

American behemoth. Rather, it was a thriving, expanding, reforming, and powerful player on the American and world stage.

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### BRAZILIAN CITIZENSHIP

*A Black Jurist in a Slave Society: Antonio Pereira Rebouças and the Trials of Brazilian Citizenship.* By Keila Grinberg. Translated by Kristin M. McGuire. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020. Pp. 226. \$29.95 paper.  
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Historians of postcolonial nations and states have for some time examined the tensions between liberal political projects and the institution of slavery, how slavery corroded the benefits that flowed from despotism's demise, and whether liberal frameworks for rights and the exercise of authority laid the ground for dismantling the oppressions that slavery both produced and depended on. In Brazil, some scholars have viewed these encounters as a question of ideas and places.

Because Brazilian independence in the early 1820s left both the monarchy and slavery standing, nineteenth-century liberalism could only be "out of place" (5). Claims to individual freedoms and equality before the law, presumed to be less dissonant in Europe, could have only superficial resonance in a society and national politics predicated on paternalism and bondage. Keila Grinberg's engaging study of Antonio Pereira Rebouças lays to rest this dichotomous analysis and its limits. She recontextualizes Brazil's liberalism, with a focus on debates about citizenship, calling attention to the exclusions that attended liberalism's ascendance in Europe and the United States. Her careful reconstruction of Rebouças' intellectual and professional trajectories, in turn, shows that he neither misunderstood, nor superficially embraced, liberalism's potential. Rather, perhaps, he committed too completely to liberalism's theory in practice, especially its defense of private property.

Rebouças' career was woven into nineteenth-century Brazilian political life. He was born in Bahia in 1798, the son of a Portuguese tailor and his wife, an Afro-Brazilian woman whose legal status at birth was free. He used his limited formal education to get work as a notarial clerk and secured permission to practice law in 1821, the same year that the Portuguese empire was engulfed in a crisis that later culminated in Brazil's independence. He fought for independence, defended a new constitutional monarchy, and was elected to the national assembly. He also defended the constitution's restrictive approach to citizenship, which privileged property-owning men. He argued that it set aside birthright in favor of merit. Even though Rebouças criticized persistent racial

hierarchies, most notably in the National Guard's officer corps, he did not see liberalism and slavery as incompatible. As property, slaves had no claim to citizenship or the rights it conferred.

Yet, Rebouças recognized that in a society dependent on enslaved labor, and with growing numbers of freed people, liberalism as a legal project required regulating the passage from enslavement to freedom, from property to citizen. In the case of self-purchase, he took a narrow view of when freedom was legally recovered (the end rather than the beginning of agreed-upon service). He also regarded Africans as "barbarians." At the same time, he insisted that the effects of a new legal status were all-encompassing. Former slaves were to have equal social, political, and economic opportunities (88).

As Grinberg also persuasively shows, the problem for Rebouças was that among both his political allies and his opponents, his skin color and ancestry continued to carry a disqualifying weight. He endured social discrimination and racial slurs. Notwithstanding his ownership of slaves and his pledge to serve as a "guarantor" of Brazilian political unity, other political elites accused Rebouças of harboring "dangerous," divisive ideas. By the second half of the nineteenth century, when abolitionist projects gained ground, Rebouças had stepped away from political life. For a younger group of liberals more invested in collective legal-political transformations, his views on slavery and race seemed fossilized.

First published in Brazil in 2002, this book recovered the complexity of Rebouças' life and work left aside in histories of nineteenth-century Brazil. The English translation of the book by Kristin McGuire is expert and seamless. Grinberg's scholarship also invites broader considerations of comparison and translation. While the title here identifies Rebouças as a "Black jurist," she points to instances when he defended the political rights and reputation of "mulattos," a category with which he identified himself. It was a category that, like Rebouças himself, stood in tension with his belief in liberalism's capacity to deracialize civil and political rights.

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## RELIGIOUS REBELLION

*Victory on Earth or in Heaven: Mexico's Religionero Rebellion.* By Brian A. Stauffer.  
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Between 1873 and 1877, a radical religious rebellion tore through Mexico's Catholic heartland in response to the "draconian" secularization project of liberal president