

broader areal characteristics. The noteworthy absence of similar constructions in most of Mexico in turn may indicate regional variation of Nahuatl dialects.

## Chapter 4

### The African connection

#### Introduction

Latin American Spanish embodies linguistic and cultural contributions from four continents. In addition to the patrimonial European heritage and the results of contact with indigenous populations in the two American continents, Spanish came into contact with African languages, spoken by the tens of thousands of Africans who formed the slave labour force of the developing colonies. During the Spanish colonial period, it is estimated that more than 1.5 million African slaves were imported into Spanish America (Curtin 1969), and in many colonies the African population outnumbered residents of European descent for nearly the entire time. The possible African contributions to Latin American Spanish are closely bound up with the tragic history of slavery, with racism and marginality, and with emerging nations' search for self-identity, often postulated on a European-American axis which excludes Africa altogether. During most of the history of Latin America, Africans and their descendants have occupied the lowest rungs of society, ranging from slaves to peons and subsistence-level farmers and fishermen. Their lives and activities were not documented, except to criticize or when they had run afoul of law or tradition, while few Africans were equipped to write their own history. Postcolonial trends towards 'whitening', both demographically and through historical revisionism, further impede assessing the full African linguistic impact in Latin America. Without this key information, the reconstruction of Spanish in the Americas is incomplete.

The history of Africans in Latin America begins with the first European voyages of exploration, some of which carried free African sailors. The African presence in the Iberian Peninsula had

begun even earlier, in the first decades of the fifteenth century. Although north Africans had been in Spain and Portugal for more than a millenium before the exploration of the New World, sub-Saharan Africans were rare in Europe until Portuguese explorations in Africa, beginning in 1420. Under the sponsorship of Prince Henry the Navigator, the coast of West Africa was systematically explored and commercial contacts were made with local African leaders. Portugal established the first permanent contacts with sub-Saharan Africa in 1445, building a trading station on Arguim Island off the coast of Mauritania. Direct contact with the Senegambia had been made the year before, but permanent mainland settlements were not established until a few years later. The Arguim station was the first link in Portugal's African slave trade, despite lying to the north of black Africa. Caravans brought slaves from the Senegambia to Arguim, whence they were shipped to Portugal. By 1455, more than 1,000 slaves per year were passing through Arguim (Vogt 1979: 5), and the identification of black Africans with slaves had already begun in southern Europe. A decade later, Portuguese explorers had reached Sierra Leone, and the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast subsequently awakened intense Portuguese interest. Trade with the Gold Coast began immediately, and this area became one of the Portuguese crown's major sources of gold. Shortly thereafter the fortress of Elmina was constructed, consolidating Portuguese control in a zone which was being increasingly contested by Spain. Portuguese explorers first arrived in the Kongo Kingdom in 1483, establishing diplomatic relations with the leader, *Mani Congo*, who converted to Christianity and became a strong Portuguese ally.

By the end of the fifteenth century, Portuguese traders and slavers had reconnoitred the entire western coast of Africa, and black slaves were being carried to Lisbon in ever larger numbers. According to some estimates, at least one quarter of the population of metropolitan Lisbon was African by the end of the fifteenth century (Saunders 1982, Tinhoro 1988). Africans were transshipped from southern Portugal to southern Spain, where significant concentrations were found in Seville (Franco Silva 1980, Pike 1967), Cádiz (Sancho de Sopranis 1958), Huelva (Larrea Palacín 1952), and as far east as Valencia (Cortés Alonso 1964, Graullera Sanz 1978). When Spain began colonizing the New World, the idea of using Africans in forced labour was well established.

In the early colonial period, Spain attempted to enslave indigenous workers, to labour in mines and on plantations. This practice was rarely successful; ravaged by European-borne diseases and prone to escaping to the hinterlands, Native Americans were exter-

minated in some regions, and retreated or resisted in others. By the early sixteenth century the Spanish government authorized the first importation of African slaves to the New World colonies. The Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494, based on a papal bull which established the Line of Demarcation between Spanish and Portuguese exploration rights, gave to Portugal exclusive commercial and colonial rights in Africa, so that the first Spanish entry into the slave trade was mediated by Portuguese merchants. Even when the crowns of Spain and Portugal were united, between 1580 and 1640, Spain still acknowledged Portuguese supremacy in the African slave trade. In keeping with the complex and monopolistic Spanish bureaucratic structure, the first African slaves had to be transported to Seville and thence transshipped to the Americas on official Spanish ships. In order to simplify this cumbersome process, the Spanish government authorized three American ports to receive slaves: Veracruz, Cartagena de Indias, and Portobelo. Havana and several Venezuelan ports were soon added to the list. When the galleon route was established between Manila and Acapulco, slaves from East Africa, purchased from Portuguese traders in southeast Asia, entered Spanish America from the Pacific. Although many contraband slaves disembarked at other locations, these ports handled the bulk of the slave trade until well into the eighteenth century, when trade liberalization caused other ports to be opened, among them Buenos Aires and later Montevideo.

The first mechanism for the importation of African slaves was the *licencia*, wherein an individual colonist or merchant paid a fee to the government in return for an authorization to import a determined number of slaves. Although the Spanish government profited by this arrangement, the number of slaves that could be imported was far lower than the demand, and the *asiento* system was instituted. Under this arrangement, the Spanish government contracted with an *asentista*, usually a trading company but sometimes an individual, to provide a certain quantity of slaves over a stipulated period. The *asentista* paid a steep fee to obtain the contract, but could reap huge profits in return. The typical *asiento* ran for up to thirty years, and many were renewed. The predominance of Portuguese among the first holders of *asientos* lasted until around 1640, when the Dutch capture of important Portuguese slaving areas in Africa marked the Dutch entry into the American slave trade. The Portuguese returned briefly to the slave trade, from 1696–1703, supplying more than 10,000 slaves. They were followed by French (1704–1713) and British (1713–1739) slaving companies, as these nations moved into the African slave trade. In the 18th century, the Spanish Compañía Gaditana also briefly

entered the slave trade (Torres Ramírez 1973), and after about 1770 the Spanish government allowed independent traders of all nations to participate. Entrepreneurs from many nations supplied slaves to numerous ports throughout the Americas; some came directly from Africa, others were transshipped from other European colonies, such as Brazil, Curaçao, Barbados, and Jamaica. In the balance, the Portuguese and Dutch supplied the majority of African slaves to Spanish America, and the reconstruction of Afro-Hispanic linguistic contacts requires close attention to the Dutch and Portuguese slaving empires.

By the first decades of the nineteenth century, the British government's anti-slavery stand and the interception of slave ships making the Atlantic crossing intensified the contraband slave trade. In Cuba and Brazil, and to a lesser extent Venezuela, the sugar plantation boom had stimulated a frantic search for cheap labour, and African slaves and free workers were secured by any and all means from all around the Caribbean as well as from Africa (cf. Klein 1967, Knight 1970). In the past, many plantation owners had attempted to buy slaves from diverse ethnic groups speaking no common language, in order to minimize the possibility of uprisings and the formation of maroon communities. These efforts were never entirely successful, and some owners deliberately chose their slaves from a single group, based on the reputation for strength, resistance, tractability, manual dexterity, etc. By the end of the slave period, however, all caution was thrown to the winds, and entire shiploads of slaves from a single ethnic group were disembarked in the Caribbean. Regardless of the circumstances, religious and cultural practices, as well as linguistic differences, often kept African slaves from finding common cause. Ethnic rivalries which had seethed in Africa resurfaced in Latin America, and members of groups known as warriors and trend-setters in Africa became natural leaders in slave communities, often exerting a linguistic and cultural influence far beyond their demographic representation. Thus although hundreds of African languages were carried to Spanish America, only a literal handful made lasting contributions to developing Afro-Hispanic language. Among the most prominent African languages are KiKongo, Kimbundu/Umbundu, Yoruba, Efik, Igbo, Ewe/Fon, and Akan, all spoken by powerful groups living in western Africa.

### Early evidence of Afro-Hispanic language

Reflecting the large African population in late fifteenth century Lisbon, Portuguese writers began literary imitations of the halting

pidginized Portuguese spoken by Africans. The treatments were hardly complementary; in the precursors of what was to become a flourishing literary industry in Spain and Portugal, Africans were portrayed as buffoons, mindless dancers, or simple victims of fate. Some of the language attributed to Africans was a transparently exaggerated travesty, but in general the features of pidgin language emerge: elimination of verbal conjugation; lack of nominal and adjectival agreement; short, simple sentences; reduction of pronouns to a single set; and considerable phonological simplification tending toward open syllables.<sup>1</sup> These early Afro-Portuguese pidgin examples are of great historical importance, for several reasons. A similar pidgin eventually stabilized to form the creoles spoken in Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé, Príncipe, and Annobón. It has been argued that this same Afro-Lusitanian creole provided the input for known and hypothetical Afro-Iberian creoles in Latin America. Portuguese pidgins in which an African component was minimal resulted in creoles stretching from India and Sri Lanka to Malaysia and Indonesia.

Within Spain, literary representations of Africanized speech began to appear at the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The earliest examples show the continuation of pidgin Portuguese elements, mixed with Spanish, as might be expected of Africans who had already spent considerable time in contact with Portuguese. A good example comes in a 'Copla' of Rodrigo de Reinosa, dated 1520 (Cossío 1950):

Yo ser de mandinga y estar negro taibo,  
y estar garrapata vostro parente,  
y vostro lenguaje yo muyto ben sabo  
ser terra Guinea de marfuza gente,  
no estar taiba mas muyto pioyenta,

By the middle of the sixteenth century, the texts no longer reflect Portuguese elements; an authentically Afro-Hispanic language is found in the writings of such authors as Sánchez de Badajoz, Lope de Rueda, Gaspar Gómez de Toledo, Jaime de Guete, Simón de Aguado, etc. Afro-Hispanic literature reached its high point in the seventeenth century, being used by Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Góngora, Quiñones de Benavente, Andrés de Claramonte, and a host of lesser-known writers. These works contain much stereotyping; however, the most egregious cases of exaggeration and distortion involve the lexicon (e.g. the recurring use of *cagayero/cagayera* for *caballero*), not to mention plot lines. The degree of consistency across time and

space, even considering the imitation of earlier authors, suggests that the phonetic and morphological traits attributed to Africans in these texts were substantially accurate. The most salient traits which recur in these Golden Age Afro-Hispanic fragments are:

- (1) Lapses of noun-adjective and subject-verb agreement.
- (2) Lapses in the use of common prepositions.
- (3) Incipient loss of final /s/, most particularly in the first-person plural verbal ending /-mos/, where the final /s/ is grammatically irrelevant, and in words like *Jesús* where the /s/ is lexical and redundant. Loss of preconsonantal /s/ is rare at the beginning, but by the end of the seventeenth century more examples are found (Lipski 1986f, 1988).
- (4) Intervocalic /d/ is frequently written as *r*; this change, found among several contemporary Afro-Hispanic dialects, results from the failure to give /d/ a fricative pronunciation. Pronounced rapidly, the intervocalic [d] reduces to a flap [r].
- (5) Paragogic vowels were added to the end of many words ending in consonants, particularly when the final vowel was stressed. The most common examples included *dioso/rioso* > *Dios*, and *sioro/seoro/sinoro/siñolo/zeolo* > *señor*.
- (6) There was much interchange of /l/ and /r/, so that the seventeenth century humorist Francisco de Quevedo (1988: 127) quipped that in order to speak *guineo*, as he called Afro-Hispanic pidgin, 'sabrás guineo en volviendo las rr ll, y al contrario: como Francisco, *Flancico*; primo, *plimo*' [you will be able to speak *guineo* by changing r's into l's and vice versa: *Francisco* to *Flancico*, *primo* to *plimo*]. In contemporary dialects of Andalusia and the Canary Islands, as well as the Caribbean, neutralization and loss of liquids predominates phrase-finally and before consonants. In the Afro-Hispanic texts, the change /r/ < /l/ was also common between vowels (e.g. *agora* < *agola* 'now') and as the second member of a syllabic onset (e.g. *negro* < *neglo*).
- (7) A general feature of early Afro-Hispanic texts is intrusive nasalization, represented in written documents by the addition of an *n* (e.g. *negro* < *nengro/nengre/nengue*). Most of these cases represent either the spontaneous nasalization of a vowel, or the prenasalization of word-initial consonants (Lipski 1992). When such a word is preceded by a word ending in a vowel, Spanish speakers perceived the first word as ending in /n/. This accounts for such quasi-articles as *lan* (e.g. *lan botella* 'the bottle'), derived from something like *la* + <sup>m</sup>*botella*. Word-final intrusive nasal consonants in *bozal*

texts are most common before voiced obstruents /b/, /d/ and /g/. A common feature of contemporary Afro-Hispanic dialects is the pronunciation of these elements as occlusives in intervocalic contexts, where they are given fricative pronunciation in other varieties of Spanish. Spanish speakers sometimes perceive an unexpectedly occlusive /b/, /d/ or /g/ as being preceded by a nasal consonant, even when objectively no nasal element is found (e.g. Catalán 1960, 1964). The postnasal environment is one of the few contexts in which voiced obstruents are uniformly occlusive in all Spanish dialects.

- (8) There was much variation in the copula. One interesting convergence in many texts is the creation of a verb *sar* (occasionally *santar*), a blend of *ser* and *estar*, and combining the syntactic patterns of both verbs. That this was not just a fanciful invention of Spanish writers is indicated by the survival of similar forms in Afro-Iberian creoles, including São Tomense, Annobonese, and Palenquero.

In other respects, early Afro-Hispanic texts show less internal consistency. A few samples of Golden Age texts which illustrate the features just described are:

Dentiliopala non yerra:  
 pensé samo de mi tierra,  
 reniega den Belcebú.  
 Si querer ser mi galán,  
 pue que Lucrecia li andora,  
 tendremo tura la hora  
 zampato de culdobán.  
 No hablá ningún cagayera  
 ma querido y rengalado:  
 yo lintraré rimendado  
 como por muser men quera.  
 Mía vida ¿no me riponde?  
 Onjos míos de anzabache,  
 quererme mucho, non tache,  
 mi amor, mi rey y mi conde.  
 (Lope de Vega, *El santo negro Rosambuco*; Vega Carpio 1893: t. IV)

Aunque más ro disimulo,  
 no le he yevado en pasiensia,  
 ¿Várate é diabro ra niña!  
 ¿Descororida te quejas?  
 Pelone vuesalmesé,  
 aunque lezcortez paresca,  
 que a eza niña endimoniada



le quielo dar cantaleta.  
 ¿Pol qué le pienza que dise,  
 yevada de tanta pena:  
 ¿sin colol anda ra niña?  
 ¡Barrabas yeve la puelca!  
 Si eya comia calbon,  
 sal, senisa, yeso, tierra  
 y otras muchas polquerías,  
 ¿cómo ha de estar golda y flezca?  
 Comiela, ¡pléguete Clisto!  
 Pala poder ezta buena,  
 vaca, tosino, calnero,  
 gayina, peldiz, coneja,  
 paromino, ganso, pavo,  
 poyos y poyas sin clestas,  
 capon de leche, chorisos,  
 solomiyos y moyejas,  
 salchichones, longanisas,  
 y culabets de peyas . . .

(Luis Quiñones de Benavente, *El negrito hablador y sin color anda la niña*; Rosell 1874)

Siolo mío, siolo mío, no hay para qué vuesa [merced] se venga tan  
 colecicos, que, aunque negro, samo honraro y no sufrimo cosiquillas,  
 aunque sean del mismo demoños, y si me plinga, voto an dioso que da  
 ocasión a que haga un disparates, y eso tocino mejor será para barrigas  
 por de dentro que por de fueras.

(Simón Aguado, *Entremés de los negros*; Cotarelo y Morí 1911: vol. 1)

Africans who arrived in Spain as adults, and who worked as slaves or common labourers, were at best able to muster a rudimentary pidginized Spanish. This pidgin never stabilized to form a creole or an ethnolinguistically distinct 'black Spanish' anywhere in Spain. Slavery was short-lived and not as widespread as in Spanish America. Free Africans became rapidly integrated into the lower echelons of Spanish society. Many blacks in Spain worked as artisans, learned skilled trades and became journeymen and even masters, although the opposition of white craftsmen was considerable. African tradesmen formed their own guilds and societies in southern Spain. They formed exclusively African *cofradías* or religious brotherhoods, and celebrated Holy Week side by side with other Spaniards. Mixture with white Spaniards was an inevitable consequence, and the pidginized speech described above disappeared after a single generation. Some lexical items referring to music, dances, etc. were retained as part of the *cofradías*, or because of their histrionic value for white audiences in the sixteenth century equivalent of minstrel shows, in which black Africans

performed 'typical' dances and rituals for European spectators. Much as in contemporary Afro-Cuban *santería* rites, which preserve African words and expressions for ceremonial purposes, Afro-Hispanic communities in sixteenth and seventeenth century Spain probably retained some linguistic memory of their African heritage. No permanent effect on Peninsular Spanish resulted, but literary 'black talk' continued to be used prominently in songs and skits in Spain well into the eighteenth century, long after pidgin Spanish had disappeared from the Iberian Peninsula. In Portugal, the same literary tradition continued until the early nineteenth century. Today the Africanized language of the Golden Age seems exotic and impossible to associate with any surviving Spanish dialect.

### The beginnings of Afro-Hispanic language in Latin America

In Latin America, the African presence lasted for nearly 400 years, and permanently affected the art, music, food, religion, medicine, and other cultural processes of many areas. Dozens of words of African origin have been identified in regional Spanish dialects, from the Caribbean to the Southern Cone (e.g. Alvarez Nazario 1974, Megenney 1983). Today, the population of African origin is demographically dominant in much of the Caribbean and along the Pacific coast of South America; during colonial times, even larger proportions of Africans were found in many highland regions. Latin America is also home to two Afro-Iberian creoles: Papiamentu, spoken on the Dutch islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, and Palenquero, spoken in the Colombian village of Palenque de San Basilio. Isolated groups of African origin in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Trinidad, Panama, and Colombia use speech traits not found in other Spanish dialects, and which hint at earlier 'Africanized' varieties of Spanish. A rich and varied corpus of literature, music, oral folklore and travel narratives attests to the use of Afro-Hispanic language in Latin America, from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century.

Although African slaves were first pressed into service in the Antilles at the beginning of the sixteenth century, during the first two centuries of colonization the largest groups worked in highland mines in Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, Honduras and Colombia. Little is known of their language except for a handful of seventeenth century poems and songs, which mimic the *habla de negro* of Golden Age Spain. The slaves were predominantly male, subjected to harsh working conditions and decimated by diseases and the

unavailability of reproductive partners. Some slaves transshipped by the Portuguese may have already spoken a rudimentary Portuguese pidgin, perhaps of the sort which eventually gave rise to Afro-Lusitanian creoles on São Tomé, Príncipe, Annobón, Cape Verde, and other regions of West Africa. Pidgin Portuguese was used by European sailors and traders throughout West Africa and well into Asia and the Orient, as a lingua franca or 'reconnaissance language' (Naro 1978). Portuguese borrowings from the sixteenth century onwards into Akan, KiKongo, Kimbundu, and many East African languages, amply attest to the viability of some from of Portuguese throughout Africa. It was the Portuguese practice to concentrate slaves in holding stations or *feitorias* awaiting sale and transshipment. Most slave depots were on islands, including São Tomé, Fernando Poo, Cape Verde and occasionally even remote Annobón. In later centuries, Brazil, Barbados, and Curaçao were used for this purpose.

It has often been claimed that in the Portuguese slaving stations Africans who spoke no mutually intelligible language adopted a rudimentary Portuguese pidgin; those who remained to form permanent populations extended this pidgin to form the creole languages mentioned above (but cf. Goodman 1987 for a rejection of this notion). The extent to which African slaves shipped to Spain and Latin America knew pidgin Portuguese is the subject of ongoing debate, since direct testimony is nonexistent. Even if the slaves had originally learned some form of Portuguese in the *feitorias* or on shipboard, it does not necessarily follow that they would have retained this language upon arrival in Spanish America. The situations most propitious to retention of a Portuguese pidgin include isolation from Spanish together with ethnic fragmentation precluding use of a common native language. These conditions could have been obtained in highland mines, but the African populations died off so quickly that no trace of their language remains. For the remainder of the colonial period, until the early part of the nineteenth century, African slaves were employed principally as domestic helpers, city labourers, and agricultural workers. They were surrounded by Spanish speakers, making it unlikely that they retained pidgin Portuguese in the face of readily available Spanish alternatives.

Among theoreticians of pidginization and creolization, the plantation environment is cited as particularly favourable to creole formation; indeed, some observers feel that a plantation-like situation is essential for creolization (cf. Mintz 1971). In Latin America, the 'plantation' environment in which Africans worked prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century fell short of the quintessential

models advocated by creolists. Linguistic and cultural separation between Africans and Spaniards was never so great as to deprive the Africans of ready native speaker models. Slaves did not live apart in barracks or camps, and worked side by side with other labourers, including indigenous or mestizo residents and even poor white colonists. Agricultural holdings were not large, diminishing the physical separation of slaves and masters. Africans were more readily able to integrate into colonial society, albeit at the very lowest levels, sometimes within a generation after arrival. Under such circumstances, first-generation Africans would speak pidginized Spanish similar to other recently-arrived immigrant groups, with African areal characteristics emerging among the effects of imperfect learning.

From the final decades of the eighteenth century until the middle of the nineteenth century, the sugar plantation boom resulted in the sudden importation of hundreds of thousands of slaves directly from Africa, as well as from other Caribbean islands. In addition to Brazil, the nation most affected by this trend was Cuba; in the latter country, the number of slaves imported in the last half century of the slave trade far outnumbered all previous arrivals since the sixteenth century. One of the consequences of this rapid increase the slave population was the use of African languages among groups of slaves who had been drawn from a single region. Vestiges of Yoruba and KiKongo continue to survive among older Afro-Cubans, although mostly confined to religious ceremonies. In such communities, a more 'Africanized' speech quickly arose, lasting at least into the second generation.

Not all the sugar plantation workers came directly from Africa; some came from other Caribbean islands, and brought with them already established creole languages. Jamaican workers, speaking creole English, and Haitians, speaking creole French, arrived in large numbers. In the nineteenth century, workers from Curaçao, speaking the Iberian-based creole Papiamentu, were also added to the mix. Many slaves arrived in Puerto Rico and Cuba via the Virgin Islands, where the Dutch-based creole Negerhollands was still widely used. Although these languages rarely survived past the first generation, they gave a decidedly creole flavor to 'Afro-Cuban' Spanish, creating the impression that a unique Spanish-based creole was once widespread in the Antilles. While a creoloid Spanish unquestionably existed at some time and for some speakers, the disproportionately large corpus of attestations from nineteenth century Cuba, and the published research which has resulted, suggest a higher degree of pan-regional consistency than is warranted by serious reconstruction.

### Written attestations of Afro-Hispanic language in Latin America

The first direct mention of Afro-Hispanic speech in Latin America comes in the middle of the seventeenth century, in songs and poems which continue the literary tradition established in Golden Age Spain. The most famous poems were written by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, who imitated the speech of Africans in Mexico (arriving from Puerto Rico) in the 1670s. Sor Juana's transcriptions are consistent with other reproductions of Afro-Hispanic speech; a typical example is:

Cuche usé, cómo la rá  
rimoño la cantaleta;  
¡huye, husico ri tonina,  
con su nalis ri trumpeta!  
¡Vaya, vaya, vaya!  
¡Zambio, lela, lela!  
¡Válgati, riabro, rimóño,  
con su ojo ri culebra!  
¿Quiriaba picá la Virgi?  
¡Anda, tomá para heya! . . .  
Sola saca la Pañola;  
¡pues, Dioso, mila la trampa,  
que aunque neglo, gente somo,  
aunque nos dici cabaya!

A number of lesser-known Afro-Mexican poems and songs also survive from the seventeenth century. A few *villancicos* were based on pidginized Portuguese rather than Spanish (Megenney 1985). An example is:

ha negliyo, ha negliyo de Santo Tomé . . .  
que de riza morremo contenta.  
que aregría que temo  
pos la santa nacimiento deste Deos  
o que nasce na seno.  
sá blanco nao sá moreno  
e may sá nosso palente.  
azuntamo turo zente  
cos flauto y os bitangola.  
birimbao,  
cos viola, cos arpa, e cascaué.  
Agregremo esse siola  
os menino e Sa Zuzé.

The reference to São Tomé is relevant, since the Portuguese slaving station on that island reached its peak around 1640, and slaves who had been held on that island would be expected to speak a Portuguese-based pidgin or creole, possibly even as a native language. The remaining *bozal* texts from colonial Mexico are indisputably Spanish. A more Hispanized seventeenth century *villancico* is (Stevenson 1974: 52):

a palente a palente  
que que le señol neglico  
que bamo a lo portálico  
a yeva a niño plesente  
vamo turu de repente  
ante que vaya pastora  
y si a lo niño que yora  
le pantamo que halemo?  
uno baile baylemo  
y sera la puelto rico  
que la niño duerme.  
lo neglo venimo  
a la nacimenta  
tocando trumenta  
y a niño selvimo  
copriya decimo.

Africanized Spanish is attested elsewhere in seventeenth-century Latin America, particularly in the highlands of Colombia, Peru, and Alto Peru (Bolivia). For example, the Peruvian Juan de Araujo (1646–1712) composed '*Los negritos a la navidad del Sp*' towards the middle of the seventeenth century (Stevenson 1959: 236f.):

Los coflades de la estleya vamo turus a Beleya  
y velema a rio la beya con ciolo en lo potal  
vamo vamo currendo aya, oylemo un viyansico que lo compondlá  
Flacico siendo gayta su focico y luego lo cantalá  
Blasico Pellico Zuanico y Tomá y lo estliviyo dilá  
Gulumbé gulumbá guachemo  
bamo a bel que traen de Angola a Ziolo y a siola Baltasale  
con Melchola y mi plimo Gasipar  
vamo vamo currendo ayá curendo acá  
vamo siguiendo la estleya lo negliyo coltezano pus lo rey  
e cun tesuro, a la estleya tlas lo Rey a pulque ayá  
de calmino los tles ban, Blasico Pelico Zuanico y Tomá e ya  
vamo turu ayá, que pala al niño alegrar  
Vamo turus los Neglios pues nos yeba nostla estleya que  
sin tantos noche abla i co Pelico Zuanico y Tomá plimo beya  
noche abla vamo alegle al polta riyo velema junto al peseble

This song was performed in Cuzco and possibly elsewhere, and claims to portray the speech of African *bozales* in seventeenth-century Peru. An anonymous seventeenth-century song, *Esa noche yo baila*, was evidently composed in Bolivia (Claro 1974: lxxv-lxxvii):

Esa noche yo baila  
con Maria lucume  
asta sol que amanece  
Plo mi Dios que sa acuya  
esa gente comensa  
aunque pe la buesa fe  
su hichito ya nace.  
Poca poca nobela  
nacie cun Batulume  
puero nega en bona fe  
del chiquillo que ayesa  
el manda me a mi canta  
yo canta asta amanese  
su hichito ya nace . . .

Another Afro-Bolivian example, from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, is (Fortún de Ponce 1957: 122f.):

Afuela, afuela apalta apalta  
que entlamo la tlopa Gazpala  
apalta, afuela  
que entlamo la gualda re reye Guineya.  
e lo pifalo soplal  
e mandamo echal plegon  
respetamo ro branco  
tenemo atención.  
Manda la reye Gazipala  
que nenglo vamo regala en plusición a plotala  
con sonaja e guitarra  
e cantemo tonadiya . . .

The *bozal* texts just surveyed bear little resemblance to contemporary dialects of Spanish used in the same regions. In particular, none of the consonantal modifications found in this early Afro-Hispanic language appear in the Spanish of highland Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, or Mexico. Moreover, the texts contain no other regionally identifiable elements which would bridge the gaps between colonial Spanish, early *bozal* speech, and contemporary regional dialects of Spanish. Seventeenth-century Latin American

*bozal* language disappeared without a trace, and exercised no discernible influence on surrounding Spanish dialects.

From the eighteenth century onwards, more authentically Latin American *bozal* examples begin to emerge. As with the Peninsular cases, there is always an element of burlesque and stereotyping, but there is also an inkling of what Afro-Hispanic speech might have been like in different Spanish colonies. The following text comes from eighteenth century Veracruz, an area where the African presence was particularly strong, and where loss of final consonants persists even today (Mendoza 1956):

Ya lo ve como no me quiere,  
no me quiere como yo,  
y dice que la mujere  
no se mueren de amó.  
Ya lo ve como tu carricia  
no comprende mi doló  
y muero y de la tiricia  
se adficia mi corazón.

These texts show phenomena still found in isolated Afro-Hispanic enclaves: the omnipresent reduction of syllable-final /s/, neutralization and loss of syllable-final liquids and conversion of intervocalic /d/ to [r].

One of the few Afro-Hispanic texts surviving from the eighteenth century Caribbean is an anonymous Cuban *canto de cabildo* (Guirao 1938: 3):

Dondó jachero  
pa un palo.  
Palo ta duro.  
jacha no cotta.  
Palo ta brabbo.  
¿qué son ese?  
Si palo so jocuma,  
yo so quiebrajacha.  
Bamo be quie pue ma.  
Tu jabla y no conose.  
Tambó ta brabbo.

The language of this poem is pidginized Spanish, but the phonological modifications are those of vernacular Cuban Spanish, and suggest that Africans in eighteenth century Cuba were extending already existing consonantal reduction, while perhaps influencing regional varieties of Spanish in areas where the African population was numerically predominant.



Another glimpse into developing *bozal* Spanish in the Caribbean comes in a catechism published by the Spaniard Nicolás Duque de Estrada in Cuba in 1797 (Laviña 1989; cf. also Fernández Marrero 1987). This curious text is entitled *Explicación de la doctrina cristiana acomodada a la capacidad de los negros bozales*, and in part constitutes a 'manual' for Spanish-speaking priests to simplify their language and make it accessible to African slaves. According to the author, the language used by the *bozales* was 'sin casos, sin tpos., sin conjunciones, sin concordancias, sin orden . . .' [without cases, without tenses, without conjunctions, without order . . .] (Laviña 1989: 67). In the catechism, only a single sentence is attributed directly to *bozal* speech (p. 75): *pa nuetro ta seno cielos* [padre nuestro que estás en los cielos = 'our Father who art in Heaven']. Most of the author's deliberate simplifications of Spanish are not so indicative of pidginized Spanish, but involve loss of articles and lack of agreement, e.g.:

Ustedes no miran casabe entero? Eso se llama torta de casabe; parte la torta pedaso, pedaso, mas que son chiquito, eso es partícula de casabe. Mismo pan, mismo ñame. (Do you not see [the] whole casabe? That is called casabe cake; part of the cake [is called a] piece, a piece, no matter how small it is, a crumb of casabe. [it is the] same [with] bread, [the] same [with] yams.)

This text suggests that by the end of the eighteenth century, *bozal* Spanish was more like a 'foreigner-talk' Spanish (in the sense of Ferguson 1975), rather than a greatly distorted pidgin as found in earlier literary examples.

Beginning at the turn of the nineteenth century and spanning the next hundred years, there was a rich outpouring of Afro-Hispanic language in poems, plays, songs and novels from several regions of Latin America. By far the largest number of texts come from Cuba, where the literary representation of 'Africanized' Spanish has been a popular motif even in recent decades. Many examples of Afro-Cuban language were collected by the Cuban folklorists Fernando Ortiz (1924, 1985, 1986) and Lydia Cabrera (1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1976, 1979, 1980, 1989). *Bozal* language was extensively used in nineteenth century Cuban *teatro bufo* or humorous skits; among the better-known works is the play *Los novios catedráticos* by Ignacio Benítez del Cristo (1930), *La herencia de Camuto* and *Los hijos de Thalía* by Benjamín Sánchez Maldonado (1961), *Los negros catedráticos* and *El negro cheche* by Francisco Fernández (Montes Huidobro 1987). The Spanish-born Cuban journalist Bartolomé José Crespo y Borbón, using the pseudonym Creto Gangá, wrote many newspaper instalments based on the

*bozal* characters Pancha Jutía and Canuto Raspadura (Cruz 1974). Among the better-known Cuban novels to introduce *bozal* Spanish are *Biografía de un cimarrón* by Miguel Barnet, *Francisco* by Anselmo Suárez y Romero, *Caniquí* by José Antonio Ramos, *Doña Guiomar* and *Via crucis* by Emilio Bacardí, *Sofía* by Martín Morúa Delgado, *Cecilia Valdés* by Cirilo Villaverde, and *Romualdo* by Francisco Calcagno. The language of these Afro-Cuban texts ranges from rudimentary broken Spanish to speech which is barely distinguishable from colloquial non-African Cuban Spanish.

The Cuban lexicographer Esteban Pichardo was one of the first to describe *bozal* speech of the nineteenth century, offering the following imitation (Pichardo 1976: 11-12):

yo mi ñama Frasco Mandinga, nenglito reburujaoro, crabo musuamo  
ño Mingué, de la Cribaneri, branco como carabón, suña como nan gato,  
poco poco mirá oté, cribi papele toro ri toro ri, Frasco dale dinele, non  
gurbia dinele, e laja cabesa, e bebe guariente, e coje la cuelo, guanta qui  
guanta.

A more humorous language was used by Creto Gangá (Cruz 1974):

Negrito má fotuná  
no lo salí lan Guinea  
bindita hora que branco  
me lo traé neta tierra.  
Ya yo son libre  
yo ta casá  
mi su amo memo  
me libertá.

The Cuban texts typify *bozal* Spanish as used in Latin American from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century.

A handful of nineteenth-century Puerto Rican *bozal* examples have come to light (cf. Alvarez Nazario 1974), as well as a couple of Venezuelan cases. Afro-Peruvian literary language of the nineteenth century is represented in several important works, reflecting the large African population in Lima and other coastal cities, whose *bozal* language and musical traditions were noted by observers throughout the nineteenth century (cf. Romero 1987). Even today, the African presence in coastal Peru is easily discerned, and in colonial Lima, African slaves and free labourers worked as domestic servants, as well as occupying a variety of skilled and unskilled occupations. An important literary source of nineteenth century Afro-Peruvian language is the satirist Felipe Pardo y

Aliaga, whose writings describe the linguistic situation in Lima in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

After Cuba, the second largest source of Afro-Hispanic language in colonial Latin America is Buenos Aires and Montevideo. During much of the colonial period the population of African origin represented a significant demographic proportion in Montevideo and Buenos Aires, approaching 40% of the total at the turn of the nineteenth century (Fontanella de Weinberg 1987a, 1987b). The Africans were mostly of recent arrival, and spoke the *bozal* Spanish found elsewhere. Numerous Afro-Argentine and Afro-Uruguayan texts have made their way into *cancioneros*, carnival repertoires, and accounts of the endless civil wars that plagued these nations in the early post-colonial period. One such example, from the nineteenth-century Afro-Uruguayan poem *Los negros federales*, is (Ortiz Oderigo 1974: 140-1):

hacemi favol, ño Pancho  
de aplical mi tu papeli  
polque yo soy bosalona  
y no lo puedo entendeli  
yo quisiela uté me diga  
lo que ti quelí decí,  
porque tío Juan, mi malido,  
quielí también esclibí.  
El es neglo bosalona  
pelo neglo fedelá  
y agladecido a la Patlia  
que le dió la libeltá.

Many of the Afro-Argentine and Afro-Uruguayan examples do not contain the condescending buffoonery of Afro-Hispanic texts from Spain and elsewhere in Latin America. In the colonial and post-colonial wars of the River Plate region, soldiers of African descent played important roles, distinguishing themselves for courage and dedication. On the *pampas*, the black Gaucho was a familiar figure, and the best *payadores* or song-improvisers were of African descent. Afro-Argentines appear in several works of Gaucho literature, including Fernández' *Martín Fierro* and Ascasubi's *Cielito gaucho*; in the latter poem, one of the black characters uses *bozal* language (Ascasubi 1900):

Onde é que etá esem branquillos.  
Lijalo no má vinise  
a ese rosine tlompeta,  
que cuando le tlopellamo  
lon diablo que no sujeta.

### Possible Portuguese creole basis for Latin American *bozal* Spanish

Most of the *bozal* Spanish texts from Latin America, from the seventeenth to the late nineteenth century, do not convincingly point to the prior existence of a uniform pan-Latin American Spanish pidgin or creole. Recurring features of *bozal* language can be explained as spontaneous independent developments or as natural learners' errors. These nineteenth-century Afro-Hispanic examples purport to represent the speech of Africans living in close contact with native Spanish speakers who, following emancipation in the mid 1800s, acquired considerable geographical and social mobility. At least through the first half of the nineteenth century, wherever there were large African populations in Latin America, there was still a pidginized Afro-Hispanic language in use. Such language rarely survived the first generation of *bozal* speakers, although fully fluent but detectably Afro-American varieties of Spanish persisted in some places well into the twentieth century. The data surveyed above fail to demonstrate that any stable Ibero-Romance pidgin or creole provided the basis for colonial *bozal* Spanish; however, several Spanish-based creoles exist or have recently disappeared in areas of Latin America with predominantly Afro-American populations. Beginning with the observations of Van Name (1869) until the middle of the twentieth century, it was felt that no creolized dialect of Spanish had ever existed in the New World, unlike the creolized French, English, Portuguese and Dutch which continue to be spoken. The one exception, conceded by some, was Papiamentu, spoken in the Netherlands Antilles (particularly on the former slaving station Curaçao), formed from both Spanish and Portuguese bases (cf. Lenz 1928, Navarro Tomás 1951, van Wijk 1958 for early theories of the formation of Papiamentu; Birmingham 1970; DeBose 1975; Ferrol 1982; Maurer 1986a, 1986b; Munteanu 1974, 1992 for more recent approaches).

Only a few decades ago, studies were begun on the creole dialect of Palenque de San Basilio in Colombia, which was found to greatly resemble Papiamentu and Afro-Portuguese creoles (Bickerton and Escalante 1970; Escalante 1954; Friedemann and Patiño Rosselli 1983; Granda 1968, 1972b; Megenney 1986; Schwegler 1991b, 1992, forthcoming a). At first, these creoles were regarded as isolated curiosities, of interest to specialists but not bearing directly on broader issues of Latin American dialectology. Palenquero, for example, was formed by a group of runaway slaves who fled Cartagena de Indias in the early 1600s and formed a maroon

village in Colombia's interior. Papiamentu arose on Curaçao during the same period, when the island was used as a transfer point for slaves, also receiving Portuguese-speaking Sephardic Jews from Brazil. Portuguese elements in Papiamentu could in principle be explained by the latter presence; similar forms in Palenquero, while perhaps supporting theories of a Portuguese pidgin learned by slaves in Africa or on the slave ships, do not necessarily imply that an Afro-Lusitanian creole had ever been widespread in Spanish America. However, several scholars had noted that certain nineteenth-century *bozal* texts from Cuba and Puerto Rico exhibit combinations which could not readily be explained away as imperfect learning of Spanish. These texts showed striking similarities with Papiamentu, Cape Verde creole and Palenquero, unmistakable creole elements whose presence could not be attributed to mere chance or predicted from the pidginized Spanish of earlier *bozal* examples. These recurring traits gave rise to the revolutionary claim that an Afro-Lusitanian creole once existed in all of Latin America, or at least in the Caribbean region.<sup>3</sup> The ultimate source is presumed to be the pidgin Portuguese 'reconnaissance language' which first arose in the fifteenth century; these similarities were also used to bolster 'monogenetic' theories of creole formation, according to which this early Portuguese pidgin was relexified and coalesced to form creole dialects of English and French in the Caribbean and Africa, Spanish and Portuguese in Asia, and Dutch in the West Indies, Guyana and possibly South Africa.<sup>4</sup> The impact of the creole Portuguese hypothesis of Spanish dialectology is obvious, for in its most radical form, this theory claims that a SINGLE creole underlay virtually all Afro-Hispanic speech over a period of more than three centuries, and was more important than the strictly African element in determining the characteristics of *bozal* Spanish and its possible repercussions in general Latin American Spanish. The focus of Afro-Hispanic studies thus shifted partially, away from the search for direct African-American links to the postulate of an intermediate pan-Hispanic creole stage. This intermediate language, through contact with European Spanish following the abolition of slavery, gradually came to resemble regional Latin American Spanish more and more, while perhaps transferring some of its own characteristics to the Spanish spoken by descendants of Europeans.

This is a sweeping claim, which if substantiated would totally reshape our understanding of the formation of Latin American Spanish in vast areas of the Caribbean and coastal South America. The African contribution to Latin American Spanish would then be twofold: not only the direct transfer of Africanisms, but also an

intermediate transfer from an Afro-Hispanic creole, whose characteristics had already solidified among the African population in Latin America.

Much of the evidence adduced in favor of a Latin American *bozal* creole cannot convincingly resist the alternative analysis of imperfectly learned Spanish, spontaneously arising in several Latin American colonies. Speakers of different African languages, acquiring Spanish under unfavourable conditions at different places and times, might produce such combinations, much as contemporary learners of Spanish from a variety of language backgrounds produce recurring errors of agreement, syntactic simplification, misuse or loss of prepositions, and so forth. In fact, all but a handful of the similarities between *bozal* texts and the above-mentioned creoles are common to all precarious language-learning environments (Lipski 1985e). Even the remaining creole-like elements may not be carryovers from an earlier pan-Hispanic *bozal* creole, but rather direct borrowings from already established Afro-American creoles.

#### A closer look at 'creole' elements of *bozal* language

A wide variety of phenomena found in Afro-Cuban and Afro-Puerto Rican texts have been used at one point or another to bolster a monogenetic Afro-Hispanic creole theory. Closer scrutiny reveals that while similar combinations are indeed found in Afro-Iberian creoles such as Papiamentu and Palenquero, they appear only sporadically in *bozal* Spanish texts, and all but a few are likely to have non-creole roots. Among the more frequently cited cases are the following:

- (1) Non-inverted questions of the type *¿qué tú quieres?* 'what do you want?' (Otheguy 1973). These constructions are common throughout the Caribbean, and may have been reinforced by the Canary Island immigration. Afro-Iberian creoles exhibit non-inverted questions, but so do non-Africanized dialects of Spanish, as well as many varieties of Portuguese.
- (2) Categorical use of redundant subject pronouns (Granda 1968, 1971). All Afro-Romance creoles use obligatory subject pronouns, due to lack of verbal inflection. The same occurs in vestigial Spanish lacking a creole basis (Lipski 1985e), and among Spanish-recessive bilinguals of various backgrounds. Given that subject pronouns or clitics are obligatory in nearly all West African languages, preference

- for overt pronouns in *bozal* Spanish would be predicted without the intermediate stage of a creole.
- (3) 'Personalized' infinitives with lexical subjects of the type *para tú hacer eso* 'for you to do that' (Alvarez Nazario 1959: 46; Megenney 1984). Such constructions are found in Afro-Iberian creoles, but also in Canary Island and Andalusian Spanish, in Galician and Portuguese, and throughout Latin America (Kany 1951: 159; Padrón 1949: 164; Flórez 1946: 377). It is likely that this construction has arisen spontaneously in more than one area, since it results from the reduction of a marked conjugated form to the maximally unmarked infinitive. This occurs in Spanish child language (Gili Gaya 1960: 29; 1972) and has also occurred in Portuguese, where a conjugated 'personal infinitive' has arisen (Maurer 1968).
  - (4) Lack of gender and number agreement in nouns and adjectives (cf. Granda 1968, 1971; Otheguy 1973, Perl 1982, 1989a, 1989b). Romance-based creoles have eliminated the original systems of marking nominal and adjectival gender and number. This same instability and reduction of gender/number is one of the most frequent characteristics of learners' and foreigners' Spanish, and is found in areas where Spanish is spoken as a second language such as Equatorial Guinea (Lipski 1985d) and where Spanish is vestigially spoken (e.g. Lipski 1985e, 1990c, 1990d). The existence of this process during creolization reflects the fact that creoles are usually formed from reduced pidgins, but the mere presence of deficient concordance systems does not point to the former existence of a creole.
  - (5) Loss of common prepositions, particularly *a* and *de* (e.g. by Alvarez Nazario 1959; Granda 1971; Otheguy 1973; Perl 1982, 1989a, 1989b). The same feature is found in nearly all foreign-influenced and vestigial varieties of Spanish. In contemporary syntactic analyses, *de* and *a* may not be underlying prepositions but rather superficial case-markers, thus subject to variable deletion during imperfect learning or linguistic erosion.
  - (6) Occasional elimination of the copula (Alvarez Nazario 1959, 1974; Granda 1971; Perl 1982). This often occurs in vestigial speech, and given that a large cross-section of West African languages employ 'verbalized adjectives' instead of a combination of *verb* + *predicate adjective*, loss of a copula might be an African areal characteristic rather than a post-creole carryover. In any case, the Afro-Hispanic examples are vanishingly rare.

- (7) Loss of articles (Alvarez Nazario 1959, 1974; Granda 1971, Perl 1982). This is also found in vestigial and foreign-influenced Spanish, and in view of the generalized absence of articles in West African languages, could also be an areal characteristic.
- (8) Postposed demonstratives of the type *piera ese* [= *la piedra esa/esa piedra* 'that rock'] (Otheguy 1973). Postposed demonstratives are found in many non-creole dialects of Spanish (and are typical of colloquial Cuban Spanish), as well as in several creoles. Moreover, Latin American *bozal* texts yield only a couple of examples.
- (9) Lack of syntactic complementizers such as *que* (Granda 1971). Syntactic simplification through reduction of subordinate structures characterizes all reduced forms of Spanish, and is found in all Afro-Hispanic, Amerindian-Hispanic and Anglo-Hispanic foreigner talk.
- (10) Use of the subject pronoun *vos*, in *bozal* texts from the Caribbean, where this pronoun is not normally found (Megenney 1984, 1985b). The pronoun (*a*)*bo* is found in all Afro-Lusitanian creoles, as well as in Papiamentu and Palenquero. In Caribbean *bozal* examples, *vos* is extremely rare, found only in a nineteenth-century Cuban *villancico* from Camagüey (Ballagas 1946: 92):

... Francisco mi pariente  
disió que ya *vos* parió,  
como yo quería aguaitá  
lo que *vó* había parío,  
aquí me tenei, Señá.

The presence of *vos* in this lone example does not implicate a former creole in Cuba, for vestigial *vos*, together with diphthongized verb forms, is amply documented for nineteenth-century Cuba in precisely this region (López Morales 1965, Pichardo 1976: 12). At the same time, diphthongized verb forms are not found in any Afro-Iberian creole, but are widely attested as *voseo* variants in several regions of Latin America, including western Panama, the Lake Maracaibo region of Venezuela, most of Chile, and occasionally in the Andean zone.

- (11) Use of the portmanteau preposition/connector *na*, found in a few Afro-Caribbean texts, and in Portuguese-based creoles, derived from the contraction of *en* + *a* (Megenney 1984, 1985b). A rare Cuban example is (Estrada y Zenea 1980): *atrás quitrín pa yegá prisa, na panadería* 'behind us the carriage is arriving quickly, to the bakery,'



*cuando yo me piá de na caballo* 'when I dismounted from the horse', Brau (1894: 138) observed that in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico, 'cimarrones bozales' used expressions such as *na-cosina*, *ne-pueblo*, *na-casa*, etc. for *en la cocina* 'in the kitchen,' *en el pueblo* 'in the town,' *en la casa* 'in the house.' This form is very limited in Afro-Caribbean texts, and is not attested for *bozal* language of other areas.

- (12) In Afro-Lusitanian creoles, including Palenquero and Papiamento, third person pronouns are reduced to a single variant each for singular plural. Typically the singular variant has the general form *e(le)*, while there is more variation in the plural, including pronouns of non-Romance origin (e.g. Papiamento *nan*, Palenquero *ané*). A few Afro-Caribbean texts show third person pronouns similar to those found in Afro-Iberian creoles. The general form is *elle* or *nelle*; these words are frequently attested for nineteenth-century Cuba. From the novel *Cecilia Valdés*, by Cirilo Villaverde (ca. 1839) we find: *Elle estaba en un mortorio. El borbano manda prendeslo. Dentra Tondá, elle solito con su espá, coge dos.* 'He was alone in a mortuary. The governor ordered him arrested. Tondá entered, alone, he grabbed two of them.' *Nelle* was occasionally used as third person plural, as in (Morúa Delgado 1901): *Y nelle lo muchachito va pendé su Paña de nuté?* 'And they the boys are going to depend on your Spain?' In the skit 'Los negros catedráticos', performed in 1877 (Benítez del Cristo 1930), we find examples such as *Eso mimo quiere yo, nelle lo mimo, vamo pa la engresia* 'that's just what I want, she does too, let's go to the church'. The nineteenth-century Cuban humorist Creto Gangá employed many instances of *nelle*, for instance (Cruz 1974: 117–8): *si yo lo tené uno niño como nelle, yo va muri de cuntentamienta* 'if I had a child like her, I would die of happiness'. Alvarez Nazario (1974: 185–97), one of the few authors to attempt an analysis of this form, feels that semantic replacement of a preposition plus an article (as in *na*) has occurred. There is, however, no plausible source in the case of (*n*)elle. The [y] represented by *ll* is presumably derived from *ella*, *ellas* and *ellos* (the variant form *nella* occasionally appears); neither Portuguese *êle* nor similar forms in Papiamento, Palenquero, São Tomense, etc., provide a source for the [y]. *Elle/nelle* may thus be a spontaneous Afro-Hispanic development which arose in the nineteenth-century Caribbean.

- (13) The use of *tener* 'to have' instead of *haber* as the existential verb (Meggenney 1984, 1985a; Granda 1968). Most Afro-Iberian creoles, as well as African-influenced vernacular Brazilian Portuguese, have replaced existential *haber* by *tener/ter*. While use of *tener* in *bozal* speech may indeed come from an earlier proto-creole, this is not a necessary conclusion, since use of existential *tener* is also found in vestigial Spanish of many regions, and even in some Spanish dialects with no demonstrable Afro-creole connection (cf. Lipski 1985e). At the same time, use of *tener* with existential force is quite rare in *bozal* language; one example (Cabrera 1969) is: *en botica tien de tó* 'in the drugstore there is everything'. Much more frequent is the use of *haber*, albeit with highly nonstandard forms and syntactic patterns: *yo lo ve craramiente que lo habé en la mundo quiene me lo tené infisión y güena goluntá* 'now I clearly see that there are people in the world who like me and wish me well' (Cruz 1974: 230).
- (14) The frequent Caribbean preposing of *más* in negative expressions (*más nada* 'no more', *más nunca* 'never again') instead of the more usual phrase-final position has been claimed as a leftover of an earlier Portuguese-based creole (Meggenney 1985a). A Portuguese connection is quite likely, but the presence of this construction in Caribbean Spanish is more likely to be due to the heavy influence of Canary Island Spanish, in which such constructions (apparently due to earlier Galician-Portuguese maritime contacts) are common (Alvarez Nazario 1972b: 95; D'Albuquerque 1953; Gutiérrez Araus 1991; Kany 1951: 363–4; Lorenzo Ramos 1976; Pérez Vidal 1944; Torres Stinga 1981).

### Possible Papiamento influence in Afro-Caribbean Spanish

Most of the features of earlier Afro-Hispanic language do not unequivocally support the former existence of a pan-Caribbean Spanish creole. There is, however, one indisputably creole element found in some Caribbean *bozal* texts, which has formed the centre-piece for all creolist theories of *bozal* Spanish. This is the use of *ta*, in combination with a verbal stem derived from the infinitive lacking final /r/:

(Puerto Rico) ¿Po que tú no ta queré a mí?  
'Why don't you love me?'

(Puerto Rico) *Siempre ta regalá dinero a mí*

'He always gives me money'

(Cuba) *Horita ta bení pa cá*

'Soon she (will) come here'

(Cuba) *Río seco ta corre mamba*

'The dry river is running downstream'

(Cuba) *Como que yo ta cuchá la gente que habla tanto . . . yo ta mirá gente mucho*

'Since I am listening to people who talk so much . . . I see a lot of people'

(Cuba) *Amo ta pedí leche*

'Master is asking for milk'

This construction, unlikely to have arisen spontaneously from an unstructured Spanish pidgin, is identical to verb phrases in Iberian-based creoles throughout the world, including Palenquero and Papiamentu in Latin America, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde Portuguese creole in Africa, Portuguese-based creoles in India, Sri Lanka, Macau and Malaysia, and in Philippine Creole Spanish (Chabacano). Many investigators (e.g. Otheguy 1973; Granda 1968; Megenney 1984, 1985a, 1985c; Perl 1982, 1989a, 1989b; Ziegler 1981) have regarded the presence of *ta* in Afro-Caribbean *bozal* Spanish as virtually conclusive proof that an Afro-Hispanic creole, similar to Palenquero and Papiamentu, was once spoken throughout the Caribbean, and perhaps even in South America.

Despite the obvious similarities with respect to the particle *ta*, in other respects, the verbal systems of the above-mentioned creoles share fewer similarities with *bozal* Spanish. For the past/perfective, *ya/ja* is the most common variant, but other forms are also used; Papiamentu, for example, uses *a*, as does the Ternateño dialect of Philippine Creole Spanish. In Palenquero, *ba* is used as an imperfective marker, although its syntactic properties are different from those of *ta*. Papiamentu and Cape Verde creole make some use of Spanish/Portuguese imperfect verb forms. No Latin American *bozal* text shows consistent use of any past/perfective particle.

There is even more variation among creoles to represent future/irrealis: Papiamentu has *lo* (apparently from Portuguese *logo* 'later'), Palenquero has *tan*, Philippine Creole Spanish has *di* or *ay*, and so forth. Latin American *bozal* texts, on the other hand, use no particle to signal futurity; either the simple present or a periphrastic Spanish future with *va* is used. This casts considerable doubt on the prior existence of a uniform Afro-Hispanic creole, since only one component of the usual three-particle creole verb system is found in attested *bozal* language. A re-evaluation of the role played by *ta* in *bozal* Spanish is called for.

It is striking that among the scores of Afro-Hispanic texts, from Spain and all Latin America and spanning nearly 400 years, the combination *ta* = *V<sub>inf</sub>* is found only (1) in a very small number of texts, (2) in the nineteenth century, (3) in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Even in the nineteenth century Afro-Caribbean corpus, constructions based on *ta* alternate with the archetypical *bozal* pattern of partially or incorrectly conjugated verb forms. No instance of *ta* occurs in the large Afro-Hispanic corpus from Argentina, Uruguay, or Peru, nor in scattered texts from other regions.

In a few cases it might be possible to argue that spontaneous developments took place, e.g. where *ta* is clearly derived from *esta[r]* acting as either a locative verb or in combination with an adjective: *Yo no pue ta quieto ya* (Cruz 1974: 148) 'I can't be still now'; *Nángüe ta bueno . . .* (Cabrera 1983: 183) 'The *nángüe* [tree] is good'. In other instances, phonetic erosion of what was once a gerund, ending in *-ando* or *-(i)endo*, is also a possibility: *Que to mi cuerpo me etá temblá* (Cabrera 1979: 40) 'My whole body is trembling'; *pavo real ta bucan palo* (Cabrera 1983: 128) 'the peacock is looking for a tree'. In other cases, however, the verbs in question are habitual or durative, contexts where Spanish would not use any combination involving *estar*. This residue is the only sure indicator of an infusion of creole elements into *bozal* language.

An overview of Puerto Rican *bozal* texts reveals only a small number of cases of the aspectual particle *ta* (Alvarez Nazario 1974: 193-4), as compared with other examples in which no clearly creoloid forms appear. By far the greatest number of cases of *ta* occur in texts from Cuba, beginning towards the middle of the nineteenth century, carrying through to the early twentieth century. Even in Cuba, numerous *bozal* texts from the same time period lack any use of *ta*, employing instead the prototypical *bozal* verbal system in which verbs were reduced to the third person singular or to a bare infinitive (or in the case of the copula *ser*, to *son*). This mystery may be at least partially resolved by taking a closer look at the recruitment of the labour force in the nineteenth century Caribbean.

The source of verbal constructions with *ta*, and possibly other creole-like structures in some Cuban and Puerto Rican *bozal* language, can be traced to the importation of Papiamento-speaking labourers from Curaçao to Puerto Rico and Cuba at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Alvarez Nazario 1959, 1974: 65, 218-9; Granda 1973). The Dutch *asiento* on Curaçao, which had been operative since 1634, was revoked in 1713, but clandestine traffic from Curaçao and St Eustatius continued past this point, transshipping African slaves throughout the Caribbean. In the final decades

of the eighteenth century, the sugar plantation boom caused an unprecedented demand for labourers in Cuba, and Curaçao was instrumental in supplying the total needs of the Spanish colonies. In Cuba, and Puerto Rico, blacks from Curaçao were mentioned in nineteenth century novels and plays. 'Curaçao speech' (i.e. Papiamentu) was described as *español arañado* or *degenerado* 'shredded or degenerate Spanish'. Use of Papiamentu is well attested in Cuba and Puerto Rico until the end of the nineteenth century (Bachiller y Morales 1883: 103; Alvarez Nazario 1974: 146).

In order for Papiamentu to have influenced the speech of *bozales*, it is not necessary that a large number of Papiamentu speakers be found in a given region, nor that imitation of all features of Papiamentu would automatically follow from the coexistence of Cuban and Puerto Rican *bozales* with natives of Curaçao. African-born *bozales*, engaged in creating a survival-level contact vernacular based on the Spanish they heard, would be likely to adopt only those Papiamentu features which partially coincided with already evolving *bozal* patterns, or which provided an especially efficient means of achieving reliable communication. The verbal construction *ta V<sub>inf</sub>* is a good candidate for adoption, since it permits a considerable verbal differentiation without increasing morphological complexity beyond that of the bare infinitive. It is also homologous with the frequent West African pattern of preverbal tense/aspect particles, which has been reproduced in African-influenced 'Atlantic' creoles, and would therefore seem less 'foreign' to the plantation slave acquiring a Spanish pidgin. This solution may ultimately be simpler than the chaotic mixture of verb forms that characterized early *bozal* speech. Several already existent features of developing *bozal* language would aid in assimilating Papiamentu verbs using *ta*: (1) the use of *ta*, derived from *está/estar* in adjectival constructions (e.g. *el palo ta duro* 'the [wood of the] tree is hard') (2) the loss of final /r/ in infinitives, from the sixteenth century onwards; (3) the use of uninflected infinitive stems instead of conjugated verbs in *bozal* Spanish. Just as Spanish speakers considered Papiamentu to be 'broken Spanish', so *bozal* speakers would have found Papiamentu to be more like their own speech than fully inflected Spanish. Curaçao labourers spoke Papiamentu fluently, as a native or near-native language, and not as a pidgin; African-born Cubans and Puerto Ricans would be likely to take Papiamentu, spoken by fellow black workers, as a preferred role model.

In support of the notion that Papiamentu may have directly influenced nineteenth century Puerto Rican and Cuban *bozal* language, we can point to several other features of these texts which

also coincide with Papiamentu. Among the more convincing cases are the following:

- (1) Use of *riba* < Sp. *arriba* 'up' (adv.), as a preposition meaning 'on, upon,' also found in Papiamentu and occasionally in other Afro-Iberian creoles:

ya pará *rriba* ténge 'He climbed up the *tengue* (tree)' (Cabrera 1975: 183)

pone cañón *riba* alifante '[they] put a cannon on top of the elephant' (Cabrera 1979: 17-8)

Ese trepa *riba* palo 'He climbs to the top of the tree' (Cabrera 1976) (Papiamentu) *Kiko tin riba mesa?* 'What is on the table?'

- (2) Use of *awor* < *ahora* 'now.' *Awor* is found in Papiamentu, as well as in Cuban *bozal* Spanish (Birmingham 1970: 28-9):

¿Y qué yo dicí *ahuora*, eh? 'What should I say now' (Benítez del Cristo 1930)

*ahuora* sí mi pecho está girviendo como agua que pela engallina 'Now my chest is boiling like water that scalds a chicken' (Benítez del Cristo 1930)

y *ahuora* que no lo ve 'And now that he can't see' (Montes Huidobro 1987 [Francisco Fernández, *El negro cheche*])

- (3) The Papiamentu word for 'today' is *awe*, significantly different from Spanish *hoy* and Portuguese *hoje*. Forms similar to the Papiamentu word are found in nineteenth-century Cuban *bozal* texts:

Moquítico fatá pa que señiora murí *agüoi* (Estrada y Zenea 1980) 'My lady almost died today'

*Agüe* memo, ñamito 'Just today, master' (Santa Cruz 1908)

*ahuoy lo va a jasé Pancha* 'Today Pancha is going to do it' (Creto Gangá 1975)

- (4) The Papiamentu word for 'child, son, daughter' is *yüu*, with an intrusive initial /y/ not clearly derivable from Spanish *hijo*. The form *yijo* appears in Cuban *bozal* texts from the nineteenth century, but is unknown in *bozal* texts from other regions:

Mi *yijo*, gayina negro son mucho, y toito pone güebo blanco 'My child, there are many black hens, and they all lay white eggs' (Morúa Delgado 1975)

*Yija* de mi pecho son 'You are the daughter of my heart' (Benítez del Cristo 1930)

ay, *yijo*, yo no tiene carabela aquí. 'Oh child, I don't have any shipmates here' (Cabrera 1970)

si, *yijo*, es mío el quimbombó 'Yes, child, the quimbombó [fetish] is mine (Cabrera 1983)

- (5) The Papiamento verb for 'say, tell' is *bisá*, from Spanish/Portuguese *avisar*. This word is not normally used thus in Latin America Spanish, but several Cuban *bozal* texts show *bisá* meaning 'say, tell':

Niña Paulita ñamá yo, *bisa* negra pa ni 'Miss Paulita called me, told this negress to go' (Santa Cruz 1908)

Robé, *visa* mi señora sení que yo ta nel río 'Robert, tell my lady that I am in the river' (Cabrera 1976)

- (6) In Papiamento, the first person singular subject pronoun is (*a*)*mi*, with the longer form being emphatic or contrastive. Since the sixteenth century, no form of *bozal* Spanish has used (*a*)*mi* as subject pronoun (Lipski 1991d), but this form reappears in a few nineteenth-century Cuban *bozal* texts:

*A mi no bebe aguariente, mi ama* 'I don't drink liquor, my lady' (Merlin 1974)

*Mi no sabe, ñamito . . . mi no sabe nã* 'I don't know, master . . . I don't know anything' (Santa Cruz 1908)

To summarize the preceding discussion, *bozal* Spanish, in the Caribbean and elsewhere, was not a homogeneous phenomenon, but rather was characterized by a considerable instability and variation more typical of recently acquired and effervescent pidgins than of a true widespread creole. The unmistakably creole items in a subset of Afro-Caribbean texts suggest, rather than a pan-Latin American creole, the direct incursion of Papiamento at a specific time and place in the history of Afro-Hispanic language. Both in the Caribbean and in the remainder of Latin America, the Afro-Hispanic linguistic situation was heterogeneous and spontaneous, and did not coalesce into a true creole except in tiny isolated enclaves.

### Permanent African influences in Latin American Spanish

Although little solid evidence supports theories of a previous Afro-Hispanic creole in Latin America, the presence of African lexical items and the penetration of many African musical, religious and folk traditions give ample proof of the African impact on Hispanic society. Africans in Latin America worked as domestic servants, and in service jobs which brought them into close contact with the

intimate family structure of Latin American society. In many upper-class families, children were cared for by African women, and played with black children. Some non-Africans became diglossic, able to authentically speak Afro-Hispanic language as well as the speech of their parents' social group. Much of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *negrista* literature written by white Latin Americans reflects this situation; the language is not an outrageous stereotype, but an accurate rendering based on traditions learned in childhood. This early exposure to Africanized Spanish was often reinforced in adolescence and adulthood by daily contacts with servants, vendors, and artisans, among whom Africans were highly represented in many Latin American regions.

At the top end of the social scale, awareness of African speech was frequently high, although resistance to openly adopting known Africanisms was also part of the elitist attitude. Among lower socioeconomic groupings, African elements more easily penetrated popular speech, and, in keeping with the general upward mobility of vernacular items, eventually came to figure in the speech of the upper classes. Music and popular drama was one efficient vehicle of transmission, and carnival-related activities provided the single most important element in the River Plate region. There is some indication that the Argentine *tango* has Afro-Hispanic roots. Although the word itself is found in Andalusia prior to the African slave trade, the first practitioners of this dance in the River Plate area were Afro-Argentines. A typical phenomenon of nineteenth-century Montevideo and Buenos Aires were the *candombes*, Afro-Hispanic musical and theatre groups which partially extended the earlier *cabildos*, and whose activities were centred around the annual pre-Lenten carnival. These groups employed popular songs in which earlier pidginized Afro-Hispanic language was retained. Many of the songs were widely known by the non-African population, and propelled some Afro-Hispanisms into the general vocabulary. In other Spanish American colonies, African elements were absorbed by the surrounding population in similar ways, particularly in large cities such as Lima, Cartagena and Havana, where Africans from the same ethnic group were able to organize religious and social activities, to maintain their native language, and to place their cultural and linguistic patterns before a wider audience.

The linguistic heterogeneity of the African population in Latin America entailed that few African lexical items would permanently penetrate the Latin American Spanish lexicon. In Africa, regional languages were often used as lingua francas, and some survived the crossing to appear in Latin America. West African Pidgin English, the major lingua franca along much of the West African coast, also



makes its appearance in nineteenth century Cuba and Puerto Rico, in such words as *tifi-tifi* (P. E. *tif/tifi*) 'to steal' (Ortiz 1916: 238-9; Alvarez Nazario 1974: 201). Creole French words also penetrated the regional vocabulary of Cuba and Puerto Rico, to say nothing of the Dominican Republic, brought by refugees from the slave uprising in Saint-Domingue (New Haiti) and by labourers and fugitive slaves from the Lesser Antilles. In the majority of cases, African words did not permanently affect local Spanish dialects, since few if any represented concepts which were not adequately covered by existent Spanish words. A major exception was food, music, and dance, where several African items have survived.

The search for lexical Africanisms has not always been approached seriously. A common practice has been to attribute unusual words in regions with a strong Afro-American heritage to African substrata, particularly if nasal consonants are present. This has caused legitimately Spanish words to be incorrectly defined as Africanisms; and since Africans were often in close contact with Native Americans, many words of indigenous origin have also fallen victim to the uncritical search for Africanisms. Few researchers of Latin American Spanish had knowledge of African languages; dilettantes simply looked for equivalents in bilingual dictionaries, without realizing that Bantu languages in particular enjoy rich morphological systems where roots are frequently surrounded by affixes not found in the dictionary entries. A number of fanciful etymologies have resulted from phonetic similarities with wildly improbable semantic values. Since the majority of West African languages have no consonant clusters or syllable-final consonants, and since languages of the Kwa and Atlantic groups abound in mono- and bisyllabic words, it is not difficult to find a possible African contender for any regional Spanish word of unknown origin.

A survey of lexical Africanisms in Latin American Spanish would be voluminous. Among the more widely accepted words of African origin are found the following:

*Banano/banana* 'banana' are used in several African languages. The use of this term in unrelated languages in widely separated regions suggests transmission through an African lingua franca, perhaps Pidgin English or Portuguese.

*Batuque* 'African dance form once popular in Buenos Aires and Montevideo'. Megenney (1983) has suggested several closely related Bantu words, in particular Kimbundu *batuke*, with similar meaning.

*Bunda* 'buttocks'. This term is used in many Caribbean and South American nations, as well as in Brazilian Portuguese and

Haitian creole, all areas with a heavy African influence. Kimbundu *mbunda*, with the same meaning, is almost certainly the origin.

*Cachimbo/cachimba* 'tobacco pipe'. Words with similar meaning and form are found in Kimbundu and neighbouring languages.

*Candombe* (and the Brazilian *candomblé*) 'an Afro-Hispanic dance group' is likely to be of African origin, most probably from Kimbundu, the language most frequently represented in the River Plate Brazil region.

*Dengue*, with a wide range of meanings including 'prudishness', 'woman's cape', and 'tropical fever', has also been suggested as of Kimbundu origin (Pereda Valdés 1965: 183).

*Gandul/guandul/guandú* 'small green pea or bean'. Standard Spanish has *gandul* 'lazy person', but the homophonous term used in much of the Caribbean seems to be of African origin; Megenney (1983) suggests Kikongo *wandu* with similar meaning.

*Marimba*; both the word and the instrument it designates have probable roots in Africa. In a variety of Bantu languages, a similar term designates a thumb piano. Instruments similar to the Latin American marimba are also found throughout Africa, and the use of *marimbas* by Africans in Latin America is described in many colonial texts.

*Milonga* 'type of Afro-River Plate musical expression' has been analysed as Kimbundu *mi* 'plural marker' + *longa* 'word'.

*Mucama* 'female domestic servant', especially in Argentina and Uruguay, appears to be of Kimbundu origin (*mu* + *kama* 'female slave'), the combination of a class prefix and a stem.

*Ñame* 'yam'. Similar words with identical meaning are found in several West African languages, from the Senegambia to Nigeria.

Other possible Africanisms are surveyed by Alvarez Nazario (1971), Megenney (1976, 1981, 1982, 1983), Pereda Valdés (1965).

### Possible African influence on Latin American Spanish pronunciation

The possible African contribution to Latin American phonology continues to be the subject of much debate. Early Afro-Hispanic texts from highland regions bear no resemblance to contemporary Spanish dialects from the same areas, which indicates that the early presence of African populations did not have a permanent effect on Spanish pronunciation. Africans in nineteenth-century Latin America were concentrated in coastal regions, where pronunciation patterns are similar to those of southern Spain, as well as showing more similarity with *bozal* texts. As with the attribution of indigenous influence on pronunciation, the search for African traces of

regional Spanish pronunciation has rarely enjoyed the benefits of serious inquiry. Socially stigmatized variants in regions with high Afro-American populations have been branded as Africanisms, without the slightest regard for either African phonotactic patterns or Spanish dialect variation. Leaving aside these fanciful claims, the residue of serious claims is small, but worthy of further consideration.

- (1) The change of /y/ and /č/ to [ñ], as in *chato* > *ñato* and *llamar* > *ñamar* has been implicated as an African transference, e.g. by Pichardo (1976: 11), describing Cuban *bozal* Spanish, by Alvarez Nazario (1974: 169) for Puerto Rico and, less emphatically, by Henríquez Ureña (1940: 168) for Dominican Spanish. The evidence is inconclusive at best, since the same phenomenon is found in non-Africanized varieties of Spanish, in Spain and in Latin America; for example the *isleños* of Louisiana (Lipski 1990c).
- (2) The shift of intervocalic /d/ to [r] has been associated with African influence, a claim which is supported by Afro-Hispanic texts from the sixteenth century to the twentieth (Chasca 1946; Weber de Kurlat 1962a, 1962b, 1970; Castellano 1961; Jason 1967; Granda 1969). The same pronunciation is currently found in Equatorial Guinea (Lipski 1985a), an officially Spanish-speaking African nation. In Latin America, the change /d/ > [r] is only found among monolingual Spanish speakers in regions with prolonged Afro-Hispanic presence: this includes much of the central Dominican Republic (Megenney 1990, Núñez Cedeño 1987), the northern coast of Colombia, the Colombian Chocó and much of the Pacific coast (Granda 1977, Schwegler 1991a), the northwestern coast of Ecuador (Toscano Mateus 1953), and several other small areas. Today, the change is sporadic, and no individual speaker pronounces /d/ as [r] in all environments. In earlier generations, this pronunciation was widespread and frequently attested in literature.
- (3) More controversial, but of the utmost importance for a complete reconstruction of Latin American dialect differentiation, is the weakening of syllable-final consonants, particularly loss of word-final /l/, /r/ and /s/. These consonants are routinely weakened in southern Spain and the Canary Islands, a process which may have begun as early as the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. In view of the widely claimed Andalusian/Canarian basis for Latin American Spanish, it is not unreasonable to attribute most or all of the

consonantal reduction in Latin America to linguistic and cultural contacts with Andalusia. Since these features in Latin America are found principally in coastal areas, radiating inland from port cities which enjoyed intensive commercial and linguistic contacts with southern Spain, a satisfactory explanation can be based entirely on the transference and further evolution of regional traits from Spain. The coincidence of consonantal reduction with the presence of African slaves can in principle be explained as a secondary effect, given that most Africans worked on coastal plantations or in coastal cities, thereby learning regional varieties of Spanish in which consonantal reduction was already prevalent. If to this account is added the fact that in all varieties of Spanish consonantal reduction is most frequent among the lowest socioeconomic strata, who provided the most ready linguistic targets for Africans acquiring Spanish, the equation is complete.

*Bozal* language in Latin America, from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century, shows the full range of consonantal reductions associated with 'Atlantic' Spanish. African slaves took as input prevailing regional phonetic tendencies, and partially altered them to conform to a broad cross-section of West African phonotactics, with the notion of open syllability being a significant but not overriding force. To the extent that regional Spanish varieties already incorporated incipient consonantal reduction, *bozal* speech frequently effaced the weakened variants even further, categorically eliminating sounds in contexts where native Spanish speakers performed only partial and variable weakening. Spanish writers, in turn, gave graphological recognition to *bozal* phonetic traits only when the latter departed significantly from prevailing regional trends, with the possible exception of the very lowest Spanish-speaking social classes, whose speech was frequently the object of ridicule. Thus the lack of a given weakening process in *bozal* texts does not necessarily imply that the phenomenon was absent in the speech of Africans, but only that Spanish writers found Africans' speech no different from their own in this feature. In general, then, the African contribution to consonant-weakening in Latin American Spanish is not to be found in the origin of these modifications, but rather in the complete loss of syllable-final consonants which may have been more strongly pronounced in non-African varieties.

- (4) Lateralization of syllable-final /r/ in Latin American Spanish

shows signs of an African contribution. In Spanish, the shift of /r/ > [l] occurs sporadically in parts of Andalusia and Murcia, as well as in the Canary Islands, but is not typical of any region. In Latin America, syllable-final /r/ > [l] is found predominantly in areas where the Afro-Hispanic presence was strong and prolonged: Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad, coastal Colombia, parts of the Caribbean coast of Panama, the northern coast of Peru, etc. Earlier Afro-Hispanic texts from Latin American regions where the population of African origin is currently very small also evidence the lateralization of /r/; this includes highland Peru, as well as the Buenos Aires/Montevidео area.

Africans in Latin America rarely if ever initiated a previously unattested reduction of syllable-final consonants. Purely African modifications (lateralization of intervocalic /r/, paragodic vowels, intrusive nasalization, etc.) which did not coincide with pan-Hispanic shifts were not retained in Latin American Spanish, except occasionally in vestigial Afro-Hispanic enclaves, and in Afro-Iberian creole languages. On the other hand, African speakers, learning Spanish under precarious conditions and hearing a received variety in which syllable-final consonants were weakened, extended such variable processes to categorical status. Megenney (1989), for example, has analysed weakening of /s/ across Latin American Spanish dialects, and has shown a striking correlation between dialects/sociolects in which syllable- and word-final /s/ is routinely *lost* (not just weakened to an aspiration), and the Afro-Hispanic linguistic profile. Lateralization of syllable-final /r/ shows a similar correlation, and conversion of intervocalic /d/ to [r] in Latin America is limited to a handful of enclaves with strong Afro-Hispanic roots. The African dimension of Latin American Spanish phonetics did not act as a juggernaut, pushing aside phonetic patterns formed in Spain, but neither was such a dimension absent in the formation of Spanish American dialects. A more temperate view of the African phonetic contribution reflects a complex pattern of Afro-Hispanic linguistic interaction over a period of several centuries, whose results embody the intertwining of several phonological systems and processes.

### Remaining Afro-Hispanic linguistic enclaves

Despite the heavy African presence in many areas of Latin America and the representation of *bozal* language in literature and folklore, there is today no major area of Latin America where an ethnolin-

guistically identifiable 'black Spanish' exists, comparable to black English in the United States. This assertion is at odds with popular beliefs in many countries, where members of the urban elite often claim that Afro-Americans speak a distinct variety of Spanish. The fact remains that in all Latin American communities where Spanish speakers of African and European origin coexist in a single linguistic zone, there is no linguistic means (e.g. detecting speech over a telephone) of differentiating African and non-African origin. What is found is a strong correlation between sociolinguistic marginality and ethnicity, so that speakers of African origin are disproportionately represented among the lowest socioeconomic strata. This distribution, together with simple racial prejudice, is responsible for persistent claims of 'black' Spanish dialects.

The possible reasons for the lack of 'Afro-American' Spanish in Latin America, as compared with the tenacious retention of 'black' and 'non-black' characteristics in American English even among much higher socioeconomic strata, are only partially understood. Lack of a rigid racially-based social and physical separation such as once existed in the United States may be partially responsible, but this alone is not sufficient. In any event, to trace the development of Afro-Hispanic speech modes and their integration into regional varieties of Latin American Spanish, reference must be made to the past, where considerable indeterminacy clouds the reconstruction. In contemporary Latin America, a few Afro-Hispanic linguistic enclaves have survived into the second half of the twentieth century. In none of these regions (with the exception of the creole-speaking Palenque de San Basilio in Colombia) is a fully 'Africanized' language still spoken, but fossil remains of earlier Afro-Hispanic forms provide tangible evidence to aid in the historical reconstruction of *bozal* and *criollo* Spanish. Some of the vestigial remains of earlier Afro-Hispanic language are:

- (1) CHOTA VALLEY OF ECUADOR. This valley is a tropical enclave surrounded by Andean uplands, and the population of the valley is almost entirely black, in contrast to the exclusively indigenous/*mestizo* population of neighbouring areas. Black *choteños* share a history of more than 250 years of residence in the central highlands; this population is perhaps the largest black settlement in Spanish America without close and recent ties to the life and language of the coastal lowlands. Found vestigially among the oldest black *choteños* are some syntactic and phonological configurations which suggest earlier more Africanized stages of the language (Lipski 1986c, 1987c). The days when pidginized Spanish was spoken in



Ecuador are long gone, for there was never a large-scale importation of African slaves in the nineteenth century, nor any other large and recent arrival of Africans who did not speak Spanish. The vestigial creoloid traits of Chota Valley Spanish are the consequences of long-term marginality, rather than the recent disappearance of a pidgin.

- (2) DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Despite the large population of African descent, and African contributions to Dominican music, food, cultural practices and vocabulary, there is no documentation of *bozal* Spanish in the Dominican Republic, comparable to attestations found for Cuba and Puerto Rico. The conspicuous absence of *bozal* Spanish from the Dominican Republic is a function of the history of this nation, where the importation of slaves directly from Africa had dwindled by the end of the sixteenth century and never experienced the upsurge found in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Despite the scarcity of *bozal* Spanish in the Dominican Republic, several regional traits reflect the Afro-Hispanic linguistic background of this nation. The typically Afro-Hispanic pronunciation of intervocalic /d/ as [r] is especially prevalent in the town of Villa Mella (Granda 1986, 1987; Megenney 1990; Núñez Cedeño 1987), which has a strong Afro-Hispanic ethnic presence. González and Benavides (1982), in describing the speech of marginalized communities in the Samaná Peninsula, note several morphological traits also found in *bozal* texts (cf. also Benavides 1973, 1985). These phenomena do not unequivocally represent *bozal* carryovers, since while the population of the Samaná Peninsula is primarily of African origin, not all are descendants of Spanish-speaking *bozales*. Samaná has also been the home of (American) English-speaking Afro-Americans, possibly supplemented by arrivals from the Virgin Islands and other areas of the English-speaking Caribbean. Also found in large numbers are speakers of Haitian Creole, known locally as *patois*, whose attempts at speaking Spanish are also easily confused with *bozal* Spanish.
- (3) CUBA. Remnants of African languages still survive in the central provinces of Cuba (García González 1974, García González and Valdés Acosta 1978, González Huguet and Baudry 1967, Granda 1973b, Valdés Acosta 1974). This is marginal bilingualism, but NOT *bozal* Spanish; these individuals speak unremarkable Cuban Spanish. Nineteenth-century Cubans, however, were well acquainted with the Spanish of *bozal* and *criollo* Africans, as witnessed by the dozens of poems, plays and novels in which this language appears.

Well into the twentieth century, *bozal* Spanish speakers were still found in Cuba, and formed the basis for the extensive writings of Fernando Ortiz and Lydia Cabrera. As late as 1960, a handful of former *bozal* slaves were still living in Cuba (Alzola 1965). Although by this time the number of Afro-Cubans who still maintained *bozal* speech was vanishingly small, the collective awareness of earlier patterns was still alive among Cubans of all races, and stereotypes of Africanized Spanish were retained in popular theatre, poetry, radio drama, music, and in a number of sayings (e.g. the derogatory *es un negro de 'vo va di y yo va vini'* 'he is a Negro who says *yo va di* [= *yo voy a ir* 'I will go'] and *yo va vini* [= *yo voy a venir* 'I will come']', applied by black Cubans to other blacks regarded as uneducated and socially inferior. Older Cubans still remember other Afro-Cuban stereotypes, such as the use of *son* as undifferentiated copula (e.g. *¿qué son esto?* 'what is this?'), and the use of *ta* + infinitive to express verbs. Popular songs by Cuban artists like Celia Cruz and Miguelito Valdés keep alive the tradition of Afro-Cuban language (Castellanos 1983). Vestiges of *bozal* Spanish also survive in *Abakuá* rituals, secret Afro-Cuban ceremonies in which African words and phrases are combined with admonitions and sayings in deliberately contrived *bozal* Spanish. Today, no linguistic features distinguish the speech of Cubans of African descent (but cf. Perl 1991), but awareness of earlier *bozal* speech is higher among Cubans than in any other Latin American community. Afro-Cuban Spanish, both objectively real and literary inventions, continues to play a role in Cuban culture.

- (4) PUERTO RICO. Puerto Rico shares with Cuba a history of intensive Afro-Hispanic linguistic contacts, but relatively few *bozal* slaves arrived during the nineteenth century. Popular awareness of Africanized Spanish in Puerto Rico was never comparable to the situation in Cuba. Alvarez Nazario (1974) is a nearly exhaustive study of *bozal* texts from Puerto Rico. Mason (1918: 361) found vestigial *bozal* songs at the turn of the twentieth century. As in Cuba, the presence of Papiamentto speakers is documented for nineteenth-century Puerto Rico (Alvarez Nazario 1970). French Creole remnants were found as late as the 1970s, when songs representing (fossilized and poorly remembered) *patois* were recorded in southern Puerto Rico. However the only potentially 'African' region of modern Puerto Rico is the village of Loíza Aldea, where musical and cultural traditions are reminiscent of those of



Afro-Hispanic groups elsewhere in Latin America. Mauleón Benítez (1974) found essentially no African linguistic characteristics in Loíza Aldea. The results were largely negative, although Alvarez Nazario (1974: 139, 224-6) interprets the results in a more favourable light, as does Granda (1978: 510-11), who regards combinations like *hijo macho* 'male son' and *hija hembra* 'female daughter' as possible West African loan translations. Spiritist sessions are especially prevalent among the population of African origin, and artificial *bozal* speech is sometimes used in moments of spiritual possession.

- (5) VENEZUELA. The African slave population in Venezuela was considerable during much of the colonial period; slave revolts and fortified maroon villages or *cumbes* were common (Acosta Saignes 1967, Brito Figueroa 1961, Megenney 1988). Little information has survived on the language of Afro-Venezuelans, although it is known that *bozal* Africans were found in the nineteenth century. Escaped slaves formed *cumbes* or fortified villages throughout Venezuela, and Afro-Hispanic language may have been concentrated in these communities. Another source of labour in Venezuela was neighbouring Curaçao; Papiamentu-speaking settlements probably existed in coastal Venezuela (e.g. the song fragment obtained by Aretz de Ramón y Rivera and Ramón y Rivera 1955: 72). In contemporary Afro-Venezuelan speech, Megenney (1979, 1985c, 1980, 1988, 1990c, MS) has found occasional phonological and morphological characteristics which may signal earlier *bozal* forms.
- (6) PANAMA. Although Portobelo was one of the major slaving ports in Spanish America, by the eighteenth century, few *bozales* were found on the Panamanian coast. The increasingly marginalized Afro-American population began the inevitable mingling with the Spanish population, and *bozal* Spanish faded from the memory of later generations. An exception to the general lack of remnants of *bozal* Spanish in Panama is the ritual language of the *negros congos*, Afro-Hispanic communities found along the Caribbean coast, centring around Portobelo and Nombre de Dios. This language is used primarily during the annual carnival, and despite later accretions of humorous distortion, contains the remnants of earlier *bozal* Spanish (Drolet 1980; Joly 1981; Lipski 1985f, 1986g, 1990e). *Congo* speech does suggest the prior existence of a pidgin and possibly a Spanish-based creole, but if the latter existed, it showed no genetic relation-

ship with Papiamentu, Palenquero, or with Portuguese-based creoles in Asia and Africa.

### Summary: assessing the African impact

The question of African influence on Latin American Spanish is too complex to be resolved by a simple yes-no answer. The evidence accumulated here, and facts emerging from ongoing field research in Latin America, suggest that no major innovation in pronunciation, morphology or syntax in Latin American Spanish is due exclusively to the former presence of speakers of African languages or of any form of Afro-Hispanic language, creole or otherwise. Colonial Spanish already contained the seeds of consonantal reduction, vocalic nasalization, non-inverted questions, preposed subjects of infinitives, retention of overt subject pronouns, and so forth. In areas where large numbers of Africans spoke differently from white colonists, the African contribution reinforced already existing processes, carrying them to their logical conclusion. This is not to deny the unmistakable African influence in much of Latin American Spanish, only to call for caution in attributing to African origins phenomena which in all probability were already found in Peninsular and Latin American Spanish.

Afro-Iberian creoles have existed in Latin America, with Papiamentu and Palenquero being the last survivors. Upon delving into the history of these creole languages, it becomes apparent that they were the exception rather than the rule, the response to unique and non-replicable circumstances that suddenly thrust Portuguese- or Spanish-based pidgins into the role of linguistic life-jacket for Africans speaking mutually unintelligible languages. These circumstances did not obtain in most Latin American regions where Africans were present, and the structural similarities among *bozal* Spanish fragments from across Latin America do not necessarily entail a pan-Latin American creole. Africans in Latin America in general passed from the pidgin or *bozal* Spanish stage to the local varieties of Spanish in the space of one or two generations, leaving in turn subtle linguistic contributions of their own.

### Notes

1. The first known example of Afro-Portuguese pidgin comes in the *Cancioneiro geral* of Garcia de Resende, published in 1516. The item in question, by the court official Fernam da Silveira, is dated 1455 (Giese 1932; Leite de Vasconcellos 1933; Teyssier 1959: 228-9). The text is a poem, and contains an imitation of the speech of a tribal king from 'Sierra Leone':

A min rrey de negro estar Serra Lyoa,  
lonje muyto terra onde viver nos,  
andar carabela, tubao de Lixboa,  
falar muyto novas casar pera vos.  
Querer a mym logo ver-vos como vay;  
leyxar molher meu, partir, muyto synha,  
porque sempre nos servyr vosso pay,  
folgar muyto negro estar vos rraynha.

A number of similar texts survive, representing the early sixteenth century; the most famous are in plays by the Galician playwright Gil Vicente (*Nao d'Amores*, *O clérigo da Beira*, *Frágoa d'amor*).

2. Among the studies of the linguistic representation of Golden Age 'Africanized' Spanish are: Castellano (1961), Chasca (1946), Dunzo (1974), Granda (1969), Jason (1965, 1967), Lipski (1986d, 1986e, 1986f, 1988), Ríos de Torres (1991), Sarró López (1988), Veres (1950), Weber de Kurlat (1962a, 1962b, 1970).
3. This hypothesis is clearly stated, e.g. by Granda (1976: 5-6):

Los esclavos negros establecidos en diferentes áreas de la América española desde el siglo XVI al XIX manejaron, primeramente junto a sus hablas africanas aborígenes y posteriormente con carácter exclusivo o al menos dominante, un código lingüístico criollo. Esta modalidad de lenguas fue evolucionando . . . hacia el español substandard de las diferentes zonas hispanoamericanas en que el fenómeno se produjo, a través de un continuum pos-criollo . . . (Black slaves found throughout Spanish America from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries used, at first together with their native African languages, and later in an exclusive fashion, a creolized language. This speech modality was evolving . . . in the direction of the substandard Spanish of the various Spanish American regions where this phenomenon was found, yielding a post-creole continuum . . .)

This creole in turn had its origins in an Afro-Lusitanian pidgin, developed in West Africa (e.g. Granda 1976: 8):

Las modalidades del criollo desarrollado y empleado en las diferentes zonas hispanoamericanas de población negra derivaron, genética y por lo tanto estructuralmente, del . . . protodiasistema criollo portugués de Africa que constituyó la base de la cual, por diferentes procesos de relexificación . . . se originaron aquéllas. (The creolized speech manifestations which developed throughout the various Spanish American regions with a black population were genetically and therefore structurally derived from . . . an African creole Portuguese proto-diasystem which formed the base upon which the former varieties were formed . . . through various processes of relexification.)

Otheguy (1973) accepts the possibility of a former creole, but without definitely accepting an earlier Afro-Lusitanian basis. Granda's hypothesis is essentially accepted by Megenney (1984, 1985b), Perl (1982, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1989a, 1989b), and Ziegler (1981). Taking an opposing view are Laurence (1974), Lipski (1986d) and López Morales (1980).

4. This hypothesis was first put forward in its modern form by Thompson (1961) and Whinnom (1965), and extended by Naro (1978).