

larger picture. Sweet accomplishes this by unraveling a great many threads in the course of one life in the slave trade and of slavery itself, a story which so often is told only in statistics and generalities.

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*Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil.* By Paulina L. Alberto. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Pp. xvi, 416. Illustrations. Map. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

This work focuses on the ways in which black activists have responded to the dominant racial ideologies that emerged throughout Brazil's tumultuous twentieth century. It concentrates primarily but not exclusively on the writings found in the black press of São Paulo from its early years onward. In addition, Alberto places her work in a comparative context by discussing the efforts of black activists in Rio de Janeiro and Salvador da Bahia, alongside those of the São Paulo activists.

Alberto sees a long trajectory of black responses to the dominant ideologies that defined the place of Brazilians of African descent in the formulations of Brazilian national identity. This trajectory begins with the emergence of the ideology of *branqueamento* (whitening) and proceeds through the rise of the fierce nationalism that held sway among Brazilian elites during the 1930s and on to the emergence of the doctrine of racial democracy, which coincided with Brazil's first period of mass democracy in the 1940s and beyond.

As these respective national ideologies gained ascendancy, black Brazilian activists countered with their own writings, highlighting the flaws in the ideologies and describing them as incomplete affirmations of national ideals or at worst subterfuges for preserving Brazil's racial hierarchies. In the 1920s and 1930s, these responses took the form of black activists' support of campaigns to create civic commemorations of the figure of the *Mãe Preta*. Black activists saw this support as countering a cultural environment steeped in scientific racism, an environment that supported Brazilians in making every effort to expunge the African presence from formulations of Brazilian identity. During the 1930s, black activists embraced an assertive racial pride as well, expressed through the political movement of the *Frente Negra Brasileira* and its newspaper *A Voz Da Raça*. This open assertion of black racial identity appeared to have been triggered by the Brazilian nationalism that grew out of the Revolution of 1930.

The doctrine of racial democracy occupies a significant place in Alberto's discussion. Alberto shows clearly the breadth and complexity of its incorporation by black activists into their writing. Their embrace of this doctrine was less a way of acknowledging its veracity than a means to exploit a discursive opening in the discussions of the Brazilian elites, who were themselves making race a cornerstone of national identity. Black

activists surely did not see this doctrine as the elite understood it—as an exhortatory claim of a uniquely Brazilian trait of racial tolerance. Instead, the black activists used the doctrine and the discussions surrounding it to paint a critical picture of Brazilian race relations in which Brazilians had hardly lived up to this ideal.

Alberto's is a significant contribution to the literature on black activism in Brazil in this sense: she draws a trajectory of the movement and establishes a context to show that the goal of that activism was to hurl a continual challenge at the ideologies of white supremacy, in whatever form they took. Alberto also avoids comparing the efforts of black Brazilian activists in resisting racial domination to the arguably more assertive movements of black North Americans. Alberto sees such binary comparisons as misreadings of the Brazilian efforts. There was as much a struggle in the realm of ideas as through mass mobilizations, with the exception of the *Frente Negra*. Black Brazilian activists took another route, through the black press, to engage and challenge the prevailing thinking that denied black Brazilians acknowledgment of their full citizenship rights.

This book is truly an important work. It will no doubt take its place as one of the standard sources on the history of black activism in Brazil. It is ably supported by the meticulous scholarship and clarity with which Alberto presents her case.

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*Los Brazos de Dios: A Plantation Society in the Texas Borderlands 1821–1865.* By Sean M. Kelley. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010. Pp. x, 283. Maps. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

This volume offers a new borderlands perspective, beginning with the statement that Texas became “the only slave-based plantation society to originate under Mexican sovereignty” (p. 2). The author is careful to note, however, that Texas differed in important ways from other borderland societies of the Southwest, while presenting similarities to states of the United States South. The focus is on five counties of the lower Brazos River valley. To explore the diversity of the region in detail, special emphasis is placed on three neighborhoods, Gulf Prairie near the coast and Chappell Hill and Cat Spring, both further inland. The region is presented as contested, with transitions from Mexico to the Texas republic, followed by U.S. statehood and finally by the U.S. Civil War.

Population diversity existed among slaves and non-slaves alike. About a thousand slaves (about 20 percent of the population) were smuggled in from the Bight of Benin and other points on the West African coast through Cuba in a dozen voyages during the 1830s. Other slaves came with owners who settled there or arrived later through the U.S. internal slave trade. Immigrants, primarily from western Germany, and their American-born children added cultural complexity as 30 percent of the white population in the region, especially in the upper counties.