Societies after Slavery

A Select Annotated Bibliography of Printed Sources on Cuba, Brazil, British Colonial Africa, South Africa, and the British West Indies

EDITED BY Rebecca J. Scott, Thomas C. Holt, Frederick Cooper, and Aims McGuinness

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Societies after Slavery

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Preface

In one society after another in the nineteenth century, slavery gave way in the face of attacks by abolitionists, changes in the world economy, wartime turmoil, and the initiatives of slaves themselves. Once slavery was gone, however, the struggle to determine what would replace it had just begun. Emancipation constituted, in effect, a historically privileged moment, one in which fundamental questions were raised and alternatives were explored. In the United States South, the Caribbean, Brazil, and Africa the meaning of "free labor" was contested not only among theoreticians and political economists but also among laborers and employers. The resolutions of their struggles—often contingent and provisional—cast a long shadow into the present, informing understandings of the meaning of freedom and citizenship and shaping the economic evolution of the societies in question.

Since the 1950s, the study of slavery has become one of the most productive fields within North American and Latin American history and, more recently, within African history as well. Much of the pioneering work of comparative history focused on slavery. With the maturation of slavery studies, however, scholars began to ask new questions about emancipation and the transition to freedom. It has become clear that the study of societies after slavery raises fundamental questions about worldwide economic changes, the international discussion of the meaning of free labor, the connections between national politics and global ideological currents, the evolution of systems of race relations, and the possibilities and constraints confronting former slaves and other rural workers.[1]

Enslavement, by its nature, took people across boundaries: slaves were those stripped of their social connections and therefore vulnerable to whatever uses captors or purchasers had in mind. The rise of the Atlantic system from the sixteenth century onward took this already familiar phenomenon to new dimensions, tying together three continents

1. For a detailed discussion of these issues, see Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Post-emancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

and shaping powerful networks and structures for the enslavement and transportation of people. The development of commercial agriculture and industrial capitalism in Europe, the enslavement of people in Africa, and the founding of large-scale units of agricultural production in the Americas linked distant parts of the world with unprecedented intensity.

The unraveling of this system was an equally international process. The abolitionists of the early nineteenth century posed the problem of slavery in terms of universal moral principles. In all the regions covered in this bibliography, debates about abolition hinged on the relationship of such a universalistic discourse to the particularities of regional politics and economic interests. All parties to these debates struggled over the power to frame moral issues and the power to act in the face of the conflicting wills of slaveowners, slaves, and others.

In the 1790s, the slaves of Saint Domingue seized an opening brought about by the struggles surrounding the French Revolution and by the possibility of turning a French discourse about the rights of man into a powerful claim for freedom for themselves. This was, in effect, the first emancipation, and other world powers did their best to contain the impact of the world's first society after slavery.[2] In the early nineteenth century, Great Britain, once the biggest slaving power of them all, became caught up in a debate about the political and moral viability of slavery. In the British West Indies, slaves were also actors in their own emancipation, and their collective actions in the early 1830s helped to turn an escalating political argument into an immediate necessity to act. By then, France, Spain, and Brazil were being confronted with the effects of international abolitionist movements as well.

From the Haitian Revolution onward, prior experiences of postemancipation society—as interpreted by opposing sides—became touchstones for evaluating the supposed capacity of former slaves to work for wages and emblems of the possibilities and dangers of broadening social and political participation by the descendants of slaves. The formal abolitions of slavery—1848 in the French colonies, the Civil War years in the southern United States, 1880–86 in Cuba, and 1888 in Brazil—were part of multifaceted struggles whose implications for economic, political, and social life would be played out in varied and interconnected ways. In each

2. Some slaves had been freed by general emancipation in a few New England states in the 1780s, following the American Revolution. But the number and circumstances were not comparable to those of Saint Domingue in the 1790s. See Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

case, understanding the relationship of national politics, international pressure, and slave mobilization remains a complex historical problem.

By the end of the nineteenth century, European conquests of Africa were bringing to the fore a new set of issues. Colonizing powers had to decide what to do about indigenous forms of slavery, which in many places had been intensified in previous decades as the end of the European-led slave trade made slave labor more available and the rising demand in Europe for tropical products made slave production more attractive. But if the possibility of slave emancipation provided a rationale for colonization in Africa, actually implementing it would prove an ambiguous process, in which slaves would once again be important actors and whose course over the ensuing decades would lead in different directions.

This combination of diversity and interconnection makes the subject of this bibliography a difficult one to grasp. Since the pioneering work of W. E. B. Du Bois, C. L. R. James, and Eric Williams in the 1930s and 1940s, historians have been aware that slavery and emancipation were worldwide phenomena, impossible to understand from a single spatial location. From the 1940s to the present, the comparative study of slavery within the Atlantic system (and to a more limited extent beyond it) has been a rich field of scholarship. Ambitious attempts to reevaluate the dynamics of slavery across the entire Atlantic system have been made, but the process of emancipation has been much less studied in a comparative and integrated context. Even some of the most influential attempts to explain variations in patterns of race relations in contemporary societies preferred to find answers in the differences among slave systems rather than in the postemancipation decades that intervened.[3]

3. Crucial early works with a systematic approach include W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (Philadelphia: A. Saifer, 1935); C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2d ed. (New York, Vintage Books, 1963); and Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944). Influential and explicitly comparative works on slavery begin with Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1946), and include Carl Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1971); Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labor: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987); and the works excerpted in Laura Foner and Eugene Genovese, *Slavery in the New World: A Reader in Comparative History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969). Recent comparative and systematic works on emancipation include Eric Foner, *Nothing but Freedom: Eman-*

As the present editors have argued elsewhere, historians have had more difficulty confronting the diverse meanings of "freedom" than they have had in comparing different meanings of "slavery."[4] There are fine studies of the impact of the ending of slavery in particular contexts, most of them written within the past two decades, and we have cited as many as possible of these in the bibliography that follows. Explicitly comparative studies remain rare.

World history and comparative history are more easily invoked than done. Historical scholarship, for good reason, emphasizes the specifics of time and place and, above all, the finding of primary sources and their interpretation in the light of particular contexts. The entries in *Societies after Slavery* are designed to lower the barriers to undertaking comparative research and to make it possible for such comparison to employ primary documentation as well as secondary sources. They can also suggest new documentary sources for use in teaching, particularly for courses that undertake the ambitious challenge of an Atlantic Studies or other systemic approach to the history of Europe, Africa, and the Americas.[5]

The printed primary documentation is in fact rich, and it allows one to focus on comparable phenomena in different regions and at different historical moments: on work relations, social relations, and community in the aftermath of slavery. Our principal goal has been to identify primary material that can be found in major research libraries or can be accessed through interlibrary loan from any university library or public library participating in a research consortium. The primary printed

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cipation and its Legacy (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983); Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776–1848* (London: Verso Books, 1988); Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), and *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); as well as the collection of essays edited by Drescher and Frank McGlynn, *The Meaning of Freedom: Economics, Politics, and Culture After Slavery* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), and that edited by Mary Turner, *From Chattel Slaves to Wage Slaves: The Dynamics of Labour Bargaining in the Americas* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1995). See also *Slavery and Abolition* 21 (August 2000), a special issue entitled "After Slavery: Emancipation and its Discontents," with an introduction and edited by Howard Temperley.

4. Cooper, Holt, Scott, *Beyond Slavery.*

5. See the discussion stimulated by David Brion Davis in "Crossing Slavery's Boundaries," a forum with contributions by Davis, Peter Kolchin, Rebecca J. Scott, and Stanley L. Engerman in the *American Historical Review* 105 (April 2000): 451–84.

sources of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include parliamentary and congressional hearings and inquiries, reports of governmental and international agencies, missionary records, published census reports, correspondence published in the context of contemporary debates, personal memoirs, surveys, autobiographies, early sociological and ethnographic studies, and transcriptions of oral interviews.

Obviously, these bibliographies are not exhaustive—they cannot include every traveler who observed social relations in each corner of Brazil or Nigeria and cannot capture the diversity (and limitations) of archival resources. They nonetheless allow a student to begin a seminar paper or embark on a dissertation project with a good sense of the range of possibilities in published primary sources. We also hope that comparativists will use our references to extend research beyond areas most familiar to them, allowing them to gain an entrée into primary sources and get a feel for the differing points of view on the emancipation process in different historical contexts. The bibliography will allow scholars to investigate connections across regions, to look, for example, for echoes of the British West Indian emancipation struggles of the 1830s in the Spanish Caribbean in the 1880s or in the newly conquered colonies of British Africa in the 1890s.

With respect to the temporal coverage of the societies under consideration, we have been expansive, including not only sources that concern postemancipation developments but also items relating to the process of emancipation itself—especially when there was a period of apprenticeship or other intermediate status between the initial steps to end slavery and the completion of legal emancipation. The beginning date of each section is therefore particular to that section. At the same time, in order to capture the economic and social transformations that followed emancipation, the editors have extended the period of focus beyond the immediate postemancipation years, generally to around 1930. The bibliography thus covers a considerable span of emancipations, with the British occupying both the vanguard (after Haiti), in their West Indian colonies, and the rear, in Sierra Leone in 1927. (This range would, indeed, become even wider if one were to begin as one logically should, with Saint Domingue. But we have deferred on the task of assembling French-language sources to a team of Francophone colleagues, as we explain below.)

We have also been inclusive in our judgment as to those social groups whose experiences should be taken into account in the scholarly analysis of societies after slavery. The bibliography encompasses sources dealing not only with former slaves and former slaveowners but with other

members of slaveholding societies whose lives were reshaped by emancipation. These include, for example, smallholders who were counted white, indentured laborers, people of color who had been free before the general emancipation, and immigrant workers. Our selection of sources comprises different aspects of the relationship of slavery to colonization and decolonization; it includes multiple crop production systems, including those on a plantation scale and those based on the extension of familial systems; and it includes a wide range of judicial systems and different forms of regulating marriage, land tenure, and inheritance.

Because slavery in the societies under consideration had been primarily a system of agricultural labor and because these societies remained predominantly agricultural for some time following emancipation, the bibliography concentrates on rural social transformations rather than urban developments. Sources that examine the interaction between rural and urban settings are included, but those sources that focus exclusively on urban life are generally not cited. This distinction, of course, is somewhat artificial, given the increased mobility that generally accompanied emancipation. But given our constraints of space, we have chosen to give preference to the rural over the urban. We hope that our colleagues carrying out innovative work on emancipation in cities, in places such as Brazil and the United States South, will excuse us.[6]

As one defines the problematic of postemancipation societies more and more broadly, the web of useful primary sources extends toward the infinite. And as this problematic attracts the attention of increasing numbers of researchers, the web of secondary sources also expands exponentially. In the last months before the text was submitted to the press, a half-dozen new books, articles, and review essays on Cuba came to hand, enabling us to provide a few new entries as of early 2001—but reminding us that key items will surely appear too late for inclusion. We can only hope that our compilation will please students and other scholars for the paths it opens up and that we will be forgiven for items overlooked or eliminated in the effort to remain concise. We are well aware, for example, that scholars in Brazil are uncovering sources and offering interpretations at an accelerating rate and that we have only captured a fraction of that production. But a glimpse of that fraction should stimulate scholars of other areas to pursue these leads vigorously and to be

6. See, for example, Sidney Chalhoub, *Visões da liberdade: uma história das últimas décadas da escravidão na Corte* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990), and the work of Elsa Barkeley Brown on Richmond, Virginia, including her doctoral dissertation, "Uncle Ned's Children: Negotiating Community and Freedom in Postemancipation Richmond, Virginia" (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1994).

alert to the excellent theses and essays emerging from such institutions as the State University at Campinas and the Federal University of Bahia in Salvador as well as the universities of Rio de Janeiro, Niterói, and São Paulo.

Nearly all of the printed primary sources cited in this volume have been annotated, and our annotations are designed to describe particular features and point the way to possible uses of the source. We do not attempt fully comprehensive annotations of sources encompassing large amounts of material, such as censuses. Instead, we focus on those aspects of the data that seem to us to be particularly promising for the study of societies after slavery. All of our annotations were composed by the editors or by advanced doctoral students, and they reflect our individual judgments on the potential value of different kinds of material.

The areas reviewed are ones for which a substantial printed primary and secondary literature exists in English, Spanish, or Portuguese, with occasional sources in French or German.[7] We have annotated the secondary sources written in languages other than English to encourage scholars to seek out these less-easily available works. In most of the sections, however, we did not fully annotate secondary sources published in English, given their relatively easy availability, although we often briefly note their geographical and chronological focus. Individual section editors have adjusted these guidelines to fit the particular needs of their sections, however, and describe in their introductions the conventions they have followed. In a few cases, for example, we have retained somewhat longer annotations that were prepared early in the compilation process, and in the one section whose sources were all in English—that on the British West Indies—some categories of relatively accessible primary sources were left unannotated.

The selection of geographical regions to be covered reflects both conscious choice and accidents of scholarly connections. Like all collaborative projects, this bibliography itself has a history. It began as a modest guide to sources for the students in a graduate seminar taught by Rebecca Scott and Thomas Holt at the University of Michigan in 1985. It expanded as Scott, Holt, and Frederick Cooper, with the collaboration

7. The coverage of Africa here is focused on the British colonies in part because the readily available *British Parliamentary Papers* constitute a rich base for departure. The comparable sources in the French case are in the archives in Dakar, but only a small portion of them are available on microfilm. A recent book by Martin Klein also provides comprehensive coverage and a valuable bibliography on French West Africa. See Martin A. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

in the early years of Barbara J. Fields, constituted the University of Michigan Postemancipation Societies Project. Neil Foley and Barbara Ransby began to add sources and prepare annotations, and Leslie Rowland visited the project to develop a parallel section on the United States South. The seminar was offered in several subsequent years by Rebecca Scott and Frederick Cooper, and the geographical shape of a formal bibliography began to become clear. Ada Ferrer soon took on joint responsibility with Rebecca Scott for the Cuba section and developed many of the entries and annotations as she carried out her own doctoral research. Alejandra Bronfman and Kathleen Lopez added annotations, as did Aims McGuinness and Javier Morillo-Alicea. Melinda Campbell at the University of Chicago collaborated with Thomas Holt to seek out and annotate items on the British West Indies, as did Lisa Lindsay, Jill Dupont, and Tim Scarnecchia. Tim Scarnecchia and Lisa Lindsay also worked with Fred Cooper on the Africa sections, and Pamela Scully took on the compilation of a section on South Africa, later updated by Kerry Ward. Many of the entries on central Africa emerged from the research of César Solá-García, which began as a seminar paper and ended in the dissertation listed in the section on British Colonial Africa. The Brazil section, initiated by Rebecca Scott, was much enriched by the labors of João José Reis and Judith Allen, with further annotations by Lara Putnam, Aims McGuinness, and Karl Monsma. It also benefited from the helpful commentary of numerous colleagues in Brazil, including Sidney Chalhoub, Hebe Maria Mattos, Silvia Lara, Keila Grinberg, and Ana Maria Lugão Rios. We anticipate that an expanded version of the Brazil section will be published in Portuguese, perhaps under the auspices of colleagues at the Federal University of Bahia, the State University at Campinas, and the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Niterói.

Leslie Rowland, director of the Freedom History Project at the University of Maryland, took on the major responsibility for the bibliography on the United States South and also established many of the conventions and procedures for selection and annotation in *Societies after Slavery* as a whole. What began as the United States section of this work, however, has grown to constitute a large bibliographic compilation in itself, one that will be completed separately under Rowland's editorship. It has its own large supporting cast, whose work will be acknowledged in that volume.

All of the editors agreed on the importance of Haiti and the French West Indies, but we lacked the primary research experience necessary to assemble such a section. Myriam Cottias, Laurent Dubois, and Carlo

Celius took on this task and are preparing a bibliography on the Francophone Caribbean. That bibliography will also appear as a separate publication, in this case in French. Certain other geographic areas are not included in this volume, though they might be in an ideal bibliography. We hope that our efforts may stimulate new compilations by specialists on those regions.

The main contributors of annotations are indicated at the beginning of each section. Throughout the project, additional graduate students from the University of Michigan, including Michael Schroeder, Mark Patrick, Catherine Kaplan, Kerry Ward, and Kathleen Lopez helped locate sources and contributed annotations, as did Alejandra Bronfman from Princeton University and Hannah Rosen and Steve Essig from the University of Chicago. Many of the graduate student contributors now hold faculty positions, and we hope they will find that this work repays the effort they invested in it as students. We owe special thanks as well to the doctoral students who participated in various phases of the postemancipation seminar at the University of Michigan and in comparable seminars offered by Thomas Holt and Julie Saville at the University of Chicago. The Postemancipation Project itself was kept on track by a series of capable graduate assistants, beginning with Neil Foley, continuing with Ada Ferrer, Lisa Lindsay, and Javier Morillo-Alicea, and ending with Aims McGuinness.

In the final years of preparing the text for publication, Aims McGuinness became a fellow editor of the volume, writing numerous annotations for several of the sections, making difficult decisions about inclusions and exclusions, and exercising his scholarly judgment as he guided the manuscript through to completion. The other three editors are very much in his debt and are grateful for his willingness to devote time to this project as he was in the midst of completing a dissertation that dealt with questions of race and popular liberalism in areas entirely outside the scope of this bibliography.

Jeanette Diuble did yeoman work as a typist in the last stages. We also owe a special debt to the Interlibrary Loan Department of the University Library at the University of Michigan and particularly to Sharon Johnson, who did a remarkable job of tracking down hard-to-find sources located in libraries across the United States.

Work on this bibliography has been supported by the Kellogg Foundation, through a grant to the Presidential Initiatives Fund of the University of Michigan, and by the Rackham Graduate School, the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies (including grants to CAAS from the Ford Foundation), and the Office of the Vice President for Research of

the University of Michigan. Work has also been made possible by grants to individual editors from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and from the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts of the University of Michigan. We express our thanks to all of these organizations and particularly to the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies at Michigan for providing a home for this project for more than a decade. Directors Thomas Holt, Lemuel Johnson, Earl Lewis, Michael Awkward, Sharon Patton, and James Jackson, as well as Associate Director Evans Young and Program Administrator Gerry Brewer, have provided crucial moral, administrative, and financial support.

We dedicate this volume to students past and future, in recognition of the ways in which pedagogy and research have stimulated each other throughout this project.

Contents

I British West Indies

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