

*Intermarriage and French Cultural Persistence in Late Spanish and Early American New Orleans**

by Paul LACHANCE**

This paper examines the survival of French culture in late Spanish and early American New Orleans by considering Catholic marriages in that city between 1790 and 1839. The white Creoles proved far from insular in allying themselves through marriage with immigrants from France and refugees from Saint Domingue. Thus French remained the language of the majority of the white population until the 1830s. Non-white Creoles were able to maintain their language and their numbers, as against the English-speaking free Blacks arriving from other American states, because of their natural increase and the contribution of refugees from Saint Domingue.

La survivance d'une culture française à la Nouvelle-Orléans sous les dominations espagnole et américaine est examinée à la lumière des mariages catholiques dans cette ville entre 1790 et 1839. Loin d'être insulaires, les Créoles blancs étaient liés par un système particulier d'alliances exogames avec les immigrants de France et les réfugiés de Saint-Domingue. Grâce à ces apports, la langue française resta majoritaire dans la population blanche jusque dans les années 1830. D'autre part, l'apport des réfugiés de Saint-Domingue et l'accroissement naturel des Créoles de couleur permirent à ceux-ci de se maintenir face à la venue des Noirs libres de langue anglaise en provenance d'autres États américains.

Insularity is often considered the key to cultural survival. To the extent that an ethnic group succeeds in establishing a space from which outsiders are excluded and in which room exists for the maintenance and development of distinctive cultural beliefs and behaviour, it is supposedly better able to resist assimilation.¹ This perspective is implicit in the insistence of partisans of French-Canadian *survivance* on familial, linguistic and religious barriers against Anglo-Saxon influence. It also inspires J. L. Breton's explanation of the survival of a French dialect in the Acadian parishes of Louisiana well into the twentieth century.

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¹ For a theoretical statement of this point of view, see Joshua FISHMAN, ed., *Language Loyalty in the United States* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), pp. 41-42. Sociologists with a more positive view of the process of assimilation would tend to argue that the isolation of an ethnic group is imposed, not desired, but otherwise agree with Fishman.

Là vivait une population exclusivement rurale, repliée sur elle-même, et dont la vie culturelle ne dépassait guère l'horizon villageois et faisait exclusivement appel au parler maternel. La langue du foyer, celle du travail aux champs — même avec les noirs — celle du marché, du café, de l'église, des fêtes saisonnières, c'était toujours le français. Les contacts avec l'administration ou les étrangers de passage étaient suffisamment restreints pour qu'une partie seule de la population soit portée à parler correctement l'anglais, la majorité se contentant de rudiments utiles.²

Jerah Johnson makes the same point more succinctly: the "physical isolation [of the Acadians] acted to reinforce their cultural isolation".³

Isolation may well have contributed to cultural survival in rural areas like Acadia, but is the explanation applicable to cities as well? Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New Orleans constitutes an interesting urban setting for answering the question. French culture there outlived for more than a century the transfer of Louisiana from France to Spain in 1762. Despite directives from the crown to require the use of Spanish in all official, religious and commercial affairs, the Louisiana population reverted to French literally the day following the retrocession of their province to France on 1 December 1803.⁴ Three weeks later the United States assumed control. Despite the contempt of the federally appointed American governor for the culture of the *ancienne population*, whom he described as "in a State of wretched Ignorance, and very much under the influence of Priests", and notwithstanding President Jefferson's designs to Americanize the territory as quickly as possible, French remained the prevalent tongue in New Orleans until the 1830s, and a minority language of importance long afterwards.⁵

² Roland BRETON, *Géographie du français et de la francité en Louisiane* (Québec: Centre international de recherche sur le bilinguisme, 1979), p. 23.

³ Jerah JOHNSON, "The Louisiana French", *Contemporary French Civilization*, I (Fall 1976): 28. Studies of the French-speaking population of Louisiana are numerous. See in addition to the above-cited works by Breton and Johnson: Lynn T. SMITH and Vernon PARENTON, "Acculturation among the Louisiana French", *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (1938): 355-64; Harlan GILMORE, "Social Isolation of the French-speaking People of Rural Louisiana", *Social Forces*, XII (1933): 78-84; Vaughan BAKER, "Les Acadiens en Louisiane avant la Guerre de Sécession: étude d'assimilation culturelle", *Revue de Louisiane | Louisiana Review*, VIII (Winter 1979): 101-15; and Larbi OUKADA, "The Territory and Population of French-speaking Louisiana", *Revue de Louisiane | Louisiana Review*, VII (Summer 1978): 6-11.

⁴ The King of Spain ordered the governor of Louisiana in 1796 to obey promptly previous edicts of 1770, 1772 and 1774, "concerning the establishment of schools to teach the Spanish language in all the cities of the Indies so that the inhabitants may learn to read, write and speak Spanish, prohibiting the use of their native language, and ordering that in the convents, monasteries and in all judicial, extra-judicial and private matters, no other language but Spanish be used". A copy of the decree is in the New Orleans Public Library, City Archives, "Records and Deliberations of the Cabildo" (typed translation of the original in Spanish), 5 vols, IV, Part 2: 25-26, 17 December 1796. On the reversion to French with the retrocession to France, see Hans BAADE, "Marriage Contracts in French and Spanish Louisiana: A Study in 'Notarial' Jurisprudence", *Tulane Law Review*, VIII (December 1979): 53-57. In the streets of New Orleans, of course, the population had never ceased to speak French.

⁵ The quotation is from a letter of W. C. C. Clairborne to Thomas Jefferson, 30 August 1804, in *The Territory of Orleans, 1803-1812*, Vol. 9 of *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, 18 vols, comp.: Clarence Edwin CARTER (Washington: U.S. Government

Indeed, French culture in Louisiana reached its apogee under American domination. Prior to the Louisiana Purchase, New Orleans had only one newspaper, the French-language *Moniteur de la Louisiane*. Eight more newspapers published wholly or partly in French were founded in the first decade of United States rule. In the 1840s, the "golden age" of French journalism in Louisiana, thirty-three new French newspapers were created in New Orleans.⁶ The division of the city into three municipalities in 1836, sometimes cited as a step towards Americanization, was in reality motivated by the desire of Anglo-Americans to escape French political hegemony. Under the new charter, which provided for one alderman for every hundred qualified voters, the council of the American municipality had ten members, those of the two predominantly French sectors had twenty-eight.⁷ However inevitable the decline and virtual disappearance of a French-speaking community in New Orleans may seem in retrospect, its decadent phase should not be dated before the second half of the nineteenth century.

Creoles, or native-born Louisianaans, formed the core of the French-speaking population. Historians who document their stubborn resistance to American absorption also call attention to a willingness to interact with outsiders that is difficult to reconcile with explanations of cultural persistence in terms of insularity. George Washington Cable alludes to their "easy coalition with foreigners of like ideas".⁸ Roger Shugg notes the efforts of descendants of French settlers "to maintain purity of blood and a *hybrid foreign culture* in the face of an American invasion".⁹ Joseph Tregle argues that native Louisianaans, albeit reluctantly, relied upon immigrants from France and Saint Domingue for political leadership, "aware that in such collaboration was the only hope for survival of Gallic supremacy".¹⁰ Jerah Johnson asserts that the Louisiana French at first assimilated Anglo-Americans, not vice versa: "The Creoles retained their Catholic faith and converted a large part of the Anglo population, usually through intermarriage."¹¹ Such characterizations raise the possibility that inter-

Printing Office, 1940), p. 288. George DARGO, *Jefferson's Louisiana: Politics and the Clash of Legal Traditions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 142-434, describes Jefferson's schemes to encourage American immigration to offset the French majority as quickly as possible.

⁶ E. L. TINKER, "Bibliography of the French Newspapers and Periodicals of Louisiana", *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, XVII (October 1932): 256, 281.

⁷ Albert FOSSIER, *New Orleans: The Glamour Period, 1800-1840* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 135-37, 510.

⁸ George Washington CABLE, *The Creoles of Louisiana* (London: J. C. Nimmo, 1885), p. 254.

⁹ Roger SHUGG, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers during Slavery and After, 1840-1875* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. 18, italics supplied. He presumably means white blood by his allusion to "purity of blood".

¹⁰ Joseph TREGLE, "Political Reinforcement of Ethnic Dominance in Louisiana, 1812-1845", in *The Americanization of the Gulf Coast, 1803-1850*, ed.: Lucius ELLSWORTH (Pensacola: Historic Pensacola Preservation Board, 1972), p. 79.

¹¹ JOHNSON, "The Louisiana French", p. 28.

action with immigrants, far from undermining the French-speaking culture of late Spanish and early American New Orleans, actually contributed to its maintenance.

I. — DATA AND METHODS

To test the hypothesis that social interaction between Creoles and immigrants favoured French cultural persistence in New Orleans, this essay examines marriages performed at the St Louis Cathedral and in other Catholic churches from 1790 to 1840. Inter-marriage is a frequently used indicator of relations between ethnic groups. Sociologists have established that endogamy is inversely proportional to the degree of interaction between groups. While members of an ethnic group are more likely to refuse to marry outsiders than to work with them, live in the same neighbourhood or invite them into their homes, reluctance to marry is related to reluctance to have other forms of contact. Conversely, exogamy can be taken as a sure sign of less consequential forms of interaction as well.¹² Preferences for marriage partners from specific ethnic groups also reveal where social interaction is strongest. Individuals may be assumed to inter-marry most readily with those outsiders with whom they are most in contact.

For the half century beginning in 1790, only the marriage registers of New Orleans' Catholic churches are extant, and only those of St Louis Cathedral systematically indicate the origin of spouses through 1840. Other Catholic churches do so for only part of the period.¹³ For an analysis of

¹² David HEER, "Inter-marriage", in the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed.: Stephen THERNSTROM (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 513-14. Studies of inter-marriage usually presuppose insularity as the operative mechanism of cultural persistence. Thus Heer writes on p. 513, "groups that want to preserve their distinctiveness actively discourage marriage to outsiders". Charles CASTONGUAY, "The Decline of French as Home Language in the Quebec and Acadian Diasporas of Canada and the United States", paper presented at the colloquium of the University of Toronto Ethnic and Immigration Studies Programme and the Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario on "The Quebec and Acadian Diasporas in North America", Toronto, 8-9 May 1981, p. 5, is even more categorical: "Exogamy, or inter-marriage with members of other language groups, is a well-known cause of language loss and demographic decline of language minorities" (italics supplied). I invite the reader to consider the possibility that certain patterns of exogamy may, on the contrary, contribute to cultural persistence.

¹³ Civil marriage records and Protestant registers are no longer extant. The following registers from Catholic churches form the data base of this study: St Louis Cathedral, Archives of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, vols II (10 May 1784 — 9 June 1806), III (12 June 1806 — 12 June 1821), IV (1 July 1821 — 31 July 1830), V (7 August 1830 — 6 July 1834), VI (12 July 1834 — 30 December 1837), and VII (16 January 1838 — July 1840) of white marriages, and Books I (January 1777 — 29 July 1830), II (1 August 1830 — 31 October 1835) and III (1 November 1835 — 31 December 1839) of Negro and mulatto marriages; the Ursulines Chapel and the Church of St Mary, Books I (17 March 1805 — January 1837) and II (February 1837 — November 1840) of white marriages; St Mary's Italian Church, the non-white register for 1805 to 1880; and in the New Orleans Public Library, City Archives, the marriage index for St Patrick's Church (1833 — May 1862). Use has been made of a translation of Vol. II of the white registers of St Louis Cathedral: Alice FORSYTH, ed., *Louisiana Marriages: I, A Collection of Marriage Records from the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans*

Creole marriage patterns, these lacunae do not present a major problem. Although the term "creole" applies to anyone or anything indigenous to Louisiana, even to Anglo-Americans born in the state, the latter were too few and too young in the 1820s and 1830s to make distinction between American and Latin Creoles meaningful.¹⁴ Almost all Creoles who married before 1840 were French-speaking, and almost all married in one of the churches whose registers identify spouses by birthplace.¹⁵ The marriage registers of these churches are also virtually complete for French- and Spanish-speaking immigrants who married after arrival in New Orleans.¹⁶ Although less inclusive of spouses born in Germany, Ireland, England, the United States outside Louisiana, and elsewhere, the records at least reveal the number of individuals from these groups who married French-speakers.

Parish priests kept separate registers for white and non-white marriages. In addition to banning marriages between free persons and slaves, the Civil Code of Louisiana explicitly prohibited marriage between whites and free persons of colour.¹⁷ While this statute was doubtlessly circumvented on occasion, it is impossible to determine the incidence of inter-racial marriages from the church records. The non-white registers do not systematically indicate the race of the spouses.¹⁸ Many inter-racial unions, in any case, took the form of concubinage and did not necessarily preclude a legal marriage simultaneously with a white partner. Owing to the nature of the documentation, then, the analysis is limited to marital

During the Spanish Regime and the Early American period, 1784-1806, 1 vol. (New Orleans: Polyanthos Press, 1977).

See Appendix Ia and Ib for the distribution of spouses by church of marriage. A total of 5,788 marriages are recorded in the above-named registers. 1,008 took place in St Patrick's and St Mary's after 1828, both white ethnic parishes with few French-speakers. Because their registers do not identify the spouses by origin, their usefulness is limited to calculations of the total number of white Catholic spouses. The other 4,780 marriages, performed in churches frequented by white and non-white French-speakers, are entered in registers that do clearly indicate the birthplace of more than ninety-four percent of the spouses. They also distinguish residence from birthplace. After subtraction of 134 non-residents of New Orleans, 8,903 spouses whose origins are known remain for analysis, 8,674 when it is necessary to know the birthplace of both husband and wife.

¹⁴ Joseph TREGLE, "Early New Orleans Society: A Reappraisal", *Journal of Southern History*, XVIII (February 1952): 23.

¹⁵ The major exception were Creoles of Spanish parentage, but even they grew up speaking French as a second language.

¹⁶ A French Protestant church was established in 1828, but its congregation of immigrants from eastern France and French Switzerland was never large. The church was essentially a futile missionary effort of Anglo-Americans. See George F. TAYLOR, "The Establishment of the Episcopal Church in New Orleans, 1805-1840" (Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1938), pp. 55-56.

¹⁷ Joseph DAINOW, ed., *1972 Compiled Edition of the Civil Codes of Louisiana*, 17 vols (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1973), XVI: 55. The statute was Article 8 of the 1808 digest of the Civil Code and Article 95 of the 1825 Louisiana Civil Code.

¹⁸ One indication of interracial marriages is the bill introduced into the state legislature in February 1857, to prevent marriages of white persons to anyone with a "taint of African blood". Its sponsor reported that such marriages were "not infrequent" in New Orleans. *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), 20 February 1857, cited in Donald EVERETT, "Free Persons of Color in New Orleans" (Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1952), pp. 238-39.

contacts between ethnic groups, defined by geographical origin, within the white and non-white Catholic populations of New Orleans respectively.¹⁹

For each race, the marriage data are interpreted through three sets of statistics. First, the proportion of spouses of different origins provides a rough approximation of the relative importance of Creoles in the Catholic population, and by inference in the population of New Orleans as a whole, showing the difference that French-speaking immigrants made in the size of the total French community. Secondly, endogamous and exogamous marriages of the principal French-speaking groups are tabulated in percentage terms, directly revealing to what extent and with which outsiders each group intermarried. Thirdly, to control for the effect of imbalanced sex ratios and the unequal size of different groups on the incidence of intermarriage, and to compare *propensities* to endogamy (defined as the difference between observed in-marriage and that expected from random mating of potential partners), the data are re-examined in terms of a statistical index of homogamy.

II. — ORIGINS OF WHITE SPOUSES

The cosmopolitan character of the white population of ante-bellum New Orleans was notorious. Visitors from the North described the city as the Calcutta of the New World.²⁰ The architect Benjamin Latrobe, on his arrival in 1818, was struck by the mixture of voices he heard coming from the levee and the market: "Une sorte de caquetage incessant, bruyant, rapide, dans toutes les langues entendues à Babel".²¹ The marriage records for Catholic congregations alone confirm these impressions. White spouses whose origins are indicated came from no less than twenty European countries, twenty-five colonies, all the states and territories of the United States, as well as from Orleans and the other parishes of Louisiana. Nonetheless, in St Louis Cathedral and St Mary's Church (formerly the chapel of the Ursulines convent), French-speakers predominated: 49.5 percent of the white spouses were Louisiana Creoles, another 30.5 percent were French-speaking immigrants, against 20 percent who came from countries or colonies where French was not the first language.²²

¹⁹ Further breakdowns possible on the basis of information given in the marriage registers have not been retained for analysis. In particular, first marriages are not distinguished from remarriages. The primary object is to determine the incidence of intermarriage. At what marriage it occurred is of secondary importance. Other lines of inquiry are impossible because of limitations in the data base. The registers do not mention the age and occupation of the spouses, or the origin of their parents, often enough to permit discussion of their effect on marriage patterns.

²⁰ A selection of such characterizations may be found in S. L. KLEIN, "Social Interaction of Creoles and Anglo-Americans in New Orleans" (M.A. thesis, Tulane University, 1940), pp. 82-89.

²¹ Benjamin H. LATROBE, *Impressions respecting New Orleans. Sketches 1818-1820* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), cited by Liliane CRETE, *La Vie quotidienne en Louisiane, 1815-1830* (Paris: Hachette, 1978), p. 79.

²² The birthplaces of 7,037 white spouses are specifically identified in the registers. French Guyana; and in Saint Domingue and two colonies where there were large numbers

The number of white Creole spouses increased from an average of 29 per year in the 1790s to 109 in the 1830s. That makes for a rate of increase of 3.4 percent per annum over the entire period.²³ Four out of five of the white Creole spouses were born within the city proper. Some élite families owned plantations along the Mississippi and adjacent bayous in addition to lots in New Orleans. It is difficult to classify them in terms of a rural-urban dichotomy. With that qualification, one can generalize that in-migration from rural parishes contributed less than natural increase to the growth of New Orleans' Louisiana-born population.²⁴

On the average, the number of French-speaking immigrants who married in New Orleans increased from eleven per year in the 1790s to sixty-six per year in the 1830s. At 4.6 percent per annum, their rate of increase was superior to that of Creole spouses.²⁵ Two-thirds of the foreign French came from Europe, principally from France. Thirty percent were refugees from the Saint-Domingue (Haitian) revolution. Less than three percent came from other colonies in the French Caribbean or from French Canada.

"European French" hereafter); in Quebec and Acadia; in Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guyana; and in Saint Domingue and two colonies where there were large numbers of refugees: Jamaica and Cuba. As it was only after 1810 that the names of spouses from the last two colonies correspond to names of refugee families, natives from there are counted as non-French until that date and French-speaking afterwards. This procedure involves a certain degree of error, but not enough to alter the general picture that emerges from the data.

²³ The rate of increase is calculated from the standard formula for average annual rates of growth:

$$1 + r = \sqrt[n]{(P_n \div P_o)}$$

where n is the length of the intercensal period in years, P_o is the initial population, and P_n is the population at the end of the period (n years). Creole spouses, it should be noted, had been much more numerous in the 1780s than in the 1790s. According to Caroline BURSON, *The Stewardship of Don Esteban Miro, 1782-1792* (New Orleans: American Printing Company, 1940), p. 281, there were seventy-eight white marriages in 1785, a level that would not be reached again until 1816. Assuming fifty-five percent of the spouses between 1782 and 1789 were Creoles, as they were in the next two decades, an average of fifty-one Creoles married each year in that span of time. The reason for the decline in the 1790s may lie in the troubled state of the economy. Sharp drops in the production of indigo and tobacco in that decade adversely affected commercial life in the city, as did war between France and Spain which halted for several years trade between Louisiana and the French colonies. Besides affecting the economic position of prospective spouses, the crisis conditions could also have reduced the pool of potential immigrant partners. The high rate of increase of 6.4 percent per annum in Creole spouses in the first decade of the nineteenth century is compatible with delayed marriages in the 1790s. The annual rates of increase for the decades 1810-19, 1820-29, and 1830-39 were 3.3, 0.8, and 3.0 percent respectively. On the economic troubles of the 1790s, see BURSON, *Stewardship*, pp. 181-84; Jack HOLMES, *Gayoso: The Life of a Spanish Governor in the Mississippi Valley, 1789-1799* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), and "Indigo in Colonial Louisiana and the Floridas", *Louisiana History*, VIII (1967): 347-49; and John Garretson CLARK, *New Orleans, 1718-1812: An Economic History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), pp. 188, 191.

²⁴ Excluding migrants from rural parishes, the rate of increase of Creole spouses born in the city of New Orleans itself was 3.1 percent per annum.

²⁵ The rate of increase of immigrant spouses is calculated from the same formula used for Creole spouses; but unlike the Creoles, the rate does not reflect natural increase.

The ratio of Creoles to French immigrants, varied appreciably from one decade to the next, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. — PROPORTION OF NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS AMONG WHITE FRENCH-SPEAKING SPOUSES BY DECADE, 1790-1839.

Decade	Louisiana Creoles (%)	European French (%)	Saint-Domingue Refugees (%)	Other* (%)	French-speakers (Total Number)
1790-99	72.9	25.1	0.5	1.5	399
1800-9	67.0	23.5	7.7	1.9	810
1810-19	56.0	24.6	18.7	0.7	1,341
1820-29	61.2	21.6	17.0	0.3	1,326
1830-39	62.1	30.5	6.2	1.2	1,754

* Includes Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guyana, Quebec and Acadia.

The variation was largely a function of the impact of two contingents of Saint-Domingue refugees, the first composed of several hundred *colons* expelled by the British from Jamaica in 1803 and 1804, the second involving several thousand whites forced to leave Cuba after six years of asylum on that island.²⁶ Refugee movements differ from other types of international migration in being more sharply delimited in time. Although they may suddenly inflate the population of the society that receives them, subsequent in-migration is minimal. One observes the marriage of a large number of refugees from Saint Domingue for two decades following the influx of 1809, then a marked diminution in the 1830s as the group aged.²⁷ The proportion of Creoles among French-speaking spouses predictably bore an inverse relationship to that of the refugees.

The proportion of spouses born in France remains relatively constant in part because it includes *colons* who had migrated to Saint Domingue from the metropole before and during the revolution.²⁸ After the revolu-

²⁶ On the Jamaican migration, see Philip WRIGHT and Gabriel DEBIEN, "Les colons de Saint-Domingue passés à la Jamaïque (1792-1835)", *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire de la Guadeloupe*, XXVI (1975): 170-73. On the expulsion of the refugees from Cuba, the most detailed study is Alain YACOU, "L'émigration à Cuba des colons français de Saint-Domingue au cours de la Révolution" (thèse de 3^e cycle, Université de Bordeaux III, 1975), pp. 417f. Two other studies that touch on the migrations are Luiz PEREZ, "French Refugees to New Orleans in 1809", *Publications of the Southern History Association*, IX (September 1905): 293-310; and Gabriel DEBIEN and René LE GARDEUR, "Les colons de Saint-Domingue réfugiés à la Louisiane", *Revue de Louisiane/Louisiana Review*, IX (Winter 1980): 102-3.

²⁷ The aging of Saint-Domingue refugees is evident in the increasing proportion over time of refugee spouses born in Cuba: 2.8 percent of all refugee spouses in 1810-19, 30.3 percent in 1820-29, and 40.8 percent in 1830-39. The Cuban-born spouses represent the youngest age cohort of the refugee population. Most were born after the mass evacuation of Saint Domingue in 1803 and prior to expulsion from Cuba in 1809.

²⁸ According to Jacques HOUDAILLE, "Trois paroisses de Saint-Domingue au XVIII^e siècle: étude démographique", *Population*, XVIII (1963): 105, natives of Saint Domingue constituted only eighteen percent of the men who married on the island after 1760 and seventy-six percent of the women. Owing to the proximity of the parishes studied by Houdaille to the Spanish part of Hispaniola, the proportion of foreigners in the population was higher than elsewhere in Saint Domingue. Nevertheless, eighty-five percent of the individuals

tion, the current of migration that had flowed between France and Saint Domingue appears to have been largely redirected to Louisiana.²⁹ In addition, the French Revolution, the Napoleonic regime, the Restoration and the Revolution of 1830 each resulted in the emigration of dissidents, some of whom made their way to Louisiana. Finally, like other European countries, France sent its share of fortune-seekers to the New World. Rather unflatteringly, Karl Pöstl described the numerous French immigrants he encountered on his tour of the Mississippi Valley in 1826 as, for the most part, "aventuriers, coiffeurs, maîtres à danser, acteurs et autres gens de cet acabit". To be fair, he also acknowledged the presence of a number of merchants, lawyers and physicians of Gallic origin.³⁰

Even though Creoles throughout the period accounted for a majority of the French-speaking spouses, the importance of immigration from France and Saint Domingue can be gauged by comparing the proportion of French-speakers among all Catholic spouses with and without the immigrant addition (Graph 1). From 1800 to 1825 roughly four out of every five persons who married in one of New Orleans' Catholic churches were French-speaking by origin. Even had there been no immigration from France and her colonies, Creoles alone would still have represented two-thirds of the white Catholic spouses. It was particularly in the decade of prosperity from 1828 to the panic of 1837, when the influx from Germany and Ireland began in earnest, that French immigrants made a noticeable difference. Thanks to them, French-speakers were at the end of the decade a respectable minority of twenty-nine percent among all Catholic spouses instead of one of eighteen percent.³¹

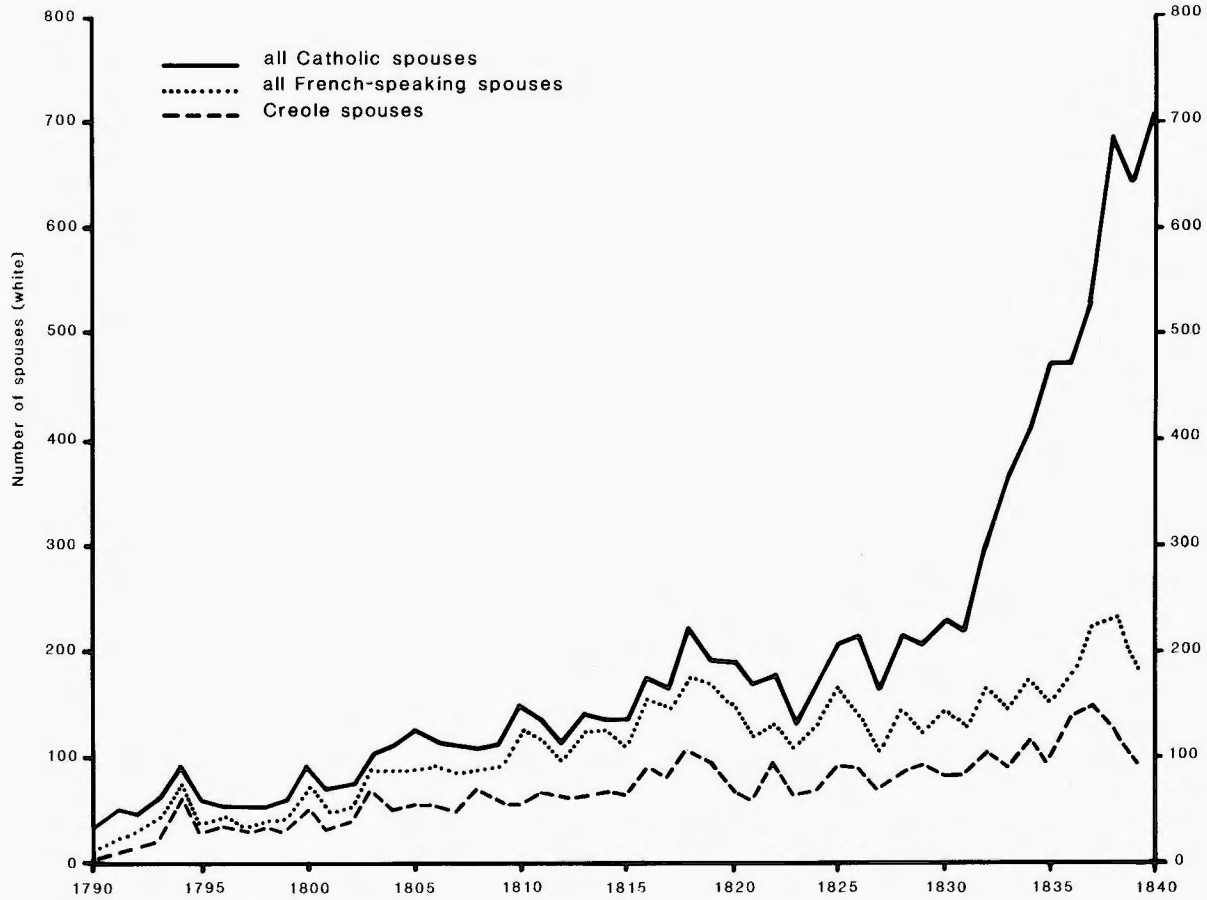
New Orleans had over 21,000 white inhabitants in 1830. Joseph Ingraham, a language teacher from Maine who visited the city in 1832 before settling in the South, remarked that 15,000 to 16,000 of them were Catholics, approximately what one would expect from the 150 Catholic marriages

born outside Saint Domingue came from France. Although the proportion of natives of Saint Domingue was greater in the refugee population than in the colony itself, immigrants from France choosing France as a refuge more readily than individuals born and raised in the colonies, a substantial proportion of the male refugees in Louisiana almost certainly had originally immigrated to Saint Domingue from France. Marriage contracts signed by the refugees in Cuba between 1803 and 1809 indicate that fifty-two percent of the grooms, but only six percent of the brides were born in France. These contracts are located in the Archives d'Outre-Mer (Paris), G⁵ 31-34, records of the *Agences des prises* established in Baracoa and Santiago de Cuba.

²⁹ With the exception of a relatively sizeable immigration from Alsace-Lorraine in the 1830s, the regional origins of French spouses in Louisiana correspond to those observed in Saint Domingue by HOUDAILLE, "Trois paroisses", p. 111.

³⁰ Charles SEALSFIELD [Karl Anton Pöstl], *The Americans as They Are; Described in a Tour through the Valley of the Mississippi* (London: Hurst, Chance and Co., 1828), cited in translation by CRETE, *Vie quotidienne en Louisiane*, p. 112.

³¹ On the beginning of German immigration to New Orleans, see John F. NAU, *The German people of New Orleans, 1850-1900* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), pp. 2-7. The most important study of Irish immigrants is Earl F. NIEHAUS, *The Irish in New Orleans, 1800-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975), pp. 23f.



Graph 1. — WHITE CATHOLIC MARRIAGES IN NEW ORLEANS, 1790-1839.

celebrated that year.³² By that date Creoles had slipped from two-thirds to one-third of the total number of Catholic spouses. Assuming they had a more normal age structure than that of immigrants, they probably represented a slightly higher proportion of the total white Catholic population, perhaps 6,000 persons, leaving 9,000 to 10,000 Catholic immigrants and 6,000 white Protestants.³³ If so, only the presence of 3,000 to 3,500 "foreign French" enabled French-speakers to remain temporarily a larger bloc than either non-French immigrants or Protestant Anglo-Americans.

III. — PATTERNS OF WHITE INTERMARRIAGE

French-speaking immigrants not only added numerically to the French presence in early nineteenth-century New Orleans. Élite elements also made a cultural contribution whose value was, admittedly, not entirely appreciated by the Creoles. Better educated immigrants from France, adept at professions such as business or law or politics that led to the quick accumulation of fortunes, too often viewed Louisianians condescendingly as provincial, backward and unrefined. Resentful of the airs of the *gens de dehors*, Creoles countered their pretensions with a Louisiana variant of the planter ideal extolling ancestry, landed wealth, honour and gracious living.³⁴

Even so, these antagonisms did not prevent a political alliance of Creoles and French immigrants against Anglo-Americans. The most combative editors and politicians of the French community were foreigners like Charles de Saint-Romes, Louis Moreau Lislet, Étienne Mazureau and Pierre Soulé.³⁵ Might not tensions have been attenuated as well by marriages between the groups? Both elements of the French-speaking population stood to gain from marriage into the other group: Louisianians, access to money being made in the dynamic sectors of the urban economy; the foreign French, access to Creole real estate and social status.³⁶

³² The estimate of Joseph INGRAHAM, from *The South-West by a Yankee* (New York, 1835), is cited by Lewis NEWTON, "Creoles and Anglo-Americans in Old Louisiana: A Study in Cultural Conflicts", in *Readings in Louisiana Politics*, comps: Mark CARLETON, Perry HOWARD and Joseph PARKER (Baton Rouge: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1975), p. 79. The figure of 21,000 that Ingraham gives for the total white population corresponds with the number of whites enumerated in the census of 1830. UNITED STATES CENSUS OFFICE, *Fifth Census; or, enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, 1830* (Washington, 1832), p. 104.

³³ Creoles probably represented a larger proportion of younger age cohorts than they did of the adult population. On the other hand, some immigrants were already married when they arrived in New Orleans.

³⁴ TREGLE, "Early New Orleans Society", pp. 30-31. Clement EATON, *The Growth of Southern Civilization, 1790-1860* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 125-49.

³⁵ TREGLE, "Political Reinforcement of Ethnic Dominance", pp. 79-81. Samuel MARINO, "Early French-Language Newspapers in New Orleans", *Louisiana History*, VII (1966): 309-21.

³⁶ The weight of economic considerations in the choice of a spouse is evident in the case of Augustin Tureaud, a native of La Rochelle who became a cotton factor in New Orleans in 1801. During a business trip to the plantation of Marius Bringier in November 1802, his host surprised him by proposing to establish a commercial firm in New Orleans

Table 2 describes in percentage terms marriages between the principal elements of the French-speaking population.

Table 2. — INTERMARRIAGE BETWEEN WHITE FRENCH-SPEAKING SPOUSES.*

French-speaking Group		Origin of Spouses (%)					Total
		Creole	European French	Saint-Domingue	Other**	Non-French	
Creole	H	89.1	2.1	5.0	0.3	3.5	100
	W	45.4	24.0	5.1	1.2	24.3	100
European French	H	52.7	24.8	15.6	0.6	6.3	100
	W	6.7	71.0	2.2	1.1	18.9	100
Saint-Domingue	H	49.1	3.4	42.7	0.4	4.3	100
	W	14.8	40.7	25.4	1.5	17.6	100

* See Appendix Iia for numbers from which percentages were calculated.

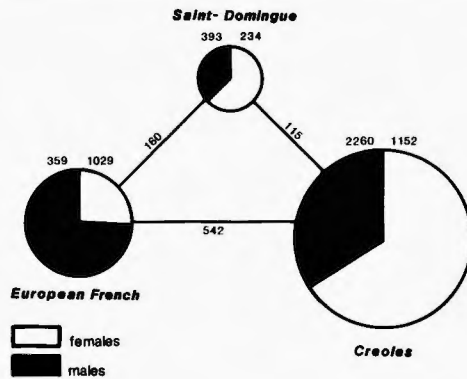
** Includes Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guyana, Quebec and Acadia.

H = husbands; W = wives.

The extent of intermarriage varied considerably. Two groups were markedly endogamous. Creole men married Creole women 89 percent of the time, and European Frenchwomen married European Frenchmen 71 percent of the time. Otherwise, a sizeable element of each group took spouses from the other French-speaking groups, ranging from 30 percent of the Creole and 57 percent of the refugee brides to 53 percent of the refugee and 78 percent of the French grooms. All immigrants from elsewhere in French America than Saint Domingue married outside their groups.

There were also systematic exogamous patterns. Given that potential Creole brides outnumbered their Saint-Domingue counterparts by almost six to one, Frenchmen wed the latter more readily, although they intermarried frequently into both groups. A larger percentage of refugee women married the European French than Creoles. Conversely, male refugees chose Creole brides much more often than brides born in France. The links between the three major components of the French-speaking population may be diagrammed as a triangle with two extrinsic elements:

under his direction. When Tureaud replied that he could not put up his share of the anticipated capital, Bringier answered that this obstacle could be easily surmounted: "In wishing to associate myself with you in interests, I wish it to be an association of the closest nature. I sincerely desire that my daughter Betsy should be the immediate means of cementing our union ... But this I must add: if the marriage does not take place, the copartnership will not be formed." Augustin Dominique TUREAUD, "A Diary Kept in 1801-1802", trans. and ed. by Trist WOOD, *Daily Picayune*, 16 October 1910. The original of the diary is in the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University (New Orleans), Special Collections Division. Kenneth Urquhart of the Historic New Orleans Collection called my attention to the diary.



Besides assuring the use of French within the primary social unit of the family, marriage between French-speakers of different origins created the infrastructure of a more cohesive Gallic community.

Marriages outside the linguistic group were also compatible with French cultural persistence (Table 3).

Table 3. — INTERMARRIAGE BETWEEN WHITE FRENCH-SPEAKERS AND NON-FRENCH-SPEAKERS.*

French-speaking Group	Origin of Spouses (%)						
		Spain	Other European**	USA	Other American***	French	Total
Creole	{H	0.2	0.8	1.9	0.6	96.5	100
	{W	7.3	8.0	7.1	1.9	75.7	100
European French	{H	0.4	2.1	3.5	0.4	93.7	100
	{W	4.2	10.0	3.9	0.6	81.1	100
Saint-Domingue	{H	0.0	0.4	3.4	0.4	95.7	100
	{W	4.2	8.1	6.6	0.3	82.4	100

* See Appendix IIa for numbers from which percentages were calculated.

** Includes England, Scotland, Ireland, Portugal, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Gibraltar, Denmark, Sardinia, Sweden, Russia and Austria.

*** Includes British colonies other than Quebec and Acadia and Jamaica after 1810, Spanish colonies other than Cuba after 1810, Portuguese, Dutch and Danish possessions.

H = husbands; W = wives.

Table 3 reveals, first, that no more than 7.3 percent of French-speaking spouses of either sex married Spaniards or Americans, the two groups that offered a threat of assimilation in the half-century under consideration. Secondly, whether Creole or foreign-born, a much higher proportion of French-speaking wives than husbands married across linguistic lines. If it is true that a child's first language tends to be his mother's, this marriage pattern reflects the absorption of more non-French into the French community than the reverse. Thirdly, the apparent preference of all three

categories of French-speaking women for men born in Europe rather than in the Americas also fits the image of a population resistant to Americanization. Among the small proportion of French-speaking men who married outside their language group, the majority wed women born in the United States, a behaviour not conducive to French language maintenance, but more than offset by the choices of French-speaking women.

IV. — RELATIVE PROPENSITIES TO ENDOGAMY

Can one infer from the patterns of intermarriage a conscious strategy of *survivance* among New Orleans' French-speakers? Was choice of marriage partners at least in part intentionally directed towards creation of family alliances linking together the subgroups of the French community and incorporating into it a segment of the non-French population? High percentages of exogamous marriages do not in themselves warrant such a conclusion. They may simply have been a function of imbalanced sex ratios and unequal numbers of potential spouses in each group (Table 4).

Table 4. — RATIO OF HUSBANDS TO WIVES AMONG
WHITE FRENCH-SPEAKING SPOUSES.*

Decade	Louisiana Creoles			European French			Saint-Domingue Refugees		
	H	W	H/W	H	W	H/W	H	W	H/W
1790-99	87	194	44.8	67	23	291.3	2	—	—
1800-9	158	374	42.2	149	33	451.4	21	38	55.3
1810-19	248	492	50.4	262	59	444.1	82	165	49.7
1820-29	278	515	54.0	215	61	352.5	83	135	61.5
1830-39	381	685	55.6	336	183	183.6	46	55	83.6
Total	1,152	2,260	51.0	1,029	359	286.6	234	393	59.5

* Calculated from marriages where origins of both husband and wife are indicated.
H = husbands; W = wives; H/W = husbands per hundred wives.

Among Louisiana Creoles and Saint-Domingue refugees, brides outnumbered grooms by ratios of almost two to one. By contrast, European French grooms outnumbered brides by almost three to one. The sex bias was especially pronounced in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, and only the refugees approached a normal sex structure by the 1830s. As for potential spouses, over the fifty-year period six times as many Creole women married as females from France and Saint Domingue respectively, while grooms of Louisianian and French origin both outnumbered those from Saint Domingue by five to one.

Imbalances of these magnitudes inescapably affected marriage choices. An overrepresented sex must marry outside its group. Likewise, the larger the proportion of persons of the opposite sex who are not of an

ethnic group, the higher will be its proportion of exogamous unions.³⁷ Fortunately, it is possible to control for these factors by means of the index of homogamy devised by Franco Savorgnan in 1950.³⁸ It is calculated from a 2×2 table representing matrimonial combinations by a specified criterion like national origin:

Origin of Husbands	Origin of Wives		Total Husbands
	Origin 1	Origin 2	
Origin 1	AB	aB	B
Origin 2	Ab	ab	b
Total Wives	A	a	n

The index of homogamy is then derived from the formula:

$$H = \frac{(AB \times ab) - (Ab \times aB)}{\sqrt{(A \times a \times b \times B)}}$$

In effect, the index measures observed marriages against an implied contingency table. It shows on a standardized scale from -1 to $+1$ how much they differ from the pattern of marriages that would occur from random mating of the spouses in the marginals. A value of 0 signifies that the proportion of endogamous to exogamous marriages is wholly accounted for by sex ratios and potential mates. A value approaching -1 means a tendency towards exogamy over and above that expected from these demographic factors. A value approaching $+1$ reveals a tendency towards

³⁷ HEER, "Intermarriage", p. 514.

³⁸ Franco SAVORGNAN, "Matrimonial Selection and the Amalgamation of Heterogeneous Groups", *Population Studies*, III (March 1950, supplement): 59-67. When the index is positive, it has the same value as the *phi* correlation coefficient which adjusts *chi* square for the number of cases in a 2×2 table. Like the *phi* statistic, the index of homogamy is preferred to *chi* square because it permits comparisons where the number of cases is unequal, as in Tables 6 and 7 below showing decennial variations in the levels of homogamy. All the indices of homogamy calculated for this study are significant at the one-percent level, with the exception of Great Britain in Table 5 whose index is significant at the seven-percent level.

An alternative method of calculating endogamy is outlined in the important article of David STRAUSS, "Measuring Endogamy", *Social Science Research*, VI (1977): 225-27. It is employed by Robert MCCA, Stuart SCHWARTZ and Arturo GRUBESSICH, "Race and Class in Colonial Latin America: A Critique", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XXI (July 1979): 421-33, to call into question the analysis of endogamy in simple percentage terms by John CHANCE and William TAYLOR in an article in a preceding number of the same review. Strauss's measure of endogamy differs from the index of homogamy in being derived from one contingency table for all groups under consideration rather than from a series of 2×2 tables. Like the homogamy index, it can be used to measure the difference between observed and expected endogamy for specific groups and to determine exogamous preferences; but it presents the additional advantage of generating a statistic (K or K^*) summarizing the general level of endogamy in society. If the index of homogamy is still preferred in this essay, it is because the data base contains subgroups that also married extensively outside the churches whose records are still extant. Calculating indices for each group makes it easier to take into account distortions that may result from the incomplete nature of the data.

endogamy.³⁹ By controlling for demographic constraints, the index brings out the actual marriage preferences of the groups in question.

Contrary to the high percentage of exogamous marriages observed in the preceding section, the indices of homogamy for the three principal components of the white French-speaking population are all positive. Creoles have the highest index (.347), the European French the second highest (.306), and Saint-Domingue refugees the lowest (.265). This is not surprising. If individuals had not preferred to marry within their own groups, one might question the distinctiveness of the groups. The real question is whether their indices were relatively high or low.⁴⁰

Compared to other groups marrying in New Orleans at the same time, French-speakers occupied the middle ground. Their indices of homogamy were lower than those of German and Irish immigrants, but higher than those of immigrants from Spanish America and the United States (Table 5).

³⁹ Take, for example, the 2,260 Creole brides and 1,152 Creole grooms. Immediately below is a contingency table showing the number of endogamous and exogamous marriages expected from the sexual imbalance.

<i>Origin of Husbands</i>	<i>Origin of Wives</i>		<i>Total Husbands</i>
	<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Elsewhere</i>	
Louisiana	761	391	1,152
Elsewhere	1,499	770	2,269
Total Wives	2,260	1,161	3,421

The next table shows the *actual* number of endogamous and exogamous marriages.

<i>Origin of Husbands</i>	<i>Origin of Wives</i>		<i>Total Husbands</i>
	<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Elsewhere</i>	
Louisiana	1,027	125	1,152
Elsewhere	1,233	1,036	2,269
Total Wives	2,260	1,161	3,421

The contingency table predicts that forty-five percent of the Creoles will marry endogamously. In fact, sixty percent did so. Their positive index of homogamy of .347 can be interpreted intuitively as the difference between observed and expected marriages as a percentage of expected marriages.

⁴⁰ Indices of homogamy have been established for Boston from 1855 to 1907 and Buenos Aires from 1893 to 1908 by SAVORGNAN, "Matrimonial Selection", pp. 59-67; for Brazil from 1870 to 1926 by Bertram HUTCHINSON, "Some Evidence Related to Matrimonial Selection and Immigrant Assimilation in Brazil", *Population Studies*, XI (November 1957): 149-56; and for the United States in 1970 by Michael HECHTER, "Group Formation and the Cultural Division of Labor", *American Journal of Sociology*, LXXXIV (September 1978): 303-5. The indices discussed in these studies are generally higher than those observed in New Orleans; but even assuming the comparability of New Orleans between 1790 and 1840 with late nineteenth- and twentieth-century societies, the reference groups are not equivalent. The data base for other studies is either a national sample or marriage records for an entire community; for New Orleans, it is limited to individuals marrying in several Catholic churches. More appropriate for judging the relative level of endogamy of French-speakers are the indices of homogamy of other ethnic groups marrying in New Orleans during the same period.

Table 5. — INDICES OF HOMOGAMY FOR WHITES OF SPECIFIED ORIGINS (3,421 MARRIAGES).

<i>Origin</i>	<i>Index of Homogamy</i>	<i>Number of Spouses in Group*</i>
Ireland	.662	188
Germany	.487	131
Spain	.351	327
Louisiana	.347	3,412
France	.306	1,388
Saint Domingue	.265	628
Italy	.207	83
Spanish America	.077	92
USA	.075	354
Great Britain	.030	64

* Only groups with fifty or more spouses have been included.

However, because these indices are based only on marriages performed at St Louis Cathedral from 1790 through 1839 and at St Mary's Church until 1828, they require certain adjustments. The registers of St Mary's after 1828, and of St Patrick's Church founded in 1833, do not give the birthplace of spouses; but both churches served ethnic congregations. German Catholics attended St Mary's until the establishment of Holy Trinity parish in 1842.⁴¹ An apocryphal conversation between two Irishmen cited in a history of St Patrick's Church recalls the ethnic discord that led to its founding.

"Shure, and this place is full of foreigners", sighed a Tippararyite. "You'd think God was Gallic instead of Gaelic", deplored another, comically sincere and sincerely comical, "and 'tis hungry I am entirely to hear the brogue just once, once more, from the pulpit".⁴²

Since Irish and German immigrants who married in these ethnic parishes, and in the case of the Germans in the Lutheran church as well, were probably even more endogamous than those who married in the predominantly French cathedral, one may suppose that their respective indices of .662 and .487 actually underrepresent their tendency to marry spouses of the same nationality. Both were immigrant groups characterized by high ethnic solidarity and relatively little inclination to intermarry with Creoles or other French-speakers.

The indices of homogamy of natives of the United States are also lower than they would be if it were possible to include marriages outside the Cathedral and St Mary's Church. Most Americans were Protestants,

⁴¹ Roger BAUDIER, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana* (New Orleans: A. W. Hyatt Stationery Mfg. Co., 1939), p. 367.

⁴² Recounted in John LESTER, *A Brief History of St. Patrick's Church, New Orleans* (New Orleans: Wetzell Printing, 1945).

and many did not marry in a church at all. Eliza Ripley remarked in her recollections of New Orleans in the 1850s that, in contrast to Catholics who celebrated their marriages in a church, most Protestant weddings were home affairs.⁴³ As a rule, only Anglo-Americans who married Catholics show up in the Catholic marriage registers. That is the main reason their indices of homogamy are so low. Two out of three Anglo-American spouses were men; eighty-six percent took French-speaking wives. They included several of the more prominent political personalities of the territorial period: General Wilkinson, Governor Claiborne and Edward Livingston among others.⁴⁴ Their nineteenth-century descendants were known as *les Wilkinson* or *les Claiborne*, indicative of the capacity of Louisiana Creoles to absorb representatives even of the non-French élite.

Spanish and Spanish-American immigrants constitute another special case. Females born in Spain were among the most highly endogamous of the spouses studied: 78 percent married peninsular Spaniards and another 12 percent married natives of the Spanish colonies. Although only 25 percent of Spanish men took spouses of Spanish or Spanish-American origin, many of the 62 percent who married Creoles may have married Creoles of Spanish descent. Among Spanish-Americans, mostly from Mexico, 90 percent of both sexes married outside their group. In their case, too, interaction with the French-speaking population should not be inferred from frequent intermarriage with Creoles. More than half the brides from Spanish America took husbands from Spain; and it is likely that many who married natives of Louisiana chose second-generation Spanish-speakers as partners. Many of these marriages, of course, took place in the 1790s when Louisiana was still under Spanish rule. In that decade 20.9 percent of all Catholic spouses were born either in Spain or her colonies. Even in subsequent decades, Hispanic immigration accounts for two to four percent of the white spouses named in the registers of St Louis Cathedral.⁴⁵

⁴³ Eliza RIPLEY, *Social Life in Old New Orleans, being Recollections of my Girlhood* (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1912), p. 87.

⁴⁴ Robert REINDERS, *End of an Era: New Orleans, 1850-1860* (New Orleans: Pelican Pub. Co., 1964), p. 12. Jews also readily intermarried with Creoles. Bertram KORN, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), pp. 214-25, after noting that of fifteen Jews who permanently settled in New Orleans between 1802 and 1815, seven remained bachelors, seven intermarried, and one took a Christian as a second wife, and that among Jews who arrived later, the rate of intermarriage was at least fifty percent until the 1830s, concludes: "every indication points to a broad-scale acceptance of Jews by both the Creole and Yankee societies of New Orleans. The frequency of intermarriage is one measure of the welcome which was accorded to Jews. Even the church, until sometime in the 1830s, ignored the religious problem. The difference of religion was not even noted in the church records which recorded their marriages. Apparently it did not matter very much to anyone that these men were Jews." Korn also puts his finger on a major factor in the extensive intermarriage that took place in New Orleans' Catholic population: "The French and Spanish Creoles were not devout Catholics. Most of the men acted as though religion was a formality designed only for women and children ... Business, success, wealth, property, pleasure, excitement, were far more important."

⁴⁵ The dimensions of immigration from Spain and the Spanish colonies are suggested in the genealogical index based on passenger lists by Charles MADUELL, *Index of Spanish Citizens Entering New Orleans, January 1820 through December 1839* (New Orleans, 1968).

Finally, interpretation of the indices of homogamy must take into account the possibility of variations in marriage rates. The fact that white adult males outnumbered white adult females by ratios of up to two to one in every census of New Orleans in the antebellum period points to a highly competitive marriage market. Judging by the large excedent of Creole brides over Creole grooms, the latter were not among the highest bidders. Many more Creole men may have been present in New Orleans than show up in the marriage records. If so, the Creole index of homogamy overestimates the propensity of native New Orleanians to marry each other.

In short, French-speakers may only appear to be more prone to endogamy than Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans because of peculiarities in the data base. They were definitely less prone than Irish, German and Spanish immigrants. Although marriage choices are subject to too many factors to ascribe them to any one motivation, the middling propensities to endogamy of Creoles, the European French and Saint-Domingue refugees at least do not preclude openness to intermarriage as a conscious means of strengthening the French population.

V. — VARIATIONS OVER TIME

Changes over time in the indices of homogamy of French-speakers offer another indication that considerations of *survivance* might have affected the choice of marriage partners. There were two decades in the period from 1790 to 1840 when the French population had special reason to feel threatened as a cultural community. Prior to 1803 Spanish domination had acted as a check on Anglo-American immigration; but retrocession of Louisiana to France and Napoleon's sale of the province to the United States eliminated that barrier.⁴⁶ At the outset of American rule, federal authorities justified delaying statehood for the territory of Orleans by the argument that it was first necessary to instill Anglo-Saxon norms in the *ancienne population*, or better yet reduce it to a minority through encouragement of immigration from elsewhere in the Union.⁴⁷ The Anglo-American threat was actually more acute in the territorial period than immediately afterwards. The Constitution of 1812, drafted when French-speakers were still a majority, assured French ethnic domination of Louisiana politics for several decades to come.⁴⁸ Still, Anglo-American immigration continued, the American suburb above Canal Street flourished, and in the 1830s the onset of large-scale German and Irish immigration presented a new source of danger to the French population. If *survivance* were a factor in the choice of marriage partners, and if intermarriage were perceived as contributing to *survivance*, one would predict the lowest levels of endogamy in the decades 1800-9 and 1830-39.

⁴⁶ Gilbert DIN, "Spain's Immigration Policy in Louisiana and the American Penetration, 1792-1803", *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXXVI (1973): 256, 271, 274-75.

⁴⁷ Paul LACHANCE, "The Politics of Fear: French Louisianians and the Slave Trade, 1786-1809", *Plantation Society in the Americas*, I (June 1979): 185.

⁴⁸ TREGLE, "Political Reinforcement of Ethnic Dominance", p. 813.

In general, decennial levels of homogamy for all French-speaking spouses correspond to this prediction (Table 6).

Table 6. — DECENNIAL INDICES OF HOMOGAMY FOR WHITE FRENCH-SPEAKING SPOUSES.

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Louisiana Creoles</i>	<i>European French</i>	<i>Saint-Domingue Refugees</i>	<i>All French-speakers</i>
1790-99	.369	.341	—*	.394
1800-9	.255	.175	.303	.197
1810-19	.318	.224	.259	.211
1820-29	.355	.318	.277	.410
1830-39	.407	.391	.097	.334

* Insufficient number of cases to permit calculation for 1790-99.

The indices are at the lowest level in the first decade of the nineteenth century, increase over the next two decades and then decline again in the 1830s. On the other hand, only the indices of homogamy of Creole and European French spouses vary in tandem. Both groups were most open to intermarriage between 1800 and 1809. Thereafter, they displayed an ever greater tendency to marry within their groups. They became, if anything, more clannish in the Jacksonian period.

If the overall propensity to endogamy nevertheless diminished in the 1830s, it was due to Saint-Domingue refugees who showed in that decade little preference for each other over outsiders, an inevitable result of the non-replenishing character of their migration. Unlike immigrants from France, there were no fresh arrivals after 1809 to sustain cultural differences. The 1830 marriages involved for the most part children born to Saint-Domingue families during the last years of the revolution or soon afterwards in Cuba.⁴⁹ Growing up in Louisiana, these children were formed by the same experiences as young people native to the state.

The amalgamation of Louisiana Creoles and Saint-Domingue refugees is even clearer when the indices of homogamy of the three possible pairs of French-speaking spouses are compared (Table 7).

⁴⁹ Jean BOZE, a Saint-Domingue refugee who kept another refugee who had returned to France informed about deaths and marriages in New Orleans, began to comment in 1831 that many of the marriages involved youth who were still *au maillot* when the latter left Louisiana (towards 1818). Historic New Orleans Collection (New Orleans), Henri de Ste. Gême Papers (1762-1842) (hereafter Ste. Gême Papers), Ms. 100, Boze to Ste. Gême, New Orleans, 3 September 1831.

Table 7. — DECENNIAL INDICES OF HOMOGAMY BETWEEN FRENCH-SPEAKERS OF SPECIFIED ORIGINS.

<i>Decade</i>	<i>between Creoles and European French</i>	<i>between Creoles and Saint-Domingue Refugees</i>	<i>between European French and Saint-Domingue Refugees</i>
1790-99	.423	—*	—*
1800-9	.230	.621	.476
1810-19	.336	.499	.305
1820-29	.409	.471	.384
1830-39	.522	.200	.413

* Insufficient number of cases to permit calculation for 1790-99.

From 1800 to 1840, the indices for marriages involving only Creoles and refugees show a definite downward trend in striking contrast to Creole-French marriages and, after 1810, marriages between refugees and the European French.

The divergent trends also expose two different types of intermarriage in the first and fourth decades of the nineteenth century. Even in the first decade, one may safely conjecture that natives of Louisiana had more in common with natives of Saint Domingue than either had with Frenchmen from the metropole. Both were colonial populations. Natives of Saint Domingue were also called "Creoles", and for the same reason as Louisianians, namely, to differentiate them from persons born in the Old World. Nevertheless, Louisianians and refugees initially preferred Frenchmen as marriage partners. Through 1830 dissimilar groups continued to show a greater propensity to intermarry than similar groups; but increasing indices of homogamy for marriages where one of the spouses was European-born reflect a growing reluctance of Creoles and refugees to enter into such unions. At the same time, decreasing indices of homogamy for marriages between Louisianians and refugees represented a blurring of the boundaries between them. By the 1830s, the pattern of exogamous marriages had reversed itself. The propensity to intermarry was greater between similar than dissimilar groups.

The shift over time in marriage preferences of French-speakers heralded a fundamental change in the social interaction of Creoles with immigrants. The high index of homogamy of .522 for Creole-French marriages in the 1830s may be taken as evidence of incipient cultural withdrawal. Masked for the moment by continued intermarriage with the last refugee cohort, insularity was replacing interaction as the mechanism of French cultural persistence in New Orleans. As an urban island where all the activities of daily life could be pursued in French, the *Vieux Carré* would endure for another half century. However, in contrast to the cosmopolitan French culture of the first decades of American rule, there was a price to be paid for *survivance* through insularity: the slow internal decay of Creole culture. Concerning French cultural persistence after 1840, Glenn Conrad observes:

The New Orleans Creoles has set up a cultural bastion so strong that it not only prevented social interaction, but it hermetically sealed its denizens from outside influences, even French, so necessary to maintain a vibrant society.⁵⁰

VI. — CHARACTERISTICS OF FREE-BLACK SPOUSES

A large number of New Orleans' French-speakers were black. They were sometimes referred to as *les Créoles nègres*, a term that presupposes that they were natives of Louisiana and of pure African descent.⁵¹ In fact, they were a heterogeneous population, although to a lesser degree than their white counterparts. The marriages of 2,106 non-whites recorded at St Louis Cathedral and in a register now located in the archives of St Mary's Italian Church make it possible to describe non-white French-speakers along the lines just followed for whites.⁵² The analysis will apply almost uniquely to New Orleans' third caste: the free persons of colour. Only thirty-nine of the non-white spouses were slaves, most of whom married in the last years of Spanish domination when the Church and imperial officials still encouraged slave marriages.⁵³ The Civil Code drafted soon after the Louisiana Purchase, as previously mentioned, expressly forbade slave marriages.

Until the 1840s free blacks kept pace with the growth of New Orleans, averaging about one-quarter of its total population, one-third if slaves are omitted.⁵⁴ They represented, however, only 18.3 percent of all Catholic spouses. In three census years in the 1790s, when Catholics came closest to constituting the totality of New Orleans' inhabitants, there were on the average 3.3 Catholic marriages a year for every 1,000 free persons of colour against 8.4 for every 1,000 whites.⁵⁵ The discrepancy probably lessened in the American period without altogether disappearing.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Glenn CONRAD, "A Critique of 'Patterns of Intermarriage in Late Spanish and Early American New Orleans'" (commentary on the first draft of this paper read at the meeting of the Canadian Association for American Studies, Guelph, Ontario, 23-25 October 1980), p. 3.

⁵¹ JOHNSON, "The Louisiana French", pp. 25-27. The term was especially used in juxtaposition to that of *nègres 'Méricains [sic]*.

⁵² The birthplaces of 1,866 (88.6 percent) of the non-white spouses are indicated. For analysis of intermarriage, 916 marriages give the birthplace of both husband and wife.

⁵³ James Thomas MCGOWAN, "Creation of a Slave Society: Louisiana Plantations in the Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1976), pp. 262-65. Needless to say, the campaign in favour of slave marriages met with little success. It is only relative to the American period that slave marriages are worth mentioning. Of the thirty-nine slave spouses, thirty-two were married before 1803 and only seven afterwards. Sixteen belonged to the Ursulines nuns. Eighteen were Creoles of Louisiana, two were born in Saint Domingue and ten were African.

⁵⁴ David RANKIN, "The Impact of the Civil War on the Free Colored Community of New Orleans", *Perspectives in American History*, XI (1977-1978): 380.

⁵⁵ Calculated from the standard formula for the crude marriage rate:

$$\mu = \frac{M}{P} \times 1,000$$

M, the total number of marriages among residents during the year, is derived for whites and non-whites respectively from the marriage records of St Louis Cathedral (the only church where marriages were celebrated in the 1790s). To eliminate yearly fluctuations, an average

Of the free persons of colour whose birthplace is given in the church records, 74.3 percent were born in Louisiana, 19.1 percent were natives of Saint Domingue or born to Saint-Domingue parents in Jamaica or Cuba, 3.8 percent were African, and 1.2 percent were from the United States.⁵⁷ Owing to the near absence of immigrants from Europe, non-white spouses were more highly Creole than white spouses. In all, 93 percent were French-speakers by origin, compared to 80 percent of the whites who married in the two French-language churches. Although only 18 percent of all Catholic spouses, non-whites represented 28.5 percent of all Creole and 34.5 percent of all Saint-Domingue spouses.

As in the white population, refugees from Saint Domingue were the major factor in decennial variations in the origins of non-white spouses (Table 8).

Table 8. — PROPORTION OF NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS AMONG NON-WHITE SPOUSES BY DECADE, 1790-1839.

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Louisiana Creoles (%)</i>	<i>Africa (%)</i>	<i>Saint Domingue (%)</i>	<i>USA (%)</i>	<i>Other* (%)</i>	<i>Non-whites (Total Number)</i>
1790-99	73.3	17.1	4.8	1.9	2.9	105
1800-9	81.5	9.6	4.5	1.3	3.1	157
1810-19	69.4	4.9	23.1	0.7	1.9	268
1820-29	62.4	2.4	32.4	1.1	1.7	466
1830-39	81.0	1.5	15.1	1.4	1.0	870

* Includes France (one bride) and French and Spanish colonies.

Early in the Saint-Domingue revolution, the French National Assembly had granted full political and civil equality to blacks already free under the

was taken of marriages the year before, the year of and the year after each census year. *P*, the average number of persons living in the area under consideration during the year, is derived from enumeration of whites and free blacks in the following censuses: New Orleans Public Library, City Archives, Census of New Orleans of Carlos de Morant, 6 November 1791; University of Notre Dame Archives, Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576-1803 (microfilm edition, 1967), Census for New Orleans, Barataria, Balize to English Turn, Bayou St. Jean, and the Coast of Chapitoulas, 29 September 1796, among church censuses taken by parish priests and reported to Bishop Luis Peñalver y Cárdenas, New Orleans, 1795-1799; Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (Paris), Correspondance consulaire pour la Nouvelle Orléans, I (1804-1817), folio 55, "Population de la Louisiane en l'Année 1797". The rate of nuptiality for non-whites was 2.7 in 1791, 2.8 in 1796 and 4.5 in 1797. For whites it was 11.3, 6.9 and 7.0 in the three years respectively. The average of the three rates for each race is the figure given in the text.

⁵⁶ The number of free-black Catholic marriages per 1,000 free-black inhabitants, non-Catholics as well as Catholics, was 2.79 in 1820, 3.21 in 1830, not much lower than in the Spanish period when a much greater proportion of the total free-black population was Catholic.

⁵⁷ The Louisiana-born, it will be recalled, constituted 49.5 percent of the white spouses in the records of St Louis Cathedral and St Mary's church.

ancien régime. Besides feeling a special debt to France, many free mulattoes and free blacks wanted the revolution to stop there. They subsequently fought unsuccessfully to defend the new status *quo* against the insurgent armies of ex-slaves led by Toussaint-Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines.⁵⁸ Free-black refugees with a military past were sufficiently numerous in Louisiana to form a separate battalion of free persons of colour that distinguished itself in the Battle of New Orleans of 1814-15.⁵⁹ In addition, the non-white refugee population included women and children with family ties to white refugees.⁶⁰

The timing of the refugee impact on New Orleans' free-black community differed from that on the white community. Minimal in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the number and proportion of non-white Saint-Domingue spouses reached a peak in the 1820s rather than in the preceding decade and tapered off less sharply in the 1830s.⁶¹ These refugees arrived in the same secondary migrations as white *colons* of Saint Domingue and their families, but a larger proportion came from Cuba in 1809 than from Jamaica in 1803-4. Furthermore, forty-two percent of the free-black refugees of 1809 were younger than sixteen in contrast to only twenty-four percent of the whites.⁶² Even allowing for some falsification of age to get around a Louisiana law barring the entry of free-black men older than sixteen, a younger age composition remains the most probable explanation of the delayed effect of Saint-Domingue spouses on marital patterns.⁶³ Also of note in Table 8 is the steady decline from decade to decade in the proportion of African-born spouses and the negligible percentage of American-born spouses in each decade.

⁵⁸ Robert STEIN, "The Free Men of Colour and the Revolution in Saint Domingue, 1789-1792", *Histoire sociale — Social History*, XIV (mai-Mai 1981): 7-28. For a discussion of their role in the revolution after 1792, see C. L. R. JAMES, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), pp. 224-37, 289-377. One should, however, be careful not to exaggerate the counter-revolutionary role of the mulattoes. As James argues, General Leclerc and later General Rochambeau alienated many of the leaders of this faction who had returned with the expedition sent by Napoleon to wrest power from Toussaint-Louverture and reimpose French control over Saint Domingue. Pétion would fight with Dessalines in the final phase of the revolution that ended with the independence of Haiti.

⁵⁹ Roland MCCONNELL, *Negro Troops of Antebellum Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), pp. 73f.

⁶⁰ The natural children of the white refugee, Henri de Ste. Gême, are one example. Jean Boze kept Ste. Gême informed for twenty years after his return to France on their development. See in the Ste. Gême Papers, Ms. 156, Boze to Ste. Gême, New Orleans, 1 March 1830, where he informs him that his daughters Fortunée and Desirée have not been able to buy the splendid dresses needed to attend the quadron balls, but have been satisfied instead with the "bals de société de leur couleur dans cette même salle, mais composés des gens honnêtes de cette classe tenant à des familles de leur connaissance", and Ms. 248, Boze to Ste. Gême, New Orleans, 28 March 1836, on efforts to place his natural sons in desirable employments.

⁶¹ See for comparison Table 1.

⁶² Report of the mayor of New Orleans to Governor Clairborne, 18 January 1810, published in *Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*, 27 January 1810, giving a statistical breakdown of the refugees by race and condition (white, free person of colour, slave), age and sex.

⁶³ H. E. STERKX, *The Free Negro in Ante-bellum Louisiana* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1972), pp. 92-94.

The number of non-white marriages increased from an average of 11 per year in the 1790s to 105 per year in the 1830s. The upward trend did not manifest itself clearly until after 1815, and only in the prosperous decade from 1828 to 1837 did the rate of increase attain the level of 7.8 percent per annum (Graph 2). Although only half the rate of increase of white Catholics in the 1830s, the augmentation of free-black spouses remains impressive, particularly as it consisted almost entirely of French-speakers, whereas the increase in white spouses owed much to German and Irish immigration.⁶⁴

The Creole element of the free-black population grew through a combination of manumissions and natural increase. The former had a limited impact on the frequency of non-white marriages because of the relatively advanced age at which most slaves were freed. More important as a cause of the upward trend in non-white marriages after 1815 was high natural increase, higher than that of the white population despite the latter's greater fertility. According to Matthew Flannery's census of 1805, there were 1.23 children under sixteen for every adult free woman of colour, 1.38 for every adult white female.⁶⁵ The census of 1820 counted 1.45 children fourteen years old or younger per free-black woman aged fourteen to forty-five, and 1.86 children sixteen or younger per white woman between sixteen and forty-five.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, a larger proportion of adult women in the free-black population meant proportionately more children. In comparison to 44 free blacks for every 100 whites in New Orleans in 1805 and 46 in 1820, the ratio of free-black to white children was 56 : 100 in the first census year and 65 : 100 in the second.⁶⁷ More children meant, as they reached maturity in the 1830s, larger contingents of marriageable individuals.

Saint-Domingue immigrants reinforced the sex and age distribution of New Orleans' free-black population. Among the refugees described by the mayor in a special report to the governor of Louisiana in January 1810, there were 1,377 free women of colour with 1,297 children, but only 428 men.⁶⁸ Simply in terms of numbers, Saint-Domingue refugees added sub-

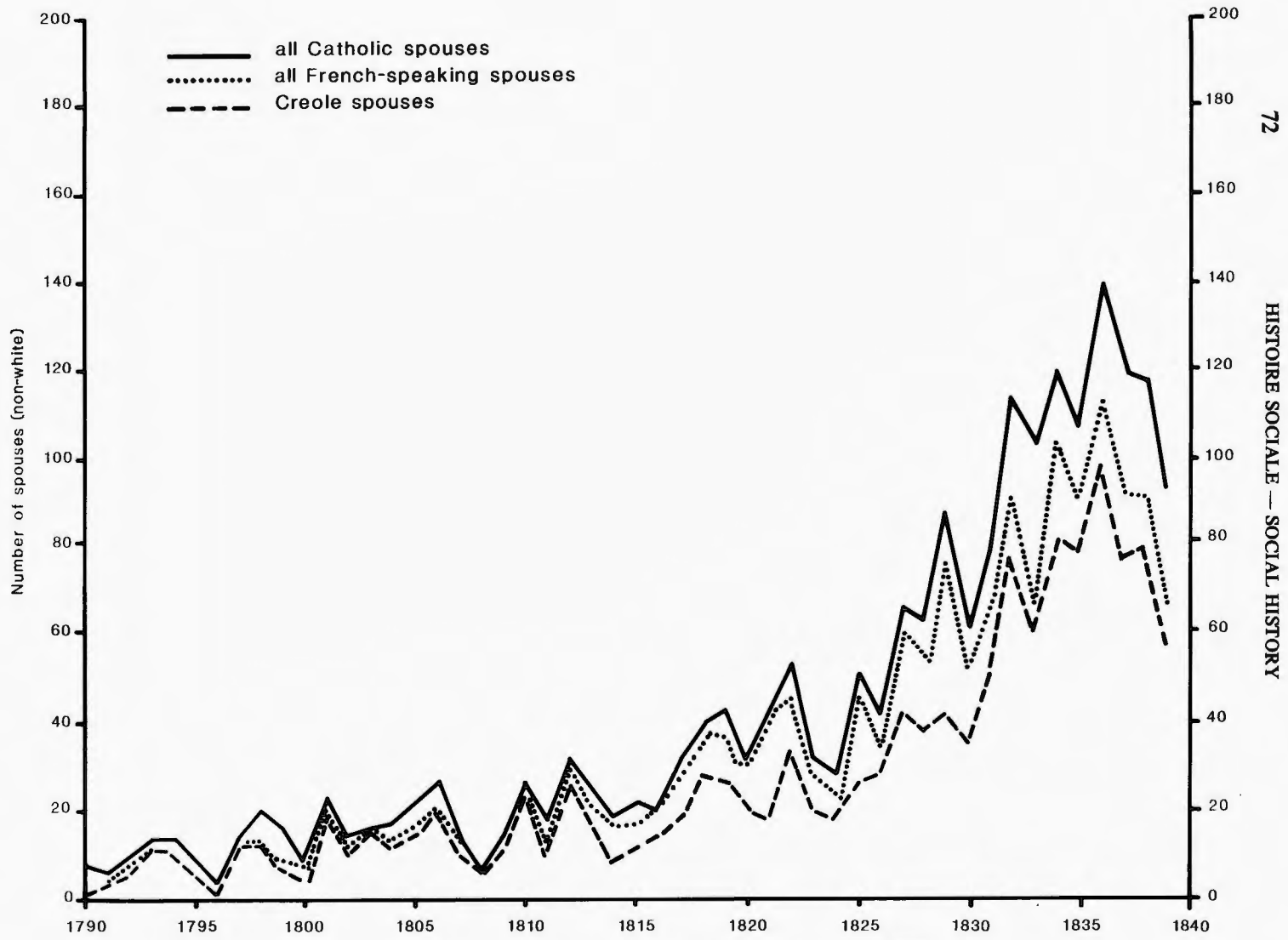
⁶⁴ For comparison, see Graph 1. In both Graphs 1 and 2, the difference between all French-speaking spouses and all Catholic spouses consists in part of cases where a spouse is explicitly identified as of non-French origin and in part of cases where the origins are simply not specified. See Appendix Ia and b. As a result of ethnic churches, most of the non-specified whites were non-French. Conversely, the proportion of French-speakers among the non-specified spouses was greater for non-whites.

⁶⁵ Charles L. THOMPSON, ed., *New Orleans in 1805: A Directory and a Census* (New Orleans: The Pelican Gallery, Inc., 1936), p. 107. The original, dated 5 August 1805 and signed by Matthew Flannery, is located in Tulane University (New Orleans), the Howard-Tilson Memorial Library, Special Collections Division, the Kuntz Collection.

⁶⁶ UNITED STATES CENSUS OFFICE, *Fourth Census: 1820*, National Archives Microfilm Publication M33, roll 32 (population schedules of Louisiana), Vol. 3, folio 110. The federal census for 1810, which gives the number of free persons of colour only in the aggregate, cannot be used to calculate crude rates of fertility.

⁶⁷ The ratio of free-black to white women of child-bearing age was 63 to 100 in 1805 and 74 to 100 in 1820. Adjusting for the different age classifications for whites and free persons of colour in 1820 would weaken, but not efface, the basic contrast.

⁶⁸ Mayor's report, *Moniteur de la Louisiane*, 18 January 1810.



Graph 2. — NON-WHITE CATHOLIC MARRIAGES IN NEW ORLEANS, 1790-1839.

stantially to the French-speaking element of the free-black community. For two decades after 1809, more than one out of every four non-white French-speaking spouses were of Saint-Domingue origin. Part of the natural increase of the Creole population consisted of children born to refugees in Louisiana. However, because the refugees were the only sizeable immigrant group in the non-white Catholic population, they played a comparatively less important role than white immigrants from France and Saint Domingue in shoring up the French-speaking population. Even in the absence of the refugee influx, free-black Creoles would have remained a majority of free-black Catholic spouses.

VII. — NON-WHITE MARITAL PATTERNS

The patterns of intermarriage within the free-black Catholic population confirm the dominant position of the Creoles (Table 9).

Table 9. — INTERMARRIAGE IN THE NON-WHITE CATHOLIC POPULATION.*

<i>Non-white Group</i>		<i>Origin of Spouses (%)</i>					<i>Total</i>
		<i>Creole</i>	<i>African</i>	<i>Saint-Domingue</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Other**</i>	
Creole	{H	90.6	1.4	7.4	0.3	0.3	100
	{W	82.3	0.7	13.5	1.5	2.0	100
African	{H	16.1	80.6	0.0	0.0	3.3	100
	{W	23.7	65.8	7.9	0.0	2.6	100
Saint-Domingue	{H	49.7	1.5	47.2	1.0	0.6	100
	{W	32.2	0.0	61.7	0.7	5.4	100
USA	{H	73.3	0.0	6.7	20.0	0.0	100
	{W	25.0	0.0	25.0	37.5	12.5	100

* See Appendix IIb for numbers from which percentages were calculated.

** Includes France (one bride) and French and Spanish colonies.

H = husbands; W = wives.

When free-black spouses born outside Louisiana married exogamously, they chose overwhelmingly Louisiana Creoles as husbands or wives. In plain numbers, 172 of 178 exogamous marriages involved Creoles. Notwithstanding, non-white natives of Louisiana were themselves quite endogamous. Not only did over ninety percent of Creole husbands choose Creole brides, a behaviour that also characterized white Creole males; as well, unlike white Creole females, over eighty percent of the free-black Creole brides wed within their group.

Although non-white indices of homogamy are higher than for the corresponding nationalities in the white population, the two French-speaking groups occupy similarly the middle range (Table 10).

Table 10. — INDICES OF HOMOGAMY FOR NON-WHITES OF SPECIFIED ORIGINS (916 MARRIAGES).

<i>Origin</i>	<i>Index of Homogamy</i>	<i>Number of Spouses in Group</i>
Africa	.718	69
Louisiana	.470	1,368
Saint Domingue	.436	344
USA	.265	23

The homogamy of Saint-Domingue refugees *vis-à-vis* Louisiana Creoles decreased from .590 in the first decade after the arrivals of 1809 to .473 in the 1820s and .366 in the 1830s. This indicates a certain integration into Creole society, again attributable to the non-replenishing character of the refugee movement; but the lowest index of non-white refugees (.366) remains higher than the highest white refugee index (.303).⁶⁹ Another difference from white refugees was the ratio of husbands to wives. Of refugees arriving in Louisiana, white males were far more numerous than white females, while free men of colour were far less numerous than female refugees of colour. Contrary to what one would expect from these sex ratios, white wives of Saint-Domingue origin outnumbered white husbands while the reverse was true of non-white refugees.⁷⁰

The low index of homogamy of American-born free-black spouses, like that of white spouses of the same origin, stems from the Protestantism of the group. Only Protestants actually intermarrying into the Catholic population tend to show up in the Catholic marriage records. More significant, in fact, than the low index of homogamy is the minuscule number of spouses from the United States: only 23 in all, compared to 182 American-born whites who married Creoles and 90 more who married white French-speakers of other nationalities. There was no shortage of potential spouses of American origin in the free-black population. Beginning in 1841, the municipality of New Orleans kept a special register of free blacks from outside Louisiana who had applied for and received authorization to stay in the state. Of the 587 persons listed in the first register, 314 (52 percent) were born in the United States. Some were manumitted slaves who had originally entered Louisiana through the domestic slave trade or who had accompanied masters immigrating there. Others were free-black immigrants

⁶⁹ Compare Table 6.

⁷⁰ The mayor's report, *Moniteur de la Louisiane*, 18 January 1810, shows 1,373 white male refugees and 703 white female refugees entering in 1809, compared to 428 free men of colour and 1,377 free women of colour, in both cases exclusive of children younger than 15. Among refugee spouses, on the other hand, there were in all 236 white husbands and 394 white wives, 196 non-white husbands and 150 non-white wives. Although the mayor's report, which does not distinguish between refugees born in France and in the colonies, is not strictly speaking comparable with the marriage data, the contrast is too striking not to be noted.

from Atlantic ports like New York, Baltimore, Norfolk and Charleston.⁷¹ In New Orleans, judging from the paucity of marriages with Creoles, these English-speakers remained isolated from French-speaking free blacks.

Finally, African-born spouses had as little tendency to intermarry with Creoles and other free persons of colour as Irish and German immigrants had with other white Catholics. The high index of homogamy for Africans can be interpreted broadly as evidence of cultural division resulting from proximity to African origins, more narrowly as a reflection of the gulf between blacks born free and those manumitted in their lifetimes (African-born spouses falling in the second category), or more narrowly still as testimony to the importance of colour differences in free-black society.⁷² In a study of the marriage patterns of the wealthy Metoyer family of Isle Brevelle in a rural parish of Louisiana, Gary Mills generalized:

Despite the modern trend of blacks to view all men of colour as "brothers" and despite the traditional attitude of whites which has tended to lump all non-whites into a single inferior category, definite class lines have existed in non-white society. For the well-to-do free man of color, status, wealth, racial composition and even religion have been important considerations in choosing a mate.⁷³

For New Orleans' free blacks of all levels of fortunes, the list of considerations should include national origin. In the final analysis, the marital preferences of Africans, Americans, Saint-Domingue refugees and Creoles of colour were relatively exclusive.

VIII. — CONCLUSIONS

Examination of marriages of white and non-white Catholics has revealed the importance of immigration in sustaining the French population of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New Orleans. Although white Creole spouses lagged behind the rate of increase of immigrant spouses, the presence of many Frenchmen and Saint-Domingue refugees among the immigrants inflated the total number of French-speakers. With the admixture of foreign elements, French remained the majority language among whites until the 1830s. Creoles, it is true, would have remained a majority of non-white Catholics by the simple mechanism of substantial natural increase and limited immigration of non-white non-French-speaking Catholics. However, Saint-Domingue refugees, who for two decades after their arrival represented one-fourth of all non-white Catholic spouses,

⁷¹ New Orleans Public Library, City Archives, Mayor's Office, "Register of Free Persons of Color, 1840-1864", 4 vols, I (11 July 1840 — 17 August 1857).

⁷² Because the non-white registers do not systematically distinguish between Negroes, mulattoes, quadroons and other gradations between white and black, and because it would be unwise in any case to trust in this matter the perception of priests officiating at marriages, it is impossible to measure the importance of racial differences in non-white marital patterns.

⁷³ Gary MILLS, *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), p. 78.

helped the Creoles to counterbalance Protestant, English-speaking free blacks entering New Orleans from other states in the Union.

The patterns of intermarriage of whites and non-whites were different. Linkages were more developed between groups of the white French-speaking population. Despite indices of homogamy high enough to bespeak two distinct subgroups, many Frenchmen from Europe contracted marriages with Creole women. A third component of the white French population, Saint-Domingue refugees, married on the female side into the "foreign French" faction and on the male side with Creoles, but over time displayed a tendency to merge with the Creole population. In addition, French-speaking women of all three groups enticed non-French elements into the French-speaking orbit. In comparison, the various subgroups of the non-white Catholic population were more homogamous. To the extent that intermarriage did occur, it generally involved Creoles as one of the marriage partners.

Although white Creoles continued to intermarry with outsiders through 1840, the wave of German and Irish immigration that reached New Orleans in the 1830s announced a major change. Creoles were more reluctant to intermarry with these immigrants than with Spaniards or Anglo-Americans. The arrival of large numbers of Germans and Irish badly fragmented the Catholic Church, an institution dominated by French-speakers up to 1840. New parishes, most with a decidedly ethnic character, proliferated in the 1840s and 1850s. This fragmentation isolated Creoles within those churches that remained French.

The arrival *en masse* of lower-class immigrants from Europe also sharpened class and racial antagonisms in New Orleans society. These cleavages started to cut deeper than linguistic differences. Irishmen and Germans competed with free persons of colour on the labour market. As early as 1835 the Irish rioted to demand preference over free blacks and slaves for employment as mechanics, carters and in other trades.⁷⁴ Such agitation bore fruit in the 1840s: the total number of free blacks residing in the city plummeted from 19,226 in 1840 to 9,905 in 1850.⁷⁵ By contributing to the departure of more than half the free-black population from New Orleans, workers from Europe helped to atrophy an important component of the French-speaking population.

In a study of legal marriages, it has not been possible to observe the interaction of whites and free persons of colour. Contemporaries spoke as if illicit unions between the races were the norm. Spanish authorities taunted Creoles for shamelessly taking black mistresses.⁷⁶ Joseph Dubreuil de Villars, a planter of an old Creole family who can hardly be suspected of animosity towards Louisianians, attributed their low birth rate to concubinage:

⁷⁴ The riot is described in the Ste. Gême papers, Ms. 239, Boze to Ste. Gême, New Orleans, 9 August 1835, with a newsclipping from *Le Franc Parleur* (New Orleans), 3 September 1835.

⁷⁵ STEREX, *Free Negro in Ante-bellum Louisiana*, p. 154.

⁷⁶ New Orleans Public Library, City Archives, "Records and Deliberations of the Cabildo", 5 vols, IV, Part 4: 198, Casa-Calvo to Vidal, 24 September 1800.

Qu'on jette les yeux sur les campagnes, sur les bourgs et sur la cité du Territoire d'Orléans, on les verra, pour ainsi dire, encombrés de filles qui voyent flétrir leurs charmes et s'éteindre leur fécondité, en attendant des hommes qui veuillent partager légalement avec elles les charges, les douleurs et les peines de la vie. Regardez à côté de ces femmes délaissées, vous apercevrez une légion de célibataires de tout âge qui, méprisant les plaisirs purs et salutaires de la seule union permise par la religion et par les loix, qui insensibles au charme inexprimable de se voir renaître honorablement dans des enfants qui puissent perpétuer leur nom, leurs talents, leurs vertus et le rang qu'ils occupent dans l'ordre social, consomment honteusement leur vie avec des femmes qui ont perdu tout sentiment de retenue et de pudeur, avec des femmes flétries par les préjugés, flétries par les loix et dont les enfants flétris comme elles et repoussés par la constitution du rang des citoyens, ne peuvent jamais perpétuer que le souvenir des vices et de la dépravation de leurs pères.⁷⁷

The system of *plaçage*, extralegal unions formed with quadroon women met at specially organized dances, institutionalized concubinage.⁷⁸ Depending on how widespread this behaviour actually was, the departure of many free persons of colour from New Orleans after 1840 had a consequence as serious as the decline in size of the French-speaking population. It weakened lines of communication between French-speakers of different races.

Several demographic and social factors contributing to the patterns of intermarriage of inhabitants of New Orleans have been discussed: in particular, the considerable imbalance in sex ratios of Creole and French immigrant spouses and the impact of the Saint-Domingue refugee influx. Other factors require further investigation. It would be interesting to establish the origins of parents of Creole spouses. If the parents were also natives of Louisiana, they may have had a different attitude to the marriage of their daughters with foreigners than parents who were themselves foreigners. It is also well-known that occupational and kinship networks affect the choice of marriage partners. These, therefore, need to be delineated.

One finding is especially puzzling: the sexual imbalance among Creole spouses. Pre-pubescent boys and girls were near parity. Why then did they not marry in nearly equal numbers as they reached maturity? Two possible explanations come to mind: first, emigration of Creole men from the city; secondly, a preference of many Creole men for unions with free women of colour over marriages with white women. If the second speculation turns out to be founded, it would only heighten the impression of extensive social interaction that has emerged from analysis of marital patterns in early New Orleans. French culture there was anything but insular for most of the period between 1790 and 1840. As long as French-speaking immigrants continued to arrive in sufficient numbers and Creoles continued to be open to a degree of intermarriage with outsiders, French language and culture survived quite well in the cosmopolitan setting of New Orleans.

⁷⁷ William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, Joseph Dubreuil de Villars Papers, undated memorandum or copy of speech to the state legislature (or territorial assembly).

⁷⁸ Laura FONER, "The Free People of Color in Louisiana and St. Domingue", *Journal of Social History*, III (1970): 411. It is rare to find a history of ante-bellum New Orleans that does not at least allude to the system of *plaçage* of light-skinned free-black women with well-connected Creole youth.

Appendix Ia. — ANNUAL NUMBER OF WHITE SPOUSES, BY ORIGIN,
IN NEW ORLEANS, 1790-1839.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Other French</i>	<i>Non- French</i>	<i>Unspe- cified¹</i>	<i>Unspe- cified²</i>	<i>Unspe- cified³</i>	<i>Total White</i>
1790	3	9	3	23			38
1791	12	11	19	10			52
1792	19	15	14	3			51
1793	25	19	16	2			62
1794	64	14	16	1			95
1795	30	9	19	2			60
1796	38	7	10	3			58
1797	32	3	20	1			56
1798	35	9	10	0			54
1799	33	12	14	1			60
1800	56	17	19	0			92
1801	36	12	13	9			70
1802	39	15	17	5			76
1803	66	22	14	2			104
1804	54	39	18	4			115
1805	56	38	29	2			125
1806	57	39	18	4			118
1807	51	35	26	3			115
1808	68	19	19	0			106
1809	59	31	17	1			108
1810	58	66	22	0			146
1811	66	50	17	4			137
1812	61	38	15	2			116
1813	61	61	20	1			143
1814	67	59	12	1			139
1815	63	44	21	10			138
1816	91	64	24	1			180
1817	79	66	27	4			176
1818	107	70	39	9			225
1819	98	72	18	5			193
1820	73	77	38	4			192
1821	59	62	40	5			166
1822	97	34	40	3			174
1823	64	46	16	2			128
1824	70	60	33	5			168
1825	96	67	41	2			206
1826	95	45	41	37			218
1827	72	34	38	20			164
1828	89	54	53	6	16		218
1829	96	36	35	20	22		209
1830	82	62	44	8	30		226
1831	82	47	28	12	52		221
1832	103	65	45	13	74		300
1833	89	54	56	30	118	16	363
1834	121	75	48	7	76	78	405
1835	98	49	38	4	242	44	475
1836	140	44	40	8	168	74	474
1837	149	76	60	13	132	102	532

<i>Year</i>	<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Other French</i>	<i>Non-French</i>	<i>Unspecified¹</i>	<i>Unspecified²</i>	<i>Unspecified³</i>	<i>Total White</i>
1838	127	108	69	4	274	102	684
1839	99	84	59	4	264	132	642
Total	3,485	2,144	1,408	320	1,468	548	9,373

Sources: Marriage registers from the following churches: St Louis Cathedral, Ursulines Chapel, St Mary's and St Patrick's.

¹ In St Louis Cathedral, Ursulines Chapel and St Mary's to 1828.

² In St Mary's from 1828.

³ In St Patrick's from 1833.

Appendix Ib. — ANNUAL NUMBER OF SPOUSES, BY RACE AND ORIGIN,
IN NEW ORLEANS, 1790-1839.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Non-white</i>				<i>Total Non-white¹</i>	<i>Total White²</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
	<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Other French</i>	<i>Non-French</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>			
1790	1	0	1	6	8	38	46
1791	4	0	0	2	6	52	58
1792	7	1	2	0	10	51	61
1793	12	0	2	0	14	62	76
1794	13	1	0	0	14	95	109
1795	6	0	2	0	8	60	68
1796	2	0	2	0	4	58	62
1797	13	1	0	0	14	56	70
1798	11	2	6	1	20	54	74
1799	8	1	7	0	16	60	76
1800	5	1	2	0	8	92	100
1801	19	1	2	0	22	70	92
1802	11	1	2	0	14	76	90
1803	16	0	0	0	16	104	120
1804	12	0	5	0	17	115	132
1805	15	3	4	0	22	125	147
1806	20	1	5	0	26	118	144
1807	12	2	0	0	14	115	129
1808	6	0	0	0	6	106	112
1809	12	0	0	2	14	108	122
1810	24	2	0	0	26	146	172
1811	11	3	4	0	18	137	155
1812	26	5	1	0	32	116	148
1813	17	4	4	0	25	143	168
1814	9	9	0	0	18	139	157
1815	12	3	5	0	20	138	158
1816	14	6	0	0	20	180	200
1817	18	11	3	0	32	176	208
1818	28	11	1	0	40	225	265
1819	27	10	3	4	44	193	237
1820	21	11	0	0	32	192	224
1821	19	22	2	1	44	166	210
1822	33	13	3	5	54	174	228

Year	Non-white				Total Non-white ¹	Total White ²	Grand Total
	Louisiana	Other French	Non- French	Unspe- cified			
1823	22	8	2	0	32	128	160
1824	19	4	1	4	28	168	196
1825	26	21	4	1	52	206	258
1826	27	8	1	6	42	218	260
1827	43	17	1	5	66	164	230
1828	39	17	2	6	64	218	282
1829	42	35	3	8	88	209	297
1830	36	18	0	8	62	226	288
1831	52	14	0	14	80	221	301
1832	77	15	5	17	114	300	414
1833	60	6	0	38	104	363	467
1834	82	23	3	12	120	405	525
1835	80	12	1	14	107	475	582
1836	100	16	6	18	140	474	614
1837	78	14	10	18	120	532	652
1838	80	11	2	25	118	684	802
1839	60	7	2	20	89	642	731
Total	1,387	371	108	238	2,104	9,373	11,477

¹ Sources: Marriage registers from St Louis Cathedral and St Mary's Italian.

² See Appendix Ia.

Appendix IIa. — MARRIAGES BETWEEN WHITE CATHOLICS, BY ORIGIN, IN NEW ORLEANS, 1790-1839.

<i>Origin of Grooms</i>	<i>Origin of Brides</i>								<i>Total Grooms</i>
	<i>Louisiana Creoles</i>	<i>Saint-Domingue</i>	<i>European French</i>	<i>Other French</i>	<i>Spanish</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Other European</i>	<i>Other American</i>	
Louisiana Creoles	1,027	58	24	3	2	22	9	7	1,152
Saint-Domingue	115	100	8	1	0	8	1	1	234
European French	542	160	255	6	4	36	22	4	1,029
Other French	26	6	4	0	0	0	1	0	37
Spanish	166	9	15	1	47	6	2	21	267
USA	160	26	14	5	0	20	8	3	236
Other European	180	32	36	0	1	22	127	2	400
Other American	44	1	2	0	6	4	1	6	64
African or Asian	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total Brides	2,260	393	359	16	60	118	171	44	3,421

Sources: Marriage registers from the following churches: St Louis Cathedral, Ursulines Chapel, St Mary's and St Patrick's.

Appendix IIb. — MARRIAGES BETWEEN NON-WHITE CATHOLICS, BY ORIGIN, IN NEW ORLEANS, 1790-1839.

<i>Origin of Grooms</i>	<i>Origin of Brides</i>						<i>Total Grooms</i>
	<i>Louisiana Creoles</i>	<i>Saint-Domingue</i>	<i>European French</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Other American</i>	<i>African</i>	
Louisiana Creoles	590	48	0	2	2	9	651
Saint-Domingue	97	92	0	2	1	3	195
Other French	8	5	0	0	0	0	13
USA	11	1	0	3	0	0	15
Other European	3	1	0	1	0	0	5
Other American	3	2	0	0	0	1	6
African	5	0	1	0	0	25	31
Total Brides	717	149	1	8	3	38	916

Sources: Marriage registers from St Louis Cathedral and St Mary's Italian.