SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

Atlantic Crossings

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1**: Mapping the Atlantic: Geographies, Currents, and Corridors
- **Chapter 2**: Iberian Pioneers: Portugal, Castile, and the First Oceanic Empires, 1490–1580
- **Chapter 3**: Conquest and Communication: Indigenous Worlds and Colonial Foundations
- **Chapter 4**: Silver and Sugar: Commodity Frontiers and the Making of Global Markets
- **Chapter 5**: Ships, Sailors, and Technology: Moving Goods and People Across the Sea
- **Chapter 6**: African Coasts and Hinterlands: Polities, Brokers, and Captives
- **Chapter 7**: The Transatlantic Slave Trade: Logistics, Violence, and Profit
- **Chapter 8**: Plantations and Power: Labor Regimes in the Americas
- **Chapter 9**: Diasporas of Color: Enslaved, Free, and Maroon Communities
- **Chapter 10**: The Dutch Atlantic: Commerce, Credit, and Competition
- **Chapter 11**: The British Atlantic: Colonies, Navigation, and Imperial Governance
- **Chapter 12**: The French Atlantic: Islands, Ports, and Reform
- **Chapter 13**: Atlantic Port Cities: Amsterdam, Lisbon, London, Bordeaux, Cádiz, and Beyond
- **Chapter 14**: Credit, Insurance, and Risk: The Architecture of Atlantic Finance
- **Chapter 15**: Merchants and Networks: Families, Firms, and Correspondence
- **Chapter 16**: Law, Sovereignty, and the Sea: Admiralty, Prize, and Maritime Violence
- **Chapter 17**: Religion, Knowledge, and Print: Missions, Science, and Information Flows
- **Chapter 18**: Everyday Exchanges: Foodways, Fashion, and Material Culture
- **Chapter 19**: War and Empire: Conflicts from the Seventeenth Century to 1815
- **Chapter 20**: Revolutions in the Atlantic: Haiti, America, and Spain's Crisis of Empire
- **Chapter 21**: Abolition and Its Economies: Britain, the Americas, and Africa, 1780–1850
- **Chapter 22**: Illicit Trades and Workarounds: Smuggling, Contraband, and Neutral Flags
- **Chapter 23**: Environment, Disease, and Demography: Ecologies of the Atlantic
- **Chapter 24**: Beyond the Atlantic: Linkages to the Indian and Pacific Oceans
- **Chapter 25**: Legacies of Empire: Inequality, Capital, and Memory

SAMPLE COPY

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

Introduction

Atlantic Crossings situates European history within the wider, saltwater world that bound Europe, Africa, and the Americas between 1500 and 1850. Rather than treating continents as self-contained stages, the chapters that follow trace the routes, institutions, and relationships that made the Atlantic a single—if unequal—arena of exchange. In this approach, oceans are not empty spaces but connective tissue: highways of wind and current along which power, people, and ideas moved. By following those movements, we see Europe not as the sole protagonist of early modern change but as one node in a dynamic, contested network.

At the heart of this book are merchant networks, slave trade routes, and colonial institutions. Merchants stitched distant shores together with letters of credit and kinship ties; insurers translated risk into profit; and imperial officials tried to discipline the sea's unruly commerce with law. Most devastatingly, the forced migration of millions of Africans underwrote plantation economies whose sugar, tobacco, coffee, and cotton fed European markets and transformed global consumption. These circuits of coerced labor were not peripheral to European development—they were integral to it, shaping fiscal states, urban growth, and cultural life on both sides of the ocean.

SAMPLE COPY

A central claim of Atlantic Crossings is that capital flows and cultural exchange cannot be separated from imperial competition. Wars among European powers were fought not only for dynastic prestige but for ports, islands, and trade monopolies that generated revenue and leverage. Privateers and pirates blurred the boundaries between commerce and conflict, while legal regimes of prize and admiralty sought to render violence legible and profitable. In peacetime, smuggling and neutral flags offered alternative pathways through the constraints of regulation, keeping goods moving despite embargoes and exclusive charters.

Yet this is not a story of European actors alone. Indigenous polities shaped the terms of conquest and alliance; African brokers negotiated captives and commodities from coastal forts to interior markets; enslaved people resisted in ways both spectacular and everyday, from shipboard revolts to maroon communities and subtle acts of refusal. The making of the Atlantic world was a process of encounter and contestation in which subaltern choices mattered. Cultural forms—religion, language, foodways, and music—bear the imprint of these intertwined histories, creating creole societies that were neither purely European nor wholly African or American.

The period 1500–1850 provides a long chronology for understanding change and continuity. It encompasses the Iberian pioneering phase, the rise of Dutch and English commercial power, the consolidation of plantation regimes, the sequence of imperial

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

wars, and the revolutionary era that remade states and citizens. It also spans the arc from the expansion of the transatlantic slave trade to its abolition in law—without ignoring the persistence of illicit traffic afterward. By holding these phases together, the book highlights deep structures—finance, law, labor, environment—whose transformations outlasted any single war or empire.

Methodologically, the chapters combine economic, social, and cultural history. Archival fragments—shipping lists, notarial records, plantation accounts, missionary correspondence—are read alongside material culture and environmental evidence to reconstruct how the Atlantic worked in practice. Networks, rather than nations, are the primary units of analysis, but states and empires remain central insofar as they enabled, taxed, and policed exchange. Quantitative patterns matter, yet so do narratives of individuals whose lives charted the ocean's routes: sailors and brokers, planters and rebels, scribes and smugglers.

The organization of the book moves from routes and institutions to commodities and communities, and from imperial centers to port cities where global and local converged. It then turns to violence—legal and illegal—and to the revolutionary ruptures that reordered sovereignty. Finally, it follows abolition's uneven pathways and reflects on legacies that stretch beyond 1850, including enduring inequalities and contested memories of empire. Each chapter pairs broad argument with case studies to show how general processes played out in particular places.

SAMPLE COPY

Atlantic Crossings invites readers to see Europe's early modern and revolutionary centuries through the prism of oceanic entanglement. The Atlantic world was a space of extraction and exploitation, but also of creativity and adaptation. By integrating capital flows with cultural exchange and imperial competition, this book offers a framework for understanding how a sea—at once connective and divisive—helped to forge the modern global economy and the societies that inhabit its shores.

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

CHAPTER ONE: Mapping the Atlantic: Geographies, Currents, and Corridors

The Atlantic Ocean, far from being a mere expanse of water, was a dynamic, living entity that shaped human history as profoundly as any continent. For centuries before 1500, it acted as a formidable barrier, a vast, unknowable realm that challenged the limits of human endurance and technology. Yet, by the dawn of the early modern era, this perception began to shift dramatically. Mariners, driven by curiosity, economic ambition, and imperial directives, slowly began to unravel its mysteries, transforming it from a terrifying void into a navigable, albeit still dangerous, highway. Understanding this transformation requires a grasp of the Atlantic's fundamental physical characteristics: its winds, its currents, and its very geography. These natural forces dictated the rhythms of trade, the routes of exploration, and ultimately, the patterns of empire.

Imagine standing on a European coastline in 1450, gazing westwards. Beyond the immediate horizon lay not just water, but an entire system of atmospheric and oceanic forces that would either aid or thwart any westward endeavor. The prevailing winds, particularly the easterly trade winds, were perhaps the most crucial element in this equation. These consistent breezes, blowing from the northeast in the Northern Hemisphere and the southeast in the Southern, were a gift to outward-bound European ships. They provided a predictable, if sometimes punishing, propulsion for vessels venturing into the unknown. Without them, the age of Atlantic exploration and subsequent trade would have been a far more arduous, if not impossible, undertaking. The return journey, however, presented a different challenge altogether.

SAMPLE COPY

To sail back to Europe, mariners had to seek out the westerlies, a band of winds found at higher latitudes that blew generally from west to east. This necessitated a colossal loop: sail south with the trades to the vicinity of the Canary Islands or the coast of Africa, then turn west towards the Americas, and finally, after reaching the New World, sail north to catch the westerlies for the eastward journey home. This grand elliptical pattern, often referred to as the "Volta do Mar" or "turn of the sea," became the standard navigational strategy for transatlantic voyages. It was a route born of necessity, a grudging concession to the ocean's immutable laws, and it profoundly influenced where Europeans established their initial colonies and trade hubs. Islands like the Azores and Madeira, strategically positioned along these wind patterns, became crucial waypoints for resupply and repair.

Complementing the wind systems were the equally powerful and predictable ocean currents. The North Atlantic Gyre, a vast system of circulating currents, played a

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

significant role in dictating maritime routes. The Canary Current, flowing south along the European and African coasts, aided ships heading towards the tropics. This then fed into the North Equatorial Current, which carried vessels westward across the ocean towards the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf Stream, a powerful, warm current, then emerged from the Gulf of Mexico, flowed north along the North American coast, and then swung eastward across the Atlantic, eventually rejoining the Canary Current. This complete circuit of currents, in conjunction with the winds, created a natural, albeit immense, conveyor belt for transatlantic travel.

The interplay of these winds and currents meant that some parts of the Atlantic were more accessible, and thus more frequently traversed, than others. The central and southern Atlantic, with its reliable trade winds, became the primary corridor for Spanish and Portuguese expansion. The northern Atlantic, with its more unpredictable weather patterns and ice hazards, proved more challenging, initially attracting fewer sustained voyages. This geographical reality had lasting implications for the colonial projects of different European powers. The Spanish and Portuguese, sailing with the prevailing winds and currents, were drawn to the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. The English, French, and Dutch, venturing later and often further north, found themselves establishing footholds in North America and the more northerly Caribbean islands.

Beyond the macroscopic forces of wind and current, the very shape of the Atlantic basin itself played a crucial role. The "narrow waist" of the Atlantic, between West Africa and Brazil, offered the shortest ocean crossing, making it a primary route for the transatlantic slave trade. This geographical proximity, combined with the favorable winds and currents, tragically facilitated the forced migration of millions. Conversely, the vastness of the northern Atlantic, while challenging, also offered a greater degree of separation between European powers, allowing for the development of distinct colonial spheres. The concept of "corridors" within the Atlantic, therefore, is not merely metaphorical; it refers to these naturally preferred pathways that dictated the ebb and flow of human movement and commerce.

The physical geography of the Atlantic also encompassed its archipelagos. Islands like the Canaries, Cape Verde, Madeira, and the Azores were not merely dots on a map; they were critical staging posts, laboratories for colonial experimentation, and vital resupply points. They allowed for the development of new agricultural techniques, such as sugar cultivation, which would later be transferred to the Americas on a far grander scale. They also served as crucial hubs for gathering intelligence, repairing ships, and preparing for the arduous oceanic crossings. These island stepping stones were integral to overcoming the psychological and practical barriers of the open ocean. Without them, the sustained exploration and exploitation of the Americas would have been immeasurably more difficult.

Moreover, the coastlines themselves were fundamental to the emerging Atlantic

SAMPLE COPY

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

world. The deep harbors and navigable rivers of Europe provided the launchpads for these oceanic ventures. The intricate river systems of Africa, while presenting their own navigational challenges, offered access to interior populations and resources, crucial for the burgeoning slave trade. In the Americas, natural harbors and fertile coastal plains became the sites of burgeoning colonial settlements, strategically chosen for their defensive capabilities and access to trade routes. The interaction between land and sea at these crucial points defined the very nature of Atlantic commerce and conquest.

The evolving understanding of these geographical realities was not a static process. Cartography, the art and science of mapmaking, underwent a revolution during this period. Early maps, often fantastical and filled with mythical beasts, slowly gave way to more accurate representations of coastlines, currents, and wind patterns. This was a direct result of accumulated experience and the sharing of navigational data, however jealously guarded it might have been by individual empires. The ability to precisely chart one's course, to anticipate the winds, and to understand the prevailing currents provided an immense strategic advantage. Accurate maps became powerful tools of empire, allowing for more efficient trade, more effective military deployments, and ultimately, a more thorough subjugation of distant lands.

Navigational technology also played a pivotal role in "mapping" the Atlantic in a practical sense. The development of instruments like the astrolabe and later the quadrant and sextant allowed mariners to determine their latitude with increasing accuracy. While longitude remained a formidable challenge for much of this period, the ability to pinpoint one's north-south position was a monumental leap forward. Coupled with improvements in shipbuilding—the caravel and later the galleon were designed for oceanic voyages, with their robust hulls and sophisticated rigging—these technological advancements transformed the Atlantic from an impassable barrier into a traversable, albeit still dangerous, domain.

SAMPLE COPY

However, the Atlantic was not just a collection of physical features; it was also a realm of perception and imagination. For many Europeans, it represented opportunity, wealth, and expansion. For Africans forcibly removed from their homes, it was the "Middle Passage," a watery grave or a journey into unimaginable suffering. For indigenous Americans, it was the route by which invaders arrived, bringing disease and devastation. These vastly different human experiences were all shaped by the same fundamental geography, yet interpreted through radically different cultural lenses. The mapping of the Atlantic, therefore, was not just about lines on a chart, but also about the pathways of human endeavor, suffering, and transformation.

The very concept of the "Atlantic World" itself emerged from this intricate dance between geography and human agency. It was the shared experience of traversing this ocean, exploiting its resources, and connecting its diverse shores that forged a new, interconnected system. The trade routes, slave passages, and imperial arteries

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

were all superimposed upon the fundamental canvas of the Atlantic's winds, currents, and coastlines. These natural features were not passive backdrops; they were active participants, dictating the pace, direction, and ultimately, the success or failure of ventures across its vast expanse. As we delve into the subsequent chapters, this foundational understanding of the Atlantic's physical nature will serve as a constant reminder of the environmental constraints and opportunities that shaped an entire era of global history.

SAMPLE COPY

Sample from MixCache.com - The Online eBook Marketplace

SHARING STRICTLY PROHIBITED - For personal use of the licensed account only - See MixCache.com Terms of Use.

This is a sample preview. Purchase the book to read the full content.

Visit MixCache.com to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY