The Making of the Black Atlantic: Transatlantic Slave Trade, Colonialism, & the Kongo cultural imprimatur

August 31, 2021
Above: Map of West Africa, circa 1800s; Right: Charles Willson Peale, Yarrow Mamout, ca. 1817. Estimate of Africans brought to the Americas from Senegambia: 756,000.
Above: Map of West Africa, ca. 1800s; Above right: Ruins of “slave castle,” Bunce Island, Sierra Leone, built ca. 1690s; Below right: Anonymous, Rice, Sugar amongst the Bagas, Upper Guinea, 1793. Watercolor. Estimate of Africans brought to the Americas from Sierra Leone & the Windward Coast: 389,000 and 337,000, respectively.
Above right: Map of West Africa, ca. 1800s; Below right: Photograph of the inhabitants of present-day Ghana’s interior, whose ancestors were conscripted into the transatlantic slave trade. Estimate of Africans brought to the Americas from the Gold Coast: 1,209,000.
Above: Map of West Africa, ca. 1800s; Above left: Anonymous, Olaudah Equiano, ca. 1780s. Oil on canvas; Below left: Photograph of an Afro-Brazilian man (with Yoruba scarifications), mid-to-late 19th century. Estimate of Africans brought to the Americas from the Bights of Benin & Biafra: 1,999,000 and 1,595,000, respectively.
Above right: Bell from the slaver Henrietta Marie, which was shipwrecked off the southern tip of Florida, 17th century; Below right: 18th century newspaper announcement about an enslaved “Ibo” man, Williamsburg, VA; Above: Map of Virginia, Maryland, & the Carolinas, 17th century.

Estimate of Africans who arrived in North America: 387,000.
Above left: George Harper Houghton, Family of slaves at the Gaines’ house, Virginia, ca. 1861-62. Photograph; Above right: Barbadoes Copper Penny, ca. 1780s-90s. Estimate of Africans who arrived in Barbados & other Caribbean islands (excluding Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, & the Dutch islands): 493,000 and 1,020,000, respectively.
Above right: Map of Cuba, ca. 1800s; Below right: Anonymous, Sugar Plantation, Cuba, ca. 1800s. Hand-colored engraving. Estimate of Africans who arrived in Cuba: 780,000.
Above and Below right:
Scenes of Sugar cultivation and processing, Saint Domingue (Haiti), 17th century. Engravings; Above right: Map of Hispanola, 19th century. Estimate of Africans who arrived in Saint Domingue: 774,000.
Above left: Iglesia de la Trinidad (a church built by and for enslaved Africans), Cartagena, Colombia, 17th century; Above right: Map of the West Indies, Mexico and New Spain, 18th century. Estimate of Africans who arrived in Veracruz & New Spain: 390,000.
Above left: Map of Coastal Brazil, 17th century; Above right: Anonymous, Brazilian family with two enslaved women, 19th century. Estimates of Africans who arrived in Brazil: 3,200,000.
Above: Map of West Central Africa, ca. 1700s; Left: Johann Moritz Regendas, *Portraits of enslaved Africans* (from various Congolese and Angolan ethnic groups) in Brazil, 19th century. Estimate of Africans brought to the Americas from West Central Africa: 3,200,000.
Above left: View of M’Banza Kongo (Salvador, present day Angola), 1688. Below left: Luumbu, or the royal enclosure, where the funeral of Ma-Kayi, the Kongo court minister of commerce is held, Cabinda, Angola, circa 1787.
Clockwise from above left and right: Two diagramtic renderings of the Kongo cosmogram. Detail of Colonoware, showing Kongo cosmogram on base, South Carolina, 18th century. Saint Christopher medal (with relief compass on rear) found in Fort Mose, St. Augustine, FL, date unknown. Silver.
Above: Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi, After being denied a chair by the Portuguese governor, Queen Nzinga Mbundu sits on the back of her attendant, 1690. Engraving.

Right: Francesco Caporale, Portrait of Manuel ne Vunda, Kongo Ambassador to the Holy See, ca. 1608. Marble. Chapel of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, Italy.
Left: Wongo peoples (Congo), Vernacular architecture with woven mats, 21st century. Center and right: Romeo Thomas (former slave & a survivor of the slave ship The Wanderer), Front & side view of a single-room dwelling, Edgefield District, South Carolina, 19th century.
Left: Chokwe peoples (Republic of Congo or Angola), Sansa (Thumb piano), late 1800s. Wood, iron. Right: Pedro Figari, Candombe, 1921. Oil on canvas.