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In this issue of *ISLAS*, we take the opportunity to mark two events. First, we recognize the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in the British Empire. Secondly, we recognize our own personal anniversary, two full years of publication for *ISLAS*.

This issue of *ISLAS* addresses a milestone in African Diaspora history. I am talking about the 200th anniversary of the Act that abolished the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in the British Empire. Many of our writers address this issue from differing perspectives; from the horror of slave commerce to the various resistance movements. From a personal perspective, no words can express the feelings and thoughts that cross my mind as I contemplate the meaning of this anniversary. The articles in this issue will bring you face to face with the horror, fear, and desperation of thousands of people who were ripped from their homes and families only to be further terrorized by brutal and inhuman treatment on their voyage and in their new land. As I read many of the articles in our issue, it reminded me of a poem that I read many years ago by Scottish poet Robert Burns:

Many and sharp the numerous ills
 Inwoven with our frame;
 More pointed still, we make ourselves
 Regret, remorse and shame;
 And man, whose heaven-erected face
 The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man,
 Makes countless thousands mourn.

ISLAS, too, is celebrating an anniversary of sorts, having just completed two full years of publication with this eighth issue. In reflecting on the journal's past, it is gratifying to see that we have made progress regarding its original mission, particularly because of the increasing participation of black writers from Cuba. The journal's increasing focus on pan-Diasporic issues is also rewarding and necessary. In examining what *ISLAS*'s future direction might be, we now hope to further shift its focus to contemporary issues of racism everywhere – but especially in Cuba – and to different ways in which it is being confronted.

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