role in the defense of the faith and the status quo. With this, they sought to present themselves as dependable allies of the Crown at all levels. They created, funded, and managed the main poor houses in Naples; they instituted charitable pawnbrokers (mounts of piety), a novel form of charity that combined medical services with the concession of microcredits to the poor. The reality of this charitable activity is that it was perceived as a new way to show how closely involved the Genoese were with matters of the Crown, such as helping the poor, thus maintaining their status as the Crown's favorite nation. In addition, these activities were instrumental in maintaining important posts in the hands of the Genoese community.

Overall, the book's thesis is interesting and well developed, although some important issues are only superficially addressed. The book mostly relies on the work of other scholars, especially concerning the economic strategies of the Genoese. The treatment of sources and historiography is rather uneven, and Spanish authors, or works which analyze the historical issue at hand from the Spanish perspective, are almost entirely absent, which does not help to understand the symbiotic character of the relationship of the Genoese and the Spanish Crown; many issues are, therefore, left unresolved. This, at any rate, does not detract too much from the value of the work, which opens extraordinarily interesting lines of future enquiry. I want to finish with a personal impression, which may very well be mistaken: Dauverd opens the book by clearly stating her intention to revise the notion of a backward south dominated by the more advanced economies, that is, the traditional colonialist ideas, but this commendable intention finds little projection in the book. This is, I believe, the main field of contention in what is, overall, a truly interesting proposal.

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Philip A. Howard. *Black Labor, White Sugar: Caribbean Braceros and Their Struggle for Power in the Cuban Sugar Industry*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015. xii + 303 pp. ISBN 978-0-8071-5952-1, $47.50 (cloth).

Black Labor, White Sugar is a meticulously researched, persuasively argued, and exceptionally well-presented examination of the extremely

difficult experience of Caribbean migrant workers, mostly from Haiti and Jamaica, during the tumultuous years of the Cuban sugar boom between 1906 and 1933. It not only constitutes an outstanding contribution to Cuban and Caribbean historiography, but it also insightfully weaves the overseas Cuban migrant experience into the domestic political and economic changes then going on in Cuba as well as the broader neighboring Caribbean societies. In six highly analytical chapters bookended by an introduction and a short epilogue, the study magisterially investigates the changing fortunes of the new sugar industry created in Cuba after the disastrous war of independence ended with a military occupation by the United States. The economic transformation of Cuba after 1898 might be a familiar story. It certainly has a large and distinguished literature, including significant studies by eminent scholars such as Oscar Zanetti, Alejandro Garcia, John Dumoulin, César Ayala, Alan Dye, Gillian McGillivray, Barry Carr, Jorge Ibarra, Julio Le Riverend, Oscar Pino Santos, Jorge Giovannetti, Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, Alexandra Bronfman, Aline Helg, and Louis Pérez Jr. Much has indeed been written about this period. Most studies, however, focus on the large-scale institutional and agricultural changes, and overlook or underestimate the basic human factors. In this superb study, the focus rests on the hundreds of thousands of imported Haitian or Jamaican workers who cut and loaded the mature sugarcane and participated in many highly mechanized sugar central factories across the island. It explores the daily lives and communal experiences of these workers vital to the process of making sugar. In almost every chapter, Howard vastly expands our general understanding of the period by qualifying the acceptable conclusions of previous scholars, by asking different questions, by presenting new information derived from several international archives, and by generally contextualizing social, political, and economic developments beyond the usual Cuba–U.S. dichotomy.

The study skillfully intertwines the rapid expansion of early-twentieth-century Cuban sugar production, especially in Camagüey and Oriente provinces, with the artificially created need for laborers by the large U.S. and Cuban companies that conspired to subordinate, exploit, repress, and demean their foreign workers. Although the companies constructed an elaborate ideology based on racial and ethnic differences, they could never fully establish the total subordination that they desired of their imported workers. Haitians and Jamaicans energetically employed a variety of mechanisms to resist their occupational subordination and social marginalization. They accentuated their religious beliefs. They formed mutual aid societies. They desperately held on to notions of the family, either by bringing family members from their homelands or making new families with

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local Cuban spouses. They also sought modest measures of economic independence by small farming on land that they either bought or by squatting on estate lands. Much as they tried, neither the U.S. or Cuban governments nor their company collaborators could entirely insulate their foreign workers from domestic political and ideological involvement. Haitians and Jamaicans enthusiastically espoused the ideas of anarcho-syndicalism that guided the organization of Cuban workers in the 1920s. By doing so, they harmoniously merged racial and class ideologies. In an impressively sophisticated discussion of the impact of Marcus Garvey and Pan-Africanism in Cuba (and elsewhere), Howard demonstrates:

> Convergence of anarcho-syndicalism and Garveyism ultimately helped to establish among black and white Cubans and Spanish and black immigrants a transnational militant working class ideology. This ideology promoted ethnic, racial and class solidarity, bringing together all sugarcane workers to challenge the power of the sugar companies, as well as of the state that supported their hegemony" (pp. 10–11).

When the sugar boom began to fizzle in the 1920s and early 1930s, the Cuban government initiated a vicious xenophobic campaign to expel the Jamaican and Haitian workers whose earlier efforts were essential in building the remarkable economic success of the island.

Black Labor, White Sugar strongly refutes the assertions by George Beckford, Sidney Mintz, and Charles Wagley that labor emigration weakened the Jamaican family structure. Instead, it produces incontrovertible evidence that Jamaicans in Cuba consistently demonstrated a powerful affinity for family togetherness. They supported their families back in Jamaica with their remittances at the end of the harvest. They used their earnings to consolidate their social and economic positions in their local communities. Many sent for family members or insisted that family members accompany them to Cuba. The study also finds that representatives of the British, Jamaican, and Haitian governments were not as helpfully interventionist as a number of other scholars have suggested. Nevertheless, Caribbean governments did assist in the repatriation of large numbers of indigent workers stranded in Cuba at the beginning of the Great Depression. Many of the English Caribbean returnees, such as Henry Shackleton, Allan G. S. Coombs, Hugh C. Buchanan, and Alexander Clarke-Bustamante, learned their political protest skills in Cuba before practicing them in their local territories. Thus, the connection between Cuba and the rest of the region is not just with migrant labor.

There are a few minor blemishes in the book. One concerns Cuban railroads. Spain did not build the railroads in Cuba during the nineteenth century; Cubans built those early railroads with Cuban capital. Railroads were operating on sugar estates long before the abolition of slavery in Cuba. Another relates to the relationship between Jamaican peasants and the United Fruit Company and the West Indies Sugar Company in the 1930s. Neither company "seized" land in Jamaica. The short discussion on pages 236–237 does not represent fairly the complex relationship between the designated foreign companies and local sugarcane growers and banana cultivators during the period. Overall, though, this is a magnificent study that efficaciously illuminates important and often-overlooked dimensions of the integrated Cuban and Caribbean experiences in those turbulent early decades of the twentieth century.

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G. Ugo Nwokeji. *The Slave Trade and Culture in the Bight of Biafra: An African Society in the Atlantic World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. xxiv + 279 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-88347-4, $110.00 (hardback); 978-1-107-66220-9, $40.78 (paperback).

The impact of the transatlantic slave trade on Africa is one of the most challenging aspects of its history to explain. How could such a destructive activity thrive for centuries? G. Ugo Nwokeji addresses this question in *The Slave Trade and Culture in the Bight of Biafra: An African Society in the Atlantic World*, winner of the 2011 Melville Herskovits Award, delivered by the African Studies Association to the most important work in African studies published in English in the previous year. In it, Nwokeji contends that this question can neither be answered merely through analyses of demand and supply, nor can the trade's impact be attributed to the greed or cunning of European and American merchants alone. African slave traders, such as the Igbo-speaking Aro from the Bight of Biafra, in southeast Nigeria, also played a key role in the traffic. They not only were among the greatest traders in the Atlantic, but they also fostered a culture that rewarded entrepreneurship and encouraged commercial expansion.