

## Colonial Latin American Historical Review

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Volume 18

Issue 1 *Second Series, Volume 1, Issue 1 (Winter 2013)*

Article 7

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1-1-2013

### Ian Read, *The Hierarchies of Slavery in Santos, Brazil, 1822-1888*

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#### Recommended Citation

Smith, John Lucian. "Ian Read, *The Hierarchies of Slavery in Santos, Brazil, 1822-1888*." *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 18, 1 (2013): 97. <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/clahr/vol18/iss1/7>

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Nonetheless, the faithful of Lima subverted the anti-baroque nature of the reform by increasing the opulence of funeral rituals and constructing elaborate tombs in the suburban cemetery. Andrew Redden's essay on angels and death covers both Mexico and Peru. He argues that the growing cult to deceased children (*angelitos*) in Spanish America stemmed from both European and indigenous notions of children as mediators between the divine and mundane.

Naturally for a collection of essays, some articles are stronger than others. Achim's study on the autopsy report of Archbishop García Guerra and Warren's on burial reform in Lima are particularly well argued and thoroughly researched. As a whole, this volume represents a welcome expansion of the cultural study of death in Latin America and points toward the imminent advent of a corpus of richly documented studies that will deepen our understanding of the commonalities of death across colonial Latin America but also highlight local particularities of different regions.

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*The Hierarchies of Slavery in Santos, Brazil, 1822-1888.* By Ian Read. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. xiv + 275 pp. Illustrations, figures, maps, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$65.00 cloth.)

Scholarship on Brazil today has no shortage of histories of slavery, but Ian Read's sobering reassessment of slave agency is different from recent work. Read skillfully draws upon a variety of sources—censuses, marriages, wills, manumissions, police reports, as well as prison and hospital records—that illuminate obstacles slaves faced in Santos, bearing out a cogent critique of the central place of slave resistance in recent histories. The book's examination of daily life in an understudied urban area of Brazil's center-south makes valuable contributions to Brazilian historical scholarship, while underscoring the often insurmountable limitations of a brutal slave regime.

At the heart of Read's argument is a revival of the category of slaveowner "treatment," which he defines broadly to include working conditions, medical care, and punishments for slaves, as well as opportunities afforded for slaves' family formation or manumission. Analysis grounded in slaveowner treatment became unfashionable decades ago, as scholars began to challenge notions of "the docile slave, always submitting to his or her master's whims" (p. 203) and, in place of these notions, emphasized slave resistance. Read breathes new historiographical life into slaveowner treatment by revealing its effects on numerous aspects of slaves' daily lives. The book examines, for example, how owners' social status translated into differentiated living and working conditions for some slaves, and how owners' labor requirements enabled a few slaves to develop particular skills that facilitated flight or social mobility. According to Read, varying treatment created

opportunities for some slaves and foreclosed opportunities for others. Such variations, Read suggests, potentially divided Santos' enslaved population and may have served to diminish slaves' solidarity in resisting slaveowners.

Read's renewed focus on treatment exemplifies how historians can account for the harsh constraints slaves faced in Brazil, without resuscitating long-discredited myths of docile slaves. Rejecting these myths just as other recent histories have, *The Hierarchies of Slavery* explores the ways that slaves took advantage of, or were prevented from pursuing, opportunities for advancement within the constraints slaveowners imposed. Yet the book provocatively questions recent historiography: "Are we as able to productively recount and engage with the forces that made slavery oppressive, when nearly all interactions between slave and masters are probed for signs of 'negotiation' or 'resistance'?" (p. 203). The book's unusual emphasis on the social status and labor needs of slaveowners enables it to offer a more measured account of slave agency than recent historiography's enthusiasm for negotiation and resistance has allowed.

The book's analytical framework falters where history proves too messy for straightforward correlations between slaveowners' characteristics and the treatment of slaves. In a chapter on medical care, in particular, too many complicating factors muddy the connections between Read's data and his arguments about slaveowner treatment. Nevertheless, historians will find substantial support for the book's broad claims in the details of its analysis, from concentrations of wealth in the early nineteenth century to the Emancipation Fund's hardening of social inequalities among slaves as abolitionism intensified in the 1870s and 1880s. Meanwhile, the painstaking detail also produces a vivid history of demographic changes in Santos as burgeoning industries, new trans-Atlantic trade connections, and modern legal supervision all changed the nature of opportunities and constraints for Santista slaves.

With compelling analysis of such details throughout, *The Hierarchies of Slavery* will interest scholars from a range of disciplines whose work confronts the complex, sometimes polarizing question of subaltern agency. The book's conclusions offer little comfort to readers invested in recent historiography's celebrations of empowered slave subjects, but Read's careful research supports his bleaker reinterpretation. Whether or not other scholars of Brazilian slavery embrace his approach, they will find a history that successfully recounts and engages with the forces that made slavery oppressive in nineteenth-century Santos.

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