] However, sovereignty continues to pulse beneath the surface.[14] Law strives to translate some aspirations for justice into reality and designates others as eschatological hope, removed from functional human aspiration.[15] Sovereignty and legality wrestle across "ordinary legal doctrine at work in mundane affairs; in utopian and messianic yearnings, imaginary shapes given to a less resistant reality; in apologies for power and privilege and in the critiques" aimed at it.[16] Legality cannot be plotted out ahead of time and then deployed neatly into history. It emerges "within a spiraling current of accidents".[17] Meanwhile, religion cannot be neatly reduced to political calculation. It emerges as "bodies splash and splatter" through life.[18]

The discussion below explores a centuries-long dance enacted by Kongolese people across the early modern Atlantic. It responds to core questions of political theology: "What cognitive and cultural resources are available to produce and sustain (or supplant) what sorts of . . . over-beliefs in a particular time and place?" and "what kind of . . . over-belief" does the sacred animate "at a given place and time, with what consequences for political governance"?[19]

Historiography has yet to tell this story in a unified way, and popular awareness of it is faint.[20] These events occupy historical blind spots. African Christianity is still seen as a European imposition.[21] Catholicism has been sidelined from Black religious histories.[22] Central Africa is overlooked because African Americans identify more with West Africa, even though around a quarter can trace their origins to the former region.[23] Spain's role in the early American Southeast is neglected, too.

However, the Kongolese trilogy *did* long endure in memory, as evidenced by George Cato's quote above. That man was interviewed in the 1930s and claimed to be descended from the Stono Rebellion's leader (known to history as "Jemmy" or "Cato").[24] He recounted his ancestor's speech shortly before the rebels' defeat.[25] The leader said that those he led did not like slavery, were headed to Florida, and "is not converted", leading the crowd to reply, "Amen".[26] Drawing historical meaning from this recollection depends on assuming that the rebels had a plan to escape to Florida and were Catholic. (Not to mention that Mr. Cato's story was historically accurate.) Nevertheless, the Kingdom of Kongo was indeed Catholic, the Stono Rebellion had hallmarks of Kongolese Catholicism, and Florida's Fort Mose did receive escapees like the Stono rebels. That is reason enough to "analyze systematically the political dynamics of religion" across this trans-Atlantic story.[27]

2. The Kingdom of Kongo

> *[A]n army of horsemen led by Saint James himself appeared in the sky under a resplendent white cross and struck scores dead.*
>
> —Afonso I, King of Kongo (r. 1506–1542)[28]

As civil war broke down the pre-Catholic Kingdom of Kongo, sovereignty surged forth and new religious expressive forms arose, and then congealed into a new legality. Catholicism soon helped the Kingdom challenge the Portuguese. In time, the Kingdom's compromises with Portugal and slavery triggered a new sovereign movement that sought to replace orthodox Catholicism and the reigning legality. The reigning legality triumphed, but it too adopted new religious expressions. Deported rebels may have been among those who later attempted another sovereign rebellion at Stono.

3. The Catholic State

Following internal conflict, the Kingdom of Kongo re-founded its legality on Catholicism.[29] The Kingdom's original founding myths taught that in the late 1300s, a young prince named Lukeni lua Nimi (or Ntinu Wene) and his followers crossed the Congo River from the north, using military prowess and iron smelting to conquer the region and found a new capital city, known as Mbanza Kongo ("City of Congo").[30] These narratives included voyage and violence. "Sovereignty is commonly expressed in acts of founding violence" and events like migrations that feature "a temporary inversion of the social order".[31] New political understandings rest upon "the kind of exceptional commitment that prepares one to kill or die"—or journey to a new homeland.[32] Sovereignty also includes notions of escape from a previous state of affairs.[33] Kongolese origins reflect the "widespread tendency to incorporate references to sovereignty and to the foundations of polity as inherently violent, or at least antinomian".[34] Within a century, the new Kingdom reached from the Congo River to Luanda, as well as eastward to the Inkisi River, ruling 350,000 people and nearly 40,000 square miles.[35] It was the most powerful political entity in Central–West Africa and was independent until 1888.[36]

Portuguese sailors arrived in 1483, hoping to reach India or recruit allies against Islamic powers.[37] Two years later, King Nzinga a Nkuwu appointed an ambassador to Portugal, directing him to bring back priests and craftsmen who could build a "house of prayer".[38] Nzinga sent children along, and educational exchanges would remain frequent for decades.[39] The embassy returned in 1491 and two years later, Nzinga was baptized as King João I.[40]

João died in 1506, possibly having apostatized, and his sons Mvemba a Nzinga and Mpanzu a Kitima both claimed the throne.[41] Kongo's succession law failed to resolve their dispute.[42] Mpanzu represented the old Kongolese legality, while Mvemba embraced Catholicism and Portuguese aid.[43] At this point, there emerged a "state of exception" beyond the law's foresight and capacity.[44] Sovereignty broke through.[45] The siblings battled at Mbanza Kongo, and Mvemba triumphed.

Mvemba credited literal divine intervention, writing that "Saint James, wearing a scarlet cape and riding a white horse, had appeared under the sky leading an army of knights under a white Constantine cross".[46] Mvemba's account echoed Iberian legends and became important in Kongolese ideology.[47] He was baptized as "Afonso", renamed for Afonso Henriques, the founding Portuguese king who also credited Saint James for his victory.[48] These pious expressions reflected sovereignty overwriting the previous legality.[49]

Afonso, who reigned all the way until 1542, re-founded the Kongolese legality with a new religious orientation.[50] Upon his baptism, he had pre-Christian religious items burned.[51] He placed onto the country's coat of arms symbols associated with Saint James, including a scallop and the swords of the knights who accompanied the saint in the vision at Mbanza Kongo.[52] Afonso built churches atop the former "house of idols" and royal cemetery; one of the central churches housed a cross-shaped stone revealed to a chief in a dream.[53] The head pre-Christian priest became the chief cleric at this new shrine.[54] Afonso sponsored the creation of schools.[55]

These changes strengthened the position of the king as the bearer of religious sovereignty (*nzambi*).[56] In Richard Sherwin's words, "Linguistic, visual, and other performative mediations of affective excess"—symbols, rituals, and myths—bound together the new legality.[57]

Afonso wanted a distinctly Kongolese Catholicism. Kongolese people educated in mission schools became lay catechists (*mestres de escola*, *adongi a aleke*).[58] Missionary priests were scarce, partly due to the Portuguese politicking discussed below, so priests' role was limited to celebrating the sacraments—baptism for many, marriage for a few, and the Eucharist in urban centers.[59] Later, between the mid-1700s and late 1800s, the missions declined further, giving laypeople an even greater role.[60] These circumstances led to interreligious blending.[61] Kongolese understood salt to be the key to baptism (a ritual known in Kikongo as *curia mungua*, or "to eat salt") due to its local role in guarding against witchcraft.[62] Traditional spiritual remedies remained popular, although the Church deemed their practitioners to be "*fetiçeiros*" (akin to folk healers found in Europe)—sinners, but not outside the Christian fold altogether.[63] Kongolese narratives said "that the Garden of Eden was in Central Africa and close to Kongo, and in all likelihood, Adam and Eve were African and probably Kongolese"—as were Jesus and Mary.[64] One Kongolese participant in the 1791–1804 Haitian Revolution declared himself a subject of the kings of Kongo, France, and Spain—each descended from one of the New Testament's Three Magi who visited the baby Jesus.[65] Afonso tried to convince the Vatican to let Kongolese priests marry because "the tropical climate made celibacy impossible", and Kongolese Catholics practiced concubinage.[66] In time, most local priests were the illegitimate sons of other priests.[67]

Some scholars consider the Kingdom's Catholicism "a dialogue of the deaf", with the Portuguese and Kongolese lacking a common religion.[68] Others note that missionaries—who were guests of indigenous kings—rejected only those aspects of native culture they deemed incompatible with Christianity.[69] Contemporary Europeans saw Kongo as Catholic.[70] A bust of Kongolese ambassador António Manuel stands in Rome's Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.[71] The Vatican sent the Kingdom gifts.[72] Visitors saw the Kongolese kneel before wooden crosses, wear rosaries, frequent the sacraments when they could, and join Holy Week processions by the thousands.[73] What is more, European definitions of Christianity narrowed over time to exclude popular devotions of the sort that were a hallmark of Kongolese Catholicism.[74]

In any event, Afonso and his people certainly indigenized their Church.[75] While the Portuguese may have wanted Catholicism to make Kongo servile, the religion's local development proved uncontrollable from the outside.[76] Afonso, too, may have wanted this process to be more centralized, but European legality stood in the way. With Portuguese support, he did have his son Henrique consecrated as a bishop.[77] Afonso proposed a fully indigenous clergy in 1526.[78] However, eight years later, conflict erupted. The Portuguese convinced the pope to let them name a new, Kongo-supervising bishop in São Tomé.[79] Portugal claimed this authority as part of its *padroado* ("patronage"), or papally granted right to control appointments to ecclesiastical offices in its overseas realms.[80] Portugal's *padroado* dated to 1452, when Pope Nicholas V sanctioned efforts to extend the Reconquista into Africa.[81]

Portuguese control over Kongo's Church appointments remained controversial. Christianity lost its status as the state religion at some point before being restored in 1548.[82] In 1583, a Kongo noble told King Álvaro I that God authorized Álvaro to appoint bishops, but Álvaro laughed this off.[83] He instead credited orthodox Catholicism for his 1574 victory over southern invaders.[84] He renamed Mbanza Kongo "São Salvador" ("Holy Savior") and sought a resident bishop, which the Vatican granted in 1596.[85] Portugal resisted this too, ultimately relocating the bishop to its colony at Luanda in 1624.[86] King Álvaro II

(r. 1587–1614) considered claiming the power to appoint bishops, but declined to do so after the Inquisition tried some of his advisers.[87]

Why did both Álvaros decline to appoint bishops, even though doing so was arguably in their political self-interests? Power contests alone do not dictate religion. People can commit to "over-beliefs they deem most worthy of whatever sacrifice it may take to sustain them".[88] Religion is decided by "accident-driven, affective economies" and sincere convictions at least as much as by "rational self-interest" defined in an entirely worldly way.[89]

Kongo did seek a Church free of Portuguese domination. Kongo's kings paid missionaries' expenses, beginning because of a Portuguese decree of 1512.[90] In the 1550s, King Diogo I stopped funding Jesuits during a dispute.[91] By 1619, the bishop found that whenever he excommunicated the king, the bishop would in turn lose his income, wood, food, and water.[92] Though Portugal introduced this financial arrangement, Kongo used it effectively.

The Kongolese legality also received reinforcement from a royal princess, who in the 1580s showed interest in joining the Carmelite religious order.[93] Her father King Álvaro asked the pope to authorize Kongolese monks and nuns.[94] A Carmelite prioress mentioned this request to a young patron, Jean de Brétigny.[95] Nothing happened for many years.[96] Then, in 1610, Pope Paul V expressed anger at Portuguese authorities for blocking religious orders from ministering in Kongo.[97] He sought funding for an independent mission.[98] The now 56-year-old Brétigny had voiced his own longstanding desire to send nuns to Kongo.[99] Fulfilling these hopes took another 30 years, but in 1640, the Vatican founded a Capuchin Franciscan mission to the Kingdom.[100] These efforts helped lead to the worldwide Congregation for Propaganda Fidei ("the Propagation of the Faith").[101] The Kingdom of Kongo thus resisted Portugal overseeing its religious life.[102] Another instance of this came in 1622, when the Kingdom secured papal condemnation of an attempted Portuguese invasion.[103] While the Portuguese brought Catholicism to Kongo, the local religion proved "radically uncontrolled" by them.[104] Religious expressive forms of legality can trigger "subjective commitment to an objectified understanding", which then restrains the exercise of power.[105] Catholicism and the commitments it entailed for the Kongolese, Portuguese, and popes became resources for the Kingdom.[106]

Catholicism also continued its ascent within the Kongolese legality. By the mid-1600s, the royal coronation ceremony featured the new king wearing a bag around his neck holding a papal bull (the bag was called the *santissimo sacramento*, or "most holy sacrament").[107] The Kingdom also understood itself as spiritually superior to its neighbors.[108] Under Diogo, Kongo evangelized its neighbors, and Catholicism spread regionally by 1600.[109] Kongolese Catholicism proved durable. In 1642, the Dutch tried to send preachers to the Kingdom, but King Garcia II refused "because the evil of the Portuguese, founded in ambition, is not sufficient for me to put aside the Catholic faith".[110] He burned Calvinist literature sent by the Dutch.[111] During one conflict, a Kongolese count refused to hand a hostage over to a Dutch merchant for safe return because the merchant was a "heretic".[112] The Kongolese military adopted the Order of Christ, a Portuguese institution whose members wore shirts embroidered with a cross.[113]

Kongo's religious and political transformation happened "under extremely hostile circumstances, marked by violence, exploitation, and enslavement".[114] Still, the Church became Kongolese as the Kingdom became Catholic. The sovereign eruption of Catholicism in the civil war congealed into a new Catholic legality.

4. Slavery's Scourge

Catholicism also became an important part of Kongo's resistance to European enslavement. Oral traditions traced local slavery to Lukeni and archival reports referred to the

practice in 1502.[115] Afonso gifted a thousand slaves to Portugal for supporting his war for the throne.[116] However, the Kingdom's legality restricted enslavement. Afonso's letters mentioned free classes of *gente* (freeborn, taxable subjects); *nossos filhos*, *parentes*, *e naturaes* (royal children and native citizens), *naturaes forros* (free citizens), and *fidalgos* (nobility).[117] Apart from these were *espriuos* or *espravos*—"slaves"—who alone could be exported.[118] They were war captives (*kijikos*).[119] Convicts could also be enslaved, but with restrictions on their treatment and sale, and many were instead exiled.[120] Some slaves held high public office.[121] Women could not be sold to the Portuguese.[122] Afonso criticized the Portuguese enslavement of freeborn Kongolese and of women.[123] He even threatened to abolish the slave trade altogether in 1526.[124] A century later, King Pedro II courted Dutch aid against Portuguese enslavers.[125] Álvaro sent a relative to São Tomé and Portugal to free subjects enslaved illegally, bringing many of the returnees into his royal administration.[126] In 1604, Manuel (the envoy honored by a bust in Santa Maria Maggiore) freed a Kongolese man enslaved in Brazil.[127] Twenty years later, Pedro II protested that Portuguese colonists from Angola had illegally enslaved thousands of Kongolese.[128] Brazilian authorities investigated and sent some freeborn Kongolese home.[129] In 1641, Garcia II's coronation ceremony included his being ordered to give alms for the purpose of freeing slaves.[130]

These measures had some effect. When the Kongolese legality was strong, few freeborn subjects were enslaved, and in 1620, an observer recorded that the Kongolese "do not trade people".[131] Still, Garcia II lamented that "in our simplicity we gave place to [slavery] from which grows all the evils of our country" and he vowed to "die to liberate my people".[132] One neighboring queen, Njinga, even apostatized from Catholicism for a time in the face of Portuguese greed.[133]

Nevertheless, the Kingdom's legality also furthered slavery. Authorities increasingly treated rebels as criminals who could be enslaved.[134] Rulers calculated a tax in terms of slaves.[135] By the mid-1600s, civil wars, political contests, insolence, thefts, adultery, witchcraft, private disputes, guilt through family association, and other ever-expanding excuses led to the enslavement of huge numbers of people.[136]

Catholicism interacted with this deteriorating legality in complicated ways. Jesuit missionaries had enormous plantations in Brazil and profited heavily from the African slave trade.[137] Catholic abolitionists were no more than a small minority.[138] However, as early as 1512, the Portuguese forbade missionaries from engaging directly in the Kongolese slave trade.[139] The Church also forbade the sale of slaves to Protestants.[140] Church officials did let the Dutch and English transport slaves to Spanish colonies in the Americas, and regardless, profit motives prevailed over religious objections by the late 1600s.[141] Even after that, though, some enslaved Kongolese preferred Catholic masters. Two boys in 1747 tried to steal a pig from Catholic missionaries so that they would "remain slaves at your post and live as Christians as we desire".[142]

Catholicism also served as the crux for a remarkable international legal dispute. In 1684, the Kongolese-descended Lourenço da Silva de Mendonça—who had been exiled in a dispute with the Portuguese over a tax to be paid in slaves—brought a criminal complaint at the Vatican against European enslavers.[143] He became the attorney for Black religious confraternities.[144] Run by lay Catholics, Black *cofradías* had existed for centuries. Seville's first was founded in the 1300s.[145] These groups were important sites for Black organizing.[146] They raised emancipation funds and asserted legal rights.[147] Women helped lead many of them.[148] So did Kongolese people.[149] Mendonça claimed that the Vatican had acted criminally in treating European enslavers with impunity and failing to prevent abuses against Black people, Indians, and Jewish converts to Christianity (*conversos*).[150] He demanded abolition of the international slave trade and sought criminal prosecutions.[151] He presented evidence compiled by *cofradías*—a remarkable example of sovereignty breaking

through to pressure legalities.[152] Mendonça asked the Vatican to recognize that African laws limited slavery's scope and duration.[153] He asked the pope to excommunicate people engaged in the slave trade.[154]

The Vatican ruled in favor of punishment for enslavers and then pressured Spain and Portugal to implement changes.[155] Both countries' kings endorsed abolition, but could not overcome internal opposition.[156] Portugal did order shipping improvements and pledged to prosecute abusers.[157] This fell far short of Mendonça's goals. Still, he and the *cofradías* demanded legal redress and won it.[158] Catholicism proved the basis for Mendonça's struggle against slavers.[159] A commitment for all the actors involved, religion legitimized both the predominant legality and reforms to it.[160] Mendonça proved "an international lawyer par excellence" and a forerunner of modern international criminal law.[161]

Complete Vatican endorsement of abolitionism would come only late into the 1800s.[162] However, law could help people undermine slavery in other ways. Governments never have a monopoly over legal meaning—they may even act "in an unprivileged fashion" alongside popular interpreters.[163] Ordinary Africans had their own understandings of legality. In 1612, a priest wrote that enslaved people were "shocked by the way the Portuguese make slaves of them" against African laws and the law of humanity.[164] Under the laws of the Mbundu people, who neighbored Kongo, *kijiko*s enslaved in wars could become free by returning home or becoming the subject of a powerful protector.[165] These options were available if a *kijiko* believed that "legal process had not been followed" or "the legality of his or her capture had not been proven".[166] Such legal norms may have been on the minds of later escapees to Florida, including the Stono rebels.

How did these rebels end up in South Carolina? No one knows for sure, but the Kingdom was torn apart at the start of the 1700s by a heretical religious movement. Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita proclaimed herself to be a prophetess possessed by Saint Anthony.[167] She was burned at the stake and many of her followers were punished through enslavement and deportation.[168] Her failed sovereign challenge to the Kongolese legality triggered punishment, while the legality renewed itself through religious recommitment.

5. The Antonian Apocalypse Averted?

Kimpa Vita attempted a radical break with the Kingdom's Catholic expressive forms, its legality, and its Portuguese entanglements. Born a noblewoman in 1684, she was burned to death for witchcraft 22 years later.[169] In between, she believed God had sent the medieval Italian friar Saint Anthony, "incarnate in her", to bring peace and re-found the Kingdom.[170] God had specially created Kongo and she would help Him reinvigorate it.[171] Kimpa Vita aimed to embody sovereignty. She positioned herself as an alternative to missionaries and other legality-sanctioned religious authorities, saying "she died every Friday and spent each weekend in Heaven conferring with the Heavenly Father about the affairs of Kongo".[172] Among the revelations she claimed to receive were that Jesus was born in Kongo, where the Virgin Mary was enslaved, and Jesus was baptized at São Salvador.[173] Kimpa Vita's followers depicted Jesus as a Black man dressed in Kongolese clothing.[174] She accused the Capuchins of prioritizing images of European saints while denying the existence of Black ones.[175] She insisted that, "there are black Kongolese up in heaven".[176] Kimpa Vita said Saint Anthony possessed her so he could "preach in Kibangu," a local language.[177] Her mission was to transgress European-inspired Christian norms and replace the Kingdom's expressive forms with Kongolese ones.[178] She wanted to radicalize Kongolese religion against European exploitation.

Kimpa Vita's purported insights into Christianity's origins and claim of direct access to divine authorities enacted a sovereign "return to chaos or the state of nature".[179] This was no mere theater. In 1704, she led followers to Mbanza Kongo, which had been destroyed

in 1668 during a civil war (and following a defeat by the Portuguese), to resurrect the Kingdom.[180] Hipolyta, wife of King Pedro IV, believed in her.[181] Several rivals for the Kongolese throne did, too, including one of Pedro's generals.[182]

That turned Pedro against Kimpa Vita. She also became pregnant by a companion she called her "Saint John" and "guardian angel", causing her to doubt her own authority to lead.[183] An apocalyptic movement's failure to maintain sovereign purity can devastate it politically, and indeed, Kimpa Vita left São Salvador and was captured by Pedro's men.[184] He had her burned to death as a heretic and witch (under Kongolese law, not canon law).[185] Following this, 30,000 Kongolese people, including many of her "Antonian" followers, were enslaved and exported, some to South Carolina.[186] European missionaries sanctioned enslavement and deportation as punishments for witchcraft.[187]

Kimpa Vita believed that the Kingdom's legality could not change without a sovereign rewriting of its religious expressive forms. However, Pedro achieved many of her political goals while strengthening orthodox Catholicism. He implemented power rotation among competing families and decentralized the government.[188] These reforms yielded decades of peace and stability.[189] Pedro even rebuilt São Salvador in 1709, five years after Kimpa Vita's journey there.[190] Kongolese political ideologies alternated between absolutism and consensus-building.[191] In keeping with his new power-sharing legality, Pedro emphasized Lukeni's role as the forging "blacksmith king" instead of that founding monarch's military conquests.[192] Pedro also fostered orthodox Catholic renewal. Rejecting an effort by Kimpa Vita to have a cross removed from a town square, Pedro and his supporters wore small crosses in front of their foreheads.[193] He explained, "We wear the sign of the cross because we are Christians and in our hearts we profess the faith of the cross".[194] The kings who succeeded Pedro also embraced Catholicism, which remained an ideological resource for the legality even as institutional political authority became more diffuse.[195]

Like many Kongolese religious visionaries over the centuries, Kimpa Vita wanted a political revolution; she sought to use sovereignty to challenge legality.[196] She triggered Pedro's Catholic renewal instead. However, Kimpa Vita's counternarratives may have endured. One of her slogans, *Lukangu* ("liberty", from *kanga* or "salvation"), was chanted by Kongolese people during the Stono Rebellion, and then again before the Haitian Revolution.[197] Many of those deported after her death "brought with them the attitudes that had fueled" her movement.[198] Perhaps her prophecies brought apocalypse for overseas enslavers rather than for Portuguese missionaries. She may have primed sovereignty for resistance to future legalities.

6. The Stono Rebellion

Several Negroes joined them, they calling out Liberty, marched on with Colours displayed, and two Drums beating.

—An Account of the Negroe Insurrection in South Carolina (c. 1739)[199]

Religion "often constitutes a series of exit signs from a condition that is regarded as limited, alienating, unjust, illegitimate, [or] intolerable".[200] Sovereignty can erupt during a state of exception.[201] Such a state commonly includes the inversion of what emotions count as desirable. For example, long-suffering may give way to exuberance and aggression.[202] Surging "joy, disgust, fear, awe, and wonder" arm sovereignty to contest a legality.[203] These emotions find expression in symbols, mythology, music, and ritual.[204] "Nations rise and fall in crucibles of heightened emotional states".[205] Sovereignty motivates lawless violation of a legality.[206] A government's claims of control over meaning confront violent resistance.[207]

Sovereignty crested over the course of one day when enslaved Kongolese Catholics rose up against their South Carolina masters. What happened should not be overly valorized. The rebels killed people—if not quite indiscriminately, then at least with little

hesitation.[208] They were resisted by White militiamen as well as by enslaved people.[209] In addition, unduly glorifying rebellion implies that "the majority, notably women, who carried on their lives as best they could ... were less commendable".[210] Nonetheless, the Stono Rebellion showcased sovereignty contesting a colonial American legality.[211]

Late on 8 September or early on 9 September 1739, twenty local slaves from a ditch-cutting crew met at a storehouse outside of Charles Town (modern-day Charleston).[212] They were supposed to be back on their plantations, but the overseer had left early.[213] Although the store was closed, two White men were inside; one of them may have even been the absent overseer.[214] The crew broke in, killed these two, and seized guns, munitions, provisions, and white cloth they used to make banners.[215] According to one later account, the crew even left the White men's heads on the steps.[216] If this happened, it may have had cultural significance or inverted a form of punishment often meted out to slaves.[217] The band proceeded to several plantations, killing 23 White people, sparing just one they deemed "a good Man and kind to his Slaves".[218] They were also prevented from killing others by fellow slaves.[219] By the next afternoon, they had proceeded ten miles along the Pon Pon Road chanting "Liberty", singing, banging drums, and gathering 60–100 marchers.[220]

They also fortuitously ran into Lt. Gov. William Bull, who called out the militia.[221] At four o'clock, the militia met the slaves dancing in a field and fired on them, killing fourteen.[222] The slaves fought back and then dispersed, with many quickly apprehended and executed; their heads were placed on every milepost along the way to Charles Town.[223] The militia claimed to capture and kill another 30 fighters about a week later, although locals remained sure that more were still at large.[224] Another 30 were reportedly seen a year after, "roaming around in gangs in the Carolina forests".[225] Thus ended the largest slave uprising in England's mainland North American colonies.[226] Some of the rebels probably did reach Florida.[227]

Perhaps these events lacked the significance given to them by English contemporaries and modern historians.[228] Peter Charles Hoffer doubts that workers would have tried to escape on a dark night when they were "dead tired".[229] (He is not even certain that the rebels were the Stono ditch crew.[230]) He thinks the slaves meant only to break in and take "what they thought was their due for a hard day's labor".[231] Perhaps they decided to press on only after they committed the capital offenses of burglary and murder at the storehouse.[232] Or maybe they "just wanted to escape".[233] Be that as it may, the rebels, or some critical subset of them, were likely Kongolese Catholics with a plan to reach a southern sanctuary.[234]

7. Assuming They Were Catholic...

Kongolese Catholics were probably involved in the Stono Rebellion.[235] That makes sense of Mr. Cato's reference to the rebels being "not converted" and wanting to reach Spanish Florida. An English report on Stono identified among the rebels "a people brought from the Kingdom of Angola in Africa" who spoke Portuguese they learned from missionaries; "many Thousands of the Negroes there profess the Roman Catholic Religion" (these are clues that the rebels' homeland was in fact Kongo).[236] More than 10,000 Africans arrived in South Carolina to work on the rising rice and indigo plantations and of these, 60 percent came from the port of Kabinda, the "vast majority" of whom were Kongolese (often traded through intermediaries due to the anti-Protestant restrictions).[237] Additionally, the Rebellion happened only 33 years after Kimpa Vita's execution, which caused mass enslavement and deportation. The rebels may have been Antonians or others caught up in the strife.[238]

The Rebellion itself had Kongolese hallmarks. Rebels seized guns, raided effectively, and then lived off the land. Many Kongolese would have had military training, including with firearms.[239] Recall also that the rebels chanted "Liberty", carried white banners, and used drums. Each of these may have been a Kongolese religious or military expressive form. The Kikongo equivalent for "liberty" was an Antonian slogan.[240] The root word also means "to bind or tie up".[241] This double entendre may have told other slaves to seize freedom by taking hold of their masters.[242] In any event, the liberty chant was an act of naming. Possibilities are "actualized" in naming, and sovereignty's power is actualized "within the event horizon of terror and wonder" caused by a state of exception.[243] Chanting "liberty" bound the rebels "in shared responsibility" for a political ideal they held sacred.[244]

The color white could have had ideological meaning also. One narrative said Afonso won a victory after the Virgin Mary appeared in white, which "dazzled the non-Christian enemy".[245] São Salvador's white cathedral was dedicated to Our Lady of Victory.[246] White had connections to the dead and ancestors, too, and Kimpa Vita said the Virgin Mary had been Kongolese.[247] The rebels' banners may have been recalling some of this.[248] As for the drums, a missionary in the early 1700s observed that before making war, one Kongolese noble would have drums played accompanied by shouting.[249] The rebels could have been doing the same. Drums were also used at Kongolese Catholic Masses.[250]

Mark M. Smith notes another detail: the Rebellion's timing.[251] The uprising began on either a Saturday night or the early Sunday morning hours.[252] (By order of law, ditch crews were denied the Sunday rest available to other enslaved people.[253] Johann Boltzius, a local Lutheran missionary, saw the Rebellion as divine punishment for this English sacrilege against the Christian Sabbath.[254]) Catholics dedicate Saturdays to the Virgin Mary, and September 8 was the day her Nativity was celebrated.[255] Although Smith finds no direct evidence of Kongolese commemorations of this holiday, Kongolese Catholics knew the liturgical calendar.[256] Smith points out another peculiarity: the Rebellion was eleven days before the Nativity as calculated by the *Gregorian* calendar.[257] But it was right on time under the Julian calendar, which English Carolinians still followed.[258] Maybe the rebels wanted auspicious timing for their sovereign uprising.[259]

Finally, after encountering Bull, the rebels stopped in a field and then "set to dancing, Singing and beating Drums".[260] This was the point when the rebel leader reportedly delivered the speech quoted by his descendant.[261] The English took the dancing to be either drunken or an effort to rally others.[262] (Mr. Cato agreed with the alcohol explanation.[263]) Another commentator interprets the dance as sheer "exhilaration".[264] To be sure, sovereign emotions can include "glory in domination of those deemed less worthy of respect—the 'enemies' in Carl Schmitt's infamous 'friend/enemy' dyad".[265] But another explanation refers to the Kongolese *sangamento* (from Kikongo *ku-sanga* or *nsanga*, referring to leaping).[266] A *sangamento* was a "mock fight ritual" before battles.[267] The *sangamento* raised fighting spirits.[268] Until at least 1880, one was performed in commemoration of Afonso I.[269] It also came to the Americas and may have inspired modern Carnival celebrations.[270] In the early 1600s, dancing the *sangamento* was a declaration of war.[271] Perhaps historians have read too much into drunken revelry. Maybe the dance was a generic form of Victor Turner's *communitas*.[272] Or perhaps the rebels' sovereignty effervesced into familiar religious and cultural expressive forms.[273] Perhaps, faced with a brutal legality, Kongolese Catholic sovereignty brimmed over—in the words of South Carolina's official report on Stono, seeking "Liberty and Life".[274]

8. Assuming They Had a Plan...

South Carolina's legality included religious tyranny and the English thought that this factored into the Rebellion. Fewer than two months earlier, Savannahians detained a

suspected Spanish spy.[275] After the Rebellion, leading Georgia colonist William Stephens believed this man to have "been employed a pretty while, in corrupting the Negroes of Carolina".[276] One Charlestonian urged "the taking of St. Augustine" due to "the Encouragement & Protection given by [the Spanish] to our Negroes that Run away there", including the Stono rebels.[277] Blaming Spain was certainly convenient.[278] Still, while there is no direct evidence that the Spanish incited the Stono Rebellion, sanctuary was no mere conspiracy theory.[279] It was religiously inspired Spanish policy and the Stono rebels would not have been the first enslaved Carolinians to avail themselves of it.

Shortly before the Rebellion, an English colonist wrote, some Africans escaped to St. Augustine, and when Georgia's leadership demanded their return, the Spanish refused based on royal policy.[280] News of this reached other enslaved people, "as it is believed, from the Spanish Emissaries"; four slaves and an Irishman reached Florida and "were received there with great honours, one of them had a Commission given to him, and a Coat faced with Velvet".[281] Theorizing as to how word had traveled, the English observed that many Central Africans spoke Portuguese—"which Language is as near Spanish as Scotch is to English"—due to Catholic missionaries back in their homelands.[282] Kongo's religious legality affected imperial power struggles across the ocean.

So did the Spanish religious legality to Carolina's south. Soon after the escape of the five people, several Spaniards who would "give no account of themselves" were detained in Georgia.[283] Another partially successful escape attempt led to the hanging of an African in Charles Town.[284] South Carolina started offering bounties for escapees' scalps.[285] Then, at the end of July 1739—just two months before Stono—a Spanish emissary went to Charles Town on the pretense of sending a message to General James Oglethorpe, who was nowhere in the area.[286] Bull concluded that the Spanish were inciting slaves.[287] He warned White Carolinians that the Africans upon whom they depended "may in little time become their Enemies, if not their Masters".[288]

Religion can be a set of exit signs out of tyranny, and here it signaled a well-frequented highway to St. Augustine.[289] In 1687, eleven people undertook the first slave exodus from Carolina to Florida.[290] By 1738, a year before the Stono Rebellion, over 100 people had gone, and 253 people escaped Carolina slavery between 1732 and 1739, over a tenth of them West-Central Africans.[291] Many of these efforts involved sophisticated planning, including a 1724 escape arranged by people on three plantations and another involving 23 people held on different plantations.[292] In August 1739, two months before the Stono Rebellion, an Indian reported that a hundred slaves working to build a frontier fort killed their English overseer and then asked how to get to Florida.[293] One official recounted other escapees asking about "the road to the Spaniards".[294]

In line with George Cato's recollection, religion likely motivated some escapees. Complex cultural and religious histories can congeal into stable commitments. People's commitments "are complex, chunky genealogies, bricolages of existing forms" founded on "a local confluence of social, political, economic, and cultural contexts".[295] Kongolese Catholics often showed great commitment to their religion. They evangelized other enslaved people in Brazil and the Caribbean, and *mestres de scola* may have had an important role in sustaining Catholicism and developing Vodou.[296] As late as 1860, slaves were seen on a ship leading a ceremony "much like a chanting of the Litany in Catholic churches", and John Thornton suspects that this was indeed a Vespers service.[297]

Some Kongolese Catholics resisted Protestantism quite stridently. African Catholics in 1600s Amsterdam maintained a secret house church called "Moyses".[298] Catholics on Barbados decried being held on an "island of heretics".[299] In 1641, *cofradía* members in Brazil assaulted Protestants who refused to venerate an image of the Virgin Mary.[300] Enslaved Catholics on Dutch Curaçao resisted Protestantism until their rulers adopted

toleration and in time, nearly the entire Black population was Catholic.[301] Slaves on English St. Christopher had their own weddings, prayed before crucifixes, hosted secret missions by French Catholic priests, and refused to let a French Protestant lead their prayers.[302]

Catholic intransigence was not universal. Many Black Catholics in New Netherland became Protestant, as did some in South Carolina and Dutch Brazil, where they fought against their former Portuguese masters.[303] However, one Black New Netherlander named Abraham Jansen refused to pay a Protestant tithe, citing his Catholicism.[304] "Spanish Negroes" instrumental to an attempted 1741 uprising in New York "insisted on being identified in court by their Iberian Catholic baptismal names" and one "made a point of kissing a crucifix on the day of his execution".[305]

Protestant legalities opposed Catholicism in return. Many Carolinians had left England hoping to halt Spanish Catholic expansion from Florida.[306] However, their own legality made them reluctant to bring African slaves into Protestant folds. Katherine Gerbner has examined how Protestants "tended to view conversion as inconsistent or incompatible with slavery" until the mid-1700s.[307] There were early Protestant missions to slaves, many featuring attacks on African Catholicism.[308] In 1737, John Wesley, the future founder of Methodism, preached along the very Pon Pon Road where the Stono rebels would later march.[309] He was followed by the legendary evangelist George Whitefield in 1738, who condemned slavery and said rebellions were divinely inspired.[310] However, these efforts met with strong rejection and even violence from slaveowners.[311]

Legalities sought to prevent the rise of any Black Protestant sovereignty. Where Iberian Catholics saw baptism as a way to induce slave conformity, White Protestants thought it risky, especially in places like South Carolina where "even a modest percentage of Christianized Africans could easily form the majority of a congregation".[312] Dutch Protestants made it harder to convert.[313] English colonial legal codes and nearly all-White churches started defining "Christian" and "Negro" as opposites.[314] Virginia redefined Africans as "'hereditary heathens' who were ineligible for Christianity".[315] Protestants racialized their religions in support of their slavery legalities. Only in the late 1600s did they begin to open baptism to Africans and reframe slavery as based on race.[316] Colonists still limited Black church membership to a select few domestic slaves, while other enslaved people "ceased to be of concern to most Anglican missionaries".[317]

Francis Le Jau was an exception, criticizing planters who did not overcome the legality for the sake of religion and see their slaves "as Christian Brethren, & use 'em with humanity".[318] South Carolina's changing legality depended instead on narratives of slaves' *in*humanity. The earliest versions of Carolina slavery let Black Charlestonians congregate and saw enslaved cowboys roam the backwoods.[319] However, the colony's first slave code, enacted in 1690, reflected concerns about Black sovereignty. It restricted slaves' movements and immunized colonists who killed escapees.[320] Accused slaves were tried by White juries and frequently sentenced to death, perpetual servitude, and torture.[321] Soon, South Carolina made slavery hereditary and authorized new mandatory punishments like branding, castration, and other forms of mutilation.[322]

Brutal legality was backed by religious developments. Protestants took more interest in slaves, possibly to dissuade them from escaping to Florida.[323] Their religion was made compatible with slavery.[324] Five years after criticizing Carolina's enslavers, Whitefield became one.[325] When one of his White followers began preaching emancipation, the government intervened.[326] Evangelicals converted only a few Black people.[327] Le Jau started requiring enslaved converts to declare: "you do not ask for the holy baptism out of any design to free yourself from the duty and Obedience you owe to your Master while you live".[328] He came to believe that Black Christian literacy posed threats after encountering a Carolina man who prophesied that "there would be a dismal time and the moon would be

turned into blood".[329] Protestant missionaries wanted to reinforce the opposite narrative: that Christian slaves were the most compliant.[330] The Anglican missionary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) lobbied for a law confirming that baptism did not trigger manumission.[331] The S.P.G.'s mission to enslaved peoples was, Gerbner writes, "completely master-centered" and contributed to slavery's racialization.[332] As these efforts started to persuade masters, the S.P.G. had them force their slaves into Anglicanism.[333] Africans resisted, and missionaries criticized them as too unintelligent to become Christians.[334] Fear of Black Protestant sovereignty outweighed religious motives to convert slaves.

The Stono Rebellion could have inspired sovereignty anyway and been taken as counterevidence of Africans' intelligence. To combat this, South Carolina made its legality even more oppressive in 1740. Enslaved people were subjected to random interrogations, barred from traveling without passes, and disarmed.[335] Slaves who informed on each other were rewarded.[336] Manumission was restricted to the legislature.[337] Possibly responding to the Rebellion, Sunday labor was condemned.[338] Perhaps most strikingly, teaching slaves to read and write was outlawed.[339] South Carolinians even tried to restrict the importation of West-Central Africans in favor of White people and other Black people.[340] They complained about enslaved people using religious gatherings as a pretext for subversion.[341] Enslaved sovereignty stoked White paranoia and South Carolina's legality responded by trying to monopolize religious and racial narratives.[342] The persistence of alternative worldviews forced White South Carolina to decide just how committed it was to violence, and strict supervision and coercion proved to be its answer.[343]

In this context, what might have been the meaning of the Stono rebels' reported remark, "we 'is not converted'"?[344] Maybe it was a reference to the rebels rejecting Christianity. Carolina Africans were starting to develop "Obeah or Conjure", discerning spiritual forces like those found in indigenous African religions (belief in which survived in Kongo despite missionaries' efforts).[345] Related cosmology would contribute to Haitian Vodou.[346] However, there is also evidence of Catholic intransigence. The Stono rebels evidently aimed to reach Florida, where conversion to Catholicism was a precondition for sanctuary.[347] For people willing to die rather than become Christians, this would have been a strange destination.[348] But for Kongolese seeking to join fellow Catholics in freedom, it would have been natural. In any event, given the religious dimensions of the English legality, being "not converted" amounted to a declaration of sacred sovereignty.

9. The Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose

> *The freedmen of Mose had vowed to be 'the most cruel enemies of the English', and to shed their 'last drop of blood in defense of the Great Crown of Spain and the Holy Faith', and many did so over nearly thirty years of armed service.*
>
> —J. Landers (1996)[349]

What sort of legality, what "paradigms for dedication, acquiescence, contradiction, and resistance", awaited Africans in Florida?[350] Sanctuary founded upon religion and imperial interests, a realm that practiced slavery in ways different than the English, and a home where Black people could enter into an enduring political covenant with Spain even in the face of English and then American hostility.

10. Religious Sanctuary

The waves of Black Carolinians exercising their sovereignty and leaving the English legality helped form a new legality: Spanish sanctuary. Ten adults and a baby escaped to St. Augustine in 1688.[351] They sought Catholic baptism.[352] The Spanish governor Diego de Quiroga y Losada had them catechized and given sacramental baptisms and marriages, set them to work as laborers in his house, and then refused an English demand for their

return.[353] The Spanish legality integrated the escapees using religion, although Quiroga later sold these people and settled accounts with the English.[354] More escapees followed over the next three years, causing English governor James Colleton to say slaves were fleeing "dayly", a situation the English (correctly) predicted would lead Black people to "massacre their masters and then to desert".[355] Florida's leadership sought legal guidance, and in 1693, King Charles II decreed in an order-in-council (*cédula*) that the escapees, "who fled on the pretext of being baptized"—perhaps even without full sincerity—would enjoy liberty "so that by their example and by my liberality others will do the same".[356] This decision mirrored 1680 decrees granting sanctuary to slaves who reached sparsely populated Trinidad and were then baptized.[357]

The legality of sanctuary had begun, built upon African and Spanish Catholicism and hostility toward Protestantism. It would be strengthened by another dozen royal decrees issued over the following century offering liberty to those escaping enslavement from the Leeward Islands "to Puerto Rico, from French to Spanish Hispaniola, from Jamaica to Cuba, from English outposts in Belize to Guatemala and Honduras", and from "Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao[ ] and the Wild Coast of South America to Venezuela".[358] Finally, in 1750, Spain granted liberty to any slaves who arrived in the empire from English and Dutch territories seeking to become Catholic.[359] The Spanish legality deployed religion as a weapon against Protestant colonies.

Sanctuary was not always granted in reality. In 1697, Florida's governor returned six escapees to the English to avoid conflict and not create a perverse incentive for the English to let slaves escape and then demand compensation.[360] A similar "case-by-case" approach was initially taken by Gov. Antonio de Benavides (in office 1718–1734).[361] Benavides auctioned off a group of escapees, interpreting the 1693 decree as applicable only to the very first group who arrived.[362] He soon changed his mind for strategic and humanitarian reasons.[363] In 1721, South Carolina officials fretted that slaves had nearly executed "a new Revolution" that "would probably have been attended by the utter extirpation" of the colony.[364] In 1724, hoping to secure escapees' return, South Carolina's governor forbade the English to attack St. Augustine or its allied Indians.[365] Benavides urged his negotiators to cite sanctuary and make Carolinians aware of it.[366] That year, ten escapees arrived, saying they knew about the policy.[367] In 1725, Benavides did not answer English demands for the return of eight escapees.[368] By 1728, the English believed he was paying 30 pieces of eight for every African rescued to Florida.[369]

Benavides sought further royal guidance.[370] In 1731, the Council of the Indies decreed that escapees were to remain in Florida without compensation to English owners.[371] The legal rationale combined realpolitik and religion.[372] The Council noted that the English lost profit when slaves escaped.[373] It also reiterated that people who said they wanted to become Catholic should not be returned to "Heretic Owners".[374] People arriving in Spanish domains knew what was expected of them. Many who sought freedom, possibly advised by priests and legal experts, said they wanted to convert.[375] They understood "how to live" in Florida's legality.[376]

Benavides and his successor, Manuel de Montiano (in office 1737–1749), at least considered inciting English slaves to rebel.[377] In 1733, the Spanish king confirmed that sanctuary was available for escapees, though they had to work as indentured servants for four years (a period shorter than English indentures).[378] Benavides broadcasted this news "by beat of Drum round the town of St. Augustine (where many Negroes belonging to English Vessels . . . had the Opportunity of hearing it)".[379] Montiano later boasted that English slaves knew about sanctuary.[380] It would either win Carolina's labor force over to the Spanish or trigger revolts.[381]

Montiano granted freedom to arriving escapees in 1738, a year before the Stono Rebellion, and the refugees laughed when their previous master tried to retrieve them.[382] Montiano also forwarded to Madrid a "Plea of the Fugitive Blacks from the Plantations of the English".[383] It declared escapees' desire "to be Christians and to follow the True Religion in which We Are Saved".[384] They pledged to forever be the "most cruel enemies of the English" and "shed the Last drop of Blood in defense of the Great Crown of Spain and our Holy faith".[385] They saw their sovereignty and Spain's as mutually entangled.

Montiano also granted fugitives an outpost later called the Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose ("Royal Benefit of Saint Teresa of Mose", more commonly referred to as "Fort Mose").[386] Eight months before Stono, Montiano published an edict (*bando*) designating this as a home for escapees.[387] The English blamed this for the Rebellion.[388] With Madrid's approval, the site was settled by 38 married men and their families.[389] The Council of the Indies also forbade the sale of any future escapees.[390] Fort Mose sat just north of St. Augustine, on the site of a former Indian mission village decimated by disease, and it was a promising buffer against the English.[391] Its obvious strategic value has led some scholars to call sanctuary "less than authentic".[392] However, the area was also rich in resources and the Spanish expected it to become agriculturally productive.[393] Spain gave residents the royal subsidies available to "soldiers, religious and government officials, pensioners, converts, and others".[394] Fort Mose was given a Catholic priest and led by Francisco Menéndez.[395] It did participate in the Spanish colonial legality, but then, no actual society embodies pure sovereignty.[396]

Menéndez led a life of both sovereignty and legality. Born in West Africa, he was enslaved in South Carolina.[397] With nine others, he fled to St. Augustine and was sold at Benavides's auction.[398] A Yamasee Indian chief allied with the Spanish credited Menéndez with fighting alongside them, but said a Yamasee warrior had wrongly sold Menéndez back into slavery in Florida.[399] In time, Menéndez became a militiaman.[400] This was a momentous way of joining Florida's legality. Legalities are "held together by the force" of commitments to them.[401] Two otherwise-identical societies will differ greatly if one is "universally venerated" while the other is considered "fundamentally unjust".[402] Conviction matters, and militia service was a sign of political faith made by Black refugees.[403]

Menéndez proved to be a pillar of the legality. In 1728, he was awarded a commendation and a promise of freedom for defending Florida against English invaders.[404] He ultimately won liberty from Montiano after petitioning on behalf of himself and others.[405] Montiano then made Menéndez the authority over Fort Mose, whose residents included many Kongolese.[406] Menéndez proved a great leader. Infuriated after the Stono Rebellion, at Bull's and Oglethorpe's urging, the English again invaded Florida.[407] Their goal was to stop Spain from stirring slave sovereignty into rebellions.[408] (Florida was also a theater in the broader nine-year conflict that came to be known as the War of Jenkins' Ear.[409]) Fort Mose's residents were evacuated into St. Augustine and Oglethorpe attacked the outpost.[410] The night before, Florida's leaders promised 500 Black people great rewards if they would defeat the English.[411] The Spaniards were desperate and Montiano believed St. Augustine would fall.[412] The English force counted thousands of fighters against the mere hundreds in the Spanish militia.[413] Oglethorpe did take Fort Mose, but the defenders swiftly counterattacked with Cuban reinforcements.[414] They killed 50 English soldiers and captured another 20 as the English withdrew to prevent another rumored slave revolt in Carolina and to get home before hurricane season.[415] Armed Black sovereignty in Florida, and the threat of more in South Carolina, defeated the English effort to avenge Stono.

Menéndez won another commendation and then took to the sea in hopes of reaching Spain and collecting a militia captain's pension.[416] He was captured by the British, who flogged him and ordered him re-enslaved.[417] (Coincidentally, the ship he was held on was

in New York when the city executed the "Spanish Negro" rebels.[418]) Somehow, he was back in a leadership role at Fort Mose by 1752, possibly due to the advocacy of the Spanish, who regularly protested the seizure of their Black mariners.[419] Fort Mose kept growing and appealing to Carolina slaves' sovereign hopes. In 1740, 150 slaves revolted unsuccessfully outside Charles Town, possibly hoping to reach Florida.[420] Another conspiracy aiming to reach St. Augustine was discovered in 1743.[421]

The Spanish developed a legality of sanctuary to undermine the English and honor their own Catholicism. Black people, including those led by Menéndez, made it their own by converting and risking their lives in its defense. These included Kongolese and others, but surely "the Church's presence in Florida made Spanish St. Augustine even more attractive to enslaved Catholics".[422] Whether escapees went to Florida because they were Catholic or they became Catholic because they needed sanctuary there, religion opened the way to a freer legality.[423]

11. Florida's Racial Order

Florida's racial legality was shaped by Catholicism and other factors that made it somewhat less rigid than South Carolina's. Spanish slave law was based on Roman law, which recognized slaves as human beings who naturally loved liberty—not chattel, as in English colonies.[424] Spanish law "favored" freedom on an abstract level.[425] Slaves could have personal property and some of their earnings.[426] Slavery was multiracial, involving war captives, convicts, and debtors.[427] The seminal thirteenth-century legal code known as the *Siete Partidas* ("Seven Parts") humanized slavery and provided ways out of it.[428] It allowed for the manumission of slaves abused by their masters.[429] Slaves could sue their masters on this ground.[430] They could also bring criminal complaints.[431] If a master intended to sell a slave, the slave could litigate to seek a new owner, including one who might manumit.[432] Converts to Catholicism were disproportionately freed, perhaps because of the "piety and integrity" of masters.[433] Slaves also had rights under canon law, including to marry and to family unity, which they used to prevent separation.[434]

Africans were in Florida from the very start of colonization (and even before, in the case of one mulatto shipwrecked in 1554)—the free Black man Juan Garrido explored the region and slaves labored to build St. Augustine in 1565.[435] Africans had been involved in Spanish society during 700 years of Moorish rule, with many occasions to prove their fighting skills and intelligence.[436] Many of the Africans enslaved in Florida were Christians. By the mid-1500s, Spain required owners to baptize slaves and let them attend Mass.[437] Some Florida slaves were Kongolese Catholics, shipped to the Americas by English Protestants. Here the Spanish engaged in legal subtlety, saying that owners bought these slaves unaware of their being baptized—despite many of them having cross markings on their chests.[438] In addition, if Floridians could not keep Kongolese Catholics as slaves, then these people would be sold to heretics.[439] The exact nature of the legal problem is unclear, as Spanish law allowed for Christians to be held as slaves.[440] In any event, Catholic authorities in Florida saw the Kongolese as un-catechized and would provisionally baptize them, assuming baptisms in Africa may not have been valid.[441] Where early Protestant legalities saw Black Christianity as inviting a threatening sovereignty, the Spanish legality understood religion as a way to ameliorate danger.

Other aspects of the legality helped enslaved Africans. Spanish courts gradually interpreted the law in favor of two rights: *coartación*, or self-purchase out of slavery, and ownership change.[442] Both rights grew out of local litigation, not royal decrees.[443] Enslaved people also appealed to last testaments allegedly manumitting them, reliance on masters' promises of "conditional liberty", the right of dependent people (*miserabiles*) to receive writs of protection (*amparo*), and their own right of self-preservation against masters' violence.[444]

Some aspects of labor were less harsh than in Carolina, too: “slaves had free time to engage in their own social and economic activities; slaves were able to utilize the resources of both frontier and coast to advantage; [and] the trade in slaves was never massive”.[445] Sovereign revolts did not arise in Florida as they did in South Carolina.

Black participation in the legality may have been part of the reason. Governments are not the sole creators of law.[446] Through litigation, slaves made law and helped define Enlightenment ideas about “natural rights, tyranny, and humanity”.[447] Many legal suits were funded by Black people and brought by women in particular, showing that “street vendors, wet nurses, and artisans . . . had access to cash to put up for their own freedom or that of relatives”.[448] *Cofradías* provided institutional support.[449] Such efforts hearkened back to an aspect of West-Central Africa’s legality: the *kijiko*-focused Principle of Return (*Mucuâ*), which urged solidarity in support of freedom—the need for a “community to which an enslaved could return”, for an *nbata rinène* (“great house”).[450] African and Spanish legalities combined into a new community bound by “common symbols and discourse, common narratives and interpretations”.[451]

To be sure, slave litigation was never widespread. Bianca Premo counts just 268 cases brought by slaves against their masters during the entire eighteenth century.[452] And Spanish slavery could often be harsh. The first known enslaved Black people brought to the modern United States accompanied a Spanish expedition in 1526.[453] They joined a native uprising and burned the Spaniards’ huts.[454]

However, the Spanish legality did channel hopes for liberty that might otherwise have triggered sovereign revolt. Manumission was “reasonably attainable in some regions” and *coartación* “led to a robust free black population in Latin America, particularly in cities”.[455] Those people had real opportunities, as Menéndez’s life shows.[456] So did mixed-race people, who were usually freed and legitimated if their fathers were White and who could serve in public roles.[457] Within the Church, Black people sometimes became lay leaders and even held respected offices, although they could also be excluded from religious orders.[458] Fort Mose had its own resident-built church.[459] Black people chose godparents within and across racial lines, creating close familial and patronage ties.[460] Archeologists have found rosaries at Fort Mose and a medal of St. Christopher carrying Jesus over the water—a fitting symbol for people who had come so far, some bolstered by Catholic faith, and some hoping to traverse the native-African “watery divide separating the living and the dead and be reunited with long-lost African ancestors”.[461] Florida’s religious legality invited Black participation.

Spanish Florida recognized its dependence on free Black people.[462] There was also an alternative: exercising fuller sovereignty and becoming maroons. Opting out of a legality can be a powerful way of critiquing it.[463] Florida’s backcountry was home to several large, independent Black communities.[464] These helped Black people resist racial restrictions. Spain did not destroy these communities and so had to negotiate terms of coexistence.[465] Black people made dignified space for themselves both inside and adjacent to the Spanish legality, and in time they were one out of every four St. Augustinians.[466]

12. The New Political Covenant

In Kongo-neighboring regions, runaway *kijiko*s (enslaved war captives) could avail themselves of safe haven and asylum.[467] A person enslaved wrongly could seek protection from a powerful lord and someone wrongly accused of a crime could move to a new area.[468] Both options required protective and welcoming communities.[469] Both carried mutual obligations. Escapees sometimes enacted this in maroon communities.[470] Florida’s legality had parallels.

One of the most prominent was the Black militia, as Menéndez's life shows. Africans may have been part of the first Floridian expedition against the English in 1676.[471] St. Augustine's Black and mulatto militias dated to 1681.[472] Two years later, there were 48 Black militiamen.[473] They were led by their own elected officers and received the same pay and uniforms as White men.[474] In 1685–1686, Black people and other Spanish soldiers raided the English, liberating a dozen of the Carolina governor's slaves.[475] Escapees brought with them knowledge of the backcountry, the English language, and sometimes (as for many Kongolese) military experience.[476] Escapees were armed—"sometimes almost immediately"—and sent back to Carolina to free others.[477] England's labor force became St. Augustine's fighting one.[478]

The English contemplated arming their own slaves lest the colony fall.[479] They attacked St. Augustine in 1719 to try to block Black insurrectionary sovereignty.[480] Before the Stono Rebellion, rumors spread that the Spanish were paying Black soldiers for White scalps—and they at least considered doing so.[481] Around the same time, Oglethorpe discovered that his White ranks included Catholic spies.[482] English Virginians feared that their slaves communicated constantly with Spanish officials in Cuba.[483] Fear of Black sovereignty spread.

England's racialized paranoia materialized three times. In 1706, the Spanish unsuccessfully invaded Carolina with a mixed-race force numbering hundreds.[484] Then, in 1715, indigenous Carolina Yamasees and enslaved Africans launched a failed rebellion.[485] This "Yamasee War", which Le Jau blamed on English cruelty, was what led Menéndez and others to Florida.[486] The Spanish also bought and freed the Yamasees' Black slaves and then sent them to raid Carolina.[487] The English complained that their slaves were "taken", not that they had revolted.[488] The English legality could not conceive of Black sovereignty. In 1741, an Englishman even wrote that escapees were betrayed by the Spanish and would not aid them in future conflicts.[489] That proved false the following year when Spanish Black and mulatto regiments—led by non-White officers—joined thousands of others in invading Georgia.[490] The *London Gazette* reported with shock that Black officers accompanied the Spanish governor on the frontline, "dressed in Gold and Silver Lace Clothes like other officers and . . . kept in the Pay as the other regiments".[491] One escapee militiaman used his knowledge of the terrain and language to ambush enemy soldiers.[492]

The Spanish were rebuffed.[493] However, the legality of Georgia was transformed. Georgia was founded in 1732 with a ban on slavery, often attributed to a desire to better the lives of poor White poeple.[494] The policy also noted the security risk posed by Florida's sanctuary law—Boltzius, the Lutheran minister, referred to Black people and the Spanish as "cruel enemies within and without".[495] Georgia was an all-White buffer and escapee-catchment zone.[496] After the Spanish invasion's defeat, in 1750, slavery was legalized due to economic concerns and bolstered confidence, with even Boltzius agreeing despite his earlier criticism of forced labor on the Christian Sabbath.[497] However, this provided Spain with another opportunity. In 1753, shortly after Menéndez's return to Fort Mose, Florida's governor successfully threatened to have Black militias invade Georgia unless the English released other Black mariners.[498]

Militia service was not useful merely for Spain. It also meant Black people's integration into the legality. Men held leadership roles.[499] Martial ties often led to marital and godparent relationships.[500] It also gave new legal rights: militiamen received the *fuero* (civil immunity), as well as medical and veterans' benefits.[501]

The relationship between Spanish and Black Floridians was not always equal. In 1749, a new governor ordered Black people to move out of the city and back to Fort Mose.[502] However, they complied only after he promised strengthened defenses.[503] Fort Mose built

a new church and rectory.[504] In 1763, 3000 Black people lived in the city and outpost.[505] The local bishop celebrated Black peoples' roles within the local Church.[506]

In keeping with *kijiko* norms, militia service triggered Spanish responsibilities.[507] A great test came in 1763, when Spain ceded Florida to the English.[508] Despite the English promising religious liberty for Catholics, many Black people joined a royally funded exodus to Cuba.[509] A wealthy Cuban donated land to provide a new home for these wayfarers, including Menéndez.[510] Frontier life was brutal and Black people suffered racial discrimination, including in widows' benefits.[511] Poverty afflicted many.[512] Still, Spanish sanctuary continued to appeal to escapees exercising sovereignty, including from Carolina—who arrived now by boat instead of on foot.[513]

However, the Spanish legality was beginning to change, in part due to new Enlightenment narratives favoring efficiency and centralization over piety and duty.[514] Spain drastically strengthened the African slave trade.[515] Religious expressions were revised as slavery's defenders emphasized that captivity among Catholics was better than freedom among infidels.[516] Spain arranged for the return of escapees to the Danish in 1767, albeit conditioned on religious liberty for them.[517] The Haitian Revolution drastically raised fears of Black sovereignty, leading many Spanish planters to criticize their legality as too lax.[518] Black *cofradías* were restricted.[519] Spain ended sanctuary for escapees from the French.[520] Slave revolts within the Spanish Empire contributed to authorities seeing (canonically forbidden) family separation as expedient.[521] Spaniards feared that Black sovereignty could no longer be controlled by their legality, so they tightened it.

The old legality and religious commitments were not entirely dead. Spain overrode Venezuelan authorities to free escapees from the Dutch in 1787.[522] In 1779, Black Cuban militiamen proved their continued allegiance by defending the island during the American Revolution.[523] The Spanish retook Florida in 1783.[524] Escapees from Georgia and its defeated Tory masters headed south.[525] Florida granted them sanctuary with work and registration requirements, subjecting their religious sincerity to only light scrutiny.[526] Two hundred and fifty-one former slaves were registered over the outgoing English governor's objections and then given shelter with the new governor and other townspeople.[527] They soon became local leaders.[528] In 1790, Florida introduced new laws allotting newcomers land, and Black people who were free participated in this system, sometimes as equals and even as slaveowners.[529] Black people became the local majority, and ten to twenty percent of them were free.[530] A school was opened, with Black children required to sit by classroom doors but protected against insults.[531] Other racially discriminatory legal measures went unenforced, including weapons restrictions and curfews.[532] Spanish courts considered claims of illegal enslavement.[533] Fort Mose, now abandoned, became a "favorite spot for large Sunday afternoon oyster roasts".[534]

Black militiamen continued to defend the colony, including against Andrew Jackson's invasions.[535] Maroon Black people comprised part of the Seminole forces that fought American intrusions into the backcountry.[536] There even arose another leader like Menéndez. In 1786, Prince and Judy Whitten, together with their son and daughter, escaped across the St. Marys River from Georgia into Florida.[537] Renamed "Juan Bautista" and "María Rafaela Quenty", the senior Whittens served as godparents for 54 people.[538] When María Rafaela's employer demanded that she work in the fields, Juan Bautista litigated for new employment and restitution for her.[539] María Rafaela even (unsuccessfully) sued several local patricians for insults and mistreatment.[540] In 1793, the French attacked Florida, and Juan Bautista enlisted in the Black militia, which was commanded by his next-door neighbor and included many escapees; they elected him their sergeant.[541] The men helped retake what is now Jacksonville and Amelia Island, earning them the governor's praise.[542] Twenty years later, when Georgians invaded Florida, Juan Bautista led a key attack on their supply

lines.[543] He and his comrades were fighting against their own re-enslavement at American hands.[544] Perhaps they felt like sovereigns even as they defended their legality.

Despite efforts like these, the United States triumphed where England had failed. In 1790, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson convinced Spain to abolish sanctuary.[545] Spain occasionally gave the owners of escaped slaves restitution and even re-enslaved some people.[546] Georgia's governor told President James Monroe that armed Black people in Spanish Florida would inspire insurrections.[547] This renewed fear of Black sovereignty inspired American invaders to defeat the Spanish.[548] A new generation of Black people faced the same choice of legality as their forebears: stay in Florida or go to Cuba. One hundred and forty-five free Black people sailed to the Caribbean.[549]

Neither those who left nor those who stayed enjoyed the old legality. The Americans forbade free Black men from any government roles and denied land grants to those who served in the integrated militia (sometimes as musicians and not even as full soldiers).[550] Cuba's government embraced Enlightenment liberalism—and racially exclusive suffrage.[551] New national legalities upended the old one, however checkered, of inclusion and freedom.

13. Conclusions

> *The "good old Flag of Spain … enslaved none but the slaves giving equal rights & privileges to all as his subjects without distinction…".*
>
> —Eliza M. Whitwell, quadroon and Florida heiress (1868)[552]

Memories of Kongolese Catholicism lived on. Catholic-esque religious societies and penitential practices were recorded among South Carolina Sea Islanders in 1834.[553] Black Catholics attacked early Protestant missionaries in 1800s St. Augustine, just as the Brazilian Kongolese had done to the Dutch who would not bow to the Blessed Virgin Mary.[554] Floridian Catholic slaves entered sacramental marriages and then used pressure from priests to keep their families together.[555] St. Augustinians fighting for the Union in the Civil War sang "O hail, Ma-ry, hail!"[556]

The Stono Rebellion was remembered, too. George Cato, born years after the Civil War and nearly 150 years after the uprising, recounted his ancestor's speech referring to Spanish sanctuary and possibly to Kongolese Catholicism.[557] He believed his ancestor took "a darin' chance on losin' his life, not so much for his own benefit as it was to help others".[558] He was proud of this sacrifice. "He die but he die for doin' de right, as he see it".[559]

Spanish sanctuary was not forgotten, either. Abolitionist congressman Joshua Giddings wrote in 1858 of how Spain gave those "[t]orn from their native land, their friends and homes" a second freedom, until the Americans "murdered many of these free men, and brought others to the United States and consigned them to slavery".[560] He deemed the American conquest of Florida "our national turpitude".[561] Ten years later, mixed-race Florida élite Eliza Whitwell wrote the nostalgic words quoted above. In the 1920s, Irene Wright and the prolific Black Floridian scholar Zora Neale Hurston published early historical notes on Fort Mose.[562]

A memory of utopia, whether fully accurate or not, is "like a seed, a legal DNA, a genetic code by which the imagined integration is the template for a thousand real integrations of corpus, discourse, and commitment".[563] From Whitwell's genteel drawing room to Hurston's study to the battlefields and polemics of the Civil War, the Kongolese episodes discussed here became a "primordial, imaginary, *true* unity that occurred in a vanished instant of long ago"—and kept firing new sovereign hopes and visions.[564]

The Kongolese trilogy does not enjoy that pride of place in modern popular or academic history. It should. Legalities can make new epics relevant to their self-understanding.[565] The history considered here is epic: trans-Atlantic in scope, with waves of sovereignty shaping legality across centuries, it offers a centering of Black sovereignties

and religiously inspired inclusion. It chronicles human aspirations to "something more than reason and legality alone", to "the affective commitment signaled by sacrifice; for a justice that transcends legality; for the possibility of grace, pardon, or redemption . . . and, when all else fails, for an escape".[566] Those memories can broaden modern understandings of American origins and pursuits of freedom, opening new horizons of inspiration for today. Some even see glimpses of God in these things. Somewhere in the dance of legality and sovereignty there happened mercy, justice, betrayal, discrimination, resistance—and the heart many people needed to make their world less heartless, the soul to make their conditions less soulless.[567]

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Notes

1 *Quoted in* (Rawick 1977, p. 56); *see also* (Smith 2001, p. 526).
2 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 21).
3 (Yelle 2019, p. 2).
4 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 1).
5 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 2).
6 Cf. *ibid*.
7 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 21).
8 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 3); (Sherwin 2024a, p. 2).
9 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 2).
10 (Sherwin 2024b, pp. 2, 7–8); *see also* (Yelle 2019, p. 14).
11 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 4).
12 (Cover 1983, p. 5).
13 (Cover 1983, p. 7).
14 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 2); *see also* (Yelle 2019, p. 19).
15 (Cover 1983, pp. 9–10).
16 (Cover 1983, p. 9); *see also* (Yelle 2019, p. 13).
17 (Schaefer 2015, p. 16).
18 *Ibid*.
19 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 3).
20 *But see* (Runyon 1999).
21 *See* (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 1); (Dewulf 2022a, p. 163); (MacGaffey 2016, p. 171) ("[T]he principal Kongo cultural export to the Americas was Roman Catholicism. (This fact makes 'Kongo' seem less authentically African in its Atlantic 'rivalry' with 'Yoruba'.)").
22 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 208); *see also* (Dewulf 2022b).
23 (Thornton 1998a, p. 1); (Thornton and Heywood 2011).

[24] (Rawick 1977, p. 55); (Halifax and Snyder 2022, p. 139).
[25] (Rawick 1977, p. 56).
[26] *Ibid*.
[27] (Yelle 2019, p. 19).
[28] *Quoted in* (Valerio 2019, p. 66).
[29] The Kingdom was not "an early modern state", but "a center of power, prestige, economic opportunity, and ritual validation" that "entered into the Atlantic trade and diplomatic relations". (MacGaffey 2016, p. 161); *see also* (Broadhead 1979, p. 619).
[30] (MacGaffey 2016, p. 162); (Fromont 2014, pp. 24–25); (Heywood and Thornton 2007, pp. 57, 172); (Balandier 1968, pp. 35–36).
[31] (Yelle 2019, p. 1).
[32] (Yelle 2019, p. 3).
[33] (Yelle 2019, p. 8).
[34] (Yelle 2019, p. 28).
[35] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, pp. 53–54).
[36] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 53); (Dewulf 2017, p. 40).
[37] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 60); (Fromont 2022, p. 6); (Adiele 2017, p. 261).
[38] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 60).
[39] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, pp. 60–61); (Thornton 2024, pp. 309–11).
[40] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 61). For a complete chronology of Kongolese kings, see (Vezzú and Ntanda 2007).
[41] *Contrast* (Dewulf 2022a, p. 63) (describing the apostacy as concerning polygamy) *with* (Thornton 1984, p. 148) (describing this as "reputed"); *see also* (Dewulf 2017, p. 24).
[42] *See* (Valerio 2019, p. 66).
[43] *See ibid.*; (Dewulf 2017, p. 24).
[44] *See* (Yelle 2019, p. 18).
[45] *See ibid*.
[46] (Dewulf 2017, p. 63). Other accounts had Mvemba's soldiers shouting Saint James's name at a pivotal moment, triggering panic. *See* (Valerio 2019, p. 66). Another version features Mvemba learning of the apparition only after the battle. *See* (Thornton and Heywood 2011). In the early 1700s, the myth included Afonso killing his pagan mother. *See* (Fromont 2014, p. 36). These accounts all reflect Kongolese themes of fratricide and witchcraft. (Withers 2020, p. 44).
[47] (Dewulf 2022a, p. 63).
[48] (Dewulf 2017, p. 25).
[49] (Yelle 2019, p. 18).
[50] (Fromont 2014, p. 6).
[51] (MacGaffey 1986, p. 199).
[52] (Dewulf 2017, p. 25); (Thornton and Heywood 2011).
[53] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 63); (MacGaffey 1986, p. 199).
[54] (MacGaffey 1986, p. 200).
[55] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 62).
[56] (MacGaffey 1986, pp. 199–200).
[57] (Sherwin 2024a, p. 2).
[58] (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 2). Lay catechesis remains important in modern Angola. (Vezzú and Ntanda 2007, pp. 71–85).
[59] (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 4) ("The Capuchins rarely numbered more than a half-dozen in a country [that grew to] three quarters of a million people . . . ".); (Hastings 1994, p. 92).
[60] *See* (Broadhead 1979, p. 625).
[61] (Dewulf 2022a, p. 70); (Thornton 1998b, p. 246).
[62] (Dewulf 2022a, p. 75).
[63] (Thornton 1984, p. 157).
[64] (Thornton 2024, pp. 309, 324).
[65] (Thornton 1993, p. 181).
[66] (Thornton 1984, p. 158).
[67] (Hastings 1994, p. 101).
[68] (MacGaffey 1986, p. 200) (citations omitted); *see also* (Withers 2020, pp. 1, 18, 34–38, 47).
[69] (Thornton 1984, pp. 152–53).
[70] (Fromont 2014, p. 32).
[71] *Ibid*.
[72] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 172).

[73] (Dewulf 2017, p. 28); (Dewulf 2022a, p. 70); (Thornton 2002, p. 83); (Laing 2002, p. 207).
[74] (Thornton 1983, p. 121).
[75] *See* (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 4); (Fromont and Iyanaga 2019, pp. 4–5) ("Readings of Christianity as a predominantly external or burdensome influence on African . . . cultures or else as a thin veneer over deeper, non-Christian allegiances are inaccurate or at least lack nuance".); (Thornton 1998b, p. 255) ("Africans became Christians . . . because they received 'co-revelations', that is, revelations in the African tradition that dovetailed with the Christian tradition".).
[76] Cf. (Schaefer 2015, p. 17).
[77] (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 3); (Thornton 1984, p. 155, n. 45). A Portuguese priest said Henrique knew Catholic doctrine "better than we others do" and had taught in Europe. *See* (Thornton 1984, p. 155, n. 45).
[78] (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 3).
[79] *Ibid*.
[80] *See* (Adiele 2017, p. 443).
[81] (Gerbner 2018, p. 17); *see also* (Cavedon 2024, pp. 17–20); (Nafafé 2022, p. 111).
[82] (Adiele 2017, pp. 439–40).
[83] (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 5); *see also* (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 172).
[84] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 172).
[85] *Ibid*.
[86] (Fromont 2022, p. 6).
[87] (Headsman 2009). This is an interview and all citations to this source are statements of John Thornton.
[88] (Sherwin 2024a, p. 3).
[89] (Schaefer 2015, p. 17).
[90] (Adiele 2017, pp. 435–37).
[91] (Thornton 1984, p. 162).
[92] *Ibid*.
[93] (Gray 2002, p. 28).
[94] (Gray 2002, pp. 28–29).
[95] (Gray 2002, p. 29).
[96] *Ibid*.
[97] (Gray 2002, p. 36); (Adiele 2017, p. 444).
[98] (Gray 2002, p. 37).
[99] (Gray 2002, pp. 37–38).
[100] (Adiele 2017, p. 449). The Capuchins disliked Kongolese Catholicism's Africanized aspects, seeing these as syncretic. *See* (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 4); (Dewulf 2022a, pp. 77–78).
[101] (Gray 2002, p. 38).
[102] (Adiele 2017, p. 451).
[103] (Thornton 1984, p. 155).
[104] (Cover 1983, p. 17).
[105] (Cover 1983, pp. 45, 68).
[106] (Cover 1983, p. 46).
[107] (MacGaffey 1986, p. 204).
[108] (Dewulf 2022a, p. 70).
[109] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, pp. 64–66); *see also* (Thornton 2006, p. 97).
[110] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 182). The Dutch briefly conquered Angola in the 1640s. *See* (Fromont 2014, p. 7).
[111] (Headsman 2009).
[112] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 182).
[113] (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 172); (Broadhead 1979, p. 620); (Dewulf 2022a, p. 3).
[114] (Dewulf 2022a, p. 7).
[115] (Heywood 2009, p. 3); *see also* (Thornton 2006, p. 86).
[116] (Adiele 2017, p. 436).
[117] (Heywood 2009, p. 4).
[118] (Heywood 2009, pp. 4–5).
[119] *Ibid.*; (Nafafé 2022, p. 155).
[120] (Heywood 2009, pp. 4–5, 8).
[121] (Nafafé 2022, p. 154).
[122] (Heywood 2009, pp. 5–6).

123 (Heywood 2009, p. 4); (Adiele 2017, pp. 440, 442).
124 (Heywood 2009, p. 6).
125 (Nafafé 2022, p. 131).
126 (Heywood 2009, p. 7).
127 *Ibid*.
128 (Heywood 2009, p. 8); (Fromont 2022, p. 6). Portugal unsuccessfully invaded Kongo three times in the 1600s. *See* (Headsman 2009).
129 (Heywood 2009, p. 8).
130 *Ibid.* (citation omitted).
131 (Heywood 2009, pp. 8–9) (citation omitted).
132 (Heywood 2009, p. 11) (citation omitted); (Nafafé 2022, p. 343) (citation omitted).
133 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 342, 377–78); *see also* (Fromont 2022, p. 53).
134 (Heywood 2009, p. 12).
135 (Heywood 2009, pp. 13–14).
136 (Heywood 2009, pp. 14–17); (Thornton 2006, pp. 90–91); (Fromont 2014, p. 7); cf. (Thornton 1993, p. 194) ("The idea of witchcraft could . . . be applied in the political realm only when kings or other political authorities used exploitation or corruption to pursue private wealth or power . . .".).
137 (Adiele 2017, pp. 453–56); (Fromont 2014, p. 6).
138 (Adiele 2017, pp. 25–26, 459–65).
139 (Adiele 2017, pp. 435–36).
140 (Dewulf 2022a, pp. 37–38 (recounting a Jesuit stopping a Portuguese sale to an English captain); (Heywood 2009, p. 20); (Thornton 1998a, pp. 102–3).
141 (Thornton 1998a, p. 103); (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 7); (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 182).
142 (Heywood 2009, p. 17).
143 *See* (Nafafé 2022, pp. 1–2, 16, 390, 418, 430).
144 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 47–48, 311, 317, 427).
145 (Gerbner 2018), p. 20; *see also* (MacMahon and Deagan 1996, p. 57) ("Spain's customary inclusion of Africans at every level of society was an outgrowth of 700 years of Moorish occupation".); (J. Landers 2014, pp. 117–18).
146 (Rupert 2019, p. 750); *see also* (Voigt 2019, p. 78) ("[T]he African kings crowned in [later Brazilian *cofradía*] festivals often enjoyed the authority and respect of real sovereigns . . .".); (Yelle 2019, p. 2) (describing festivals' "installation of a temporary ruler from the lower classes" as a "means of reinforcing, as well as of contesting and even potentially remaking, the polity".).
147 (Gerbner 2018, p. 21); (J. G. Landers 2006, p. 119).
148 (Johnson 2015, p. 132).
149 (Nafafé 2022, p. 29).
150 *See* (Nafafé 2022, pp. 311, 323–24, 346).
151 (Nafafé 2022, p. 351).
152 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 41, 352).
153 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 41, 359–60).
154 (Nafafé 2022, p. 373).
155 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 43, 380).
156 (Nafafé 2022, p. 43).
157 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 43, 394).
158 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 409, 411).
159 (Cover 1983, p. 46).
160 (Cover 1983, p. 68); cf. (Cover 1983, p. 54, n. 147).
161 (Cover 1983, p. 413).
162 (Adiele 2017, pp. 366–405); *see also* (Lehner 2016, pp. 185–87).
163 (Cover 1983, p. 18).
164 (Nafafé 2022, p. 334).
165 (Cover 1983, p. 162).
166 (Cover 1983, p. 245).
167 (Elnaiem 2019).
168 (Thornton 1998a, pp. 166–84).
169 (Withers 2020, pp. 64, 70). The authoritative treatment of Kimpa Vita is (Thornton 1998a).
170 (Headsman 2009); *see also* (Thornton 1998b, p. 254) ("African Christianity was a form of Christianity in that its followers accepted as genuine a series of revelations in which various otherworldly beings, primarily saints that were recognized by Catholic

Christians through their own tradition of revelations, now revealed themselves and were thus accorded status and worship by Africans".). In Kongo, Saint Anthony was sometimes identified with Toni Malau, a *nkisi* (spirit) associated with hunting. (MacGaffey 2016, p. 171).

171 *See* (Headsman 2009).
172 *Ibid*.
173 *Ibid*.
174 *Ibid*. Regarding Catholic craftsmanship in West-Central Africa, see (Heywood 2001, p. 101).
175 (Thornton 2024, p. 325).
176 (Elnaiem 2019).
177 *Ibid.* Capuchin missionaries did learn Kikongo, and Jesuits published a Kikongo catechism in 1624. *See* (Adiele 2017, p. 451); (MacGaffey 1986, p. 200).
178 Cf. (Yelle 2019, p. 13) ("[T]he history of religions could be written in terms of . . . acts of transgression . . .. [including] a host of millennial and apocalyptic movements".).
179 (Yelle 2019, p. 2).
180 (Elnaiem 2019); (MacGaffey 1986, p. 21); *see also* (Broadhead 1979, p. 615).
181 (Headsman 2009); (Fromont 2014, p. 7).
182 (Headsman 2009).
183 (Thornton 1998a, pp. 166–84).
184 (Thornton 1998a, p. 178); (Headsman 2009); cf. (Cover 1983, p. 39).
185 (Headsman 2009).
186 (Withers 2020, p. 75); (Elnaiem 2019); (Thornton 1998a, pp. 206–7) (describing enslaved Kongolese being sold to Protestant merchants outside Kongo's borders).
187 (Thornton 1998b, p. 264). A missionary did protest one of Pedro's slaving raids, requiring him to pay restitution before he could receive sacramental absolution. (Thornton 1998a, p. 91).
188 (Fromont 2014, p. 7); (Broadhead 1979, pp. 624, 641).
189 (Fromont 2014, p. 7); (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 7).
190 (Fromont 2014, p. 7).
191 (Thornton 1993, p. 187).
192 (Thornton 1993, pp. 190–91); *see also* (Thornton 1993, p. 196) ("It was in [Pedro's] court that the stories of the founder as a blacksmith originated . . .".).
193 (Thornton 1998a, pp. 131–32).
194 (Thornton 1998a, p. 132).
195 *See* (Broadhead 1979, p. 620).
196 *See* (MacGaffey 2016, p. 178).
197 (Elnaiem 2019); (Thornton 1993, pp. 212–13). Regarding Kongolese Catholicism's role in the Haitian Revolution and early Vodou, see (Lowe 2020; Rey 2017); *see generally* (Thornton 1993); *but see* (Mobley 2015) (arguing that most enslaved Haitians were not Kongolese Christians). Some religious movements in the modern Congo region identify with Kimpa Vita as well. *See* (Headsman 2009); cf. (Bockie 1998, p. 647).
198 (Thornton 1998a, p. 211).
199 (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 13–15, p. 14).
200 (Yelle 2019, p. 14).
201 *See* (Yelle 2019, p. 18).
202 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 1).
203 (Sherwin 2024a, pp. 4–5).
204 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 4).
205 (Sherwin 2024a, p. 10).
206 (Yelle 2019, p. 9).
207 (Cover 1983, p. 52).
208 (Walters 2015, p. 26).
209 *Ibid.*; (Wax 1982, p. 142).
210 (MacGaffey 2016, p. 169).
211 *See* (Halifax and Snyder 2022, pp. 136–60).
212 (Walters 2015, p. 24); (Stanley 2020, p. 28). Regarding the ditch-cutting projects, see (Hoffer 2010, pp. 62–64).
213 (Hoffer 2010, p. 67). Looking back years later, then-Gov. William Bull blamed this for the Rebellion—"not oppression of our slaves". (Bull 1770), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 30–31, p. 31).

214 (Hoffer 2010, pp. 79–80 and 80 n. 23).
215 (Walters 2015, p. 24); (Wood 1975, p. 315).
216 (Hoffer 2010, p. 82); (Anonymous 1916), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 7–8, p. 7).
217 *See* (Nafafé 2022, p. 191) ("African tradition maintained that to truly kill a powerful enemy, decapitation was required. Without it, there was a risk that the enemy would come back to life. Indeed, decapitating an enemy meant appropriating his or her power".) (parenthetical omitted); (Pearson 1996, pp. 38–39).
218 (Walters 2015, pp. 26–27).
219 *See ibid*.
220 (Walters 2015, p. 27); (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 14–15). The crew "spread out over the country" during the night. (Hoffer 2010, p. 90).
221 (Walters 2015, pp. 27–28).
222 (Walters 2015, p. 28).
223 *Ibid*.
224 *Ibid*.
225 (Urlsperger [1739] 1981, p. 11). One scholar suggests that life as forest maroons may have been the rebels' goal. (Mullin 1992, p. 45).
226 (Halifax and Snyder 2022, p. 139).
227 (Thornton 1998a, p. 214); (J. Landers 2014, p. 131).
228 *See* (Rawick 1977, p. 56) (quoting George Cato: "How it all start? Dat what I ask but nobody ever tell me . . .".).
229 (Hoffer 2010, p. 71).
230 (Hoffer 2010, p. 72).
231 (Hoffer 2010, p. 76).
232 (Hoffer 2010, pp. 80–81).
233 (Lowery 2021, p. 113).
234 *See* (Hoffer 2010, pp. 66–68, 100).
235 Cf. (Thornton 1998b, p. 331) (saying rebellions were often organized ethnically).
236 (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 14).
237 (Thornton 1998a, p. 210); (Thornton 1991, pp. 1103, 1106); *see also* (Thornton 1991, p. 1104) (noting other possible origins); cf. (Young 2007, p. 21) (indicating that Kongolese-Angolans were 36.2% of all Africans imported into the lowcountry between 1700 and 1740, and 65.33% of those of known origin (*citing* Eltis 1999)). Regarding South Carolina's transition to backbreaking rice cultivation in the 1720s, which helped spur the need for more ditches, see (Walters 2015, p. 20). Regarding the abolition of Indian slavery in the 1710s following the Yamasee War, which increased the demand for African slavery, see (Young 2007, p. 21).
238 (Thornton 1998a, p. 211).
239 (Thornton 1991, pp. 1103, 1109); *see also* (Thornton 1991, p. 1113) ("[T]heir tactical behavior was perfectly consistent with tactics of the battlefields of Kongo".).
240 *See* (Hoffer 2010, p. 74).
241 (Thornton 1998a, p. 213).
242 However, the slaves did not burn the store or fire guns, both of which would have signaled an uprising. (Hoffer 2010, p. 86).
243 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 9).
244 *Ibid*.
245 *See* (Smith 2001, p. 525).
246 (Smith 2001, p. 530).
247 (Smith 2001, p. 525).
248 *See* (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 14).
249 *Quoted in* (Balandier 1968, p. 121).
250 *See* (Smith 2001, p. 527).
251 Also relevant, yellow fever was devastating Charles Town. (Walters 2015, p. 25).
252 *See* (Smith 2001, p. 527). South Carolina was about to start requiring white men to bear arms to church on Sundays to prevent slaves from seizing guns during their absence, which may have been another factor. (Walters 2015, p. 25); (Horne 2014, p. 79).
253 (Stanley 2020, pp. 10, 34); (Hoffer 2010, p. 65). Regarding Anglican missionary Francis Le Jau's failed efforts to secure Sunday rest for slaves, see (Laing 2002, p. 204).
254 (Stanley 2020, p. 66) (citation omitted); (Hoffer 2010, pp. 120, 128, n. 2).
255 (Smith 2001, p. 527).
256 (Smith 2001, p. 522).
257 (Smith 2001, p. 531).

258 *Ibid*.
259 (Smith 2001, pp. 531–32).
260 (Walters 2015, p. 27) (citation omitted).
261 (Rawick 1977, p. 56); cf. (Balandier 1968, p. 121) (recounting that a speech to councilors could precede war declarations).
262 (Anonymous 1916), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 7–8).
263 (Walters 2015, p. 32); (Rawick 1977, p. 56).
264 (Withers 2020, p. 102).
265 (Sherwin 2024b, p. 4).
266 (Dewulf 2019, p. 28); (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 212); (Thornton 1991, p. 1112).
267 (Fromont and Iyanaga 2019, pp. 3–4).
268 (Dewulf 2019, p. 28).
269 (Dewulf 2017, p. 40).
270 (Dewulf 2017, p. 38).
271 (Walters 2015, p. 27); cf. (Balandier 1968, p. 121) (recounting how drumming with shouting and "mock combat" could precede war declarations).
272 *See* (Yelle 2019, p. 32).
273 *See* (Hoffer 2010, p. 68, n. 7) (noting Spanish sanctuary and parallels to a 1741 slave uprising in New York City). Amber Withers unpersuasively suggests that the Stono Rebellion "reflected stronger ties to ethnic, not, Christian identity". (Withers 2020, p. 75); *see also* (Pinn 2017, p. 11). One scholar says the rebels reasserted masculinity threatened by rice cultivation, which was women's work in Africa. *See generally* (Pearson 1996).
274 (Journal of the Commons House of Assembly 1953), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 28–29, p. 28). Reconstructing the rebels' motives is difficult because the primary sources were written "by whites, some of them far distant from the actual events". (Hoffer 2010, p. 159); see also (Pearson 1996, p. 24).
275 (Stephens 1906), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 3–6, pp. 3–4).
276 (Stephens 1906), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 6).
277 (Pringle 1972), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 9–10, p. 9).
278 *See* (Stanley 2020, pp. 6–7, 69); (Walters 2015, p. 30).
279 *See* (Stanley 2020, pp. 46–47).
280 (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, pp. 13–15, pp. 13–14).
281 (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 14); (Wood 1975, pp. 310–11); (J. Landers 2014, p. 130).
282 (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 14).
283 *Ibid*.
284 *Ibid.*; (Runyon 2005, p. 193).
285 (J. Landers 2014, p. 131).
286 (Candler et al. 1913), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 14); (Journal of the Commons House of Assembly 1953), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 29); *see also* (Horne 2014, pp. 110–11).
287 (Sainsbury Transcripts n.d.), *reprinted in* (Smith 2005, p. 16).
288 *Quoted in* (Wood 1975, p. 312).
289 (Yelle 2019, p. 14).
290 (Bossy 2017, p. 75).
291 *Ibid.*; (Pearson 1996, p. 36).
292 (Bossy 2017, p. 75); (J. Landers 2014, p. 130).
293 (J. Landers 2014, p. 131).
294 (J. Landers 2014, p. 125); (Horne 2014, p. 112).
295 (Schaefer 2015, pp. 13–14); cf. (Franck 1996, p. 359).
296 (Thornton, forthcoming, pp. 8–10); (Thornton 2022, pp. 731, 744–46).
297 (Thornton, forthcoming, p. 13).
298 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 176).
299 *Ibid*.
300 *Ibid*.
301 (Gerbner 2018, p. 26); (Rupert 2019, p. 746).
302 (Lehner 2016, p. 199); (Thornton 1998b, pp. 269–70).
303 (Dewulf 2022a, pp. 176–77); (Thornton 1998b, p. 269); (Laing 2002, pp. 197–98, 200, 213) (attributing the reluctance of Kongolese in South Carolina to become Anglican to Protestant attitudes, given that missionaries did not mention African reticence in the way

they had Indians'); cf. (Heywood and Thornton 2007, p. 272) (arguing that Christianity was more important than Catholicism for most ordinary enslaved Kongolese, an overbroad contention); Berlin (1998) (same).

304 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 177).

305 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 2).

306 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 194).

307 (Gerbner 2018, p. 2).

308 (Gerbner 2018, p. 5); (Young 2007, pp. 74–75).

309 (Hoffer 2010, p. 57).

310 (Hoffer 2010, p. 58); (Kelly 2013, pp. 20, 22).

311 (Gerbner 2018, p. 3).

312 *See* (Gerbner 2018, p. 14); (Laing 2002, p. 203).

313 (Gerbner 2018, p. 27).

314 (Gerbner 2018, pp. 42, 46–47, 74); (Laing 2002, p. 205).

315 (Gerbner 2018, p. 47).

316 (Gerbner 2018, p. 89).

317 (Laing 2002, pp. 205–06).

318 (Gerbner 2018, p. 105) (citation omitted). Kongolese Catholics were among the people Le Jau sought to convert. *See* (Laing 2002, p. 197); (Brown 2002, p. 297).

319 (Johnson 2015, p. 133); (Berlin 1998, p. 68).

320 (Stanley 2020, p. 19).

321 (Stanley 2020, p. 20).

322 (Stanley 2020, p. 22).

323 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 195).

324 Caribbean Catholic missionaries also made slavery more religiously permissible. (Gerbner 2018, p. 94).

325 (Young 2007, p. 70).

326 (Laing 2002, pp. 215–16); (Kelly 2013, pp. 33–35).

327 (Berlin 1998, p. 173).

328 (Gerbner 2018, p. 125).

329 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 171) (citation omitted).

330 *See* (Gerbner 2018, pp. 133, 135).

331 (Gerbner 2018, p. 135).

332 (Gerbner 2018, pp. 135–36). Part of the reason may have been missionaries' own concerns about their standing within white society; many grew up poor. *See* (Laing 2002, pp. 204–5).

333 (Gerbner 2018, p. 136); *see also* (Wax 1982, p. 142) ("The S.P.G. proposed that schools be established for the training or indoctrination of slaves. About 1742 the S.P.G. purchased two 'Country born young Negroes' to be trained as teachers".).

334 (Gerbner 2018, p. 136); see also (Laing 2002, p. 217) (noting that Africans would probably not otherwise "have considered Christianity as part of their oppression in America").

335 (Stanley 2020, p. 53).

336 (Halifax and Snyder 2022, p. 140); (Wax 1982, p. 142).

337 (Wood 1975, p. 324).

338 (Wax 1982, p. 139).

339 (Stanley 2020, p. 53).

340 (Dewulf 2022a, pp. 194–95); (Wood 1975, pp. 324–25); *but see* (Brown 2002, p. 303) (attributing this to changes in international politics and the temporary stabilization of West-Central African governments).

341 (Wax 1982, p. 143). French Catholic religious authorities in the Caribbean made the same accusation in 1722. (Rey 2017, pp. 112–13).

342 Cf. (Cover 1983, p. 53) (discussing judicial monopolization of legal meaning).

343 Cf. *ibid*.

344 (Rawick 1977, p. 56).

345 (Thornton 2022, pp. 743, 746); (Johnson 2015, pp. 133–34); (Withers 2020, pp. 89, 123, 146).

346 *See* (Withers 2020, pp. 166–73).

347 (Walters 2015, p. 23).

348 *But see* (Mullin 1992, p. 45) (suggesting that the rebels' goal may have been living as maroons, possibly practicing indigenous religions); (J. Landers 1984, p. 307) (noting that one person who accepted Florida sanctuary said "Guinean" rites were practiced at his house).

349 (J. Landers 1996, p. 44); *see also* (Wright 1924) (transcribing the original Castilian). Wright compiles primary sources.
350 (Cover 1983, p. 6).
351 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 168); (Wright 1924, p. 145).
352 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 168); (Wright 1924, p. 150) (primary source).
353 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 168); (Wright 1924, p. 145).
354 (Wright 1924, p. 145).
355 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 168) (citation omitted); (Horne 2014, p. 88); *see also* (Wright 1924, pp. 151–54) (primary sources).
356 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 168) (citation omitted); (Rupert 2013, p. 201) (citation omitted); (TePaske 1975, p. 3).
357 (Rupert 2013, p. 201).
358 (Rupert 2013, p. 202); *see also* (Salmoral 2005, p. 129) (discussing the development of Cartagena's sanctuary policy). Regarding sanctuary in Venezuela, see (Rupert 2015).
359 (Rupert 2013, p. 203); (Salmoral 2005, pp. 131–32).
360 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 186 n. 28); (Reigelsperger 2013, p. 56).
361 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 192).
362 (Rupert 2013, p. 205).
363 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 192).
364 (Horne 2014, p. 89) (citation omitted).
365 (Dubcovsky 2016, p.195); (Wright 1924, p. 146).
366 (Dubcovsky 2016, pp. 195–96).
367 (J. Landers 2014, p. 127).
368 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 194).
369 (Horne 2014, p. 89).
370 (Rupert 2013, p. 205).
371 (Rupert 2013, p. 205); (Wright 1924, pp. 166–72) (primary source).
372 (J. Landers 1984, p. 297).
373 (Rupert 2013, p. 205).
374 (Rupert 2013, pp. 205–6); (Salmoral 2005, p. 130) (citing similar reasons in Cartagena).
375 (Rupert 2013, pp. 212–13).
376 (Cover 1983, p. 6).
377 (Rupert 2013, p. 249); (J. Landers 2014, pp. 179–80); (Real Academia de la Historia 2024).
378 (Reigelsperger 2013, p. 244); (J. Landers 1984, p. 300).
379 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 196).
380 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 2).
381 (Walters 2015, p. 23). Hoffer argues that Florida's sanctuary policy may have *suppressed* slave revolts by "drawing off . . . able and angry slaves". (Hoffer 2010, p. 101, n. 53). The English and Spanish certainly did not think so, and as discussed below, Florida armed many escapees and sent them back to attack the English.
382 (Wright 1924, p. 146); (J. Landers 2014, p. 130).
383 (Wright 1924, p. 175).
384 *Ibid*. (translations here are mine).
385 *Ibid*.
386 (Wright 1924, p. 146); *see also* (Wright 1924, pp. 176–80) (primary sources in Castilian). Images of artifacts found there are published in (Deagan and MacMahon 1995).
387 (Wright 1924, p. 147); (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 2). The *bando* is lost to history. (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 2).
388 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 2).
389 (Wright 1924, p. 147).
390 *Ibid*.
391 (Mock 2021, p. 104); (J. Landers 1999, p. 86).
392 (Mock 2021, p. 104); (Kly 2008, p. 59 n. 18) (accusing the Spanish of "urbane cynicism"); (Ogunleye 1995); (Wright 1924, pp. 144–45); cf. (Rupert 2013, p. 200) (noting Spanish use of fugitive slaves to extend control over marginal territories).
393 (Reigelsperger 2013, pp. 251–52); cf. (Reitz 1994, p. 38) (finding that Fort Mose had more domestic meat than local Indian missions, but less than St. Augustine and coastal plantations).
394 (Reitz 1994, p. 26).
395 (Johnson 2015, p. 136).
396 (Cover 1983, p. 16).
397 (Johnson 2015, p. 136).

398 (Johnson 2015, pp. 136–37); (J. Landers 2018b, p. 178).
399 (J. Landers 2018b, pp. 176–77, 180); (J. Landers 1999, pp. 14–15). See generally the first source for a discussion of Indian-Black connections.
400 (Johnson 2015, pp. 136–37). Black militias are discussed below.
401 (Cover 1983, p. 7).
402 *Ibid.* (writing of commitments to legal norms).
403 (Cover 1983, p. 8).
404 (Berlin 1998, p. 74).
405 (Berlin 1998, p. 73); (J. Landers 2014, p. 181).
406 (J. Landers 2014, p. 181); (J. Landers 2002, p. 229). For the story of another Black soldier moving across imperial borders to seek freedom before Menéndez, see generally (Dubcovsky 2013).
407 (Horne 2014, pp. 113–15). A recent biography of Oglethorpe discusses his opposition to slavery. *See generally* (Thurmond 2024).
408 (Horne 2014, pp. 113–15).
409 (Reigelsperger 2013, p. 251); (Horne 2014, p. 127); (J. Landers 2018b, p. 181).
410 (Horne 2014, p. 116); (Berlin 1998, p. 73).
411 (Horne 2014, p. 116).
412 (Dubcovsky 2016, pp. 205–6).
413 (Runyon 2005, p. 222).
414 (Kelly 2013, p. 20).
415 (Kelly 2013, p. 21); (Horne 2014, p. 115); (J. Landers 1999, p. 37).
416 (Berlin 1998, pp. 74–75). Black militiamen were also key to repelling the English attack on Cartagena two years later, then again in 1749. (Horne 2014, p. 128); (Kuethe and Andrien 2014, p. 149).
417 (Berlin 1998, p. 75).
418 (J. Landers 1999, p. 43).
419 (Berlin 1998, p. 75); (J. Landers 2014, p. 132); (Runyon 2005, pp. 238–39).
420 (J. Landers 2014, p. 132).
421 (Runyon 2005, p. 236).
422 (Berlin 1998, p. 73). Mock overlooks this in describing conversion as a burden. (Mock 2021, p. 102).
423 (Young 2007, p. 70).
424 (Premo 2017, p. 193); (J. Landers 2014, pp. 117, 124).
425 (Premo 2017, p. 193).
426 (J. Landers 1999, p. 84); (Howe 1961, p. 16).
427 (J. Landers 1999, pp. 7–8).
428 (Gerbner 2018, p. 16).
429 (Premo 2017, p. 194).
430 (Premo 2017, p. 193).
431 *Ibid*.
432 *Ibid*.
433 (Lehner 2016, p. 187).
434 (Premo 2017, pp. 193, 201); (Gerbner 2018, pp. 20, 94).
435 (J. Landers 2014, pp. 118, 121); (TePaske 1975, p. 1); (J. Landers 1999, pp. 14–15).
436 (MacMahon and Deagan 1996, p. 57); (Howe 1961, p. 12).
437 (Gerbner 2018, p. 19). The first such laws dated to the 1400s and were meant to stop the importation of Islam and indigenous beliefs into Spain. (J. Landers 2015, p. 496). Like religion, law can develop through unforeseen historical accidents. Cf. (Schaefer 2015, p. 16).
438 (Salmoral 2005, p. 130) (discussing Cartagena).
439 *Ibid*.
440 *Ibid*.
441 (Young 2007, p. 69).
442 (Premo 2017, p. 193).
443 (Premo 2017, p.194).
444 (Premo 2017, pp. 195, 204, 208).
445 (J. Landers 1995, p. 17).
446 (Cover 1983, p. 11).
447 (Premo 2017, p.192).

448 (Premo 2017, p.197).
449 (Gerbner 2018, p. 21).
450 (Nafafé 2022, p. 244).
451 (Cover 1983, p. 40) (commenting on antebellum constitutional abolitionists).
452 (Premo 2017, p. 195).
453 (Stanley 2020, p. 12); (Lehner 2016, p. 188); (Mormino 2014, p. 12).
454 (Stanley 2020, p. 12); (J. Landers 2014, pp. 119–20).
455 (Gerbner 2018, p. 21); (Schneider 2015, p. 28).
456 (J. Landers 2014, p. 117).
457 (Wright 1924, p. 144); (Marotti 2013, p. 13).
458 (Lehner 2016, pp. 199–200); (Johnson 2015, p. 132).
459 (J. Landers 2002, p. 229).
460 (Berlin 1998, p. 75); (J. Landers 2018a, p. 183); (J. Landers 1999, p. 25). For archival records, see Slave Societies Digital Archive, https://www.slavesocieties.org/ (accessed on 16 March 2025); (Beats 2007); (J. Landers 1999, pp. 118–25, 255–79) (giving census information).
461 (J. Landers 2002, p. 230).
462 (J. Landers 1995, p. 18).
463 Cf. (Yelle 2019, p. 183) (commenting on ascetics rather than maroons).
464 (Ogunleye 1995, pp. 202–3).
465 (J. Landers 1990, pp. 12–13).
466 (Berlin 1998, p. 75).
467 (Nafafé 2022, pp. 244–45).
468 (Nafafé 2022, p. 245).
469 *Ibid*.
470 *Ibid*.
471 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 164).
472 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 165).
473 (Berlin 1998, p. 65).
474 (Horne 2014, p. 90); (J. Landers 2018a, p. 183).
475 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 166); (Johnson 2015, p. 135).
476 (Berlin 1998, p. 72).
477 (Johnson 2015, p. 136).
478 *Ibid*.
479 (Horne 2014, p. 70). English slaves were armed against early Spanish incursions. *See* (Berlin 1998, p. 66).
480 (Horne 2014, p. 89).
481 *Id.* at 73; (TePaske 1975, p. 7).
482 (Horne 2014, p. 93).
483 (Horne 2014, p. 80).
484 (Horne 2014, pp. 68–69); (J. Landers 2018b, p. 169).
485 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 164).
486 (J. Landers 2018b, pp. 164, 172). Tribes seeking English profits enslaved 50,000 Indians in the late 1600s and early 1700s, thereby devastating Spanish missions and alliances. (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 6); (Howe 1961, p. 8).
487 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 164.)
488 (J. Landers 2018b, p. 173) (citation omitted).
489 (TePaske 1975, p. 9).
490 (Horne 2014, p. 132).
491 (Horne 2014, p. 133) (citation omitted).
492 (Dubcovsky 2016, p. 209).
493 (Kelly 2013, p. 22).
494 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 195).
495 *Ibid.*; *see also* (Reigelsperger 2013, p. 253).
496 (Horne 2014, p. 92).
497 (Jennison 2012, pp. 17–18); (Runyon 2005, p. 237).
498 (Runyon 2005, p. 239).
499 Landers, *supra* n. 460, at 183.

500 *Ibid.*; (Garcia 2015).
501 (J. Landers 2014, p. 124); (J. G. Landers 2011).
502 (Berlin 1998, p. 76).
503 (Reigelsperger 2013, p. 254); (J. Landers 2018a, p. 186).
504 (J. Landers 2018a, p. 186).
505 (Berlin 1998, p. 76).
506 (J. Landers 2015, p. 500).
507 *See* (J. Landers 2006, p. 137).
508 *Ibid*.
509 (J. Landers 2015, p. 500); (Dewulf 2022a, p. 149); (J. Landers 2018b, p. 183); (Lampkin 2016, pp. 43–44).
510 (J. Landers 2015, p. 500); (J. Landers 2018b, p. 183).
511 (J. Landers 1996, pp. 48–51); (J. Landers 2015, p. 505); (J. Landers 1999, p. 63).
512 (Ogunleye 1995, pp. 385, 388).
513 (Lampkin 2016, pp. 68–69).
514 *See generally* (Kuethe and Andrien 2014).
515 (Schneider 2015, pp. 5–6).
516 (Schneider 2015, p. 23).
517 (Salmoral 2005, pp. 134–35).
518 (Schneider 2015, p. 28); *see also* (Garcia 2015, p. 311) (suggesting that humanizing reforms were meant to counter colonists' power).
519 (J. Landers 2015, p. 502).
520 (Garcia 2015, p. 179).
521 (Garcia 2015, pp. 201–2).
522 (Rupert 2013, pp. 216–17).
523 (Kuethe and Andrien 2014, p. 301).
524 (Southall 1934, p. 81).
525 *Ibid.*; (J. Landers 2000, p. 122); (Lampkin 2016, pp. 94–95).
526 (J. Landers 2018a, p. 187); (J. Landers 2014, pp. 36–37, 44).
527 (J. Landers 2014, pp. 37–38).
528 (J. Landers 2014, p. 39).
529 (J. Landers 2000, pp. 123, 125–26); (J. Landers 2014, p. 54); (J. Landers 1999, p. 99).
530 (J. Landers 1995, p. 20); (J. Landers 1984, p. 305).
531 (J. Landers 2014, pp. 42–43); (J. Landers 1999, p. 116).
532 (J. Landers 1999, pp. 200–1).
533 *See* (Salazar-Rey 2018).
534 (Marotti 2013, p. 3).
535 (Marotti 2013, pp. 3–4).
536 *See generally* (Kly 2008); (Southall 1934, p. 81).
537 (J. Landers 2014, p. 34).
538 (J. Landers 2014, pp. 41–42); (J. Landers 1999, p. 94).
539 (J. Landers 2014, pp. 45–46).
540 (J. Landers 2014, p. 46).
541 (J. Landers 2014, p. 52).
542 (J. Landers 2014, pp. 52, 54).
543 (Marotti 2013, pp. 7–8, 16).
544 (Marotti 2013, p. 7).
545 (J. Landers 2014, p. 48).
546 (Rupert 2013, pp. 215–16).
547 (J. Landers 2018a, p. 191).
548 (J. Landers 2018a, p. 192).
549 (Marotti 2013, p. 26).
550 (Marotti 2013, pp. 37, 62–63).
551 (Garcia-Balañá 2018).
552 *Quoted in* (Marotti 2013, p. 13).
553 (Young 2007, p. 45).
554 (Dewulf 2022a, p. 149).

[555] (Marotti 2013, pp. 104, 108).
[556] (Dewulf 2022a, p. 149).
[557] *Quoted in* (Rawick 1977, p. 56).
[558] *Ibid*.
[559] *Ibid*.
[560] (Giddings 1858, p. *v*).
[561] (Giddings 1858, p. *vi*).
[562] (Wright 1924); (Hurston 1927).
[563] (Cover 1983, p. 15).
[564] *Ibid*.
[565] (Cover 1983, p. 4 n. 4).
[566] (Yelle 2019, p. 184).
[567] *See* (Luchte 2009, p. 413).

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