

Introduction

Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World

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The concept of the Atlantic world – of an interconnected Atlantic world formed by the ‘kaleidoscopic movement’ across and around the Atlantic basin over a period of more than three centuries of peoples, products, practices, and ideas – has gained great currency in recent years, especially since Professor Bernard Bailyn established the International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World at Harvard University in 1995.¹ The broader outlook and new perspectives that have arisen from the work of Atlantic scholars, primarily historians, have been widely welcomed by the academic community, as evidenced by the ever-growing number of monographs, essay collections, textbooks and readers which contain the term ‘Atlantic’ in their titles, as well as by the publication since 2004 of the journal *Atlantic Studies: Literary, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives*. Scholarly engagement with the Atlantic paradigm is ongoing, giving rise to numerous conferences, seminar programmes, postgraduate programmes and, increasingly, survey courses aimed at undergraduate students, especially but not exclusively in the United States. Writing in the *American Historical Review* in 2006, Alison Games described this explosion of interest as a ‘passion that has developed for all things Atlantic’, adding for Atlantic history in particular that it ‘has arrived with a vengeance, making a rapid transition between 1995 and 2005 from novelty to establishment’.²

The steady growth in the number of publications incorporating a specifically Atlantic dimension certainly justifies the optimism of historians as seasoned and committed to the project as Alison Games. It is also the case, however, as even the most recent additions to the literature show, that the field remains fluid and in process of definition.³ Scholars continue to debate the significance and

¹ For the origins and evolution of the Atlantic idea, see especially Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge and London, 2005). See also William O’Reilly, ‘Genealogies of Atlantic History’, *Atlantic Studies*, 1/1 (2004): 66–84, and Peter A. Coclanis, ‘Drag Nach Osten: Bernard Bailyn, the World-Island, and the Idea of Atlantic History’, *Journal of World History*, 13/1 (2002): 169–82. Coclanis also offers a critique of what he considers to be the limitations of the field.

² Alison Games, ‘Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities’, *American Historical Review*, 111/3 (2006): 743, 745.

³ See Toyin Falola and Kevin D. Roberts (eds), *The Atlantic World: 1450–2000* (Bloomington, 2008), and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman (eds), *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500–2000* (Upper Saddle River, 2007).

usefulness of the Atlantic as a unit of analysis; to conceptualize, define, or re-define what exactly the ‘Atlantic world’ is; to interrogate the extent to which an Atlantic approach can enhance understanding of the transformations that occurred following the opening up of the ocean in the wake of the voyages of the fifteenth century; to debate the point at which the Atlantic ceases to be a viable unifying concept for study; and to discuss the relative merits, or point to the limitations, of particular methods and/or approaches. In evaluating, in 2002, three approaches to, or models for, Atlantic history, David Armitage acknowledged that it ‘has no agreed canon of problems, events, or processes’; that it ‘follows no common method or practice’; and that it is like the ocean itself, ‘fluid, in motion and potentially boundless, depending on how it is defined’.⁴ In 2005, Nicholas Canny concluded that ‘there is such limited agreement over what the subject entails that it might be said that there are as many varieties of Atlantic history as there are Atlanticists’.⁵ The ‘what and why’ of Atlantic history remains, then, a matter of scholarly consideration and debate.⁶ Yet few would disagree with the respective assessments of Eliga Gould and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, in a recent *AHR* Forum on the ‘entangled’ histories of the Spanish and British Atlantic empires, that one of the defining features of the field ‘has been an insistence on studying the early modern Atlantic world as a zone of interconnection’,⁷ and that the emerging consensus among scholars is ‘that “the Atlantic” as a category’ must ‘deliver narratives’ that illuminate how ‘a distinctly transnational space’ was created through the circulations of people, products, and ideas.⁸

The potential which this broader geographical and conceptual perspective offers for study of the Atlantic ‘as a zone of interconnection’ or as ‘a distinctly transnational space’ continues to be limited, however, both by the tendency of historians to restrict their research to single nations or national experiences,⁹ and by the uneven output on the disparate lands and peoples that came into contact as the ocean was transformed, to borrow Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert’s phrase, from

⁴ David Armitage, ‘Three Concepts of Atlantic History’, in David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (eds), *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke and New York, 2002), p. 26.

⁵ Nicholas Canny, ‘Atlantic History and Global History’, in Renate Pieper and Peer Schmidt (eds), *Latin America and the Atlantic World, 1500–1850: Essays in honor of Horst Pietschmann* (Cologne, 2005), p. 25.

⁶ Nicholas Canny, ‘Atlantic history: what and why’, *European Review*, 9/4 (2001): 399–411.

⁷ Eliga H. Gould, ‘Entangled Histories, Entangled Worlds: The English-Speaking Atlantic as a Spanish Periphery’, *American Historical Review*, 112/3 (2007): 784.

⁸ Jorge Cañizares Esguerra, ‘Entangled Histories: Borderland Historiographies in New Clothes?’ *American Historical Review*, 112/3 (2007): 796.

⁹ John Elliott, ‘Afterword’, in Armitage and Braddick (eds), *The British Atlantic World*, p. 235.

a barrier to a *via*.¹⁰ It is well known that historians of colonial Anglo-America have been the most enthusiastic in embracing the Atlantic project. Of 268 papers presented at the Harvard International Seminar between 1996 and 2004, surveyed by Games in the *AHR*, as many as 115 related to the British Atlantic, compared with, at the lower end, nine to Portugal or Portuguese Brazil, and eight to the Dutch Atlantic. Only five focused on Africa.¹¹ The preponderance of papers on the British experience substantiates the view, most recently expressed by the authors of the first survey text to attempt to integrate the histories of the four continents into a single narrative, that Atlantic history is still largely equated with the history of English America.¹² Conversely, the under-representation of Africa goes some way towards explaining Africanists' pointed critiques of Atlantic historians – including one as influential in shaping the field as Bernard Bailyn¹³ – for their failure adequately to recognize African participation beyond the acknowledged and well-documented contribution which they made through their labour as slaves to the development of the American colonies, and for their tendency to regard the continent as 'a site of European activities, rather than an active agent', and Africans as no more than marginal, indeed passive, players in the creation and development of the Atlantic world.¹⁴

Two main challenges, then, face Atlantic scholars. The first is to bring to the centre of analysis regions and peoples – non-European as well as European – whose role in the formation of the Atlantic world has so far tended to figure less prominently in the literature.¹⁵ The second, equally important, challenge is

¹⁰ Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation Upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492–1640* (Oxford and New York, 2007), p. 6.

¹¹ Games, 'Atlantic History': footnote 29, 750.

¹² Douglas R. Egerton, Alison Games, Jane G. Landers, Kris Lane and Donald R. Wright, *The Atlantic World: A History, 1400–1888* (Wheeling, 2007), p. 5.

¹³ Robin Law and Kristin Mann, for example, have challenged Bailyn's conception of the Atlantic world, in which, they state, 'Africa has played a very limited role in shaping the history and culture of the Atlantic basin'. Alison Games has similarly critiqued his perspective on the Atlantic, which, she states, he approaches 'largely as the study of Europe and the Americas'. See Robin Law and Kristin Mann, 'West Africa in the Atlantic Community: The Case of the Slave Coast', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 56/2 (1999): 308, and Games, 'Atlantic History': 744.

¹⁴ See Kristin Mann, 'Shifting Paradigms in the Study of the African Diaspora and of Atlantic History and Culture', in Kristin Mann and Edna G. Bay (eds), *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin and Brazil* (London and Portland, 2001), p. 14, and Robin Law, 'The Port of Ouidah in the Atlantic Community, 17th to 19th Centuries', in Horst Pietschmann (ed.), *Atlantic History: History of the Atlantic System, 1580–1830* (Göttingen, 2002), p. 349.

¹⁵ There are, however, clear indications that a significant shift of emphasis is taking place. Two research groups launched in 2006 – the 'French Atlantic History Group' (<http://antlantique.mcgill.ca>) at McGill University, and the 'Rethinking the Iberian Atlantic Project' (<http://www.liv.ac.uk/iberianatlantic/about.htm>) at the University of Liverpool – promise

to find ways of bridging the imperial or national boundaries within which most scholarship remains confined, in part at least for reasons to do with the often insuperable difficulties scholars face in conducting research in numerous countries and several languages, and in mastering vast and unfamiliar literatures outside clearly defined areas of expertise. Yet as Erik Seeman has argued in the context of the Americas, historians who confine themselves to the Atlantic ventures of individual nations can lose sight of ‘the dynamic interplay across national boundaries that characterized the early modern Atlantic’.¹⁶ The limitations of ‘nation-driven narratives’¹⁷ are most obviously revealed in the Caribbean, where the proximity of islands held by the English, Spanish, French, and Dutch meant that colonists and slaves interacted on a regular basis with counterparts of different national origin.¹⁸ But individuals normally divided by the boundaries of nations, empires, even religious cultures, ‘keenly conscious’ that they were sharing in the endeavour of settling in and exploiting the resources of the Atlantic basin with others ‘who might be their competitors or even their enemies, but who might, on occasion, assist them’,¹⁹ wove ‘webs of mutual dependence’²⁰ based on shared economic interest in towns and cities throughout the Atlantic world. In Europe, West Africa, and the Americas, as David Hancock reminds us, not only did the activities of independent entrepreneurs bind ‘people together across imperial

through future publications to advance understanding of the nature and consequences of French, Spanish, and Portuguese participation in the Atlantic world. Indeed, the need for further consideration of French participation in particular was acknowledged in a special issue of the journal *Atlantic Studies* published in 2007, which had as its aim to focus ‘attention on French participations in trans- and circum-Atlantic exchanges’, and to force ‘debate on what that “French Atlantic” might be’. See Maria Lauret, Bill Marshall, and David Murray, ‘Editorial’, *Atlantic Studies*, 4/1 (2007): 1–4.

¹⁶ Erik R. Seeman, ‘Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic: Crossing Boundaries, Keeping Faith’, in Cañizares-Esguerra and Seeman (eds), *The Atlantic in Global History*, p. 39.

¹⁷ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman, ‘Introduction: Beyond the Line: Nations, Oceans, Hemispheres’, in Cañizares-Esguerra and Seeman (eds), *The Atlantic in Global History*, *ibid.*, p. xxiv.

¹⁸ Seeman, ‘Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic’, p. 39.

¹⁹ Canny attributes the willingness of individuals ‘to act in concert with subjects of a different ruler for the achievement of a goal that was to their mutual benefit’ to the fact that they felt ‘scant loyalty to any government’ – this because they identified themselves not as being from Spain or France or England or the United Provinces, but as being from Extremadura, Brittany or Normandy, Bristol, or Holland. When it suited their interests to do so, or when they shared religious loyalties, people normally divided by imperial boundaries could cooperate in pursuit of a common aim. Nicholas Canny, ‘Writing Atlantic History; or Reconfiguring the History of Colonial British America’, *Journal of American History*, 86/3 (1999): 1107.

²⁰ Wim Klooster, ‘The Rise and Transformation of the Atlantic World’, in Wim Klooster and Alfred Padula (eds), *The Atlantic World: Essays on Slavery, Migration, and Imagination* (New Jersey, 2005), p. 30.

boundaries' regardless of 'government fiat or modern analytical convenience', but 'real people' constructed their social and cultural (as well as commercial) lives 'out of plural demands and influences'.²¹

Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World: People, Products, and Practices on the Move aims to contribute to our understanding of the ways in which ordinary people shaped their social and cultural lives by directing attention to regions, communities, and groups whose activities in, or responses to, an ever-more closely bound Atlantic world remain under-represented in the literature. Spanning the period stretching from the earliest French crossings to Newfoundland at the beginning of the sixteenth century to the end of the wars of independence in northern Spanish South America, c1830, and encompassing a range of disciplinary approaches, the chapters that comprise the volume seek to shed light on the complex and varied outcomes of the intermingling of peoples, circulation of goods, exchange of information, and exposure to new beliefs and ideas that are the hallmarks of the early modern Atlantic. Six of our chapters focus on the experiences of Europeans, but among these we find French consumers of Newfoundland cod, English merchants forming families in Spanish Seville, Scots men and women establishing a close-knit community in Dutch Rotterdam, and Jewish refugees from Dutch Brazil making the English Caribbean island of Nevis their home. Most being travellers, traders, soldiers, sailors, and settlers, these chapters examine the activities in which they became involved, consider the adaptations which they made in new and unfamiliar environments, and assess the extent to which they – or the societies from which they originated – were changed by the encounter with the peoples, places, and/or resources of the Atlantic. Four focus on the ways in which the populations with whom Europeans came into contact, enslaved, or among whom they settled in Africa or the Americas – the Tupi peoples of Brazil, the Kriston women of the West African port of Cacheu, among others – adapted to and were in turn changed by their interactions with previously unknown peoples, goods, institutions, and ideas. All, however, share a central concern to explore – as A.J.R. Russell-Wood has so skilfully done for Portugal's far-flung enterprises overseas – the 'human dimension of a world on the move'. Ours, however, is not a multi-oceanic world connected by a single expanding culture, but an Atlantic world connected by the interaction and interpenetration of greatly diverse peoples and cultures.²²

To provide a context for the chapters that follow, this Introduction first directs attention to the sheer extent of movement that characterized the early modern Atlantic, the frequent opportunities that existed for contact and exchange across geopolitical, social, and cultural boundaries, and the extraordinary variety of peoples who, in different ways, participated in and were affected by the opening of the ocean to colonization, migration, slavery, and trade. It does not set out to

²¹ David Hancock, 'The British Atlantic World: Co-ordination, Complexity, and the Emergence of an Atlantic Market Economy, 1651–1815', *Itinerario*, 23/2 (1999): 108, 119.

²² A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *The Portuguese Empire, 1415–1808: A World on the Move* (2nd edn, Baltimore and London, 1998), pp. xvi, xviii, xxv, 6.

offer another comprehensive review of recent Atlantic scholarship, however, nor are all the sources upon which it is based drawn from an explicitly ‘Atlantic’ literature. Its purpose is instead to highlight, through discussion of a striking range of examples, the transformative effects of the experiences, exchanges, and relationships – affective as well as commercial – that resulted from the convergence of individuals and communities of different ethnic, national, and religious cultures, and of exposure to new products, beliefs, and ideas. Given the continued underrepresentation of Africa in current scholarship,²³ we begin by focusing on a number of key contributions by historians of Africa and African-America, which have not only challenged the marginalization of the continent, but illustrated the critical role of Africans, on both sides of the ocean, in the historical development of the Atlantic world.

Africa, Africans, and the Atlantic World

John Thornton’s *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, first published in 1992 and re-published in extended form in 1998, was one early and influential contribution. Through a wide-ranging analysis of African-European military, economic, and political relations during the era of the slave trade, Thornton set out to demonstrate that in Africa, it was African rulers who determined the nature of their interactions with Europeans, participating in Atlantic trade – including the slave trade – actively, voluntarily, and on their own terms. He also set out to show, through examination of the part played by slaves, as cultural actors, in the colonial societies of the Americas, that many Africans were able successfully to transmit their cultural traditions, however altered by new environments, and to contribute to the development of an ‘African-oriented culture’ in spite of the undoubtedly difficult conditions of enslavement.²⁴ A central argument of *Africa and Africans*, as it is of Thornton’s work more generally, is that the African background and experiences of slaves are essential to understanding their actions and development in the Americas,²⁵ and by extension also essential to understanding the nature of the wider Atlantic world.

Of particular relevance in the context of this discussion is his assessment of the impact on the first generation of slaves transported to the Americas of prior

²³ This is notwithstanding the fact that historians of the transatlantic slave trade, beginning with Philip Curtin, in sharing a concern to place the movement and experiences of slaves at the centre of their work, could be considered pioneers of an Atlantic approach ‘unfettered’, as Games puts it, ‘by state borders’. See Games, ‘Atlantic History’: 743. See also Elliott, ‘Afterword’, p. 235.

²⁴ John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 182.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 129. Among others, see also John Thornton, ‘African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion’, *American Historical Review*, 96/4 (1991): 1101–13.

contact with Europeans along the Atlantic coast of Africa itself. Beginning in the fifteenth century, he shows, the growth of trade not only resulted in knowledge of European languages spreading widely through the commercial community of the region, but also led to the emergence of 'European lingua francas' (pidgins and creoles) that would in time help to provide slaves with 'a common lingua franca in the New World'. Missionary endeavours, moreover, combined with the proselytizing efforts of merchants and settlers, resulted in the conversion of some Africans to Christianity even before embarkation. There were, then, among the first slaves to arrive on American shores, at least a proportion who were familiar with European languages and religions, having 'borrowed' from them 'willingly and on their own terms in their home territory' rather than 'under the stultifying influence of slavery'. These individuals, Thornton argued, played a cultural role out of proportion to their numbers, helping to both disseminate the use of the creole language and shape the development of African-American religion.²⁶

In an equally influential contribution that has made deep inroads in subsequent African scholarship (including in Kenneth Kelly's chapter in this volume), Ira Berlin focused more closely on the new peoples, some of whom were of mixed ancestry, who evolved out of the meeting of Africans and Europeans on the west coast of Africa. These were individuals, whom he termed 'Atlantic Creoles', who 'by experience or choice, as well as by birth, became part of a new [cosmopolitan] culture that emerged along the [entire] Atlantic littoral' from the sixteenth century.²⁷ Berlin examined the growth and development of the Atlantic creole population from their first appearance at the trading posts or factories established by Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese at Axim and Elmina, and explored the distinctive experience of those amongst their number, often individuals on the margins of the creole community in Africa itself, who found themselves enslaved and shipped across the Atlantic, to form part of the 'charter generation' of slaves who helped develop the Dutch, English, French, and Spanish colonies of mainland North America from the seventeenth century.²⁸ He argued that the creoles' experience of Atlantic trade and commerce and their skills as intercultural negotiators – acquired through prior occupations as intermediaries and interpreters, employees of European trading companies, sailors, shipboard servants, and independent traders, among others – together with their familiarity with its cultures and religions and their 'cosmopolitan ability to transcend the confines of particular nations and cultures', set them apart from the millions of Africans from the interior of the continent who followed them into slavery in

²⁶ Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, pp. 8, 213, 216–17, 254.

²⁷ Ira Berlin, 'From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America', *American Historical Review*, 53/ 2 (1996): 254, footnote 8.

²⁸ Among those who formed part of black America's charter generations there were also Atlantic creoles of European, Caribbean, and South American origin, Berlin argues. *Ibid.*, 276.

later generations.²⁹ ‘Atlantic creoles’, Berlin stated, ‘did not arrive in the New World as deracinated chattel stripped of their past and without resources to meet the future’.³⁰ Their skills as intercultural negotiators, for instance, made them as valuable to Europeans in the colonies of the Americas as they had been on the coast of Africa. Thus, the experience of ‘Domingo the Negro’, called upon to serve ‘as interpreter’ for the slave Jan Angola when, in 1665, he was brought before the Dutch court of New Amsterdam on a charge of stealing wood, is representative of that of creoles in countless places around the Atlantic rim.³¹

Berlin further argued that the creoles’ knowledge and understanding of the wider Atlantic, and their ‘confidence in their abilities to master a world they knew well’,³² equipped them with strategies that enabled many to overcome their condition as slaves, to integrate into their local societies, and to prosper. In New Netherland, for example, they exploited the large measure of independence which, in the interests of short-term profit, the West India Company (WIC) allowed company-owned slaves, to learn the Dutch language, trade on their own account, acquire property, participate in the religious life of the Dutch Reformed Church, and establish families. As early as 1635, fewer than ten years after the arrival of the first Africans, black people in the Dutch colony had learned enough about their new masters to travel to company headquarters in Holland to petition the WIC for wages. By 1664, as many as one in five had gone on to gain their freedom; some joined the landholding class, and participated actively in the life of New Netherland.³³ Crucially, according to Berlin, there was nothing anomalous in the experience of Atlantic creoles in this Dutch-controlled territory. It was, rather, characteristic of the experience of creoles in Virginia, South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida as well – at least, that is, until the ‘triumph of plantation production’ transformed the colonies of mainland North America from ‘societies-with-slaves’ into ‘slave-societies’ dependent on the large-scale importation of Africans drawn from the interior of the continent rather than the littoral.³⁴

More recently, Robin Law and Kristin Mann, while questioning the degree of cultural creolization that took place in coastal communities of West Africa during the early period of contact, and the numerical significance of Atlantic creoles among the slave population of seventeenth-century North America,³⁵ have applied Berlin’s

²⁹ Ibid., 254–62.

³⁰ Ibid., 266.

³¹ Ibid., 267.

³² Ibid., 282.

³³ Ibid., 269–71.

³⁴ Ibid., 254, 274, 277–84. For an analysis of the case of Florida, and the extent to which Africans fit Berlin’s profile of Atlantic creoles, see Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana and Chicago, 1999).

³⁵ For a further critique of Berlin’s evidence, see James H. Sweet, ‘Collective Degradation: Slavery and the Construction of Race’, Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Gilder Lehrman International Conference at Yale University, 7–8 November 2003, Yale University: 25–9

conceptual framework of a cosmopolitan culture linking all sides of the Atlantic to explain the growth and transformation, between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, of an ‘Atlantic community’ on the Slave Coast (Bight of Benin) whose outlook, commercial activities, social relationships, and cultural practices spanned the ocean.³⁶ Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they show, the commercial contacts and networks that developed as a result of the slave trade led to the emergence on the Slave Coast of a European population consisting of traders, chaplains, and soldiers of several nations who formed social relationships and engaged in cultural exchanges with coastal populations, from the political and commercial elites to the African employees, enslaved and free, of the forts the Portuguese, French, and English established at Ouidah. Europeans, some of whom established prominent families in Africa – the d’Oliveiras, descended from Joseph Ollivier de Montaguère, commander of the French fort between 1775 and 1786, is one among many such families³⁷ – brought literacy, numeracy, and Christianity to the Slave Coast, as well as European languages, customs, and goods, which were disseminated within the surrounding community by the newcomers and by their locally-recruited personnel.³⁸ Critically, they also draw attention to the fact, as did Berlin, that it was not only Europeans and enslaved Africans who journeyed across and around the ocean. Many Africans acquired knowledge of European languages and cultures through personal travel, serving as diplomatic emissaries of African rulers, for example, or temporarily settling abroad for the purpose of education. Mattéo Lopes was one such individual. Said to be a professed Christian of Portuguese nationality (who appears to have originated from the island of São Tomé), in 1670 Lopes was sent by the king of Allada on a mission to France, to which he travelled via Martinique accompanied by several members of his large family. He returned to Africa later that year, after having been granted an audience with King Louis XIV. Another was Latévi Awoku, the founder of the Lawson family of Little Popo. Taken to England for an education by the English captain of a slave ship (from whom he took the name Lawson), by 1784 Latévi Awoku had one son studying in England and another in Portugal, no doubt accounting for why, as late as 1850, some members of the family were described as ‘living as Portuguese’, and ‘others as Englishmen’.³⁹

The conduct of the slave trade also required that representatives of African rulers travel across the Atlantic to the Americas, principally to Brazil (especially Bahia), to which the vast majority of slaves were transported from the Bight of Benin. Between 1750 and 1812, seven official embassies are recorded to have arrived

(<http://www.yale.edu/glc/events/race/Sweet.pdf>). For a refinement of Berlin’s interpretation, see Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (Cambridge, 2007), especially pp. 236–93.

³⁶ Law and Mann, ‘West Africa in the Atlantic Community’: 307–12.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 307.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 313–14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 316, 319.

there from Slave Coast states. Beginning in the seventeenth century, moreover, but gathering pace after the legal abolition of the trade, many white Brazilian and thousands of Afro-Brazilian immigrants – the latter former slaves and descendants of slaves, some of whom had converted to Islam in the Americas, and many of whom maintained family and social bonds on both sides of the Atlantic – added significantly to the cultural mix on the Slave Coast,⁴⁰ as did smaller numbers of Africans returning from Cuba, the West Indies, and the United States.⁴¹ Thus, as Kristin Mann has argued elsewhere, people, products, and practices ‘flowed not only east to west, but also in the reverse direction in the era of the slave-trade and after abolition’. Immigrants, she states, brought with them ‘a transatlantic economic orientation’, ‘new ideas about ethnicity that had been forged abroad’, ‘new religious institutions and practices, both Catholic and Muslim’, and ‘new material culture and aesthetic values’.⁴² Over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century, newcomers and repatriates (some of whom, including former slaves, themselves became substantial slave traders) contributed to a process which Law and Mann have described as the ‘Brazilianization’ of the Slave Coast. This was a process whereby the ‘Brazilian’ community in Ouidah and elsewhere – a community which not only absorbed individuals from across the Portuguese Atlantic, including São Tomé, Madeira, and Angola, but also from Spain and Cuba – came to define itself, in cultural terms, as Brazilian. The ‘Brazilian’ identity of what was in effect a very heterogeneous population was forged by the use of the Portuguese language, the widespread (though not exclusive) practice of Catholicism, and the adoption of Brazilian styles in music, dress, and cuisine; it was sustained and reinforced by the commercial and social relationships which individuals and families on both sides of the Atlantic maintained with each other.⁴³

Approaching the study of African agency and its role in the development of the Atlantic world from an entirely different angle, Judith Carney has focused instead on the contribution which Africans and African indigenous crops made to the agricultural history and to the food culture of the region. Scholars, Carney argues, have traditionally tended to concentrate ‘on the food staples of New World provenance’ (such as maize, manioc, and peanuts) which were introduced into Africa as part of the process of plant transfer that has come to be known as the ‘Columbian

⁴⁰ Ibid., 320, 323–6, 329. The founding of Ouidah’s first mosque dates to this period. See Law, ‘The Port of Ouidah’, pp. 356–7.

⁴¹ Mann, ‘Shifting Paradigms’, p. 10.

⁴² Ibid., p. 10.

⁴³ According to Law and Mann, Africans who had never travelled to Brazil also came to form part of this community, having assimilated Brazilian culture in Africa, either as slaves or as clients of Brazilian settlers. See Law and Mann, ‘West Africa in the Atlantic Community’: 324–7. See also Law, ‘The Port of Ouidah’, pp. 358–9. For a discussion of families who still live in the Maro, Zomaï, Boya, and Brazil quarters of Ouidah and who acknowledge their descent from returned slaves, see Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving ‘Port’, 1727–1892* (Oxford and Athens, OH, 2004), pp. 180–81.

Exchange'.⁴⁴ Such emphasis on the spread of American crops, combined with the privileging of the Europeans who brokered the transfer of seeds, has, however, obscured the part played by African expertise and knowledge systems in transferring and adapting favoured African foodstuffs to the new and diverse environments of the Atlantic islands and the Americas.⁴⁵ 'Africa', she states, echoing the concerns with which we opened this discussion, 'remains conceptualized as a region where crops diffused to, rather than from, and where New World domesticates revolutionized the continent's agrarian systems'.⁴⁶ Yet many indigenous food crops which provisioned the slave ships of the Middle Passage subsequently became established in the Americas, frequently grown for domestic use by slaves using African technologies and processing devices, or by maroon communities for subsistence.

Glaberrima rice, whose introduction to the Americas Europeans attributed to their own ingenuity, is a case in point. There is, Carney shows, strong evidence of its use by slaves in El Salvador, Brazil, and South Carolina, as well as in Cayenne, where, in the 1940s and 1950s, French botanists recovered from the descendants of maroons varieties of *glaberrima* related to those grown in Guinea, Liberia, and Ivory Coast.⁴⁷ More importantly, in South Carolina, where the higher-yielding Asian *sativa* variety had become favoured for export by the early eighteenth century, planters who 'had no prior rice-farming knowledge' seemingly relied on charter generation slaves from West Africa's rice region to 'tutor' them in growing the crop and adapting it 'to challenging New World conditions'.⁴⁸ Indeed, as late as the second half of the eighteenth century, Carolina planters showed a marked preference for slaves originating in the rice-growing region of Africa, one newspaper advertisement of 1785, for instance, announcing the arrival of a Danish ship carrying 'a choice cargo of windward and gold coast negroes, who have been accustomed to the planting of rice'.⁴⁹ Whilst difficulties to do with breakage during the process of husking the grain prevented the widespread adoption of *glaberrima* as an export crop – although it continued to be grown by slaves for their own use – the important point is that the knowledge and expertise of slaves, as well as their labour, proved critical to the evolution of the colony as a major rice producer. Africans also played a part in the spread throughout the Americas of many other crops of African origin, in some instances probably grown from seeds obtained from African sailors and/or cooks on board slave ships. Indeed, Carney reminds us how many crops valued by slaves for their medicinal properties and preferred

⁴⁴ As first formulated by Alfred W. Crosby in *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, 1972). See Judith A. Carney, 'African Rice in the Columbian Exchange', *Journal of African History*, 42/3 (2001): 381, and *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2001), p. 11.

⁴⁵ Carney, 'African Rice': 377, and *Black Rice*, pp. 7, 12–13, 97–8.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁴⁷ Carney, 'African Rice': 387–91, and *Black Rice*, pp. 2–3, 76–7, 80, 153–5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81, 83–4, 147.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

as foodstuffs – among others, yam, okra, oil palm, ackee, and black-eyed peas – became key ingredients in, and contributed to shaping, the regional cuisines of the Americas, including those of South Carolina, Jamaica, Suriname, and Brazil.⁵⁰

Atlantic Interactions

The examples outlined in brief above are particularly striking because they are suggestive of the extent to which Africans—regional and generational differences notwithstanding—engaged with and contributed to the changes set in motion as the Atlantic world gradually came into being, of the mobility that characterized the region during the early modern period, and of loyalties and identities that were considerably more fluid than they have previously tended to appear. The fluidity of national, religious, and cultural loyalties and identities are further considered in this section, which explores the nature and significance of interactions between people and economies supposedly divided, principally in the context of the Americas. Whilst many such contacts (as Heather Dalton and Douglas Catterall show in this volume) were licit and welcomed, others arose out of ‘illegal connections’⁵¹ formed for the purpose of pursuing a contraband trade that paid little heed to mercantilist theories, commercial rivalries, or warfare; that corrupted imperial boundaries; and that made a mockery of imperial control.⁵² In Brazil, for example, as Bernard Bailyn points out, the gold of Minas Gerais found its way to England, Portugal, and Africa in spite of repeated decrees directed at curbing smuggling activities. The Dutch West African stronghold of Elmina, in fact, ‘became such a hub of this illicit trade that return voyages arrived in America loaded with miscellaneous European goods’. Into British North American territory, French Caribbean sugar products were imported in such quantities that they flooded the North American market. In Massachusetts, for instance, evidence of the magnitude of this illegal trade is provided by figures on both official imports of molasses entering Boston in 1754–55 – a total of 384 hogsheads – and on the output of the province’s sixty-three distilleries, which required a staggering 40,000 hogsheads to maintain normal production levels.⁵³

⁵⁰ Carney, ‘African Rice’: 377, 392–6. On African plants used for medicinal purposes, see Linda A. Newson, ‘Medical Practice in Early Colonial Spanish America: A Prospectus’, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 25/3 (2006): 379, 383, and Robert Voeks, ‘African Medicine and Magic in the Americas’, *Geographical Review*, 83/1 (1993): 74. For a critique of the ‘black rice’ hypothesis, see David Eltis, Philip Morgan, and David Richardson, ‘Agency and Diaspora in Atlantic History: Reassessing the African Contribution to Rice Cultivation in the Americas’, *American Historical Review*, 112/5 (2007): 1329–58.

⁵¹ Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, p. 89.

⁵² I also draw here on Sir John Elliott’s Plenary Lecture, ‘The Americas and the Atlantic World: Connections and Comparisons’, delivered at ‘The Americas Plural: Regional and Comparative Perspectives’ Conference, Institute for the Study of the Americas, London, 19 June 2008.

⁵³ Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, pp. 88–90.

It was the overseas possessions of Spain, however, that were especially subject to penetration (or, as John Elliott has termed it, ‘collective larceny’) by imperial rivals, especially from the second half of the seventeenth century, when the economic and military weakness of Spain enabled the Dutch, the French, and the English to seize numerous islands in the Caribbean and to establish footholds on the mainland (in the Guiana region, for instance), several of which came to serve as bases for the ‘stripping’ of Spain’s imperial assets. This was achieved in part, of course, through raiding and/or piracy, but Spanish resources also passed to foreign hands through a peaceful contraband trade in which Spaniards and Spanish Americans were themselves complicit.⁵⁴ Nuala Zahedieh’s work on records relating to Jamaica from its seizure by the English in 1655 is indicative of the frequency and scale of the trade in contraband that took place between this island alone and Spanish territories in the years leading up to 1692. She estimates that between 1679 and the end of the 1680s, almost half of all English and colonial ships that called in at Port Royal went on to trade in Spanish markets – many under cover of the 1670 Anglo-Spanish Treaty of Madrid and the legal (*asiento*) trade in slaves. Trade with Spanish territories also stimulated the growth of the local sloop fleet, which expanded from 40 in 1670 to approximately 100 in 1689. Whilst the absence of detailed statistical evidence means that it is not possible accurately to quantify the value of the trade over the 1655–1692 period, its importance to Jamaica is suggested by the returns of the Naval Officer Reginald Wilson, who reported that in the 16 months to March 1679, island sloops carried out approximately £20,000 worth of trade with colonists in Spanish-held territories; by the fact that the inventories surviving for Port Royal for the years 1686 to 1692 indicate that as many as one quarter (29 of 118) of the deceased to whom they relate participated in it; and by the claim of the earl of Inchiquin, governor between 1689 and 1692, that in 1690 alone more than £100,000 worth of bullion was carried by the fleet leaving Jamaica, exceeding by £12,000 the value of the island’s sugar exports in 1689.⁵⁵

According to Zahedieh, the trade in contraband goods ‘was mainly carried on “underhand” in bays and creeks and smaller towns’, as larger fortified cities such

⁵⁴ J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in the Americas, 1492–1830* (New Haven and London, 2006), p. 224.

⁵⁵ Under the terms of the Treaty of Madrid, Spain officially recognized British ‘sovereignty, ownership and possession’ of ‘all the lands, regions, islands, colonies and dominions, situated in the West Indies or in any part of America’ which ‘the King of Great Britain and his subjects’ held at the time of its signing; it also authorized ships from either nation to enter each other’s ports for repair, refitting, revictualling, or in the event of shipwreck or bad weather. Nuala Zahedieh, ‘The Merchants of Port Royal, Jamaica, and the Spanish Contraband Trade, 1655–1692’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 43/4 (1986): 574, 576, 579, 584, 590–92; and ‘Trade, Plunder, and Economic Development in Early English Jamaica, 1655–89’, *Economic History Review*, 39/2 (1986): 216, 218–19. On the Treaty of Madrid, see also Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic*, p. 220.

as Havana, Portobello and Cartagena 'were more difficult and risky to penetrate'.⁵⁶ The evidence for Cuba certainly suggests that smuggling activities took place principally in the southern districts of Bayamo, Isla de Pinos, and Puerto Príncipe, rather than in the heavily protected district of Havana; similarly, in Santo Domingo, smuggling is said to have been carried out in rivers and streams rather than in the ports of the colony, where the presence of officials implied a greater risk of detection.⁵⁷ The city of Cartagena, however, the headquarters for Spanish military and naval units stationed on the northern coast of New Granada (present-day Colombia) and a key centre for Spanish imperial trade, has been described by Lance Grahn as 'a cog in the distribution network of foreign Caribbean and Atlantic trading ports such as Willemstad, Kingston, and Philadelphia'.⁵⁸ In spite of the primacy of the port, he argues, Spain's inability to meet colonial needs meant that consumers turned to foreign suppliers, often illegally, to obtain a range of goods including cloth and clothing (that made of Brittany linen being especially favoured), as well as essential foodstuffs such as flour and meat. Provincial producers in the colony, for their part, diverted cacao, dyes, and woods into foreign hands, not infrequently abetted by port officials who were themselves implicated in an enterprise which, in the mid-1730s, was estimated to be worth two million pesos annually.⁵⁹ Indeed, according to one senior officer resident in Cartagena in the early 1720s, the city had become a base from which English, French, and Dutch contrabandists sold their wares as freely as they did in their home towns, whilst the fortifications that surrounded the port were said to serve not as the deterrents for which they were intended, but as 'mere guideposts' for foreign smugglers.⁶⁰

Grahn attributes the cosmopolitan outlook of Cartagena's population, which was to become especially evident when, in the early 1800s, leading creoles began to express their growing disillusion with the Spanish colonial system, to the city's long-standing links (licensed as well as illicit) with foreign merchants and contrabandists.⁶¹ Yet due to the clandestine nature of that part of the trade that was conducted illegally, we know little about the relationships that enabled such networks to function, or about their social and cultural impact. Recent work

⁵⁶ Zahedieh, 'Trade, Plunder': 218.

⁵⁷ Wim Klooster, *Illicit Riches: Dutch Trade in the Caribbean, 1648–1795* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 76–7.

⁵⁸ Lance R. Grahn, 'Cartagena and its Hinterland in the Eighteenth Century', in Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (eds), *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650–1850* (Knoxville, 1991), pp. 168, 175.

⁵⁹ Lance Grahn, *The Political Economy of Smuggling: Regional Informal Economies in Early Bourbon New Granada* (Boulder, 1997), pp. 99–102.

⁶⁰ Grahn, 'Cartagena and its Hinterland', p. 176.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 175–7. On the ideas that informed creoles in Cartagena, and on the fall of royal government in the colony, see especially Anthony McFarlane, *Colombia Before Independence: Economy, Society, and Politics under Bourbon Rule* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 297–352.

on the Dutch island of Curaçao's links with the Spanish mainland, however, provides some insight into the range of individuals involved on both sides of this particular imperial divide, and into the wider and longer-term effects of contact between them. Captured by the Dutch from the Spanish in 1634, administered by the West India Company, and a free port after 1675, Curaçao has been described as 'an American counterpart of Amsterdam',⁶² 'a thriving regional entrepôt in the Dutch commercial system, linking American colonies of several different imperial spheres with Europe, Africa, and markets well beyond the Atlantic'.⁶³ The island developed principally as a base from which a wide variety of European commodities, such as wines, cloth, and spices – shipped in from Dutch ports but the vast majority of which were neither of Dutch origin nor manufacture – were sold on to buyers in the Spanish, English, and French colonies in exchange for a whole range of commodities, including cacao, brazilwood, tobacco, and sugar. Most crucial to its prosperity, however, was the illicit trade with the Spanish mainland, especially with the nearby and relatively accessible coasts of Venezuela and New Granada, where, as we have seen, the French and the British were also actively involved in trade.⁶⁴ Along the Guajira peninsula, for example, large stretches of which remained under Indian control in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Curaçaoan merchants not only traded with, but for part of the year reportedly lived among, the indigenous Guajiro people, exchanging logwood, among other products, for the gunpowder and firearms that enabled native groups to hold back Spanish encroachment.⁶⁵ During or soon after 1693, moreover, colonists from Curaçao, some of whom were Sephardic Jews, boldly established the settlement of Tucacas on the Paraguaná peninsula, on the northwest coast of Venezuela. In spite of several half-hearted attempts to destroy the settlement, which maintained its own synagogue, Tucacas survived until the 1720s – apparently serving as the centre of a smuggling network that, according to José Francisco de Canas, governor of Caracas in the mid-1710s, was protected by the 'Spanish friends' of 'the Jews and Dutch', and that reached deep into the interior of the Spanish empire, linking

⁶² Klooster, *Illicit Riches*, p. 59; Wim Klooster, 'The Jews in Suriname and Curaçao', in Paolo Bernardini and Norman Fiering (eds), *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450–1800* (New York and Oxford, 2001), p. 353.

⁶³ Linda Rupert, 'Contraband Trade and the Shaping of Colonial Societies in Curaçao and Tierra Firme', *Itinerario*, 30/3 (2006): 38. See also Jonathan Israel, 'The Jews of Dutch America', in Bernardini and Fiering (eds), *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe*, p. 337.

⁶⁴ Klooster, *Illicit Riches*, p. 74; Klooster, 'The Jews in Suriname and Curaçao', pp. 355–6; and Grahn, 'Cartagena and its Hinterland', p. 175.

⁶⁵ Klooster, *Illicit Riches*, p. 76, and Grahn, *The Political Economy of Smuggling*, pp. 41–3. Spanish sources also indicate that, on occasion at least, Guajiro chiefs travelled to the island in person to obtain supplies for their communities. See Eduardo Barrera Monroy, *Mestizaje, Comercio y Resistencia: La Guajira durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII* (Bogotá, 2000), pp. 156–7.

Curaçao with cities as distant as Santa Fe de Bogotá and Quito, and these, in turn, with the wider Atlantic world.⁶⁶

Linda Rupert has shown that the contraband trade between Curaçao and Venezuela linked, on the Dutch side, merchants and traders (Protestants and Jews), shipowners, dockworkers and sailors (enslaved and free), with, on the Spanish American side, landholders large and small, plantation labourers, soldiers, vagabonds, runaway slaves, and local officials 'torn by conflicting loyalties'. Even Catholic clergy from the mainland, permitted to proselytize among, and conduct services for, the island's black population – whom the Dutch were less committed to converting – participated in the illegal inter-imperial trade.⁶⁷ Interests shared by the inhabitants of both colonies made possible the exchange of Venezuelan commodities, especially cacao (shipped out of Curaçao's port of Willemstad to markets in and beyond the Atlantic), for slaves destined for the plantations (some of whom were legally obtained), and manufactured goods much needed in a region outside the main shipping routes between Spain and its empire. Critically, she argues, the smuggling networks that developed across geopolitical boundaries, and which depended on a degree of confidence between the parties involved, also created opportunities for other types of social and cultural exchange, among people of African descent for example, who by 1800 comprised the majority of the population in both colonies.⁶⁸

Between the mid-seventeenth and the late-eighteenth centuries, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of slaves, women as well as men, exploited these networks to flee the Dutch island for the Spanish mainland, where, between 1680 and 1790, they were offered freedom on condition of baptism in the Catholic faith. So many Afro-Curaçaoans had established themselves in the Venezuelan city of Coro by

⁶⁶ According to Klooster, the Dutch remained active in Tucacas until at least 1767–68, when they were reported to be taking local products 'as boldly as if they were on their own soil'. See Klooster, *Illicit Riches*, pp. 135–8; Israel, 'The Jews', p. 338; and Mordecai Arbell, 'Rethinking the Jewish Experience: Rediscovering Tucacas', *American Jewish Archives* 48/1 (1996): 36–7.

⁶⁷ Rupert, 'Contraband Trade': 39–42. Cornelis Goslinga cites the case of Agustín Caicedo, an Augustinian and a member of a wealthy Bogotá family, who purportedly combined his ministry in Curaçao with interests in the tobacco trade. See Cornelis C. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and in the Guianas, 1680–1791* (Assen/Maastricht, 1985), pp. 257–61.

⁶⁸ Rupert, 'Contraband Trade': 42–3. See also Israel, 'The Jews', pp. 343–4. Israel argues that that the geopolitical context of the Caribbean from the mid-seventeenth century favoured commercial contacts across the Spanish and Dutch imperial divides. After the Dutch surrendered Recife to the Portuguese in 1654, he maintains, the latter's presence in the Americas proved no more than a commercial threat to Spain, unlike the English and the French, who became increasingly serious political and strategic threats: if it was necessary to obtain supplies, or slaves, from a rival power, as in the 1660s, then the Dutch, who did not endanger the existence of the empire, were preferable to either the English or the French, who did.

1704, in fact, that the local Spanish authorities considered creating a new town to accommodate them. By mid-century, former fugitives from the Dutch island could be found living in communities throughout the region. Some became landowners. Many participated – or continued to participate – in the contraband economy, often in collaboration with Venezuelan-based slaves and freemen. Everywhere Afro-Curaçaoans learned ‘to use the Spanish colonial legal system to obtain and defend a variety of rights’.⁶⁹ Fugitive slaves from the Dutch colony, as well as Afro-Curaçaoan traders and seafarers, were also instrumental in the spread throughout the region of Papiamentu, a creole language which facilitated communication and the exchange of information between a close and highly mobile African population, and resulted in other types of collaboration, most notably the rebellions that occurred almost simultaneously, in 1795, in Coro (May) and Curaçao (August).⁷⁰ The ‘symbiosis’, as Wim Klooster has termed it, of Venezuela and Curaçao,⁷¹ combined with, for Africans, the prospect of freedom from slavery, resulted in the development of relationships of various kinds between people of diverse ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds on both sides of the Dutch-Spanish divide.

Shared economic interest, of a different kind, also promoted a surprising degree of interaction and co-operation across national, even religious, lines in the sugar-growing region of north-eastern Brazil, at least for a number of years after the Dutch capture of Pernambuco in March 1630. To neutralize resistance to the West India Company, which took control of the administration of the region (1630–54), and to encourage Portuguese mill-owners and cane-farmers to remain within the Dutch zone and rebuild operations damaged or destroyed in the fighting, the WIC directors assured the local inhabitants that their ownership of property would be respected. They also promised economic prosperity, and guaranteed freedom of conscience and belief.⁷² To attract native support to the Dutch cause, moreover, and to encourage Dutch-speaking Portuguese Jews from Amsterdam with access to the considerable financial resources of the Sephardic community to either settle in Brazil and/or invest in its sugar industry, ‘liberty of conscience’ – as well as the right to practise their respective faiths – was extended to ‘Spaniards, Portuguese, and natives of the land, whether they be Roman Catholics or Jews’.⁷³

⁶⁹ Rupert, ‘Contraband Trade’: 43–7; and Linda Rupert, ‘Waters of Faith, Currents of Freedom: Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in Inter-Imperial Trade Between Curaçao and Tierra Firme’, in Nora E. Jaffary (ed.), *Gender, Race, and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 159–61.

⁷⁰ Rupert, ‘Contraband Trade’: 47.

⁷¹ Klooster, *Illicit Riches*, p. 120.

⁷² Stuart B. Schwartz, ‘Portuguese Attitudes of Religious Tolerance in Dutch Brazil’, in Jonathan Israel and Stuart B. Schwartz, *The Expansion of Tolerance: Religion in Dutch Brazil, 1624–1654* (Amsterdam, 2007), p. 46.

⁷³ Jonathan Israel, ‘Religious Toleration in Dutch Brazil’, in Israel and Schwartz, *The Expansion of Tolerance*, pp. 17–18, 27, and Israel, ‘The Jews’, p. 341.

Jonathan Israel has argued that the policy of religious toleration implemented by the WIC in Dutch Brazil was pragmatic rather than principled, and in the medium term it certainly did little to change entrenched Portuguese Catholic attitudes towards Jews (to whom many planters, significantly, became indebted). He has also shown, however, that it did create many opportunities for contact across national and religious divides during the period of Dutch dominance. Many Jews, for instance, though based mainly in Recife, Frederikstad, and Mauricia, travelled regularly into the interior to conduct business with Portuguese planters; some ventured out on a more permanent basis, acquiring plantations of their own; after 1636, moreover, a number of Portuguese took up residence in the inner township of Recife, where they lived alongside Jews and Protestant Dutch.⁷⁴ More noteworthy is the extent to which the Portuguese – Old Christians, clerical and lay, as well as New Christians, many of whom took advantage of the religious liberty extended by the WIC to return to Judaism – accepted Dutch rule, leading, according to Stuart Schwartz, ‘to a period of collaboration and even conviviality between the Dutch and the Portuguese’.⁷⁵

Frei Antônio Caldeira, an Augustinian in Serinhaem, was one among several clerics who socialized with (and sold sugar to) the Dutch; others were said to have reassured their parishioners of the peaceful intentions of the new rulers.⁷⁶ Even individuals who initially resisted and later fought to expel the Dutch were reported to have developed close personal relationships with the enemy. Such was the case of João Fernandes Vieira, a man thought to have been of humble Madeiran origin who became the agent and clerk of High Councillor Jacob Stachouwer, and later a confidant of Governor-General Johan Maurits (1637–44). His ‘tight friendship’ with Stachouwer enabled Vieira to make a fortune and become one of the colony’s richest men; his loyalty to the Dutch, however, at least in the short term, clearly extended beyond the merely commercial, in that he also served as town councillor (1641–43) and as captain of a squadron consisting principally, if not exclusively, of Dutchmen.⁷⁷ Another was the Jesuit Manuel de Moraes. After an initial period of resistance to the invasion, Moraes went over fully to the Dutch. He changed his allegiance again in the mid-1640s, but in the intervening period he had abandoned

⁷⁴ Israel, ‘Religious Toleration’, pp. 19, 27–8. See also Jonathan Israel, ‘Dutch Sephardi Jewry, Millenarian Politics, and the Struggle for Brazil’, in David S. Katz and Jonathan I. Israel (eds), *Sceptics, Millenarians and Jews* (Leiden, 1990), p. 91.

⁷⁵ Schwartz, ‘Portuguese Attitudes’, p. 36.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 51, and C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil, 1624–1654* (Hamden, 1973), pp. 272–6. Russell-Wood describes Vieira as a mulatto whose commercial dealings had provided him with enough capital to enable him ‘to have his own house’ by the age of 17. He led the 1645 uprising against the Dutch in Pernambuco, and subsequently acquired landholdings and sugar mills formerly owned by them. He became governor of Angola between 1658 and 1661 and, on his return to Pernambuco, superintendent of fortifications on the Brazilian coast. See Russell-Wood, *The Portuguese Empire*, pp. 68–9.

the Jesuit order, travelled to, and lived in, the Netherlands, married a Protestant Dutch woman and, on her death, a second.⁷⁸ There were many other examples of individuals who crossed religious boundaries during these years: among these were the three daughters of Domingo Ribeiro, all of whom contracted Protestant marriages with Dutchmen; the Dutch who married Portuguese widows in Rio Grande do Norte and converted to Catholicism; and the two daughters of one Mateus da Costa of Ipojuca, one of whom married a Dutch Protestant, and the other a New Christian who had returned to the practice of Judaism. Both Protestant and Catholic clergy noted these developments with some concern for, as Schwartz explains, such marriages ‘always implied a certain insecurity of national and religious identities’. And indeed, when the period of goodwill and co-operation drew to a close with the outbreak of the Portuguese planters’ revolt in 1645, some Dutchmen who had married in Brazil joined the rebel cause; so, too, did many French and other Catholics who had formerly been employed by the WIC (the soldiery of which, consisting mainly, as Maurits explained, of ‘English, Scots, or Frenchmen’, was itself multi-national). Those Dutch and other non-Portuguese who made common cause with the rebels against the WIC were sufficient in number to form eight companies to fight alongside the Luso-Brazilian forces.⁷⁹

The insurrection of Portuguese Catholic planters in June 1645 and the subsequent loss of the colony in 1654 represented a serious blow to the West India Company, as it did to the Jewish community which, attracted by the WIC’s promise of liberty of conscience for Jews as well as Catholics, grew to number some 1,450 by 1644. The ‘Catholic zeal’ exhibited by the insurgents, combined with the treatment meted out to a number of captured Jews – including the cases of the two Jews hanged by rebel forces north of Recife in the summer of 1645, and especially the exceptional but nonetheless notorious case of the proselytizer Isaac de Castro Tartas, burned alive at the age of 22 at an *Auto-da-fé* staged in Lisbon in December 1647 – had a major impact on Jewish attitudes towards the Portuguese. Not the least of the consequences was the return of a substantial number of refugees to the Dutch Republic, and the migration of many others to parts of the New World where they could expect, if not the same degree of toleration that they had experienced in Dutch Brazil, then at least conditions far more favourable than they could expect under the rule of Portugal, where Jews identified as having formerly been New Christians in particular faced the real threat of prosecution by the Inquisition.⁸⁰ Indeed, when in April 1654 the defeated Dutch requested an extension to the three-month period allowed them for departure, they were assured by General Francisco Barreto de Menezes that both Dutch and Jews would continue to be treated mildly,

⁷⁸ Schwartz, ‘Portuguese Attitudes’, pp. 49–50. The case of Manuel de Moraes is discussed in greater detail in Boxer, *The Dutch*, p. 267–9.

⁷⁹ Schwartz, ‘Portuguese Attitudes’, pp. 51–2. On Maurits’ remarks on the soldiery of the WIC, see Boxer, *The Dutch*, p. 129.

⁸⁰ Israel, ‘Dutch Sephardi Jewry’, pp. 86–97.

except, that is, for ‘the Jews who had been Christians, these being subject to the Holy Inquisition, wherein I cannot interfere’.⁸¹

Of those who left Brazil, some established new communities in the Dutch colonies of Curaçao and Suriname (taken from the English in 1667), in both of which they came to comprise approximately one-third of the white population,⁸² and in New Netherland, where Recifean Jews were authorized to settle, with restrictions, on the grounds ‘of the large amount of capital which they have invested in this [West India] Company’.⁸³ Some migrated to Jamaica, where the Sephardic Jewish population, small at the time of the island’s seizure by the English in 1655, by 1672 included 13 individuals (some of whom were of Portuguese origin) holding patents of naturalization, under which they enjoyed ‘the same rights to trade as natural-born citizens without distinction of religion’.⁸⁴ In spite of other controls and disabilities, discussed by Natalie Zacek in this volume, it grew steadily thereafter, reaching 700 to 800 (equivalent to one-tenth of the total white population) by 1735. As in Curaçao, Jews in Jamaica were able to capitalize, as Allan Meyers explains, on their knowledge of the wider Atlantic world, their multilingualism, and their close ties with communities of co-religionists in Europe, New England, the Caribbean, ‘and all the leading ports on the Spanish Main’, to carve for themselves an important niche in the contraband trade, serving as middlemen supplying Spanish Americans with dry goods imported from Europe through their Christian and Jewish agents.⁸⁵ Other groups of refugees from Recife migrated to the English colony of Barbados (claimed by the English in 1627) where, in 1650, a full six years before similar legislation was passed in England, the island Assembly permitted the immigration of Jews, placing them, in 1655, ‘on the same footing as foreigners in England’.⁸⁶ A number subsequently migrated to the small colony of Nevis, whose Jewish community is the subject of Zacek’s chapter.

⁸¹ James Homer Williams, ‘An Atlantic Perspective on the Jewish Struggle for Rights and Opportunities in Brazil, New Netherland, and New York’, in Bernardini and Fiering (eds), *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe*, p. 377.

⁸² Seeman, ‘Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic’, pp. 42–3; David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge and New York, 2000), pp. 236–40

⁸³ For attitudes towards Jews in New Netherland, and the nature of the restrictions they faced, see Israel, ‘The Jews’, pp. 344–5, and Williams, ‘An Atlantic Perspective’, pp. 377–85.

⁸⁴ Zahedieh, ‘The Merchants of Port Royal’: 580.

⁸⁵ Allan D. Meyers, ‘Ethnic Distinctions and Wealth among Colonial Jamaican Merchants, 1685–1716’, *Social Science History*, 22/1 (1998): 55, 57; and Mordechai Arbell, *The Portuguese Jews of Jamaica* (Kingston, 2000), p. 8. In his *History of Jamaica* (1774), Edward Long wrote of the island’s Jews that ‘their knowledge of foreign languages and intercourse with their brethren, dispersed over the Spanish and West Indian colonies have contributed greatly to extend trade and increase the wealth of the island’. See *ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸⁶ Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery*, pp. 239–40. In reality, Eltis states, the rights extended were only those of residence and denization.

Even as they migrated to new homes across national and imperial boundaries, Jews worked to preserve their distinctive identity by maintaining economic and kinship ties with other Jewish communities scattered throughout the Atlantic world, and by strict observance of the rituals of their forebears. However, as Erik Seeman's study of Jewish death rituals in the English and Dutch Caribbean shows, theirs was not an identity untouched by the diverse cultural heritages of the peoples among whom they lived in both the Old World and the New. Jewish memorialization practices, especially tombstones and markers, are especially revealing in this regard. Seeman shows that in spite of the Second Commandment's prohibition on the depiction of 'graven images', many human images – such as the biblical Esther represented on Esther Senior's 1714 tombstone, an almost identical copy 'of a woodcut from a Christian Latin Bible published in Lyon in 1562' – adorned the tombstones of the dead in Curaçao, Jamaica, and Barbados, clearly demonstrating the extent to which Jews incorporated Christian iconography into their own iconographic traditions. In the English and Dutch islands, he argues, they remembered 'the dark decades when Catholics forced Sephardim to convert or keep their beliefs secret' and seemingly 'rejoiced in their ability to proclaim to the world their faith and their varied cultural inheritances'.⁸⁷ Perhaps an even more significant adaptation to local conditions took place in Dutch Suriname – a sugar colony with a predominantly African population, and the only place in the New World where a community of mulatto Jews, the offspring of Jewish plantation owners and African women, came into being – where Jewish gravestones were influenced by African, rather than European Christian, iconography. The *sankofa*, for example, a heart-shaped symbol of the Akan people of West Africa, many of whom became slaves on Suriname's sugar plantations, appears alongside Hebrew lettering and the Star of David on numerous burial markers that still stand today in the Sephardic cemetery at Paramaribo.⁸⁸ It is also to be found, Aviva Ben-Ur has demonstrated, in Paramaribo's Ashkenazi, Moravian, and Protestant cemeteries, indicating not only that Jews and their Christian neighbours found their faith and their practices tested by the new environments in which they found themselves, but also that African influence profoundly permeated memorialization rituals across religious and ethnic lines in Suriname.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Seeman, 'Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic', pp. 45–6, 48–9, and especially Figures 2 and 3. See also Aviva Ben-Ur, 'Still Life: Sephardi, Ashkenazi, and West African Art and Form in Suriname's Jewish Cemeteries', *American Jewish History*, 92/3 (2004): 74. 'Tombstones', Ben-Ur states, 'were a medium through which Suriname's Jews could express their multi-heritage origins – including the non-Jewish elements of that legacy – as acceptably Jewish'.

⁸⁸ Seeman, 'Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic', pp. 50, 53–5, and especially Figures 6 and 7.

⁸⁹ Ben-Ur, 'Still Life': 77, and footnote 168; and Seeman, 'Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic', p. 56.

Consumption and the Atlantic World

The unprecedented circulation of people, beliefs, and ideas that characterized the early modern Atlantic was driven and paralleled by an equally unprecedented circulation of goods which not only linked the region through production, commerce, and consumption,⁹⁰ but also, as the examples discussed below show, had the potential to transform tastes and fashions in all parts of the Atlantic world. The sheer scale of effort and the extent of the mobilization involved in production and transportation on the part of Europeans alone are reflected in figures relating to the migratory cod fishery which developed off the coast of Newfoundland in the immediate aftermath of John Cabot's voyage of 1497, which, in addition to demonstrating the existence of a 'new land' between Europe and Asia, also made known the extent of the marine resources that existed in the northwest Atlantic.⁹¹ The first cargo of North American cod is recorded to have been landed by the *Gabriel* of Bristol in 1502. By the end of the decade, European crews – particularly Breton, Norman, and French Basque crews, who dominated the fishery through the sixteenth and well into the seventeenth centuries – were seasonally catching and salting cod off the Newfoundland coast,⁹² in another example of what Nicholas Canny has described as a 'space' whose exploitation Europeans were fully aware they shared with others of different origin.⁹³

The combined efforts of Europeans in Atlantic Canada by the end of the century were so extensive that, in volume and value, commercial activity in the region exceeded that taking place in the Gulf of Mexico, traditionally considered 'the American center of gravity of early transatlantic commerce'.⁹⁴ Records show that by 1615, the English employed approximately 250 ships and a minimum of 5,000 men to produce an annual output of some 300,000 quintals of dry fish (equivalent to a live catch of 75,000 tonnes per year).⁹⁵ The French transatlantic fishery was approximately twice that size overall. At mid-century, the French fishing fleet comprised more than 400 ships, and employed almost 10,000 men over a wide area including the shores of Newfoundland, the Gulf of St Lawrence, and Nova Scotia.⁹⁶ The fleets of these two nations, together with those of the Basque and the Portuguese (whose participation, although significant, was on a smaller scale) are estimated to

⁹⁰ Games, 'Atlantic History': 756.

⁹¹ Peter E. Pope, *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill and London, 2004), pp. 11, 13.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16. According to James Pritchard, the French supplied the largest single domestic market for cod as well as substantial and profitable export markets in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. See James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670–1730* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 140, 142.

⁹³ Canny, 'Writing Atlantic History': 1107–08.

⁹⁴ Pope, *Fish into Wine*, p. 13.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹⁶ Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, p. 142.

have fished and transported a live catch of perhaps as much as 200,000 tonnes per season. This was, as Peter Pope has stated, an enormous industry not only for its own time, but already by the end of the 1600s ‘in the same order of magnitude as catches of northern cod in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century’.⁹⁷

Wind-dried cod and the related ling, known as stockfish, had of course been accessible to, and eaten by, Europeans long before the waters of the northwest Atlantic were found to be ‘churning with codfish of a size never before seen and in schools of unprecedented density’.⁹⁸ Norway had been exporting stockfish to the continent in commercial quantities from about 1100; by 1350, it had become Iceland’s principal export staple; and by the beginning of the fifteenth century, migratory fisheries had been established by the English in Icelandic waters.⁹⁹ Perhaps for this reason, and despite the fact that due to the resources of the new fishing grounds cod came to account for as much as sixty per cent of all fish consumed in Europe between the mid-sixteenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries,¹⁰⁰ its impact on the societies and cultures of consuming nations has received less attention than those previously unknown and more obviously exotic plants of New World origin that altered tastes, transformed diets, and created new customs and rituals across the Old. Yet as Peter Mancall’s and Marcy Norton’s recent studies of two such exotic plants – tobacco and chocolate, respectively – demonstrate, analysis of the processes whereby the products of the Americas came to be incorporated into European habits, cultures, and value systems have great potential for illustrating how individuals who never left their towns or villages of origin could also experience the opening up of the Atlantic through their own consumption. Both studies show the ways in which over time, exposure to, and/or the spread of information about, products which on first acquaintance most Europeans in the Americas actually found unappetizing if not decidedly distasteful, gave rise to new practices, fashions, and the adoption of new implements on the other side of the Atlantic, first among a handful of aficionados and subsequently among the population at large.¹⁰¹ Norton, as we shall see, focuses first on the

⁹⁷ Pope, *Fish into Wine*, pp. 16, 19–20. Pope clarifies that the Portuguese, who had their own fisheries off Madeira and the Azores, and were also heavily involved in Brazil, Africa, and the Indian ocean, did not become major participants in the migratory fishery in north Atlantic waters. ‘Even in the second half of the sixteenth century’, he states, ‘when the port of Viana, in particular, sent ships regularly to Newfoundland, they did not commit themselves as seriously as the French already had or as the English would’.

⁹⁸ Mark Kurlansky, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish that Changed the World* (London, 1999), p. 49.

⁹⁹ Pope, *Fish into Wine*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁰ Kurlansky, *Cod*, p. 51.

¹⁰¹ Peter C. Mancall, ‘Tales Tobacco Told in Sixteenth-Century Europe’, *Environmental History*, 9/4 (2004): 648–78, and Marcy Norton, ‘Tasting Empire: Chocolate and the European Internalization of Mesoamerican Aesthetics’, *American Historical Review*, 111/3 (2006): 660–91.

contexts in which Spaniards in Mesoamerica became familiar with, and unwittingly developed a liking for, chocolate, before examining how they transmitted their taste for this indigenous beverage as well as the paraphernalia required for its preparation to Spain, and then to the rest of Europe.¹⁰² Mancall explores instead the processes whereby tobacco, a product initially associated with native savagery, heathen rituals, and even demonic intervention, was desacralized, ‘civilized’, and ‘commodified’ for a European market, a transition that made possible its ‘leap from unknown plant to highly desired [and widely consumed] good’.¹⁰³

Tobacco’s transformation was, Mancall argues, connected to and facilitated by the rapid expansion of print over the course of the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁴ The dissemination of a growing number of printed books – especially travel accounts, herbals and treatises – some of which contained illustrations of the plant and of the ways in which it was smoked by indigenous peoples, gradually made accessible to literate Europeans knowledge of the medicinal benefits and healing properties celebrated by its advocates, as well as the corrupting and addictive qualities highlighted by its detractors.¹⁰⁵ Gauging the size of the reading public in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is, as he acknowledges, notoriously difficult, as is assessing the popularity of any particular text. It is known, however, that some 10,000 books containing information on the Americas were distributed from the major European print centres between 1500 and 1650, satisfying a growing demand for books and pamphlets that described (and made familiar) the environments, peoples, and products of the New World. Of these, approximately 400 either included mention of tobacco or focused on it exclusively. Once it had ‘leapt the cultural divide’ through the medium of print, and its ‘underlying value’ was ‘extracted from its savage context’, tobacco production spread rapidly throughout (and well beyond) the Atlantic world. So too, of course, did consumption, increasingly for recreational rather than medicinal purposes. In England alone it is estimated that imports rose from 25,000 pounds in 1603 to 38 million pounds by the end of the century. In Africa, its impact was said to have been so great that tobacco creation myths were invented following its introduction there.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, according to Robert Voeks, once tobacco had been naturalized in Africa and incorporated into African ethnomedical systems, it was diffused through the slave trade back to the Americas. By the latter years of the trade, he states, ‘Africans arriving in Venezuela introduced healing rituals with tobacco that were uniquely African’.¹⁰⁷

Chocolate was another New World product with potentially ‘idolatrous’ associations that successfully made the leap from the unfamiliar (and initially

¹⁰² Norton, ‘Tasting Empire’: 660, 687.

¹⁰³ Mancall, ‘Tales Tobacco Told in Sixteenth-Century Europe’: 648–50, 656.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 648–50, 656.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 650, 655–65.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 666–7, 670.

¹⁰⁷ Voeks, ‘African Medicine’: 75.

disliked) to the widely consumed. In her study of the ways in which the drink gained acceptance by Europeans, however, Marcy Norton finds that the publication and dissemination of books played no obvious part in this transition: by the time the first such work aimed at a Spanish readership, Santiago de Valverde Turices *Un discurso de chocolate*, was printed in 1624, thousands of pounds of cacao and chocolate were being imported annually, and consumption was on the way to becoming well established in Seville.¹⁰⁸ Arguing instead that Spaniards acquired a taste for the product as a consequence of their ‘continued material dependence on Indians’, Norton explores the ‘colonial spaces of dependence’ in which they were exposed to, and gradually absorbed, the material practices connected to the consumption of this pre-Columbian drink. She pays particular attention to households, Indian villages, and the marketplace, all meeting points between cultures and sites where colonists were open to acculturation (and probably pressure to conform) to local customs, by women as well as men. In the household, for example, it was Indian women, traditionally charged with the preparation of the drink, who played a particularly important role as wives and concubines in acculturating Spanish men ‘to Indian dietary and domestic practices’ and creating ‘culturally *mestizo*’ environments. Even Indian women who served as domestics in creole households, however, played a part in this process, principally through their role in exposing creole children to a milieu that was culturally indigenous. Spaniards also encountered chocolate in Indian villages – where as late as the seventeenth century, in accordance with pre-Hispanic forms of hospitality, tributaries and parishioners commonly offered the beverage on welcoming visiting officials and clerics – and in the marketplace where, as one Spaniard discovered in the 1570s, of ‘all the varieties of fresh and dried fruits, indigenous and from our own land ... that which is held in higher appreciation than all of the others is *cacaotl*’.¹⁰⁹

Whilst cross-cultural contacts of this kind explain how European *colonists* developed a taste for chocolate and learned to consume it as it was consumed in Mesoamerica, its eventual diffusion from colony to metropolis – after a lapse of some seventy years – Norton attributes to the emergence in Spain of a ‘critical mass of aficionados’ who had first-hand experience of the New World and its resources. Among these she identifies in particular merchants and clergy who ‘moved often and easily within an integrated Spanish Atlantic world’, and who through their social contacts initiated metropolitan ‘neophytes’ in all the varieties of the chocolate drink, and in the ways of drinking it. In the process they contributed to an extraordinary expansion of demand, reflected in figures on exports from Venezuela, which rose from some 31,000 pounds between 1620 and 1650, to 7 million pounds between 1650 and 1700.¹¹⁰ Over time, Norton acknowledges, the beverage that people in Europe consumed diverged from that which early settlers

¹⁰⁸ Norton, ‘Tasting Empire’: 668, 680.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 676–9, 682.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 668, 670, 679–81.

had initially encountered in the Americas, not least because Old World spices and flavourings, the most notable being sugar and cinnamon, replaced the original ingredients of honey, chilli pepper, and flower spices. She argues, however, that this should not be taken to mean that Europeans set out to modify chocolate to accord with their own aesthetic predilections. Contrary to common assumptions, such tinkering was part of a process of gradual evolution motivated by the desire to maintain ‘the sensory impact’ of a product for which Europeans – the vast majority of whom had never, and would never, set foot on American soil – had acquired a new, unexpected taste.¹¹¹

Peoples, Products, and Practices on the Move

The aim of this Introduction has been to highlight, albeit briefly, the themes that are developed in greater detail in the following chapters, which explore, from a variety of different perspectives and based on a wide range of sources, what engagement with the Atlantic world meant for the individuals and communities who are their subjects, and how these ordinary people contributed through their own travels, relationships, and day-to-day choices to the process whereby four continents were brought into regular communication and exchange. In the opening chapter, Laurier Turgeon takes a fresh look, from a new angle, at the establishment and rapid expansion from the beginning of the sixteenth century of a French migratory fishery off the coast of Newfoundland, with particular reference to the impact and consequences of the increasingly widespread consumption of codfish on the culture of France itself. His chapter begins with a discussion of the development of the French fishing fleet, and then goes on to chart, using sources that include notarial records, provisioning contracts, account books, and cookbooks, the ways in which Newfoundland cod penetrated the interior from coastal ports, and came to be accessible to, and eaten by, people of practically all social classes. Turgeon’s principal concerns are to explore the connection between mass consumption of what was at the time considered an ‘exotic’ New World product and the establishment of a permanent colony in Canada in the early seventeenth century, and the part cod played in the development of a French national market and national identity. Can widespread consumption of this North American product be interpreted as the means whereby the French appropriated the geography of the ‘New Lands’ and made the region a desirable site for colonization? Can it be argued that the sharing of a ‘common good’ enabled the French to ‘materially acknowledge’ that they belonged to the same community? In considering these questions, he offers an innovative exploration of how the French experienced the Atlantic world through their own consumption and in their own bodies.

Heather Dalton focuses on the small community of English merchants based in Seville in the early decades of the sixteenth century, and discusses the commercial

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 660, 669, 683–6.

interests and the personal relationships which they developed whilst settled in the city. Basing her study principally on the records relating to the settlement of the will of Thomas Malliard, who died in Seville in 1522, she shows that, contrary to the widely held view of historians, English merchants such as Malliard accumulated substantial fortunes during these years, by investing in local industries and properties, and by collaborating with Spanish and Genoese merchants in trade with Spain's Atlantic colonies. Dalton also pays close attention to the controversy that developed when Malliard's Spanish mistress Beatriz Hernández and their daughter Ana contested his will, to the events that took place subsequently, and to the interests of the individuals involved on both sides. Her analysis offers important insights into the ways in which English merchants operated in the city, and into their connections with the local community. She shows that although English merchants always remained loyal to their families back home, to whom they willed the bulk of their fortunes, they also formed new families in Seville, and became influential members of local society, taking sides with, and being supported by, those factions within the city who were willing to accommodate the foreign merchants and embrace their expertise.

Douglas Catterall also explores the Atlantic activities and associated support networks of a small expatriate community, namely, that of the Scots based in Rotterdam in the middle decades of the seventeenth century. Few of these individuals were substantial merchants of the kind who are the subject of Dalton's chapter. Rather, most were common sailors (some were captains or skippers) who formed part of the large international labour pool that the city, home to one of the chambers of the Dutch West India Company from 1621, attracted to support a variety of enterprises, including those in Brazil, the Caribbean, and the Chesapeake. Basing his analysis principally on notarial records, Catterall estimates the size and analyses the composition of the city's Scot's population; explores the nature and extent of their participation in those parts of the Caribbean and the Chesapeake where the Dutch had a significant presence; and examines the institutions and networks which the Scots community developed to support the sailors, soldiers, and itinerant labourers who participated in Dutch ventures in the Atlantic, as well as the families they left behind. He pays particular attention both to the extensive network of lodging-house keepers who provided lodging, credit, and wage-collection services, and to the role of the Scots Church of Rotterdam, founded in 1643, to show how the Scots community was able to take part in, and profit from, Dutch activities in the wider Atlantic world.

Natalie Zacek turns our attention to the Americas, specifically to the Jewish community which established itself in the island of Nevis in the decades following the Portuguese re-capture of Recife in 1654. She focuses on the business and social networks of some of the most prominent of the island's Jewish merchants, and in so doing provides important insights into their activities and interests, and into the ways in which both Jews and the English among whom they settled in the Caribbean in the later decades of the seventeenth century came to terms with, and adapted to, each other's cultures and religions. Basing her analysis principally on

legal and commercial documents, Zacek shows that in spite of legal proscriptions and the often far from favourable attitudes displayed towards Jews by the English, illustrated vividly in this chapter, the displaced Recifeans prospered here. Indeed, she also demonstrates that Jewish families, such as those of Haim Abinum de Lima and Isaac Pinheiro, did not form a sub-culture segregated from the white planter society of the island, but rather that their commercial and personal relationships included many non-Jews of property and prestige. Far from being excluded from participation in the social and economic life of the white community, they enjoyed positions of respect, and were linked by ties of friendship as well as commerce to wealthy and prominent local Christian families.

Mark Meuwese explores a much-neglected aspect of the history of north-eastern Brazil during the period of West India Company rule (1630–54) – namely, relations between the Dutch and their indigenous Tupi allies. He shows that although Dutch control over the lucrative sugar-growing provinces of the region was achieved with the support of the Tupi peoples, many of whom welcomed the newcomers as liberators when the WIC committed itself to abolishing Indian slavery, Dutch-Tupi relations were frequently marred by discord and conflict, due to the divergent understandings of both sides regarding the status that the native population was to enjoy in the emerging Dutch Atlantic empire. Was this to be a diplomatic alliance between equals, or were the Tupi to be subordinate members of Dutch colonial society? Central to this analysis is Antonio Paraupaba, a prominent leader of the Potiguar who over a period of three decades from 1625 until his death in the Netherlands in 1656, travelled to the Republic on three occasions to negotiate the terms of the relationship between his people and the WIC administration. Meuwese pays particular attention to Paraupaba's role as an intercultural negotiator, and examines how, having become familiar with Dutch customs and interests, and gained some fluency in the Dutch language, he sought to exploit distance and differences between the board of WIC directors and the High Council in Recife to secure self-governance for the Tupi, a key demand of the indigenous leadership.

Archaeologist Mark Horton considers the Atlantic ventures of another company – that of *The Company of Scotland Trading to Africa and the Indies* – in the Darien region of Panama in the closing decades of the seventeenth century. Combining analysis of the written record of the early settlers with the archaeological evidence derived from survey and excavation at the sites of New Edinburgh and Fort St Andrew, Horton considers the reality of everyday life for the colonists during their short period of settlement, discusses the challenges they faced in the harsh contested environment of Darien, and provides a detailed account of their day-to-day experiences. In paying particular attention to the physical characteristics of the region, the location, scale, and form of construction of the fortifications built to defend the colony, and the miscalculations made in both Scotland and at the local level concerning, among other key issues, supplies and provisions, Horton offers a fuller and more nuanced interpretation of the failure of what has come to be known as the Scottish Darien Scheme.

Archaeologist Kenneth Kelly explores African responses to trade and interaction with Europeans in the trading state of Hueda (with its capital at Savi) and its successor Dahomey (which channelled trade though Ouidah) over the period stretching from the mid-seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century. Kelly's chapter, like that of Horton, combines analysis of archaeological evidence and documentary sources to examine how Africans and Europeans interacted at these sites, the strategies developed by the rulers of Hueda and Dahomey to control their relationships with foreign traders, and the longer-term outcomes of those relationships for local societies. He shows that African participants in the slave trade were well informed about the Atlantic world and willing actively to engage with their foreign partners, and that at Savi and Ouidah, Africans also developed strategies to assert power and authority over Europeans, and ensure their continued autonomy—as manifested, for instance, in the quality of construction and physical location of European trading lodges. Kelly also argues, however, that despite their successful control of European traders, participation in the Atlantic economy had far-reaching consequences for coastal people: changes in political and economic power balances upset existing relationships in coastal and inland areas, and led to long-lasting conflict between African groups.

Anthropologist Philip Havik also explores the nature of African-European interactions, in this case in the trade settlement of Cacheu, in what is now Guinea Bissau, during the seventeenth century. Based on the still largely neglected records of the Portuguese Inquisition, he examines the activities, relationships, cultural traditions, and religious beliefs and customs of the diverse population of what was at the time Portugal's principal port on the Upper Guinea coast, considers the bonds that tied the community to neighbouring African societies, and discusses the part played in processes of cross-cultural exchange and transculturation by free Christianized Africans (Kriston). The case of the healer and diviner Crispina Peres, the daughter of a Christianised Guinean mother and a Portuguese father and the wife of a second-generation New Christian (who was tried by the Inquisition in Lisbon for practising African rites, consulting witch-doctors, and performing 'heathen' rituals), is central to this chapter. Through careful reading of the documents relating to the case – in particular the detailed descriptions of local religious beliefs and rituals contained in witness statements – Havik is able to identify what he terms a set of 'Afro-Atlantic' cultural practices shared by all the inhabitants of the community, assess the ways in which these were shaped and influenced by those of their 'ethnic' neighbours, and illustrate the role which African women played as cultural mediators in these Christianized communities.

James Sweet takes a broader approach to the analysis of African participation in the Atlantic world by examining the role played by slaves in disseminating knowledge of the powerful protective talismans of the ethnic Mandinga of the Upper Guinea coast – the *bolsas the mandinga* – throughout the Portuguese Atlantic. Sweet also bases his analysis on Inquisition records, specifically those relating to the trials of enslaved Africans accused of producing and trading *mandinga* pouches (the *mandingueiros*), and explores the ways in which, through

the buying, selling, borrowing, and sharing of *mandingas* containing a variety of substances and items, they linked places as far apart as Ouidah, Pernambuco, Madeira, and Porto. By unravelling the histories of the accused, and explaining the connections between them and the many other Africans they implicated in the manufacture and distribution of the *bolsas*, his chapter shows that the slaves involved in the trials were all products of an overlapping and interconnected Atlantic world. Sweet also considers, however, the extent to which the Portuguese were themselves implicated in the proliferation of the magical ideas with which the pouches were associated. Not only were white Portuguese as likely to purchase *bolsas* as were Africans, but the Inquisition, in defining *mandingas* as ‘heresy’ and ‘witchcraft’, bringing Africans to trial in cities such as Lisbon and Coimbra, and exiling the guilty to small villages such as Faro and Bragança, affirmed the power of the pouches, and linked the cultures of Brazil and Africa to those of Portugal itself.

In the final chapter, Matthew Brown turns our attention to the life experiences of Scottish-born Alexander Alexander, one of the more than 7,000 foreigners who joined the forces of the leaders of the Spanish American independence movements in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Based on close analysis of his autobiography – *The Life of Alexander Alexander*, published in Edinburgh in 1830 – Brown discusses Alexander’s accounts of his activities within and outside the Atlantic world over the period stretching from 1800 to 1822. He follows his travels in search of profitable occupation to Curaçao (1800–01), to several British Army postings in England, Ireland, and Asia (1802–15), to Demerara (1815–17), and to various islands of the West Indies (1821–22), in order to consider the ways in which Alexander’s often bitter experiences in the British imperial world shaped his attitudes towards, and responses to, the societies he encountered during two separate periods of residence in Venezuela and Colombia between 1816 and 1822. Alexander’s British identity, Brown shows, was shaken and tested by enlistment in a republican army in a region characterized by racial and cultural diversity, but he also argues that the Atlantic dimension of his life was no more than ‘a facet of a life that was lived imperially’, and that was marked by concerns about status and race that transcended geographical regions. For Brown, Alexander Alexander’s autobiography reveals the porosity and fluidity not only of the boundaries of the Spanish and British empires in the Americas, but also those of the Atlantic world itself.

In highlighting the sheer extent of movement and interaction that characterized the early modern Atlantic, the contributions to this volume enhance our understanding of that complex phenomenon which we call ‘The Atlantic World’ in two main ways. First, they show that if the significance of the ‘Atlantic’ as a unit of analysis lies in what it tells us about the overlapping and interconnected character of the region, then scholars must pay attention to, and incorporate, the full diversity of peoples who in countless points of contact around the Atlantic basin interacted with, changed, and were changed by, others who were different from themselves. Secondly, the emphasis in a number of the chapters on the non-

European experience serves to remind us that African and indigenous American peoples were neither passive nor marginal participants in the changes set in motion as the Atlantic world came gradually into being. The agency of Africans and native Americans – their capacity and willingness, that is, to use a variety of means to advance or protect their own interests and/or those of their own people – has of course long since been recognized by scholars whose perspective is centred on the indigenous populations of both continents. From these studies, however, they also emerge as playing as significant a role in the construction and development of the Atlantic world as the Europeans whose voyages first brought them into contact with others from whom they had for millennia been separated by the ocean.