



William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 81, no. 2 (April 2024): 319–58

Au-delà de la traversée:
The Transatlantic Slave Trade within Prerevolutionary Saint Domingue

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Prior to the 1791 revolution, three-quarters of a million captive Africans were dragged to Saint Domingue through the transatlantic slave trade. Re-creating these Africans' pathways of forced migration after their arrival in the island reveals the existence of a large, sophisticated, and well-organized intracolonial slave trade on Saint Domingue that has largely escaped the attention of historians. Slave ship captains steered their vessels to different locations within the colony depending on the age, health, ethnicity, and gender of their captives, determining where in the island enslaved people would likely spend the remainder of their lives. Colonial slave traders then organized sales that were designed to sort physically diverse captives and distribute them to socially and racially diverse colonial buyers. Africans moved away from such sales to remarkably varied fates: many were marched to sugar, coffee, indigo or cotton plantations; others were forced to work as servants or apprentices in port cities; and still more were held in urban barracoons and later resold, sometimes hundreds of miles away. Enslaved people were thus forced through an intracolonial slave trade that powerfully determined their often-divergent fates and began to acclimatize them to the brutalities of colonial life.