

The book is not really a biography of Lula, given its narrow focus. It is instead a terrific study of his early life and his rise to prominence as a labor leader. The failure to detail his life after the union as a politician limits the book's scope. But its focus on the earlier period makes it an essential book for the study of the internal politics of Brazilian trade unionism during the 1964–85 military dictatorship.

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### BRAZIL'S RURAL BLACK COMMUNITIES

*For Land and Liberty: Black Struggles in Rural Brazil.* By Merle L. Bowen. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. 248. \$99.99 cloth.  
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In drafting the 1988 constitution, newly elected Brazilian legislators aspired to a democratic future built on the ruins of the country's two-decades-long dictatorship. A glaring injustice perpetuated from 1964 to 1986 was the exclusion of black history and black culture in the Brazilian educational curriculum and society, not to mention continued marginalization of black Brazilians economically and politically. In response, drafters of the 1988 constitution included restorative articles, including Article 68, intended to address historical injustices. Article 68 dictated that land occupied by or deemed to *quilombo* communities be designated as collective property in perpetuity.

Bowen uses a variety of methodologies, including oral history, historical archives, and quantitative surveys to measure the efficacy of Article 68 in a comparative context of quilombo clusters in the Iguape Valley of Bahia and the Ribeira Valley of São Paulo state. Bowen's book is essential to the study and criticism of the 1988 constitution and quilombo historiography, as well as to the efforts, both legal and extralegal, to prevent the fulfillment of justice for those people of color who toiled for Brazil's wealth. Although justice may have been denied prior to 1986, Bowen finds that land compensation claims for black Brazilians still constitute justice delayed in the contemporary era.

Bowen, with skillful use of historical and anthropological methodologies, first renders a clearer image of quilombo life as it has come down to rural Brazilians today. Elusive as is constructing history from oral and quantitative approaches, Bowen confounds the notion that quilombo life played out in isolation. In contrast, and as represented by the descendants of these vibrant communities today, quilombos were a *mélange* of black, mixed-race, and native inhabitants who worked with adjacent communities and plantations, providing supplemental food crops, riverine shellfish harvests, and manual labor in Bahia's Reconcavo and São Paulo's forested hinterlands. The author's

sensitivity to the continuities of these activities, and the mental and physical strain they occasioned, paint a sympathetic figure of black Brazilians' economic contributions, their gendered labor patterns, and the validity of their claims for titled communal land.

Second, Bowen elucidates the legal apparatus at the national and state levels that have facilitated and simultaneously complicated the administration of justice for historical quilombo communities. In explaining the conditions under which historical communities, as well as their advocates, have promoted ethnic and cultural ties to land in the absence of documentary claims, Bowen's analysis raises questions as to why such claims were contingent on community designations as opposed to individual entitlement.

In both Bahia and the state of São Paulo, Bowen illustrates how a number of barriers interfered with expedited titling of land to quilombo communities. In some cases, this consisted of recalcitrant landowners unsympathetic to claims of perpetual occupation or cultivation, compounded by the imposition of physical obstacles such as fences that prevented access to public waterways where clams and shellfish provided sustenance to Bahians. In other cases, Bowen illustrates how corporations, including palm-oil producers, often employed black Brazilians in factories adjacent to fields they had historically worked, only to sell off those lands as they consolidated their large-scale production elsewhere. Surprisingly, the author continues, state projects, including national parks and newly legislated environmental protections, prevented the traditional slash-and-burn agricultural patterns in São Paulo state quilombos, confounding justice in the process, even when those collective labor patterns posed no threat to the sustainability of the lands in question.

Bowen's study makes a compelling case for the continued investigation and categorization of historical black rural communities in Brazil by virtue of her carefully executed quantitative comparisons of Bahian and São Paulo quilombos. Rich riverine harvests in Bahia, as well as the gendered labor of women weaving nets to supplement family incomes, raised household salaries to near the national average, but incomes often fell short for families that could not engage in a number of economic activities. In the São Paulo hinterlands, a higher level of government benefits sustained declining agricultural fortunes, while the prospects of tourism development offered viable options to supplement household incomes.

This book represents an innovative approach to rural community studies in Brazil that bears attention from scholars in a variety of fields, as well as graduate and undergraduate students interested in the intersection of civil rights and sustainable development (if a paperback edition is issued). Bowen's book is a stark reminder that differences between legislation and its execution often leave painful reminders of inequities unaddressed.

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