BABYLON, CHRISTIANITY, AND REPUBLICANISM IN NEW WORLD SLAVE SOCIETIES

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A COLONY OF CITIZENS: REVOLUTION AND SLAVE EMANCIPATION IN THE FRENCH CARIBBEAN, 1787–1804. By Laurent Dubois. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Pp. 466. $55.00 cloth, $22.50 paper.)
AVENGERS OF THE NEW WORLD: THE STORY OF THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION. By Laurent Dubois. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004. Pp. 384. $29.95 cloth, $17.95 paper.)
THE DEVIL AND THE LAND OF THE HOLY CROSS: WITCHCRAFT, SLAVERY, AND POPULAR RELIGION IN COLONIAL BRAZIL. By Laura de Mello e Souza. Translated by Diane Grosklaus Whitty. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004. Pp. 374. $60.00 cloth, $24.95 paper.)
TROPICAL BABYLONS: SUGAR AND THE MAKING OF THE ATLANTIC WORLD, 1450–1680. By Stuart B. Schwartz. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Pp. 368. $59.95 cloth, $22.50 paper.)
SLAVERY AND SALVATION IN COLONIAL CARTAGENA DE INDIAS. By Margaret M. Olsen. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004. Pp. 208. $59.95 cloth.)
LIBERTY AND EQUALITY IN CARIBBEAN COLOMBIA, 1770–1835. By Aline Helg. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Pp. 384. $59.95 cloth, $22.50 paper.)

The expansion of Europe in the fifteenth century, the establishment of colonies in the New World and generally speaking, the emergence of a dynamic Atlantic region produced, for better or worse, an unprecedented circulation of peoples, commodities, discourses, and practices across that ocean. Atlantic racial slavery was one sordid aspect of all that oceanic activity. That forced migration of millions of captive people entailed irrevocable transformations for all those involved in the crossing, for the new societies they entered, and probably for the communities they left behind forever. Research on differing aspects of Atlantic racial slavery

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and on the new lives, identities, and communities that people of African descent constructed in New World colonial and postcolonial societies has constituted one of the fastest-growing areas in Latin American history in the last three decades, but particularly in the last ten to fifteen years. Although probably more work has been recently coming out on the postcolonial modern period, the Latin American colonial field has produced its share of solid research as the study of slavery moves out of the plantation loci (the Babylon of the title) into new sites of life and work (urban areas, military frontiers, mines, maroon and corporate communities, lay brotherhoods) and also into new geographical regions. There is not only a new interest in colonial peripheries and frontiers such as those in Colombia, Ecuador, eastern Cuba, and Florida but magnet regions such as Mexico, which are usually construed as mestizo or Indian, are also increasingly the focus of research on enslaved and free people of African descent (albeit there is no example of such work in this group of books). This expanding interest is also benefiting from the ever wider academic frameworks of Atlantic history and African diasporic studies, as well as from extra-academic movements and mobilizations in some Latin American regions (Colombia and Brazil in particular). This new wave of research is still developing its own specialized historiography, but future work on Latin America may soon turn to more hybrid social and racial formations and to intersections and comparisons with other groups, particularly Indians and *castas*. When appropriate, I will indicate potential moves in that comparative direction as suggested by some of the work reviewed here.

The specific set of books under review in this essay represents a relatively wide range of themes, approaches and lines of research within this area of work in colonial historiography. The meaning of the disparate triad in this essay's title: "Babylon,""Christianity," and "Republicanism," will become clearer as the works are discussed. These books explore the limits and outcomes of a range of expanding projects and discourses that attempted to reconstitute subjects of African descent in various Spanish, Portuguese, and French colonial Atlantic locations, first as slaves, commodities, and laborers; as enslaved black, Christianized subjects; and later at the dawn of the old (colonial) regimes as free Republican citizens.

Stuart Schwartz' anthology *Tropical Babylons: Sugar and the Making of the Atlantic World, 1450–1680* is a good place to begin. Chronologically, it opens in the mid-fifteenth century, before European expansion to the New World even began, and geographically and conceptually, the volume's scope is explicitly Atlantic. The only work in the set with a political economic approach, *Tropical Babylons* focuses mostly on the early modes of production of sugar in different locations across the Atlantic that range from Iberia to Madeira and the Canaries, Hispaniola, Cuba, Brazil, and on to Barbados—a range of loci that also stand for a diachronic trajectory of the development of sugar production in the early modern Atlantic world. The volume ends where the usual "master" story of sugar and the "plantation system" often begins: the alleged "sugar revolution" in Barbados during the 1640s.

Aside from finessing several empirical aspects in the early history of sugar production, Schwartz seeks to unpack the imbrications of sugar, capitalism, and slavery that have become intrinsic to this master story—a jab at Eric Williams' classic account in *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), at Manuel Moreno Fraginals' *El ingenio* (1964) and perhaps too at Sidney Mintz' more recent *Sweetness and Power* (1985). The "Babylons" of the title refer to sugar production sites throughout the Atlantic world—sordid sources of great wealth and pleasures but also of great suffering for the many who labored there in captivity. That suggestive biblical image with its condemnatory moral overtone comes from the Jesuit Andre João Antonil who in the seventeenth century invoked it to portray Brazilian sugar *engenhos* and the kind of (colonial) society that developed in close relation to that source of wealth. The volume, however, keeps away from the moral register evoked by that charged biblical metaphor as it focuses on its own debunking tasks.

While chapters focus on their own particular cases and empirical reconstructions, Schwartz' introduction to the anthology addresses more general conceptual and historical issues. According to him the early story of sugar shows that its production predated capitalism, that slavery did not constitute the main form of labor in early sugar production and that mixed forms of labor were the norm (even in Brazil) before slavery became the prototypical form of labor in the "mature" plantation after the mid-seventeenth century. Sugar did not give rise to Atlantic slavery or the slave trade, nor were most slaves initially destined to sugar-production loci. Sugar production was not tied to technological innovation or increased productivity, and high rates of sugar consumption in Europe seem to predate capitalism. Thus, sugar production is obviously compatible with several labor regimes and modes of production. At stake is a historical contingency argument meant to debunk essentialist notions of what became an ideal type of the "plantation system" based mostly on (Marxist) conceptual models and/or on a particular later historical formation.

Although some of these conceptual and historical disentanglements are not particularly novel, the empirical fleshing out of these modes of production and relations in the early period is important and especially useful when they are collected in a single volume. There are also more modest and specialized concrete historical issues that individual essays in this volume address and seek to fine tune. For example, chapters by Gernaro Rodríguez Morel and Alejandro de la Fuente examine the importance of sugar production in Española and Cuba during the sixteenth century; John McCusker and Russell Menard both query the role of British merchant capital in the early sugar boom of Barbados, and in a more interpretative vein, interrogate whether we can even speak of a "sugar revolution" in Barbados in the 1640s. Six of the essays in this volume deal with the production side of the story in different locations. Schwartz gave a series of items to the contributors to try to address in their research: land, labor, volume of production, efficiency, and technology. The chapter on Brazil, also by Schwartz, is a model of what an essay of this sort can look like despite the limited documentation for the period (not so grave in the case of Brazil as in others, however). An introductory essay tries to mount a comparison and draw out conclusions, but one wishes there had been at least a table to keep track of the data produced in each of the chapters in a more systematic way.

Only two essays in the volume deal with topics not directly tied to production: a broad and very nice summary of his and other recent work on the slave trade by Herbert Klein and an empirically detailed research piece on early modern distribution nodes and consumption patterns of sugar in continental Europe by Eddy Stols. The latter extends to other regions the anthropology of consumption that Sidney Mintz carried out for Britain in his *Sweetness and Power* (1984). It also tentatively sets the date back almost a century for the consumption boom of this commodity at least in these often-neglected continental regions. The piece is a welcome addition to a genre that has concentrated on Britain, and it also has further implications for the study of the transnational circulation of forms of consumption in the early modern world. This reviewer would welcome more anthologies along the lines of *Tropical Babylons* that feature other early Atlantic agricultural commodities. Coffee and tobacco are obvious candidates. Perhaps some day cacao and chocolate will also attain iconic scholarly status and become the subject of an anthology too.

Margaret Olson's *Slavery and Salvation in Colonial Cartagena de Indias* moves away from the realm of political economy and material production to that of cultural studies and textual production. The Christian faith's claim to "universality"—and universal hegemony—meant that in principle its ranks encompassed all kinds of nations and people throughout the old and new worlds, including enslaved sectors of society. Olsen's book explores that project of evangelization and reconstitution of African enslaved subjects into New World Christian slaves as taken up by the Jesuit order. Grounded in the early to mid-colonial period, this study unfolds in the Atlantic location of Cartagena de Indias, present-day Colombia, the main official entry point of African slaves into Spanish South America during the seventeenth century. Most of these enslaved laborers would not end up in tropical Babylons, however; they were headed for mines, cacao plantations, domestic service, and a wide range of urban occupations in Spanish colonial societies.

Specifically, Olson's *Slavery and Salvation* analyses and contextualizes Jesuit friar Alonso de Sandoval's largely forgotten work *De instauranda Aethiopum salute,* the earliest and only published missionary history that deals exclusively with the evangelization of Africans in early colonial Spanish America. Originally published in Seville in 1627 (with an expanded version in 1647), it languished in oblivion for more than three centuries. *De instaurada* deserves an important, even canonical, place among colonial texts, if only for its rarity. It constitutes a major and welcome addition to the study of the large corpus of texts produced by a long line of Christian missionaries from different orders that concentrate on the different Native American populations in the New World. These texts have traditionally constituted an important object of inquiry in the field of Spanish colonial studies. They have been tapped to tackle questions such as European inscriptions of "self" and "other;" early constructions of indigeneity; the production of hybridity, etc. Yet, for a variety of reasons, including the lack of privileged "canonical" missionary texts, African subjects have been conspicuously absent from this allegedly interdisciplinary field. At most, they have constituted an occasional presence at the margins of scholarly inquiry. While the field of history has turned its attention to the subject of slavery and free people of African descent since at least the 1970s, the field of "Spanish Cultural Studies" has lagged behind in this regard. Olson's work opens up new ground in that field. Although her sparse references to the historiography of slavery suggest that she is not well versed in the recent literature and issues in the field of Latin American colonial social and cultural history (a recurring problem in studies with interdisciplinary claims), this work may open up new conversations and exchanges between those related fields.

Most of the little attention that this text has heretofore received is related to Sandoval's views on the slave trade and slavery, specifically asking whether they were an instance of early abolitionist views. Sandoval was no radical figure in this regard. Olson argues, however, that he implicitly made a harsh moral critique of the trade while refraining from its outward condemnation. Although at some points, perhaps quoting others, Olson makes an analogy between Sandoval and Bartolomé de Las Casas, the Dominican "protector of the Indians," he was certainly not the equivalent of the more radical Las Casas in the case of African slaves. The value of his text does not reside in its critique of enslavement. Its main interest lies elsewhere. To this reviewer at least, the most interesting aspect of *De instaurada*—and of Olsen's study—lies in the text's construction of the African subject, and how it deploys notions of color and race current at the time. Fascinating as well is the mapping of what it terms the "Ethiopian" or "black" regions of the world. The text inscribes its Cartagena location and its evangelization project in a wider global framework that reaches out beyond the Atlantic world into the east Indies.

Although Olson also claims to be able to reach the voices of Africans and their resistance to evangelization and colonization by way of Sandoval's text, these claims are not the strongest part of the study. The bits and pieces she is able to cull out (from what she terms "textual marronage") are much better represented in other kinds of sources that historians have been using for some time. The author is nonetheless rightly interested in showing that Sandoval's text—as those of other missionaries and for that matter most colonial texts—is not univocal. Rather, as it is now recognized, colonial texts are complex multilayered artifacts that encode not only European views and positions, but those of the colonized subject as well. Another of Olson's arguments is the more general, and by now no longer surprising one emerging from post colonial studies, namely that colonization (and more specifically in this case Christianization) was not, cannot, ever be a fully realized project and that colonial subjects, in this case enslaved African subjects, hybridize the cultural formations to which they are exposed. Future lines of work could compare the "ethnic" and "racial" constructions of African / Ethiopian subjects in different sides of the Atlantic—in Angola and Congo where the Jesuits also operated and produced texts—and in Brazil and now Cartagena. Conversely, other lines of work might move on to compare the construction of Ethiopian and Native American subjects in missionaries' treatises.

Laura de Mello e Souza's *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross* shifts our attention to another New World location heavily influenced by the circulation of peoples, commodities, discourses and artifacts in the Atlantic world. This work studies the cultural reconfigurations and hybrid practices that crisscrossing traditions produced in the cauldron of colonial Brazil. Covering a chronological arc that runs from the early to the late colonial period and focusing on witchcraft practices investigated and prosecuted by the Portuguese Inquisition, Souza uncovers the fissures in the Christian hegemonic project and the great syncretic processes underwriting Brazilian colonial culture and popular religiosity to this day. In this sense, the subject of this work is the hybrid outcome and heterodox underside of the Christian project examined in Olsen's *Slavery and Salvation*.

The book constitutes an English translation of the original Portuguese version published in 1986. A product of its time, and of the European/French training of many Latin American intellectuals, the work is strongly informed by the Annales School's paradigm of disembodied homogeneous *mentalités* unfolding in the *longue durée*. These are the kind of temporalities that give way to "civilizational" constructs (and there are strong echoes in this study of Gilberto Freyre's [1964] notion of a "Brazilian civilization") or at the very least to less ambitious concepts such as a (Brazilian) colonial "popular religiosity." This syncretic religious culture was—and supposedly still is— shared by an undifferentiated "popular" sector that is often set off in the book against the "high" and "literate" religiosity of an also vaguely defined "elite." Souza herself would probably acknowledge that today more pluralistic conceptions of culture and society disaggregate those kinds of totalities and binary constructs.

Souza subsumes her study of the production of colonial popular religiosity within an ample historiography of witchcraft and popular religiosity in Europe—mostly northern Europe—and its own grand questions, debated issues and periodization schemes. At times, that frame seems too large or incongruous for the material on Portuguese Brazil at hand. The hazy "elite" and "popular" religiosity binary obtained from a historiography of early modern Europe beg to be fleshed out in a more precise way for the Portuguese Brazilian case. There is also insufficient contextualization of the Inquisition tribunal in Portugal, or even in analogous colonial contexts such as neighboring Spanish America or, more importantly, Goa where, in contrast to Brazil, the Portuguese Inquisition founded a permanent tribunal as early as 1560 (one can only imagine what a fascinating study the comparison of colonial Goa Inquisition cases and Brazilian ones could be). Nor is it made clear why colonial witchcraft did not face the fury and fire that Northern European witch hunts met with. While Souza depicts the Inquisition as an overpowering and terrifying machine, one wonders about the actual reach and effectiveness of its apparatus in the colonial world in relation to its capability in the metropolitan context. In the Spanish colonial case, there were three tribunals (Mexico City, Lima, and Cartagena) to oversee an immense territory many times larger than tiny metropolitan Spain, where thirteen tribunals oversaw the orthodoxy of the land (Lea, 1922; Alberro, 1988). In Brazil there was never a permanent tribunal. Even the number of cases there from 1590 to 1780 (119), with one long hiatus during 1625–1725 that involved only six accused, seems relatively small for such a heterogeneous population; or at least no kind of context is provided with which to compare that case volume with.

And yet, submerged in the sweeping brushstrokes and wide canvas of this ambitious work, there are major insights that appear to proceed from its broader European historiographical contextualization. Most significant perhaps is the revision of Souza's own master's thesis position—a pervasive one among many other scholars as well—that colonial witchcraft practices, at least those that left traces in Inquisition records, constituted manifestations of "authentic" African religious retentions, or of African resistance to dominant Portuguese Christian culture and enforced evangelization. In this view, practices of magic and sorcery were intrinsically linked to African culture and counterposed to European Christianity. In *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, however, Souza concludes that the Brazilian witchcraft practices found in Portuguese Inquisition records, particularly throughout the sixteenth century, had a distinctive European character to them, and that indeed they were part and parcel of an "archaic" European popular religiosity where magic and sorcery permeated everyday life. Syncretism with African and Indian magical practices in colonial Brazil actually took place throughout the seventeenth century. By the eighteenth century, the process of syncretism was supposedly complete, and popular European, African, and Indian (sometimes she also adds Jewish) practices merged into an allegedly indistinct Brazilian "popular religiosity." Despite the decidedly significant instances of transculturation and hybridization processes underlying many of these practices, the teleologically oriented "cultural mestizaje" paradigm that informs Souza's big story (of the creation of a Brazilian popular religiosity or civilization) is more problematic.

Other studies may want to look for more socially nuanced distinctions that may require more systematic probing of these and other sources. Souza's book has chapters that summarize different types of sorcery (divination, healing, "superstitious blessings," sortilege, and *mandinga* pouches, among others), but they are not socially contextualized (not even by gender). The pouches, perhaps "the most syncretic of all magical practices" (130) are the most clearly delineated ones, however. One important question that this book's conclusions raise and that needs to be addressed in the future is when did the magical and syncretic practices that Souza presents as part of a general colonial "popular religiosity" become a signifier of "Africanness" or begin to be coded as "African"? Was this a late-nineteenth or a twentieth century phenomenon, perchance a manifestation of positivist reinventions of past and present? Or did "African" encoding of at least some practices such as the mandinga pouches or the *calundus* occur in the colonial period, too, thereby suggesting the existence of distinct clusters of practices associated with differentiated social groups?

Finally, from her excursions into European historiography, Souza introduces yet another thread into her story: the "devil" theme in the book's title. Aside from the multiple "syncretic" process discussed above, there was a concurrent widening gap between learned conceptions of Christianity (and ideas of the devil) and popular ones imbued with "archaic" and quasi-pagan concepts of magic. While at least in Europe "elite" Christianity sought to reform (and "modernize") the latter, particularly during the European Reformation and Counter-reformation periods, it unwittingly infused popular religion with its learned compact-making figure of the devil. That is, elite Christianity, as manifested in Inquisition officials' beliefs and ideas of orthodoxy, invented, sought to repress, and thereby helped produce the horrendous figure of the compact-making devil that subsequently made its way into popular culture, where in Brazil it allegedly merged with other (general) African and Indian magical beliefs. According to Souza, there were 24 specific accusations of pacts out of 205 sorcery charges in Brazil. A problem that anyone familiar with this type of records must contend with is the scripted character of the interrogations and depositions, the scribe's own mediation of the responses, and in general, the considerable opacity of Inquisition records. The book has a useful section where judicial procedures and trial protocols are laid out in detail, but it is always difficult to determine how widespread or significant these devil-centered beliefs of elite origin really were throughout all sectors of society.

Ultimately, colonial religious and magical syncretism would prove itself "uncontainable and ineradicable" (255) and became constitutive of Brazilian popular religious culture (read "Brazilian civilization") to this day. It should be noted, however, that this popular religious culture is not a generic totality or a mere survival of early modern colonial religiosity and that its multiple expressions and appropriations can produce distinct identities and subjects. Finally, we may also ask just who constitutes the "elite" cultural counterpart of this "popular" religious culture in present day Brazil and what does that elite culture stand for.

The last set of books move away from Christian discourses and (often failed) projects to the diffusion of new secular protean ones that constituted the foundation of "new" regimes. Two interrelated works set in the heart of Babylon—the French Caribbean plantation colonies—and one grounded in a more peripheral location in "Caribbean Colombia" deal with major challenges to colonial regimes and the social formations on which they were built. The very titles of two of these volumes, Laurent Dubois's *A Colony of Citizens* and Aline Helg's *Liberty and Equality in Caribbean Colombia,* highlight the new discursive categories and political issues that moved to the forefront of colonial history during this period of turbulence and military conflict known as the Age of Revolution. In contrast to the previously discussed books, these works constitute more forthright political histories of colonial subordinate groups. Dubois's *A Colony of Citizens* in particular represents an important gesture toward a more interdisciplinary approach that incorporates anthropology, colonial studies, and some excursions into literature as well.

The French Revolution of 1789 utterly destabilized colonial regimes in France's Caribbean empire, particularly in Saint Domingue. In *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution,* Laurent Dubois calls the Haitian Revolution "the most radical political transformation of the Age of Revolution that stretched from 1770s to the 1830s" (3). Events in the colonial plantation world, particularly the massive mobilizations of slaves, profoundly altered the actual meaning of the revolutionary discourse of Republicanism and effectively extended the reach of its "universal" claims in an unprecedented way. According to Dubois, the most radical resignifications of the revolutionary terms of "liberty" and "equality," indeed the fully *modern* meaning of these terms, did not take place at the heart of France and Europe but in colonial locations of the Atlantic world. This major—yet disavowed—significance of the Haitian Revolution also constitutes a central concern in the work of a current group of scholars in several related disciplines that include Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995) and Sybille Fisher (2004). It was latent in C. L. R. James's 1938 classic *The Black Jacobins*, too.

For the bicentenary of those labyrinthine events retrospectively known as the Haitian Revolution (1789-1804), Laurent Dubois has produced an engrossing and relatively accessible narrative. This is not a work of original scholarly research; it is rather a synthetic account and interpretation based mostly on secondary sources, old and new. The works in English of David Geggus (1982, 2002), Thomas Ott (1973), and Carolyn Fick (1990), for instance, are more strongly based on primary research and provide differing interpretations of the Revolution or of some of its particular regions and events. Curiously, although there are few references to James's (sparsely footnoted) text in Dubois's endnotes that text becomes a palimpsest for Dubois's own. Dubois's strong reliance on narrative form, the political, diplomatic and military thrust of the historical events, the "tragic" theme underwriting the towering figure of L'Ouverture, the structuring role of some key passages, quotations or even episodes that seem to have become conventional elements in the story are all rhetorical practices that seem to echo James's earlier text if at times they also take on a different spin.

The title of the book, *Avengers of the New World*, refers back to the figure popularized as a warning in the 1770s by French writers such as Louis Sebastian Mercier and Abbé Raynal, that of a black revolutionary leader who would one day rise up in the New World to avenge the tyranny of slavery. The legendary "avenger" that came to represent the fulfillment of that "prophesy" was Toussaint L'Ouverture. He not only played this role in C. L. R. James's book, but the latter claimed that L'Ouverture had cast himself in that role. In Dubois's account, the "avengers" of the title are set in the plural, in line with his more critical reading of the central figure of L'Ouverture. For both James and Dubois, the figure of L'Ouverture stands for modern leaders facing critical predicaments in revolutionary situations. Both pay homage to the brilliance and stature of this man in similar ways but their account of L'Ouverture's "fall from greatness" varies.

For Dubois, the core of L'Ouverture's "tragic" failing consisted of his inability to construct "a multiracial, egalitarian and democratic society in Saint Domingue," early on (174). At the core of that political failing were his policies related to the militarization of plantation labor, which represented if not a betrayal of the Republican revolution at least a "retreat from equality." This tragic failure in fact made L'Ouverture an emblematical figure of the "leaders of every other post emancipation society in the Atlantic world" (174). The principal contradiction at the heart of the "colonial Republican" project itself was the incompatibility between the principle of "freedom" for former slaves and the labor requirements of keeping up a plantation based regime to meet export trade's demands. Dubois criticizes L'Ouverture for not considering the Marquis de Condorcet's proposal that plantations be divided into small plots of land producing sugar and worked by ex-slaves turned farmers rather than by a semi-free plantation based labor force—to be sure an interesting proposal whose failure to be considered is in need of a greater in-depth sociopolitical and economic analysis.

James, on the other hand, perhaps in line with his more positivist Marxist orientation, seems to have supported the more "advanced" economic export regime as the basis of Saint Domingue's future viability and prosperity. He attributes L'Ouverture's conciliatory policies toward white planters to the Revolution's need of their political support and know-how. L'Ouverture's "tragic" flaw was his distancing from the masses and his inability to explain his strategy, thereby giving rise to uncertainty regarding his alliances and rumors of being pro-white and at times pro-British. Perhaps due to a more contemporary and post-Marxist sensibility, Dubois is less tolerant of L'Ouverture's authoritarian policies. To be sure, James also criticized L'Ouverture's increasingly "despotic" policies but perhaps tolerated—if not justified—them as revolutionary necessities. Ultimately, however, in both accounts Toussaint L'Ouverture is portrayed as shortsighted at a critical moment and unable or willing to go far enough. Dubois thus extends the "avenger" role to Dessalines who pushed forward the anticolonial project. The rupture with France over which the latter presided in 1804 ultimately protected the universalist meanings of freedom and citizenship that had taken shape in the colonial context.

Dubois revises James's *Black Jacobins* in other ways too. He discards James's most blatant Marxist language and analogies, plays down James's racialization of many conflicts among insurgents (between blacks and mulattos), and provides some possible new angles to certain questions. He also updates his *Avengers of the New World* with more textured accounts of slaves' lives before the Revolution by making use of the work of Gabriel Debien (1976). Following John Thornton (1991) and others he also flags other revisionist issues regarding African influences particularly with regard to military practices, political understandings (kingship), and religious practices (voudoun), given that the majority of slaves and many military leaders in Saint Domingue were first generation Africans. The question of the prevalence and role of marronage (flight) in the Haitian Revolution has also received increasing attention in the recent historiography, particularly in the work of Carolyn Fick (1990). Unfortunately, the issue has been subsumed under a misleadingly coded opposition between "indigenous" and "exogenous" factors informing grassroots mobilizations and revolutionary events in general. In this debate, "French" revolutionary discourse constituted the "exogenous" factor opposed to "indigenous" forces like marronage. Dubois acknowledges the role of both grand and petit marronage but like James (1938, 1989) before him, and more recently David Geggus (1982, 2002), does not grant it the central role that Fick has recently claimed for this practice. Despite all the revisions, I would argue that Dubois does not fundamentally rewrite James's text. Ultimately, the unequivocal gist of the Haitian revolution for both historians lay in the modern transnational Republican discourse of freedom and equality that was fully radicalized by colonial enslaved black subjects turned into citizens.

Concurrent with the volume on the Haitian Revolution, Laurent Dubois also published in 2004 a study based on original research on the less known case of Guadalupe, where revolutionary events had a different outcome. In 1802 Napoleon was able to restore slavery in Guadalupe. The news of that restoration pushed the revolutionary colony of Saint Domingue to the final stage of a war that culminated with the eventual rupture with France and independence in 1804. *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787–1804* is a solid piece of scholarly work aimed at a more academic audience but still accessible to a sophisticated general reader, too. The book can be considered an in-depth exploration of some of the issues raised in a more cursory fashion in the volume on the Haitian revolutionary process. Recurring themes are those regarding the resignification and radicalization of key terms of Republican discourse in this location, the participation of slaves in the events, and, particularly in this case, their appropriation of Republican terms, the predicaments faced by Victor Hughes's Jacobin regime (1794–98) (yes, the very Victor Hughes of Alejo Carpentier's historical novel *El siglo de las luces* (strangely) translated as *Explosion in the Cathedral*), and finally Hughes' retreat from equality as a result of some of the same contradictions that L'Ouverture faced in Saint Domingue. Dubois also examines the eventual demolition of the Republican project in this part of the French Caribbean. The work also constitutes a nuanced rendering of the relation between present and past, micro and macro levels, colonial centers and peripheries in historical writing.

Dubois chooses some local events and communities, such as the revolt in Trois-Rivieres and Basse-Terre, as a lens through which he examines larger conflicts and themes from the perspective of enslaved insurgents.

He also examines the ways in which ex-slaves enacted their new status of freedom and sought to expand its practical meaning in what I have called elsewhere (and in relation to a previous period) "micro-events" or the "praxis of everyday life" (Díaz, 2000). Particularly interesting in this regard is his examination of the ways in which ex-slaves engaged state discursive classifications, particularly racial categories, in the *état civil* and notary registers of Guadalupe. These closeups of life during the Republican regime in Guadalupe, a sort of ethnography of the political culture of Jacobin Republicanism among colonial subjects, including former slaves, allow him to examine how far this transatlantic Revolution had penetrated life at the local level and how colonial subjects were reconstituting and refashioning themselves in this historical matrix.

The book's account of eighteenth-century French abolitionist ideas and their gradualist tenets (particularly those of the influential figure of the Marquis de Condorcet) provides a useful overview of the intellectual tradition informing anti-slavery thinking in this part of the Atlantic world at the time (indeed, if anything, the intellectual formation of many colonial Latin America's Creole figures would have been closer to this tradition than to the humanitarian and religiously inflected trends of British antislavery). More specifically, the overview of abolitionist thought provides the context to understand the frame of mind with which Republican administrators and other progressive political figures approached the revolutionary events in the colonies and sought to resolve contradictions. Victor Hughes invoked the discourse of "national responsibility" of former slave-citizens to work as plantation laborers and pay back the Republic for the freedom it had granted them. While slaves envisioned freedom and citizenship as an opportunity to become small farmers, Republican administrators, like planters before them, were invested in the idea of economic prosperity that should not be disruptive of the plantation export economy.

A Colony of Citizens also explores the central role that the theme of the citizen-soldier played in Republican colonial discourse and policy. Victor Hughes embraced the idea of arming slaves-turned-citizens to fight the British threat. The role of the rights to citizenship of the soldier who fought for the Republic constitutes an important theme that also merits further exploration in colonial and postcolonial regimes elsewhere in Latin America, given the importance of militia service for free people of color in these regions. While Napoleonic forces repressed and dismantled the Republican regime in Guadalupe in 1802, the radical possibilities that the modern discourse of Republicanism had unleashed in the colonies would, according to Dubois, not die out re-emerging in subsequent decades like a "return of the repressed." *A Colony of Citizens* ends with contemporary appropriations and resignifications of the universal—and now hegemonic—discourse of Republicanism by immigrants and immigrants-turned-citizens in France today.

Finally, the Haitian Revolution also haunts the last work in this review essay, if only in an oblique way. Aline Helg's *Liberty and Equality in Caribbean Colombia, 1770-1835*, delves into the impact of the new discourse of liberalism and republicanism of the Age of Revolution in what she calls "Caribbean Colombia" (or New Granada), a neglected coastal "frontier" region populated mostly by people of African descent. The Caribbean regional focus has in this case a metaphorical significance, for the postcolonial Colombian "nation" has been construed as a predominantly mestizo and Andean nation. This work seeks to write a past for that marginalized Caribbean zone that still needs to be fully acknowledged as a "region" in a (pluralized) national imaginary. More importantly, it endeavors to render that regional history through a racial lens hardly ever utilized to examine that past. In that sense, Helg is part of a whole new generation of researchers, particularly anthropologists and historians such as Nina S. de Friedemann and Jaime Arocha (1986), Peter Wade (1993), and others who are also currently working on present and past constructions of race and racial identities in Colombia. A good part of that recent work has been compiled in an important anthology entitled *Afrodescendientes en las Américas* edited by Claudia Mosquera, Mauricio Pardo, and Odile Hoffman (2002).

While Helg's racially oriented approach to the anticolonial and postcolonial history of Caribbean New Granada constitutes an important intervention in the historiography of Colombia, Latin America, and the Atlantic world, the work is somewhat clouded by the contrived character of the "big" question superimposed on an unwieldy and fragmented archival documentation that at times gives the work a disjointed character. The author queries why there was no Haitian Revolution in the Colombian Caribbean after the initial breakdown of the Spanish colonial regime in 1808. There is no space here to speculate about the premises that may have prompted Helg to pose the problem in such a sweeping counterfactual way. Suffice it to say here that it has to do with disclaiming—yet wanting to take seriously—the spectral fear of "another Haiti" that some white elites (including Simón Bolívar) sometimes invoked during and after the independence wars in New Granada. In any case, the conditions—and perhaps the entities compared—seem so different from the start that the comparison seems almost superficial. Caribbean Columbia was a peripheral frontier region with a dispersed population, not a plantation society based on slave labor. In fact, slaves, who played such a major role in the events of Saint Domingue, constituted a very small minority of the population as Helg herself notes. Alternatively, a more compelling question is why the free of color, the *pardos*, who constituted a majority of the population in this frontier region did not mobilize along color lines to establish a pardo republic—a *pardocracia* as Bolívar referred to the feared possibility. Helg points out what she considers to be the main factors that "precluded local and regional organization along class and/or racial lines" (9). These included the fragmented character of this frontier region and its scattered population, isolation, and *patria chica* loyalties, patronage- and hierarchy-based networks headed by elite whites, as well as divisions and internal rivalries among all groups, including among people of African descent. In other words, there was a variety of affiliations around which people mobilized at any given time in this region that occluded the preeminence (if not the actual emergence) of race- and class-based horizontal identities.

One important set of questions to explore in a more sustained way would be if, when, and under what circumstances people in New Granada in fact asserted racial identities and mobilized along those lines, and how did the new liberal and Republican discourses of equality actually draw out or suppress those identities in different spheres of life. Helg's own regional study of Caribbean New Granada consists of descriptive political sketches of five subregions, which she hurriedly compares regarding their political conflicts during the different phases of the Independence wars. Any of these subregions, particularly Cartagena or Mompox, which produced some radical mobilizations and proposals during the first phase of the war would have constituted by itself a rewarding in-depth study of the appropriations and effects of Republican discourse among the free of color. In this regard, Dubois' focus on specific communities such as Basse-Terre in Guadalupe and his study of practical discourses at the local level could provide a model for this line of work.

In fact, one particularly interesting issue that emerges from Helg's study is that although abolition of slavery was not included in the constitutional proposals of Republican movements and groups in New Granada (abolition of the slave trade was, however, and so was a postponed goal of "gradual" abolition that echoed most moderate antislavery stances at the time), Republican proposals readily granted citizenship rights to those already free, regardless of race. In this regard, some of the secessionist movements in New Grenada, such as that of Cartagena province, radicalized the liberal discourse of the Cortes of Cádiz by their recognition of people of African descent as deserving of citizenship rights. In fact, free pardos and blacks in Cartagena acquired political equality early on apparently without the opposition *gens de couleur* went through in Saint Domingue during the early years of revolutionary conflict there (1789–1793). Although Helg suggests that there was an element of cooptation in this "concession" of political equality to the free of color, one may want to probe further into the actual process that brought about such an outcome and the actual agency of free pardos as Dubois seeks to do in the cases of the French Caribbean. Political and military considerations, such as the important role that the free pardos already played in the militias, may have played a stronger role in the production of such inclusive citizenship rights. Although more work needs to be done on the militias as an important sphere wherein people of African descent made claims under colonial royalist and post-colonial Republican regimes, Helg rightly flags this as an important subject that her study begins to address.

Finally, one of the most engaging topics of Helg's book was her more focused (chapter-long) account of the fascinating figure of a popular hero of the Independence wars, General José Padilla, a man of African and Indian ancestry. Padilla's father, in fact, was born in Saint Domingue and Padilla himself sought exile in Haiti for some time after the Spanish reconquest of New Granada in 1815. His military achievements and popularity—and his tragic denouement—as well as his political prominence and social visibility single him out for further study. Of particular interest, as Helg notes, is his race-inflected political discourse of Republicanism that contrasted with other racially empty invocations and uses of that discourse at the time. Padilla constitutes an ideal figure to explore the limits of racial discourse and identification in pre and post colonial Caribbean New Granada society and the ways this identity was publicly and privately navigated alongside or in lieu of other affiliations in social and political life. Overall, Helg's work opens up a wide range of research agendas in this region for the future.

One hopes that new generations of Latin American historians now in the making will turn their attention to this promising circum Caribbean region. Issues of slavery and freedom, and of race and identity in Latin America are at the forefront in the field of history. This new work is helping rethink the region's past and present. The books reviewed in this essay constitute only the tip of the iceberg.

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