

In this brief space I can only hint at some of the other interesting aspects of the book, e.g., the suggestion that Mesoamerican “syncretism” may often have been quite deliberate, the implications of divinatory mnemonics for Mayan epigraphy, or the questioning of Victor Turner’s distinction between divination and revelation (a discussion that I do not find entirely convincing). *Time and the Highland Maya* is a seminal book that should arouse considerable controversy. Tedlock has certainly clarified some important aspects of Quiché horology and shown it to be part of a larger cultural configuration.

This is a cultural study rather than an individual account, but if the author had taken (or been allowed) another 50 pages, one would appreciate a stronger sense of the individual reality of her subjects. Even the examples of divination are highly generalized, and one misses a feeling for the character of the diviners or their clients, despite the numerous fine photographs. Tedlock surely has this information, and perhaps she will publish it elsewhere. For now, we must be thankful for this clearly written and well-produced account of a system of thought that is both coherent and beautiful.

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PHILIP K. BOCK

A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555.

By A. C. DE C. M. SAUNDERS. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982. Illustrations. Notes. Maps. Tables. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Pp. xviii, 283. Cloth. \$49.50.

The ancient tradition of slavery in the Mediterranean world lingered on through the Middle Ages but always remained strongest in those regions on the extremities of Western Christendom where Europeans were in continual and often hostile contact with peoples of other religions or cultures. In Iberia, the enslavement of Moorish prisoners had remained part of the process of reconquest, but the institution of slavery received new breath when in 1444 North African captives were delivered to the Algarve, a by-product of the age of maritime expansion. Despite the fact that commoners who witnessed the auction of these unfortunates were so enraged by the separation of families that they tried to halt the proceedings, slavery in Portugal had been resuscitated, and by the end of that century some 2,000 slaves a year were arriving at Lisbon.

Saunders’s study of Black slavery in Renaissance Portugal is the most thorough and competent examination of that topic published in any language. With a wide reading of secondary literature, a familiarity with the

historiography of Latin American slavery, and extensive research in municipal and ecclesiastical manuscripts as well as in the more commonly consulted national repositories, he has produced a carefully crafted study of the status and activities of Blacks in Portugal and their relation to Portuguese society and institutions.

Saunders's detailed analysis produces a series of sound and careful conclusions: the trade to Portugal was limited, but reexports were important; critics of slavery were relatively unsuccessful in the face of profits to the crown; perhaps 10 percent of the population of Lisbon, Évora, and the Algarve was slave by 1550, but in the north the figure was only 1 percent; freedmen composed about 3 percent of the national population; slaves were found in a wide variety of occupations, and those in household service were the most advantaged. The patterns of life, religious practice, situations before the law, and access to freedom as described by the author are all familiar to students of Brazilian or Latin American slavery. Saunders is at his best when, faced with a lack of traditional historical sources, he turns to literature or linguistic evidence to examine the role of Blacks in society or the development of Black forms of speech, the *fala de guiné*. The picture he draws is at once detailed and comprehensive.

In some respects, however, Saunders's strengths also generate weaknesses in this book. The attention to detail keeps the focus limited. There are no provocative new theses put forward, nor is the excellent construction of the historical record placed in opposition to currently held wisdom. Saunders, for example, demonstrates with some precision the growing importance of the Guinea trade to Portugal but he also suggests that this trade never equaled the revenues from taxation generated in Portugal itself. It is difficult, therefore, to argue, as some have done, that the slave trade provided the wherewithal of Iberia's rise to power in the sixteenth century. Saunders might have addressed this problem head on but he keeps his conclusions and arguments limited to targets on the immediate horizon of his inquiry. A few topics also call for more detailed attention than they receive. The Council of Trent seems to have played a major role in codifying aspects of slave life, but references to it are dispersed throughout the book. Slavery in Madeira and the slave trade to the Canaries obviously influenced Portugal's experience with the institution, but this subject is not examined in any detail. Agricultural labor in the Algarve receives a fascinating paragraph, but there is surely a need for more in this regard. In fact, while the author's archival work in central and northern Portugal was extensive, he appears not to have spent much time south of Évora.

These reservations, however, simply reflect the gluttony of a reader who has already been served a rich historical meal and cannot get enough. No student of slavery in Brazil or Iberia can ignore or fail to profit from

this book. Saunders has read widely in the historiography of Latin American slavery and is indebted to it; that debt is repaid in this fine volume.

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STUART B. SCHWARTZ

COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

The King's Coffer: Proprietors of the Spanish Florida Treasury, 1565-1702. By AMY BUSHNELL. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1981. Map. Tables. Appendixes. Glossary. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 198. Cloth. \$20.00.

This tightly written book is institutional, social, and administrative history at its best. Focusing on the royal treasury in Spanish Florida between 1565 and 1702, Amy Bushnell fashions a multidimensional picture of this neglected, out-of-the-way frontier outpost in an equally neglected epoch. Royal treasury officials in Saint Augustine, she demonstrates, involved themselves in all aspects of colonial affairs and were "proprietors" in every sense. Acquiring their posts by purchase or royal favor, these officials perpetuated themselves in office through marriage, lifetime appointments, and nepotistical bequests of their offices to sons and other relatives. According to Bushnell, they also "naturalized" the Florida *caja*, pursuing their own or colonial interests rather than the crown's. Using their privileged position to become a part of the Florida elite, they enjoyed better housing, a richer diet, a more prestigious place in processions on festival days, and finer clothes (like the nine-ducat taffeta dress for their wives or daughters, which amounted to ninety-six wage-days for forced Indian laborers). Treasury functionaries also enjoyed high political status. In fact, in a bit of revisionism, Bushnell shows that Spanish Florida did indeed have a *cabildo* and that officials of the *exchequer* played an important role in its operation.

In their duties as royal tax collectors, treasury officials garnered only a few meager revenues from tithes, salary and land assessments, port taxes, salvage operations, and donations, grossly inadequate for maintaining the colony and its beleaguered garrison. Having to rely almost exclusively on a subsidy (*situado*) from New Spain for survival, they encountered monumental problems in its collection. The penchant of the viceroy and his subordinates to fall in arrears, the need for high-priced loans to tide the colony over when the subsidy was delayed or not paid, shoddy goods, high