Revolutionary Emancipation: Slavery and Abolitionism in the British West Indies by Claudius K. Fergus (review)

George E. Boulukos

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important contributions to the study of Guatemala City. By foregrounding her seemingly routine but poignant meetings with young men over the years, she writes in a way that adds important depth to discussions of postwar violence and gangs. Her long-range perspective is, in the end, one of this book's greatest gifts.

Any quibbles here are few. If pressed, one might call out Levenson's use of images. She draws on some of the most daring photographers, including the groundbreaking Donna DeCesare and Andrea Aragón, to animate her work. Yet working with so many talented artists, each with a signature style, yields a somewhat muddled composition that at times mirrors the writing's own somewhat patchwork-like feel. Much of this, of course, has to do with the impossibility of maintaining any continuity with a setting like the one she has chosen. Too many young men die and too many ethnographic leads become far too dangerous to follow. But this patchwork evokes an unsettled feeling, as if the author herself might not yet know—may never be able to know—what is really going on. But many would not quibble over this point. They would instead call it epistemological honesty.

University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

KEVIN LEWIS O'NEILL

AFRICANA, SLAVERY, AND DIASPORA STUDIES

Revolutionary Emancipation: Slavery and Abolitionism in the British West Indies. By Claudius K. Fergus. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013. Pp. xiv, 271. Notes. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. $45.00 cloth.

Claudius Fergus sets out in this book to vindicate the position that slave uprisings, and slave resistance more broadly, put crucial pressure on both colonial masters and metropolitan policy makers, leading, in the British case, to both the 1807 Abolition and 1833 Emancipation acts. Fergus contends that the laws ending slavery were really policies of "social control," and were always enacted out of anxiety about, even fear of, the enslaved. Hence, neither the Abolition act nor the Emancipation act was a moral act intended to recognize the humanity of, or indeed to liberate, slaves. Rather, each policy emerged as antislavery activists and planters converged on an optimal plan for controlling and exploiting African workers.

For Fergus, the 1807 Abolition act represents a historical agreement that "amelioration," and especially the creolization, of slavery was the safest way forward. Edward Long, the outspokenly racist and proslavery Jamaican planter, had argued in the 1770s that the dangers of slavery came not from assimilated creole slaves, but from fresh native Africans. Fergus contends that abolitionists were convinced of Long's view; once a later generation of planters, typified by Bryan Edwards, began to promote amelioration and creolization, there was little difference between the two sides. Haiti convinced both sides of the urgent need for change. While other scholars, notably João Marques,

have recently questioned the link between uprisings and abolition, pointing out that abolition languished during the Haitian Revolution, Fergus reminds us that the 1807 Abolition act was passed almost directly in the wake of the Haitian declaration of independence from France.

But despite what his title, and his central concerns, might seem to imply, Fergus does not focus on slave rebellions, uprising, or resistance, nor does he present "revolutionary emancipation" as a mentality of the enslaved—or for that matter of the metropolitan administrators of colonial policy. Rather, he looks very closely at the theory and mechanics that underlay the British colonial administration in the West Indies, particularly in the years between the Abolition and Emancipation acts. Although Fergus never directly declares it, his agenda appears to be to fill the gap between the work of historians like Herbert Aptheker and Richard Hart, who document slave uprisings and argue for their crucial importance, and those like Seymour Drescher and Christopher L. Brown who focus on the metropolitan politics of antislavery. Further, Fergus seems to be rebutting the skepticism evinced toward the role of slaves themselves in emancipation and its politics in the collection *Who Abolished Slavery,* focusing on the work of João Marques, although he mentions it only in passing.

The first half of Fergus's book is an engaging, often polemical synthesis of extant scholarship. The highlight here is chapter 5, "The Haitian Revolution and Other Emancipation Wars," which gives attention to the black fighters, their decisions, and their culture. The second half of the book (chapters 6–12), Fergus's original research contribution, is a detailed history of the colonial administration's attitudes toward slavery in Trinidad as the colony moved from Spanish to British rule, especially between abolition and emancipation. However, two of the chapters, 7 and 8, are so caught up in the details of British administration and policy in Trinidad that one loses the connection to the central argument.

In the story Fergus tells, the Emancipation act of 1833, too, came about on the terms that the planters, not the abolitionists, put forward. But again, Fergus argues that the two sides were never as far apart as that might imply. He reminds us that the prominent abolition leaders, especially William Wilberforce, long insisted that they never intended emancipation. His argument is diffuse, and very detailed, but he insists that once the myth of Creole passivity was destroyed by the realities of early nineteenth-century uprisings, the anticipated solutions to the threats of slavery embedded in the Abolition act—creolization and amelioration—came to be recognized as failures. Continuing post-abolition uprisings by Creole generations of slaves confirmed the need for new measures. Thus, emancipation (with apprenticeship, of course) was merely the next tactic in an ongoing campaign for social control of black laborers. Indeed, some of the most important evidence Fergus gives for his thesis relates to the fact that the newly emancipated reacted to their "liberation" with further acts of resistance against apprenticeship, which they denounced as unneeded and likely a distortion of the new law. Fergus has written a rich and important book. In such a brief review, I have left untouched many key points, such as his treatment of the Baptist War. However, I can

note that the book would more effectively reorient debates in the field if it had a more defined and sustained focus, and particularly a more concrete definition of the title term, "revolutionary emancipation."

Southern Illinois University–Carbondale GEORGE E. BOULUKOS
Carbondale, Illinois

CONQUEST AND COLONIZATION

The Spanish Colonial Settlement Landscapes of New Mexico, 1598–1680. By Elinore M. Barrett. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012. Pp. xvi, 296. Maps. Tables. Appendix. Abbreviations. Preface. Notes. Index. $49.95 cloth.

This meticulously researched book focuses on the first eight decades of the Spanish colonization of New Mexico, beginning with the 1598 expedition under Juan de Oñate and ending with the pueblo Indian revolt of 1680 that violently overthrew Spanish authority and forcibly removed Spanish colonists for some dozen years. Barrett's task is difficult because many archival materials—in particular land grant records that would have provided key information about Spanish administration, economy, settlement, and land use—were physically destroyed during the turbulent 1680s. Archaeological research, of which Barrett makes ample use, helps to identify and locate specific Spanish sites and fill many data gaps, but that research is itself still fragmentary.

New Mexico lay at the far northwestern frontier of Spain's colonial domain of New Spain, whose principal administrative capital at Mexico City was hundreds of miles to the south across territories that were themselves often imperfectly subject to Spanish authority. Although several sixteenth-century Spanish exploratory missions had created interest in potential sources in New Mexico of wealth and new converts to Christianity, it was not until the 1598 Oñate expedition, comprised of some "500 people, 7000 head of livestock, and 83 carts and wagons" that a serious and sustained colonization effort was undertaken.

Barrett nicely documents the precarious footing of Spanish authority throughout the early decades of the colonization process, a period that saw many desertions by colonists as they realized the difficulties of living in this distant, arid, and resource-poor province whose direct links to far-off Mexico City were limited to three annual caravans. Their problems were compounded by serious conflicts with sedentary Puebloan Indians over access to scarce irrigable lands in the Rio Grande drainage, and raids from mobile Apache groups who quickly discovered new sources of booty in the scattered Spanish haciendas and estancias with their irrigated fields and flocks of introduced livestock.

Barrett shows how these external threats were compounded by internal contradictions within Spanish society itself, as the needs of settlers for Indian lands and labor in agriculture, salt mining, and textile workshops conflicted with imperial and church edicts that provided, however imperfectly, some measure of protection for native peoples.