

Cuban-Congo language in Equatorial Guinea.

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The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is a small country located in West Africa. It consists of the continental region of Rio Muni, the islands of Bioko (formerly Fernando Po) and Annobón, and the tiny archipelago of Mandyi (including the islands of Corisco, Elobey Grande and Elobey Chico). The arrival of Catholic missionaries from Spain (Jesuits, Claretians and Concepcionists) to Equatorial Guinea in 1843 guaranteed that the Spanish language would remain at the core of the *mission civilisatrice*. Linguistic policies were implemented to assure a monoglossic Spanish culture. Equatorial Guinea is the only Spanish-speaking country in sub-Saharan Africa, making it an especially interesting site for studying language contact and Hispanic dialectology, particularly Afro-Hispanic dialectology in Africa and Latin America.

Despite the fascinating complexity of Equatorial Guinea's linguistic repertoire, I focus in this paper on following the linguistic traces left by the arrival of Cubans in 1860. I will explore the Equatorial Guinean Spanish variant and the interplay of lexical, social, and ethnic forces that have shaped it.

There were three different waves of Cuban immigrants: black slaves returning from the Antilles where they had been used by the Spaniards as a labor force, Cuban political deportees, and Spaniards from La Habana looking to make money as *finqueros*. In addition to the sociodemographic and cultural impact caused by their remittances, the ebb and the flow of Cuban

people led to language contact. The Spanish spoken in Equatorial Guinea borrowed *cubanismos* and *afrocubanismos* from the Cuban-speaking community. The *afrocubanismos* were African loanwords adopted by Cubans and reunited in the “lengua congo,” which was used mostly for religious rituals.¹

Cubanismos are lexical features borrowed by the Spanish language in Equatorial Guinea from the Spanish spoken in Cuba. These lexical features were brought to Equatorial Guinea by Cuban political deportees in 1869. In this paper, I work with a corpus composed of five texts written by Cuban deportees to Fernando Po: Balmaseda (1869), Bravo Sentiés (1869), Sifredo y Llopiz (1893), Valdés (1898) and Miranda (1903). These texts are best categorized as memoir, though their authors viewed them as notes (“apuntaciones”), “narrations” or “impressions”. I will rely on the linguistic works of González (1951), De Granda, (1974, 1984, 1985), Valdés (1987), Lipski (2000, 2004), Quilis and Casado-Fresnillo (1995) and Pichardo’s dictionary of Cuban words (1985) to identify the Cuban words utilized by the political deportees.

The human traffic between the Gulf of Biafra and Cuba.

I would first like to highlight some historical facts to contextualize the sociodemographic backdrop for language contact stemming from the commercial and political expeditions made by the Spanish ships on the West African coast since 1474 (de la Torre y Suárez, 1958-1960; Ruméu de Armas, 1956-1957). I will devote particular attention to the slave trade route along the Gulf of Biafra.

After the Treaty of El Pardo, signed with Portugal on March 24, 1778, the Conde de Argelejo left Montevideo and headed to Fernando Po (now Bioko), in order to control the lands of the Gulf of

¹ Lydia Cabrera, Fernando Ortiz, Humberto López Morales, Luis Ortiz and Germán de Granda have conducted compelling studies of the *lengua congo* (see attached bibliography).

Guinea. Yellow fever, extreme conditions and the impassable land put an end to the first attempt at Spanish colonization. Meanwhile, in 1817, Great Britain urged Spain to sign an antislavery agreement which stipulated the legal condition of the emancipated person² (Roldán, 1982: 561). Consequently, by December 1824, 150 ‘negroes’ captured in the brigantine “Relámpago”, were declared emancipated and liberated near the coast of Cuba (ibid). Britain suspected Spain wasn’t abiding by the agreement and moved the Mixed Court for the Suppression of the Slave Trade from Sierra Leone to the island of Fernando Po in 1827. At the same time, Captain Fitz William Owen settled in Port Clarence (later known as Santa Isabel and now Malabo) and governed Fernando Po. The island was populated soon thereafter by a labor force from Sierra Leone - freed slaves and *krumanes* (Liberian laborers), otherwise known as the *fernandinos* group of Clarence (see Sundiata, 1972, 1996). Pidgin English was the language spoken by the *fernandinos*. The expansion of the English language was a major concern among Spanish missionaries and the colonial administration. Baptist and Protestant missions occupied Clarence and opened churches and schools, teaching and preaching in English.³ British tradesmen, such as John Beecroft - governor of the African possessions at that time- and John Holt - a wealthy landowner and *finquero*- developed commerce in cocoa, coffee, and palm oil (Sundiata, 1974, Diaz, 2005). Great Britain reacted to this economic growth by offering Spain 60.000 pounds to buy Fernando Po.

² Spain signed a new treaty with Great Britain in July 1835 changing the text of the articles. It stated that black slaves who had been captured and liberated must be under the protection of the government whose ship had rescued them and not under the protection of the country where the case of slavery was to be judged (Roldán, 1982: 527).

³ Both the Spanish government and the British foreign office were fully aware of this situation: “There are many villages that have their native pastor, having prepared Bibles in the dialects of the country, in addition to English, which is the most widespread in those possessions. At Santa Isabel, say what you say, Kruman is the more widespread language, a Special English, or the proper English, which is explained by the vast number of laborers imported from the Republic of Liberia and Sierra Leone” (Barrera, 1907: 26). “English and Spanish are both spoken at Santa Isabel but English has been the common speech of the coast people since the British occupation. Trade or Pidgin English is used as a lingua franca not only between whites and blacks but also between natives with distinct language of their own (...) Some of the annobonose speak English but Spanish is taught by the missionary fathers. The Government of the colony has taken no census of continental Guinea, Spain has never succeeded in asserting her effective dominion over the country. She occupies only a fringe of the seaboard and strips of territory along the navigable rivers of the interior, and for the most part, the real rulers of the tribes decline to recognize her authority (Great Britain F.O. 1920: 6).

Although the sale of the island did not materialize due to the opposition of the Cortes and the Spanish press, it initiated a steady parade of commercial, scientific and religious expeditions orchestrated by the Spanish. According to Sundiata, “[Spain’s] decision to retain Fernando Po was made after consideration of the effect of British possession on the Cuban trade and not because of the intrinsic value of Fernando Po” (1977: 92).

The period that followed was characterized by intense trafficking and negotiations regarding slaves. A letter from the commander in chief of Cuba warned of the incalculable damage caused by the blacks emancipated in Cuba and requested ships for their repatriation in 1832. On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, Spain, angered by the restrictions on the slave trade and by the denial of Cuba for the transportation to Fernando Po of black slaves, suffered from a shortage of indigenous laborers in her African colony. Looking to resolve this situation, Spain released an Organic Statute on December 13, 1858 about Fernando Po’s lands and its colonizers. This colonizing project would be paid by the Cuba’s budget.

A new Royal Order was approved on April 5, 1861 permitting the evacuation of 200 emancipated black Cubans to Fernando Po. The Royal Order stated that they would be free and would earn a salary. On May 28, 1861, the colonial administration asked the Minister of War and Foreign Relations about the consignment of 75-80 ‘emancipated negroes’ to substitute for the Marine Corps⁴, but this ‘human remittance’ never happened. During those years, the *Fernandino* prison was created, relentlessly taking inside its bars Spanish political convicts⁵, freed black men, repeated criminals and political deportees from Cuba (Royal Order, June 20, 1861).

⁴ The government asked for emancipated black Cubans “que se hallen suficientemente instruidos, que posean un oficio útil, robustez y buena conducta” (Unzueta, 1947: 398).

⁵ As Unzueta maintains, in 1861-1862 there were imprisoned people from Spain in the island of Fernando Po. The 90 or 13 (??) Spanish political deportees were condemned because of their participation in the socialist republican

The Royal Order of July 20, 1862 declared that all emancipated Cubans would be pursued to the same treatment, salary and guarantees as the kruman workers, and therefore they would be subject to the law regulating Cuba's Chinese labor force (Unzueta, 1947: 211). A month later, two hundred freedmen arrived to Fernando Po and solved two major problems for the Spanish government: the emigration of free blacks from Cuba and the supply of labor in Fernando Po (Sundiata, 1977: 95). Impressions of their arrival were recorded by John Holt in his diary on August 31, 1862: "The Spaniards have married a lot of these Cubans by wholesale" (1948: 35). By June 27, 1863 a new Order was released to regulate the transportation of another 200 emancipated Cubans who had to be 'pure black' (*de condición bozal*), with the exception of skilled emancipated workers, who could be mestizos (*ladinos*) (Unzueta, 1947: 283-287). In this last case, the sending of women was allowed.

As Unzueta puts it, besides nineteen Spanish political deportees, one hundred and seventy-six Cuban deportees were on board the merchant ship "Rosa del Turia" on their way to the prison of Fernando Po in September / October 1866. The ninety Cuban individuals deported by General Captain Lersundi likely belonged to this last group. Balmaseda informs that they were 'colored' (1869). Amongst them, ten were condemned as criminals without having had a trial and the rest was found guilty of laziness, drunkenness or chimerical behavior (1869: 151). The group did not have great fortune: forty died, forty remained in Fernando Po, and the rest returned to Cuba. There is no archival trace of this event or of the number of Cubans transported as assistants for the Osorio y Montes de Oca expedition that took place in 1884 (following Unzueta, 1947: 285).

Based on the written testimonies of five Cuban deportees, I have documented three massive deportations of Cubans that took place in 1869 and 1897. The first trip happened on May 25,

movement in Andalusia. Another 19 political deportees from Spain arrived in September/October 1866 to Fernando Po on board of the *urca* (big boat) "Marigalante", (1947: 283-287).

1869 via a ship called “San Francisco Javier de Borja” (Balmaseda, 1869; Bravo Sentiés, 1869; Sifredo y Llopis, 1893), the second group of deportees left Cuba on November 28, 1896 at on a boat called “Ciudad de Cádiz” (Miranda, 1903), and the third one departed on board the “Buenos Aires” on February 28, 1897 (Valdes, 1898). These texts⁶ are flooded with expressions of sour denunciation regarding the moral and physical affront experienced by the Cuban deportees under Spanish custody. The authors provide numerous details about names, places, dates, and actions that may help to reconstruct those loosely known historical facts.⁷ I consider these memories extremely interesting not only because of the painstakingly detailed accounts embedded in their paragraphs but also because they contain lexical and grammatical elements of the Spanish spoken in Cuba during the mid-nineteen century.

Three factors influencing the texture of language contact

I would like to pay attention to three factors which will help us to contextualize the language contact and the subsequent lexical transfer: first, the sociocultural composition of the Cuban speech community in Fernando Po; second, the environmental characteristics both in Fernando Po and Cuba; and finally, the prestige of the colonial speakers.

⁶ See the attached bibliography to capture the vivid picture of the deportees’ living conditions: the confinement of Fernando Po, their work as *braceros*, their salary of 3 *pesos* per month, all kind of sickness, deaths and miseries that happened in a short time. As Valdés quotes, “to be Cubans was our crime” (1898). The context of these deportations must to be understood within the context of the revolutionary movement of independence in Cuba at the time. These five writers were politically active, upper-class and of white-collar professions. Some of them were amateur writers, while others had been granted recognition as fiction writers (especially Balmaseda, whose edited anthology of poems, comedies, fables and short stories was published in 1874). They escaped from Fernando Po and emigrated to the United States and Cuba a year after their arrival to Africa.

⁷ Unzueta refers to Balmaseda’s book in the following terms: “nos ha dejado un libro que relata su vida en Santa Isabel, triste y calamitosa, lejos del pensamiento que pudiera embargarnos pensando en los sonos lánguidos y cadenciosos de las guajiras y habaneras en las noches estrelladas del trópico” (1947: 285). Fernando Po is seen by Balmaseda as a “tomb” (1969); Sifredo y Llopiz describes the “painful and terrible real ordeal” (1893); Miranda characterized his book as a “stark narrative” (1903).

The demographic composition of Fernando Po in 1870 highlights the significant presence of Cuban people on the island. According to the census, there were 1,223 inhabitants in Santa Isabel (now Malabo) in January 31, 1869. The sociodemographic breakdown was as follows:

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Spaniards	81	2
British	9	
Kruman (from Cabo Palma)	467	
Accran	38	
Congalese (emancipated from La Habana)	120	30
Natives from Santa Isabel	108	116
Sierra Leoneans	40	28
From the Coast and Portuguese colonies	75	109
<i>Total</i>	<i>938</i>	<i>285</i>

Source: Unzueta, 1947: 286

To have a broader sense of the sociodemographic context, we must recall that half of the Fernandinos people and the Baptist missionaries were expelled by the Spanish governor in 1845.⁸ Cuban political deportees weren't added to the 1870's Census. In its entirety, the group was formed by 176 Cuban deportees who had arrived in 1866 (Unzueta, 1947); another 250 who had

⁸ Royal Order December 30, 1845. Guillemar de Aragón, the Spanish consul in Sierra Leone, conceded a deferral of a year and three months to the Baptist missionaries. In 1858, the new governor of Fernando Po, Carlos Chacón, had to issue an update with a new deadline for the departure plus a compensation of 1,500 pounds in the name of the Baptist missions (Roe, 1874: 10).

arrived in 1869 (Balmaseda, 1869; Sifredo y Llopiz, 1893); 18 ‘infidentes’ (disloyal people) (date unknown); and some Cubans who had previously been incarcerated in Cadiz and arrived in 1896 (Miranda, 1903). The last 68 Cubans landed on Fernando Po in 1897 (Valdes, 1898).⁹ (Valdés, 1898: 71). Along with the Cubans transported by the ship Ciudad de Cádiz in 1896, 25 Puerto Ricans traveled to Fernando Po (“jíbaros como los llaman allí a los campesinos” [jíbaros, as the peasant are called in Puerto Rican] says Miranda, 1903: 14). The Cuban group was declared free as soon as it arrived to Fernando Po. The economic budget for the colony could not withstand that burden. All the Cubans were men and soon they merged into the social and economic life of Fernando Po. They opened their own business as clockmakers, shopkeepers, international traders or *finqueros*. A “barrio Congo” Balmaseda (1869) o “Los Congos” (as Sifredo y Llopiz names it) was formed with the emancipated blacks.¹⁰

	<i>Cuban deportees</i>	<i>Emancipated blacks from Cuba</i>
1858		200
1866	176	
1869	250	
1896	18	
1897	68	
<i>Total</i>	<i>412</i>	<i>200</i>

⁹ Valdés’s text comes with a more data (1893: 71): for a total of 119 Cubans, 38 left Fernando Po, 40 had not been repatriated and 41 died during deportation. He also states that of the 211 Filipinos males and 6 females, 104 men and 3 women returned to the Iberian Peninsula, the rest succumbed in the African.

¹⁰ Besides the Cuban black emancipated, a group of black ‘jamaiquinos’ (Jamaican people) was living there (Sifredo y Llopiz, 1893: 20).

It turned out that the six hundred Cuban inhabitants in Fernando Po greatly fluctuated up and down from 1866 to 1898. De Granda stated that the high number of Cuban inhabitants “constitutes a relevant factor in the determination of the linguistic physiognomy of the African region” (1985: 136). Therefore, we can argue that the Spanish spoken in Fernando Po since 1862 until the end of nineteenth century had to be mostly Cuban. The linguistic repertoire of Fernando Po may be summarized as follows: natives did not speak Spanish but *bubi* and *krumans* spoke a Creole derived from Krio; Britons were not competent in Spanish; and Fernandians spoke pidgin-English (*pichi*).

The group of deportees was diverse. With respect to their professions, we might find physicians and surgeons (Bravo Sentiés was one of them), dentists, pharmacists, a British vice-consul, priests, bankers, bakers, electricians, peasants, ‘calafates’ (caulkers), clockmakers, accountants, etc., (Balmaseda, 1869: 19; Bravo Sentiés, 1869: 97-110). In Bravo’s memoir there is a chart with the name, date of imprisonment, neighborhood, citizenship, legal status (married or single), age and profession of each deportee. A close look at these data suggests a high diastatic level of the Cubans in Fernando Po and hence a formal style of speaking (*un estilo cuidado*). The profile of the typical deportee was male, highly educated, wealthy, politically active and white. This last aspect is crucial for asserting that the linguistic features of the first colonist, in this case the white Cubans, will remain in the local way of speaking. We may argue that this it will be as a consequence of an *iconization* process (Irvine and Gal, 2000).

The second factor is, as De Granda maintains, the similar environmental characteristics of Cuba and Fernando Po (climate, flora, fauna). This should have facilitated the process of lexical transfer due to the homology of the *realia* in both geographical zones. As an example, I have isolated from the selected corpus some idioms classified as ‘cubanisms’ in Ecuatoguinean

Spanish that belong to the lexical family of fruits and trees: “abundan *los plátanos, el anón*¹¹, *la piña, el mango*”, writes Balmaseda (1869: 13). From the 35 inputs selected by Valdés to be translated into “bubee dialect”, we find: *cacao*¹², *ñame*¹³, *yuca*¹⁴, *malanga*¹⁵.

One question about those *cubanisms* relates to their origin. Considering that their African roots are beyond question, the issue is whether they are related to Equatorial Guinean native languages or not. De Granda observes that it would be a mistake to trace their *étimos* from the bubí or benga languages (native languages in Equatorial Guinea). They may be linked to other *africanisms* as *banana*¹⁶, *malanga*, *ñame*, *balele*¹⁷ derived from Bantu languages spoken in Congo and Angola (De Granda, 2003-2004), but not from bubí, benga or fang languages. However, those loanwords were maintained as a result of the linguistic contact between African black slaves and Cubans. As a result of a circular process of import-export of linguistic features, some of the lexical items were transported from Congo to Cuba and then to Fernando Po. As an example, *Chapear*¹⁸, *nigua*¹⁹, *papaya*²⁰, *petate*²¹, *tabaco*²², *cayuco*²³, *Ceiba*²⁴, *hacienda*²⁵, *finca*²⁶, *manglar*²⁷ are

¹¹ Anon: árbol indígena que no pasa de cinco varas de altura. Fruto del mismo nombre. De figura oval, con escamas regulares, pulpa blanca, dulce. Sus hojas se usan para curar indigestiones y “catarros de la vedija especialmente” (Pichardo, 1985).

¹² Cacao: voz ind. Mej. Árbol y fruto descubierto en tierras de México y Venezuela (Pichardo, 1985)

¹³ Ñame: “voz cubanizada e inmigrada de la Nigrícia”. Bejuco de hojas opuestas, cordiformes, verdes y lisas. Su fruto es un tubérculo farináceo (Pichardo, 1985).

¹⁴ Yuca: “voz ind. Planta muy conocida y común entre los Trópicos de América y África, una de las más útiles, apreciadas y cultivadas en esta Isla, de donde también es natural. (Pichardo, 1985).

¹⁵ Malanga: “Voz africana cubanizada”. Planta común cuyo fruto llaman Bola, con un jugo lechoso que se cocina en la preparación de viandas (Pichardo, 1985).

¹⁶ Banana o banano: se duda si esta palabra es Africana o Americana. En la isla de Cuba se denomina plátano (Pichardo, 1985)

¹⁷ Balele: Baile que ejecutan los indígenas de algunos pueblos de África al son de tambores primitivos (DRAE, 2001).

¹⁸ Chapear: limpiar la tierra de yerba con el machete. Pichardo, 1985.

¹⁹ Nigua: voz ind. Insecto que se introduce en la piel causando picazón. Pichardo, 1985.

²⁰ Papaya: voz ind. El fruto del Papayo. Pichardo, 1985

²¹ Petate: “voz indígena mejicana muy usada en esta Isla, no tanto en su principal significado de estera cuanto en el de la frase “liar el petate”, marcharse, o prepararse para ello, o para morir” (Pichardo, 1985).

²² Tabaco: voz ind. Planta Solanácea. Tallo recto, alto con hojas grandes oblongas. Pichardo, 1985.

²³ Cayuco: voz ind. Embarcación o especie de bote (Pichardo, 1985).

²⁴ Ceiba: (*séiba*). Voz ind. Árbol silvestre. (Pichardo, 1985).

²⁵ Hacienda: “Hato o corral, sitio de crianza o realengo destinados a la ganadería” (Pichardo, 1985)

africanismos which appear frequently in the writings of the deportees. They are also categorized as africanismos of Equatorial Guinean Spanish in the linguistic work of Quilis & Casado-Fresnillo (1995: 334).

The memories of the deportees contain some Cuban idioms that are no longer part of the Spanish spoken in Equatorial Guinea. Some examples are provided by Balmaseda when he quotes “eran de los pardos²⁸ cheches²⁹ de la Habana” (1869: 8). Miranda’s memory is a swarm of *antillanismos*; some of which were borrowed from Equatoguinean Spanish (*peso*³⁰) others of which were not (*paila*³¹, *zambullo*³², *mambí*³³). Sifredo y Llopiz’s fictional account of his imagined death on the island provides a hint of cultural information for the Cuban’s audience: “muera aquí contento siempre que este tirano me acompañe en la Palma. La *Palma* es como se llama al cementerio en Fernando Póo; es un lugar entre malezas, chapeado y con una *Palma Corojo*³⁴ por señal”.

The last factor highlighted by De Granda to support his theory about the presence of Cuban and Antillean lexical words in Equatoguinean Spanish relates to the prestige associated with the linguistic features which were borrowed. The first significant group of colonizers in Fernando Po was *de facto* that of the Cuban deportees. Even though they spent a short time on the island, the

²⁶ Finca: casas y edificios en poblados urbanos, ingenios, cafetales, potreros rurales (Pichardo, 1985)

²⁷ Manglar: lugar donde abundan los mangles. Mangle: árbol común y ramoso que cubre las costas, cayos y orillas de los ríos en sus embocaduras (Pichardo, 1985).

²⁸ Pardo: “mulato o mulata. Dícese algunas veces, singularmente al libre, para suavizar la Voz propia así como al Negro, Moreno” (Pichardo, 1985).

²⁹ Cheche: *Cuba*. Hombre bravucón, fanfarrón (DRAE, 2001).

³⁰ Peso: moneda (Pichardo, 1985).

Following Crespo Gil-Delgado (1949), in 1949 the bubi people from Fernando Po used the American lexical form of ‘peso’ instead of the Spanish one ‘duro’ (cited in De Granda, 1985: 142)

³¹ paila: *Cuba*. Cazo (DRAE, 2001)

³² Zambullo: barril cubierto usado en la Habana para la limpieza y transporte del excremento de las letrinas (Pichardo, 1985).

³³ Mambí: En las guerras de independencia de Santo Domingo y Cuba en el siglo XIX, insurrecto contra España. (DRAE, 2001).

³⁴ Corojo: voz ind. Una de las especies de Palmas, silvestre, abundantísima, especialmente en el interior de la isla (Pichardo, 1985).

iconization process put into play between race and linguistic features was strong enough to leave a linguistic impact. Fernando Po had few Spaniards and the British were away. Consequently, Cuban deportees were the only white, highly-educated, and qualified workers. They were also aware of the racial and social divisions in Cuba. Balmaseda's work is riddled with references about the clear distinction between people of color and whites, both in la Habana and Fernando Po. For the former, Cuba was an 'adopted Patria' (1869: 151). The latter were native Cubans, properly speaking. The way in which white Cubans spoke was therefore imitated, adopted and diffused through the island of Fernando Po at the end of the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

I would like to finish with a closer look at the corpus. It provides us with lexical features such as Latin learned words ('cultismos') (i.e. *luctuoso*, *lenidad*, *meretriz*, *apostrofar*, *sentina*, *absintio*) and Arabic learned words (i.e. *chiquero*³⁵). The texts are full of rhetorical figures of speech, hyperbolic expressions and loanwords from *bubi* (*cuabear*³⁶, *ballajá*³⁷, *balele*³⁸) and English (*bloodhound*³⁹). As a result of their direct style, they contain a witty combination of formal style and direct speech. These memories convey the freshness and urgency of their actions; the eyes of the reader move quickly from one scene to the next, captivated by the tragedy and emotion of the prose. There are idioms and rare expressions such as: "había que sacarles los reños a los negros mambises" (Miranda, 1903). Nevertheless, the most frequent terms come from the lexical families of agriculture and animal species. This raises the question of the class of lexical words

³⁵ Chiquero: (Quizá del mozár. y ár. hisp. širkáyr, y este del lat. vulg. *circarñum, der. del lat. circus, circo, cercado). Pocilga (establo para ganado de cerda). DRAE, 2001

³⁶ Sifredo y Llopiz se refiere a una técnica de pesca: los negros pescan con pequeños palos, atrayendo a los peces a la superficie por la noche con teas encendidas (1893: 21)

³⁷ Ballajá: pañuelos con los que los bubis cubren "los pudendos de sus cuerpos" (Sifredo y Llopiz, 1893: 21)

³⁸ Balele: danza

³⁹ Balmaseda quotes: "lo españoles son tan aborrecidos que cuando entre los naturales se quiere insultar un hombre se le llama español, *bloodhound*, sangre de perdiguero" (1869: 140)

which were borrowed. Cuban deportees worked at the coffee, lumber and cacao plantations in Fernando Po, but the most important labor force was, at that time, the emancipated blacks from Cuba. Their work alongside the *Fernandinan* natives favored a linguistic setting amenable to the transfer of lexical features and explains why family lexical words from daily life (work, kinship and commodities) were the first to be adopted. The prestige of the white Cuban deportees could have led to the transmission of a cultivated variation (*'estilo cuidado'*) of the Spanish spoken in Cuba. The Cuban loanwords identified in Equatorial Guinean Spanish, however, are grounded in the common and basic lexical families needed to survive in the forest.

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