

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Sustaining Freedom and Second Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Brazil and Cuba

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This essay reviews the following works:

Freedom from Liberation: Slavery, Sentiment, and Literature in Cuba. By Gerard Aching. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015. Pp. ix + 241. \$48.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780253016935.

Slavery and Politics: Brazil and Cuba, 1790–1850. By Rafael Marquese, Tâmis Peixoto Parron, and Márcia Regina Berbel. Translated by Leonardo Marques. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016. Pp. 1 + 351. \$29.95 paperback. ISBN: 9780826356482.

Divining Slavery and Freedom: The Story of Domingos Sodré, an African Priest in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. By João José Reis. Translated by H. Sabrina Gledhill. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Pp. xi + 351. \$32.99 paperback. ISBN: 9781107439092.

Ever Faithful: Race, Loyalty, and the Ends of Empire in Spanish Cuba. By David Sartorius. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014. Pp. vi + 312. \$24.95 paperback. ISBN: 9780822355939.

The Politics of the Second Slavery. Edited by Dale W. Tomich. Fernand Braudel Center Studies in Historical Social Science. Ithaca: State University New York Press, 2016. Pp. xii + 280. \$25.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781438462363.

This essay reviews recent studies of freedom and human bondage in nineteenth-century Brazil and Cuba, situating these texts within the historiographic terrain of Dale W. Tomich's "second slavery." Several of these works explicitly attempt to give the concept greater analytical utility for the study of Atlantic-world modernity, while others implicitly promote the inclusion of more social-biographical perspectives that integrates micro- and macro-level historical methods. At its most narrow, the concept creates a subperiodization of the Atlantic world's "long nineteenth century," maintaining its traditional start with the French and Haitian Revolutions, but shortening it to either 1865, with the abolitionist victory of the US Civil War, or 1888, with final emancipation in Brazil. This era witnessed slavery's simultaneous expansion and crisis. Impressive new profits were generated by the export-oriented, plantation production of Brazilian coffee, Cuban sugar, and southern US cotton, while liberal notions of individual rights placed slavery's advocates on near constant defense against unprecedented charges of moral barbarism.¹

Tomich also offers the "second slavery" as a theoretical reflection on the constitutive links between modern slavery and capitalism, and challenges simple abstractions of this relationship. Although he is indebted to Immanuel Wallerstein's "world systems" framework, Tomich questions the hierarchical differentiation between metropolitan and peripheral roles in consolidating capitalism. Fundamental to Tomich's approach is Eric William's thesis delineating how the profits from British Caribbean slavery provided what Marxists would label as the seed "primitive accumulation" necessary for the rise of industrial capitalism. Tomich expands this issue into Brazilian and Cuban contributions. However, Tomich's second slavery is consistent

¹ Dale Tomich, "The 'Second Slavery': Bonded Labor and the Transformation of the Nineteenth Century World Economy," in Francisco O. Ramirez, ed., *Rethinking the Nineteenth Century: Contradictions and Movements* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 103–117; reprinted in *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004).

with the consensus rejecting William's view of an inevitable, economically motivated transition from slave labor to wage labor. Along with their US southern counterparts, agricultural capitalists in both nineteenth-century Brazil and Cuba actively resisted abolitionist efforts.²

Tomich's edited volume *The Politics of the Second Slavery* belongs to a series of works of the past decade offered by Latin Americanist adherents to second-slavery analytics.³ Rafael Marquese and Tâmis Parron's "International Proslavery, The Politics of the Second Slavery" describes greater participation of American nations in the creation of the new British-led interstate system explored by Tomich in his opening essay. They praise him, but then correct a limitation in second-slavery methodology by examining an opposite causal relation between the emerging Atlantic political order and vicissitudes of nineteenth-century slavery. "Tomich has not given due weight to the dimension of power in his original formulation of the concept; to put it another way, he did not explore the role of the political and diplomatic clashes of the nineteenth-century interstate system in making the new historical structure of slavery and producing its subsequent crisis" (26–27). They emphasize the respective assertions of sovereignty by the political elite in Brazil, "Spain-Cuba," and the United States as each confronted British antislavery. They describe the establishment, by the 1830s, of an "international proslavery" polemic that united slaveholders in their additional goal of maintaining the internal social hierarchy of their countries, despite their differing governing structures—Brazil's representative system under a "centralized monarchy," Cuba's colonial status, and the United States' existence as "a democracy based on racial distinction."

One of the more important constraints on their political interaction was the inability of slaveholders to create a unified (physical) center of proslavery thought to counteract London (52). The authors note that the relatively tame British policy toward US slavery proponents, in contrast to the pressure placed on Brazilians and Cubans, was not only a recognition of the United States' growing military strength. It is also attributable to the centrality of slave-produced US cotton to Britain's Industrial Revolution and its defenders' membership in an English-speaking cultural community. US slavery advocates created defensive, popular texts designed to placate English audiences, while the Brazilians and Cubans did not (50). Marquese and Parron also challenge an existing historiography that assigns to the United States the only "positive" defense of slavery among these nations. They list several mid-nineteenth-century Brazilian and Cuban "positive" justifications for slavery, including: "the idea that bondage eventually produced citizens in Brazil; the claim ... that slave labor was cheaper and more productive than its free counterpart in regions of open frontier; the perception that the abolitionist experiment in the British West Indies had been an economic failure; a vision of slavery as a tool for social progress; positive comparisons between the life conditions of slaves and European free workers ... ; and the characterization of abolitionism as a radical movement that was equivalent to socialism" (49).

José Antonio Piqueras's "Return to the *casa de vivienda* and the *barracón*: The Terms of Social Action in Slave Plantations" places itself within a second-slavery framework with a comparative, historiographic examination of social theory in several of the seminal mid-twentieth-century studies of nineteenth-century plantation slavery. It draws attention to how important differences in these studies' treatments of structure and agency have influenced subsequent research on slavery's social elements. Piqueras identifies for slavery three main investigative arenas: quantitative concerns about various system inputs and outputs, such as slave-trade volume and profitability; theorizing efforts that often stood in comparison to Marxian perspectives and their visions of international economic transformations; and social research into the links between slaveholder practices and the subaltern power and survival of enslaved people.

Piqueras does not sufficiently acknowledge nationalism as a central structure that shaped the foundational scholarship. Nationalism is implicitly seen, however, as Piqueras describes Cuban Fernando Ortiz (1881–1969) and Brazilian Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987) as important precursors to Eugene Genovese's (1930–2012) innovative explorations of the socially constructive interactions of the enslaved and the master class.⁴ Piqueras also considers Frank Tannenbaum (1893–1969), but Tannenbaum's relation to nationalist

² Eric E. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994). Frank Tannenbaum's early critique of William's economic determinism may still be useful to Latin Americanists; see Tannenbaum, "A Note on the Economic Interpretation of History," *Political Science Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (1946): 247–253.

³ See, for example, Josep M. Fradera and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, eds., *Slavery and Antislavery in Spain's Atlantic Empire, European Expansion and Global Interaction*, vol. 9 (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013); Dale W. Tomich, ed., *New Frontiers of Slavery* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015); and Leonardo Marques, *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776–1867* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

⁴ Fernando Ortiz, *Los negros esclavos: Estudio sociológico y de derecho público* (Havana: Ciencias Sociales, 1988, original 1916); and Gilberto Freyre, *Casa grande e senzala: Formação da família brasileira sob o regime da economia patriarcal*, 48th edition (Recife: Global Editora, 2003, original 1933).

history was less straightforward, in his negative comparison of the legacy of slavery in the United States against what he saw as the less conflictive result in Latin America.⁵ Ortiz, Freyre, and Tannenbaum shared a concern about black integration into postabolition, multiracial societies and used slavery to explain the success or failure of this project. Piqueras reads from them an attention to interacting social structures that contrasts markedly with current historiographic focus on individual and collective *agency*.

In slavery studies' shift from structure to agency, Piqueras highlights Genovese and notes his indebtedness to E. P. Thompson and Antonio Gramsci for their demarcation of working-class action/agency in the creation of a common, but unique, culture and a counterhegemonic identity that were not simply corruptions of elite versions.⁶ The working class had negotiated its own existence in the face of ruling-class oppression. This intellectual basis prompts Piqueras to object that Genovese and his followers have exaggerated master-slave negotiations to the point that implies that "slaves took responsibility for the system and were in some way responsible for the continued feasibility of the slave regime" (104). They misapplied free industrial labor theories and "post-slavery contractualism" to slavery. For Piqueras, microhistorical studies of enslaved individuals exacerbate this problem. These studies assess the individual "human condition instead of offering historical explanations," thus making the historian into "a lay moralist" (97). Instead, he proposes integrated research at both macro and micro levels.

A limiting element of this otherwise useful essay is omission of the contributions of major African-descended scholars. The exception is Eric Williams and his internationalist approach to the economics of modern slavery. However, the absence of W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963), C. L. R. James (1901–1989), and John Blassingame (1940–2000) suggests a need for Latin Americanists to engage more directly with scholars who examine agency within slavery from a black studies framework.⁷ The lines of inquiry and conclusions offered by these scholars have been important interpretive departures from the mainstream, especially in terms of resistance and other forms of social interaction. Their absence couples with the relegation of female scholars to the notes and no discussion of feminist scholarship to indicate a narrowness to Piqueras's approach to slavery's social history. These omissions do not serve future scholars well.

The Politics of the Second Slavery exposes both the successes and limitations of the approach. One of the method's values is its centering slavery within the study of other grand historical themes associated with the nineteenth-century Atlantic world. Second slavery's balanced transnationalism addresses the criticism famously lodged against its roots in world systems theory by Steve Stern of an inherent bias against Latin America in the "center-periphery" dichotomy.⁸ Its broad geographic scope has in practice left tensions between micro- and macro-level analysis. Some members of the school are aware of this problem and "propose microhistory as world history from the perspective of the individual."⁹ However, at least in the volume under review, historical agency is often limited to large units and a few elite individuals. Non-elite masses and enslaved people are left nameless, with free people of color essentially absent. They are written into their respective labor status units, with little impact on the order and transformations controlled from above. Viewing them almost exclusively and collectively as either the victims of dehumanizing ideologies, the requisite labor for consolidation of Western capitalism, pawns in Euro-American geopolitics, or the agents of infrequent resistance, curtails their humanity and extends the elitism of nineteenth-century primary sources.

Slavery and Politics: Brazil and Cuba, 1790–1850, by Rafael Marquese, Tâmis Peixoto Parron, and Márcia Regina Berbel, is a translation of the meticulously researched and innovative 2010 Portuguese original.

⁵ Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Random House, 1946).

⁶ Piqueras cites several of Genovese's works. Among the most important are *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (New York: Pantheon 1969) and *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon, 1974). For Antonio Gramsci's development of the concept of working-class counterhegemony, see *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971). For E. P. Thompson on working-class culture, see *The Making of the British Working Class* (New York: Pantheon, 1963).

⁷ The writings of W. E. B. Du Bois are extensive. For those most relevant to the second slavery, see *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870*, Harvard Historical Studies, vol. 1 (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896); "The Study of the Negro Problems," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 11 (January 1898): 1–23; review of *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Régime*, by Phillips Ulrich Bonnell, *American Political Science Review*, 12 no. 4 (1918): 722–726; and *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1935). See also C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1938); and John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972).

⁸ Steve J. Stern, "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean," *American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988): 829–872.

⁹ Dale Tomich and Michael Zeuske, "Introduction, the Second Slavery: Mass Slavery, World-Economy, and Comparative Microhistories," *Review* (Fernand Braudel Center) 31, no. 2 (2008): 91–100.

Its simple title belies a delicate treatment of slavery, the transatlantic slave trade, race, and political representation in colonial and republican/democratic practice. Despite confining itself to the high-level public politics of slavery, the volume makes several important historiographic interventions. A methodology emphasizing a comparative second-slavery analysis presents a much-needed correction of the Anglo-American dominance in the political historiography on slavery in the Americas. It also explicitly challenges the lingering presence in Latin American historical studies of the “Prescott Paradigm,” derived from founding nineteenth-century historian William H. Prescott’s vision of a lack of Iberian modernity in contrast to Anglo-American socio-economic advancement.¹⁰ A departure point for the volume is the desire “to conceptualize the [Iberian] and British Empires as belonging to distinct, albeit interconnected, historical temporalities” (13). The authors caution against envisioning the growth of the Atlantic world in linear time and argue that the Iberian imperial world occupied a different temporal space than did the empires of the northwestern European nations of England, France, and the Netherlands. Distinct Iberian and Northwestern European “temporal structures” coexisted for much of the early modern period, until the collapse of the Iberian one in 1808.

The authors argue that the Iberian system was characterized by its early sixteenth-century foundations; “the structural weakness of metropolitan economies and their dependence on external sources of financing” (18); export-oriented extraction in the Americas based on non-European labor; commonalities “in the mechanisms for the reproduction of labor power” (18), which was regionally differentiated by the use of either enslaved Africans or nominally free Amerindians; “a racial enslavement of Africans ... [that] was not racially conceptualized” (22); “the shifting dynamics from metropolis to colony over who controlled the slave trade” (19); and “the social complexity caused by slave manumissions [or modes for acquiring freedom]” (20). The authors highlight a notable difference within the Iberian system: the formal, political designation and social restriction of nonwhite *casta* groups in the Spanish empire and the absence of such restrictions in the Portuguese (21). The authors are less precise in characterizing the northwestern European Atlantic system, stating only that it began with the Dutch in the late sixteenth century, and the English and French entered shortly afterward; it possessed strong metropolitan economies; and relied on racial justifications for slavery.

The authors describe how the initial northwestern European system was critically reshaped by the Seven Years War (1756–1763), Enlightenment liberalism, and rising antislavery politics, but survived, dependent on wage labor. Similarly, throughout the eighteenth century, enlightened Ibero-American reformers sought economic improvements, admired British and French Caribbean slavery, debated how potential adjustments in slave treatment could be economically beneficial, and implemented limited changes. The modified Iberian Atlantic system collapsed as a result of the French and Haitian Revolutions and the independence of continental Latin American nations. As their export-oriented agricultural production grew and employed more slave labor, Brazil and Cuba were incorporated into a new northwestern European Atlantic system, with a British center. Contemporaneously, both antislavery ideology and the Haitian Revolution generated a new world historical problem: the conversion of formerly enslaved people into citizens.

The 1808 arrival of Portuguese monarchy afforded Brazil the continuation of the existing political system. Meanwhile the Napoleonic imprisonment of the Spanish Crown brought sweeping shifts in political philosophies and practices, and prompted new conversations on citizenship. The equality of the unified Brazilian and Portuguese empires, declared in an absolutist context, initially minimized their intra-imperial political competition and forestalled any imbalance in political representation. The subsequent rise of Luso-Brazilian liberal constitutionalism promoted a racially inclusive citizenship, an important political practice which was readily continued with Brazilian independence in 1822. However, the 1823 Brazilian Constitution excluded Africans from the possibility of naturalized citizenship, but the authors do not acknowledge this as racialized citizenship. They do not attempt to reconcile their labeling of the United States as a “democracy built on racial distinction,” in the essay reviewed above, with their implicit acceptance of nineteenth-century Brazil as a racial democracy for free people. Both nations were marked by operational similarities in a constitutional rhetoric of racial equality that existed in tandem with the marginalization of free, African-descended people in local politics. Additionally, the authors’ explicit praise of a “mulatto escape hatch” emerging from Brazil’s racially inclusive constitutional politics problematically ignores decades of scholarship that have reliably challenged that concept.¹¹ The authors are more convincing in their discussion

¹⁰ For the naming and analytical description of the “Prescott Paradigm” see Richard L. Kagan, “Prescott’s Paradigm: American Historical Scholarship and the Decline of Spain,” *American Historical Review* 101 no. 2 (1996): 423–446, which relies heavily on William H. Prescott, *History of the Reign of Philip the Second of Spain*, 3 vols. (Boston: R. Bentley, 1855).

¹¹ See, for example, Edward Telles, *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

of the racial limits on Spanish citizenship brought before full Spanish-American independence by Article 22 of the liberal 1812 Cádiz Constitution, with its exclusion of free men of African descent. This legislation was motivated by metropolitan fears of diminished imperial political power if American colonials were given representation in proportion to their true population size. Unlike most other Spanish colonial groups, Cubans support stemmed from a belief that free African-descended men would use such political rights to end slavery and thereby undermine the island's economic success.

This volume is particularly insightful in its comparison of Brazilian and Spanish-Cuban responses to nineteenth-century British anti-slave-trade pressures. Both nations were victims of their dependence on British capital and markets for their agricultural exports. However, the existence of an intra-imperial slave trade between Brazil and Angola during the initial phase of British anti-slave-trade demands allowed the Portuguese to appease the British by ending the trade north of the equator while remaining relatively unaffected with its continuation to the south. According to the authors, "Spain-Cuba" did not have a similar system and succumbed earlier. Brazilian independence changed this dynamic and eventually forced the new nation to acquiesce also. Nevertheless, both countries expanded the trade through illegal means. The book details the internal debates in Brazil and Spain-Cuba over support for British intervention or continuation of this contraband trade. Attention to these debates and the reconsideration of the notion of civilized nationhood within them are important shifts from the classic historiography.¹² A greater familiarity with the Brazilian sources is revealed in the recognition of varied forms of pro-slavery and anti-slavery politics and the historiographic thoroughness of the analysis. The Cuban sources are not as nuanced, and awareness of Spanish-American historical scholarship is not as clear, such as lacking reference to the Bourbon reforms for eighteenth-century changes in Spanish slave policy. Therefore, the analysis is not as rich. A bias toward Brazil is also revealed in the temporal range in the book's subtitle, by ending with the 1850 close of Brazil's contraband trade, and in providing less detailed analysis of the political situation associated with its Cuban counterpart that ended by 1865.

Unlike the historical studies reviewed in this essay, Gerard Aching's *Freedom from Liberation* utilizes literary-oriented cultural studies methods to examine second-slavery subjectivity in Cuba, especially "the ways individuals ... desire, imagine, and strive for personal and collective freedoms" (1). He considers these strivings for five types of individuals: a group of Creole reformers gathered into the literary world of Havana intellectual Domingo Del Monte (1804–1853); an exceptional, literate enslaved man, Juan Francisco Manzano (1797–1854); an Irish abolitionist, Richard Madden (1798–1886); the fictional slave characters created by these writers; and their real audiences. In making significant use of Madden's edited volume of Manzano's poetry and autobiography, which is a rare published Latin American slave narrative, Aching distinguishes between freedom and liberation.¹³ There are many freedoms, which are partial, situational, and shaped by external pressures and one's own internal compromises. They are stages toward full "self-mastery." Conversely, liberation is simply "the act of being liberated," often with someone else's notion of freedom (1).

While the importance of slave manumission is accepted in Tomich-school works, it is often discussed in impersonal, disembodied terms, without referencing specific people. By contrast, Aching reveals multiple meanings of freedom within mid-nineteenth-century Cuba by analyzing four literary-political practices: the abstraction of liberal ideals associated with white anticolonial politics and abolitionism; the projection of these liberal abstractions onto the experiences of both real and fictional slaves; Manzano's awareness of and deference to this projection; and his endeavor to achieve a self-mastery that was not defined by the white gaze. Confronting a colonial censorship that constrained engagement with political liberalism, human rights, slavery, and Cuban nationhood, Del Monte's circle sought literature as an alternate, contemplative space. They did so through their own writings, translated foreign texts, and the secret sponsorship and dissemination of Manzano's works. In addition to cataloging aspects of a budding national identity, this group's own texts reflected redemptive goals, efforts to rescue their own morality and that of their compatriot audience from slavery's corrupting influence. Part of that corruption was a "perverse intimacy" that compromised the possible self-mastery of both owner and slave through their mutual dependence.

¹² For example, Leslie Bethell, *Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); and David R. Murray, *Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain, and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

¹³ Juan Francisco Manzano, *Poems by a slave in the island of Cuba, recently liberated; translated from the Spanish, by R. R. Madden, M.D., with the history of the early life of the negro poet, written by himself; to which are prefixed two pieces descriptive of Cuban slavery and the slave-traffic, by R.R.M.* (London: T. Ward and Co., 1840).

In relying heavily on historian David Byron Davis's explanations of the rise of Western abolitionism,¹⁴ Aching unintentionally exposes a possible element of second slavery unacknowledged within the Tomich school. Absent is a nascent cultural relativism promoted by eighteenth-century "primitivists," who Davis described as deducing from African and African-diasporic practices the same virtue and creativity then newly believed to be inherent in all humankind (34). This primitivism remains to be studied on its own terms and in relation to later forms of racism. Its inclusion might influence the second-slavery periodization and interpretations now most associated with liberalism, abolitionism, and increased plantation profits.

In *Divining Slavery and Freedom*, João Reis presents an updated translation of his 2008 critical biography of Domingos Sodré (ca. 1797–1887), an African man who was brought to Brazil enslaved, acquired his freedom, fought as a patriotic soldier in the Brazilian independence struggle, gained property (including slaves), and earned the respect of many in his community of nineteenth-century Salvador, Bahia. This is a story of the personal effort and social structures that allowed for these and other major transformations in Domingos's life. In doing so, the study considers tensions between the publically acceptable and the secretive (and perhaps subversive) social relationships and networks of friendship, family, sexual relations, and business partnerships that included him. The book interrogates Domingos's varying interactions with the local and national state, which were often mediated by personal contacts. On the one hand, he was the beneficiary of some of its structures, such as the right of a slave to own property and to purchase his own freedom. On the other hand, he was subjected to restrictions on his freedom: legal ones, such as the African exclusion from Brazilian citizenship, or social ones, such as elite attempts to repress African spiritual practices.

The book's nuanced analysis is a masterful accumulation of Reis's more than thirty years of research into black life in Salvador. This expertise is demonstrated throughout but is especially impressive when Reis explains Domingos's religious Candomblé practices to readers who may be approaching West African spirituality for the first time. Here, Reis draws on both the scholarship specific to Africa and that particular to Afro-Brazilian customs. The careful discernment with which Reis combines Atlantic-world sources, whose distinct geographic origins historically militated against it, speaks to the undeclared expansion of second-slavery methods into southern Atlantic cultural issues. Reis holistically discusses a number of analytical concerns, including social identity, power, and sociopolitical negotiation. Negotiation is seen, for example, in what he labels "the political economy of witchcraft," which involved local police, diviners within Afro-Brazilian religious traditions (including Domingos), and their clients. Although divination (foretelling one's best future actions based on the will of particular African gods) was forced to operate discretely because of elite Brazilian presumptions of its primitiveness, its use was widespread, even among whites. This generated a familiarity that normalized it in relation to other societal regulations. Disgruntled clients were not above involving local police to arbitrate costs and other expectations (131).

In contrast with Piqueras above, Reis explicitly defends biographic, microhistorical analysis. It "enables us to perceive the broad movement of history from a more human perspective ... the formation of Atlantic societies, economies, and cultures. ... [It] serves as a strategy for understanding the historic process that shaped modernity in the broadest sense" (296). This microhistorical perspective allows him to consider Brazilian particularities in offering "ladinization," in contrast to the more widely accepted notion of creolization, to explain the shifts in Domingos's social identity. Reis concludes that in "cultivating relationships inside and outside the African community ... [Domingos] was a cultural broker and mediator; a perfect ladino" (300).

David Sartorius's *Ever Faithful* is a much-needed correction to the presumption of undifferentiated political goals among African-descended people in nineteenth-century Cuba. Where previous studies had prioritized the group's anticolonial, anti-Spanish attitudes, Sartorius examines the varied context for loyalty to Spain and "historicizes loyal subjectivity" (13–14). He also uncouples this choice from the belief that it did not represent the true interests of its adherents and instead reflected false consciousness. Cubans of color, even enslaved people, had at stake the corporatist rights and protections granted them by the Spanish state. Sartorius uses this reality as a point of departure for building on Matt Child's conceptualization of "rebellious royalism," which noted how African-descended colonial subjects acted on their distinct expectations of different levels of Spanish government.¹⁵ They could demonstrate their distrust of resident colonial administrators while maintaining faith in the monarchy's intended fairness toward them. By contrast, liberal and anticolonial proposals were transient and uncertain.

¹⁴ David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975).

¹⁵ Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

Cubans of African descent assessed the benefit of their colonial fidelity along several social axes, such as servile status, occupation, class, gender, and location. Of note is this work's broad geographic treatment of the island, with an attention to the urban centers of Cienfuegos and Santiago that escapes the Havana-centrism that dominates the existing historiography. Additionally, Sartorius's recognition of the particular involvement of women of color in loyalist politics is a praiseworthy model of inclusive scholarship that neither subordinates them to male actions nor isolates them to their own social world. The study moves chronologically from the 1808 Napoleonic invasion of Spain to the 1902 establishment of the Cuban Republic. While the Haitian Revolution preceded this periodization, its later resonance among loyalists of color is a curious absence.

Moments pivotal to African-descended Cubans' evaluations of their loyalty include the 1812 Cádiz Constitution's legal establishment of race-based Spanish citizenship; the racially selective organizing of the 1823 Soles y Rayos de Bolívar nationalist conspiracy; the 1844 multiracial, nationalist La Escalera conspiracy; the freedom granted volunteer slave-soldiers in the Ten Years' War by the 1870 Moret Law; and the final abolition of slavery in 1886. In each, several potential political paths for people of color were lodged between "an ethic of liberalism" and "an ethic of patronage," and in neither did the Spanish government or Cuban whites fully curtail racist policies. Sartorius demonstrates that just as Spanish colonialism failed repeatedly on this issue, so too did Cuban nationalism. Anticolonialism did not equate with antiracism. With this reality surrounding them, Cubans of color made political choices in which race was only one factor, albeit an inescapable one.

A commonality of the works on nineteenth-century Brazil and Cuba reviewed here is their emphasis on the ways these countries were not part of some theoretically defined periphery. Instead they were significant contributors to a Euro-American modern world system. The concept of "the second slavery" provides a concise generalization through which to study the similar political and economic experiences in these late slaveholding societies. However, even as it acknowledges important national differences, it still has to attend more conscientiously to the collective and individual experiences of blacks that don't fit wide international or translocal patterns of slavery or freedom. Resistance to or collaboration with slavery were not the only dimension through which they defined their lives. Scholars who acknowledge the second slavery but are not wedded to a comparative, macro-level focus seem to tell more nuanced stories of historical change coming from the masses up, instead of from the top down.

Author Information

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