

Slavery is as old as prostitution, but more complicated since it involves psychological and cultural acceptance of degradation of other human beings. Of particular interest in which historians have written volumes upon volumes of work is American slavery in the seventh to nineteenth century. America's importation of slaves from Africa during this time comprised less than four percent of the total imported slaves during this period (Bergad, 96). Ignoring slavery in Cuba and Brazil, the other two major slave importing countries, is to have an incomplete narrative of the situation and the pain that Africans experienced. Liard W. Bergad's book, *The comparative histories of slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States*, examines slavery by tracing its roots, similarities, and difference in all three nations, which was the source primarily utilized to complete this composition. Though the creation and institution of slavery in America, Brazil, and Cuba are very different, each nation shares unmistakable traits that make them very similar in nature and demonstrates the barbarity Africans endured.

Comparing slavery in Cuba, America, and Brazil is both challenging and dangerous. Bergad admits that "despite popular perceptions and imagery, there are few generalizations about the slave [individual] experience that may be universally applied" (Bergad, 33). In America, a slave living in Louisiana versus Maryland versus Tennessee all had some general similarities but each person could tell you a completely different experience of slavery because the system acted as an autonomous microcosm in which unregulated owners independently created rules and norms. Despite all of this self-governance, generalities did emerge in America as they also did between these three nations. Slavery was based on a system of both "brutality" and "coercion" with the underlying aim of maximizing profit (Bergad, 133). Cuba, America, and Brazil are ideal countries to compare because of the large proportion that was represented. It has been established, with as much reasonable certainty as the documents preserved have allowed that each of these three countries had approximately thirty percent of its entire population enslaved by people of African descent circa 1790s (Bergad, 124). The final caveat that must be mentioned about this study, and admitted by Bergad at several points throughout the book, is that primary sources in Cuba and Brazil is not as abundant as in America and thus more work must be done¹. Despite making dangerous generalizations based on a few individual experiences and lacking of

¹ A major reason for the lack of documentation from Brazil is that by the 1870s eighty percent of the population was illiterate (Bergad, 286)

records in Brazil and Cuba, comparing the three countries is ideal due to the nation's reliance and demand for slavery in agricultural production.

I. History & Justification of Slavery

To understand slavery and eliminate the mistake of *presentism*, a study of slavery's original rationale must be examined. Muslims, Jews, and Christians all partook in slavery. Earlier Christians thought slavery was an acceptable practice with spiritual advantages because it was St. Paul who told people that if people were meant to be slaves then they should accept their disposition in life because "even supposing you could go free, you would be better off making the most of your slavery" (Blackburn, 36). Aristotle's Natural Slavery doctrine further supported such arguments by stating that slaves were barbarians that had muscles, not brains, thus "*natural slaves* needed the direction of those who were gifted with independence of character as well as intelligence and civilization" (Blackburn, 35). St. Thomas Aquinas in 1270 wrote a letter to Duchess of Brabant stating that "the guilt of the Jews caused them to be condemned to perpetual slavery" (Blackburn, 46). It was only St. Patrick who opposed slavery. "I make this earnest appeal to all you men of piety and humble heart, it is not right to curry favour with such as these nor to take food and drink with them, nor ought one to take their alms until they make amends to God by grueling penance, with shedding of tears, and free God's servants and the baptized handmaidens of Christ" (Blackburn, 37-38). Saints and religious clerics in Christian Europe all condoned slavery, so people didn't think twice about participating in the system. Muslims too participated in advancing slavery. The Islamic faith forbids all Muslims from becoming slaves, but Muslims could have infidels as their slaves (Blackburn, 42). Muslims and Jews traded with European Christians from the eighth to tenth century but could offer nothing but slaves in exchange for the luxurious goods that were being bartered for (Blackburn, 43). A demand and supply chain was thus created that would help to lead to the explosion of the institution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Morally conscious and devout people believed that slavery was an acceptable practice and were taught to accept it through religious doctrines.

Theoretical rationale transformed into application and enslavement of peoples around the world. "By the tenth century an association between blackness and menial slavery had developed in the Muslim and Arab world: the word '*abd*, or black, became synonymous with slaves. As

early as the seventh century black Africans were regarded as desirable slaves in Arabia and its dependencies; a treaty or capitulation entered into by the Christian kingdom of the Nubians as early as the year 31 (AD 652 of the Christian calendar)” (Blackburn, 79). Slavs provided Italian and Viking slave traders with the majority of their slaves between the tenth and sixteenth centuries (Blackburn, 54). Henry II of England in 1155 “persuaded Pope Adrian IV to issue the Bull *Laudabiliter*, encouraging him to go to Ireland *to enlarge the boundaries of the Church, to reveal the truth of the Christian faith to the unlearned and savage peoples, and to root out from the Lord’s field the vices that have grown in it*” (Blackburn,47). The “Exception of Irishry” was introduced into the legal system demanding a “lighter penalty for killing an Irishman than for killing an Englishman – in one such case the penalty, a fine of 70 shillings, was payable to the lord of the victim” (Blackburn, 47). England was not the only nation using slaves, Spain² and Portugal were the two major European powers at the time who employed slaves with the goal of converting the infidels while they completed “domestic and artisanal roles”, never were they used as laborers or made to do back-breaking work (Blackburn, 50). “To treat slaves cruelly, to starve them or to interfere sexually with their wives or daughters” was both illegal and socially frowned upon (Blackburn, 51). Slavery was widespread and prominent in all major European nations which culturally accepted the institution and promoted its use. Making this connection it is easy to understand why Africans were used as slaves in Cuba, America, and Brazil; as well as where this system had its origin. Europeans embraced slavery and transformed theoretical ideology into daily practices and norms.

The creation of modern-day slavery in America, Cuba, and Brazil in the sixteenth to nineteenth century was a result of capitalism and desperation for workers. The driving force behind slavery was the need for labor. Wage increases, abundant land, sparse populations, and the harsh conditions in the New World deterred Europeans from engaging in indentured (Bergad, 136). Not to mention the hard work that was required on these plantations in inhospitable land where there were little or no people which was a natural deterrent from participating in these expeditions. The capitalistic system of wage labor had yet to be universally accepted; thus without the use of wage incentivizes, slavery was created due to the abundant and availability (Bergad, 133). Natives were first utilized as workers along with slaves, but their susceptibility to

² Catalans, a region within Spain, by the 1400 had approximately 4,375 slaves, a century later Lisbon and Seville had approximately ten percent of its population comprised of slaves whom “worked as servants, craftworkers, or menials” (Blackburn, 52).

European diseases, ill treatment by their captors, and loathing/refusal to be “discipline and regimentation” which was required in both slavery and farming ended the practice (Bergad, 39). That coupled with the Spanish Government and religious groups in the sixteenth century reversed their stance on use of Indigenous people in the practice of slavery citing a multiple reasons made Africans the default slave (Bergad, 135).

Capitalism and labor demand were the primary reason behind slavery and is best demonstrated in Latin America where slavery first took root. Thus far, it should be clear why and how people rationalized and embraced slavery in the centuries preceding the fifteenth century. What remains is an explanation into how slavery was established in the Western Hemisphere. Starting in 1415, Portuguese traded with North Africa “for gold, ivory, slaves, and other products” (Bergad, 1-2). By the 1440s, Portuguese had an established trading system in for African Slave (Bergad, 34) and created formalized rhetoric advocating slavery and adopted precedence, rational, and legal cultural norms designating Africans as slaves (Bergad, 134). Thus, the first visitor to the New World, Columbus, brought slaves to mine for gold while Cortez employed them to attack the Aztecs in 1521(Bergad, 35). Slave markets were established in Lisbon and Southern Portugal (Bergad, 35) that supplied Cuba, the first slavery colony, with workers (Bergad, 136). Slavery then expanded and was developed principally in Mexico, Peru, and northeastern Brazil due to the inability to utilize indigenous labor and the strong colonial networks that were established, especially in Mexico and Peru where the Aztec and Inca Empires had already established a framework (Bergad, 36). Slavery was heavily concentrated in only the Spanish colonies (Bergad, 41) because in these areas large precious metals like silver were found in northern Mexico and Bolivian highlands in 1540s, indigenous population collapsed, and new animals and crops like “sugar cane, grapes, and a variety of grains” from Europe were demanded by settlers (Bergad, 37). For the first century of slavery in Latin American, slavers usually worked on small plots of land with no more than five slaves working it (Bergad, 43). Thus began the start of slavery in the Western Hemisphere and the death of millions of Africans in the pursuit of profits.

II. Overview of Slavery in Cuba, Brazil, and America

The history of Cuban slavery explains why it was the first slave nation in the Western Hemisphere and how it became such a popular practice. Under Spanish control in 1511, gold was discovered and the indigenous peoples, Arawaks, were exploited (Bergad, 13). As explained earlier, natives became unsuitable, but more important to Cuba, gold deposits became scarce (Bergad, 137). Little attention was paid to Cuba until pirates robbed Spanish ships, the French attacked and burned Havana in 1537, and continued its random attacks in the 1540s and 1550s until it captured Havana in 1555 (Bergad, 137). Recapturing the capital in the 1550s resulted in enormous construction projects to create fortifications in and around Havana led to the use of slave labor in almost every industry, while the central and eastern portion of the island required little or no slave labor (Bergad, 138-139). By the 1570s, Cuba was an important strategic location for the Spanish fleet that would sail ships from Panama and Vera Cruz transporting “Mexican and Peruvian gold, silver, and other products back to Spain” (Bergad, 13). Havana was a major port where people expected entertainment, shipping repairs, food, water, lodging, etc ... (Bergad, 14). Unable to ship and convince enough Europeans migrate, slaves were utilized and worked together with wage laborers (Bergad, 14). Slavery now became an institution that was not widely practiced, but one in which was accepted as a norm of daily life, especially in the western part of the island. Slavery exploded in Cuba after speculators gambled on growing and manufacturing sugar because they saw the enormous profits that tobacco farmers in America were able to generate (Bergad, 141). Slavery was reinforced by the English in the 1762 when the English conquered Havana and encouraged a society of slave based labor (Bergad, 141). The British West Indies (Barbados and Jamaica) had the largest “slave-based sugar production” (Bergad, 15), which was a model that was transposed onto Cuba (Bergad, 15). From 1762 to 1792, sugar production rose from ten thousand acres to one hundred fifty thousand acres (Bergad, 17). Additionally, the War of 1812 and the Napoleonic Wars also created an increase in demand for Cuban products, which required more labor and an even stronger reliance upon slavery (Bergad, 18). By the 1840s and 1850s disdain for “Spanish-born officials, merchants, and planters” increased and desires for independence exponentially increased (Bergad, 20). Eastern residents (commoners and elites) felt marginalized and resented the western island elite who had the majority of wealth from sugar plantations and mills; thus, they supported independence and emancipation (Bergad, 20). Reformist Party was created in reaction to the status-quo in 1865 and demanded representation within the Spanish Parliament (Bergad, 20). Denied, and humiliated by

having taxes raised, in October of 1868 a ten year war for independence begun in which approximately two hundred thousand people would die (Bergad, 20-21). Three years later a law freeing all slave children was created by the Spanish, followed by the 1880 law that freed all Cuban slaves, with the caveat that forced “them to work for eight more years as contracted laborers”. 1886 was the last year of Cuban slavery and absolute emancipation was enacted (Bergad, 21). Slavery in Cuba occurred for approximately three hundred and seventy five years. The nation was modeled after the West Indies and promoted by most of the major European powers of the time, French, English, and Spanish. The system slowly seeped into every part of society, but was principally an agricultural phenomenon. According to the Bishop of Oxford in the Anti-Slavery Report, Volume 1 1846, approximately ten percent of the slaves in Cuba were being killed annually (British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, 113), thus the explanation for the continued maintenance of the slave import market. Cuba’s slavery system helped the island to become rich, and also allowed other nations like America and Brazil to continue the practice.

Slavery in Brazil reads like the similar narrative as Cuba in that it was brought and advanced by imperial European nations to exploit the rich natural resources and later exported to the agricultural sector. The Portuguese first used indigenous people for slaves for sugar cane production, but due to high incidence of death and runaways like in Cuba, they switched to Africans (Bergad, 3) By 1600 the population in Brazil was estimated to have about one hundred thousand people, thirty thousand of which “were of European descent and the rest of African, indigenous, or mixed origin” (Bergad, 4). The Dutch in 1624 captured Brazil’s capital for a year, and in 1630 the Dutch took control of a vast northern region, this area included the sugar plantations which made the country so rich (Bergad, 4). Governing this area, the Dutch rulers supplied the northeast with ample number of slaves (Bergad, 5). Doing so created an acceptance of slave labor and would undercut any farmer who didn’t utilize them by selling the products for cheaper due to lower input costs. From 1650 to 1700 slavery took root only in sugar cultivation and manufacturing (Bergad, 39), the indigenous people made up the majority of the labor rather than Africans (Bergad, 39). It wasn’t until the gold rush in the 1690s in the mountainous region of Minas Gerais that the country became a slave labor society (Bergad, 5). In 1700 to 1800, approximately 1.7 million slaves were sent to Brazil (Bergad, 6). In 1807, Brazil’s slave society was forever altered by the Napoleonic Wars when Lisbon was invaded in 1807 and the royal family fled to Rio De Janeiro (Bergad, 7). The king, indebted to Britain, unregulated Brazil’s

economy and exports of slave intensive goods like sugar, cotton, and coffee rose dramatically (Bergad, 8). In 1822 Don Pedro would take advantage of the king's departure back to Portugal and achieve an independent Brazil by 1825 (Bergad, 8). At this point, more than ever, Brazil was a slave economy with census figures from 1819 demonstrating that out of 3.6 million people, one third were enslaved people from Africa (Bergad, 9). By the 1840s, coffee grown by slaves was exported to America and Europe and was the principal resource of the economy (Bergad, 9). The slave trade was embedded in how the main revenue source of the nation and the government, meaning that there was no reason for legislatures to debate ending this system. There was so much manual labor required that immigrant "workers from southern Europe, mainly Spain and Italy" were imported to meet additional demands (Bergad, 10). Thus in 1872 Brazil had swelled to a population of ten million people, with an estimated fifteen percent being enslaved persons (Bergad, 11). Brazil was the last nation to liberate slaves (Bergad, 12) and only did so because Don Pedro II was a progressive thinker who hated slavery and had enough popular support, as well as political pressure from America and England, to abolish slavery gradually over a period of twenty year period (Bergad, 283-287). Brazil history of slavery was as impressive as Cuba's, lasting over three hundred and fifty years and resulting in the death of millions. The Dutch, English, and Americans all encouraged the practice during the seventeenth and eighteenth century because they benefited from low cost agricultural goods. If Brazil didn't have the progressive leadership of Don Pedro II to assist in the emancipation of slaves in Brazil, it is uncertain how long the practice would have continued and whether it would have require a war, like in America.

The brief history of American slavery mirrors Brazil's and Cuba's deeply embedded roots that encompassed all of society and allowed "masters" to maximize their profits. The first slaves were imported to Chesapeake Bay in 1619 from the British Caribbean colonies for use on tobacco farms (Bergad, 22). America, opposed to Cuba and Brazil, had a larger percentage of land owners, more land availability, a less monopolized land grant system, and greater autonomy in all aspects of its governance (Bergad, 23) which assisted in its ability to attract more Europeans and thus have white majority for most of its history opposed to Brazil and Cuba whom had greater slave imports (Bergad, 24). By 1750, New York City had twenty percent enslaves, while places like the Chesapeake Bay area in 1770 had approximately half its population enslaved (Bergad, 24). As commerce grew and slave populations increased in

America, creating a system of control, limitations, discipline, and exploitation became a central theme (Bergad, 57). Post Revolutionary War and Enlightenment philosophy, slavery started to wane, this was augmented by the banning of importing slaves in 1808 (Bergad, 30), but the discovery of short-staple cotton and the invention of the cotton gin, slavery spread and prospered as newly acquired regions were opened to populate by the government (Bergad, 149). A misnomer is that the north did not participate in slavery after the Compromise of 1820. Northern textiles turned the cotton picked by slaves into products sold back to southerners for the purpose of clothing their slaves (Kolchin, 114-115). The entire country was implicitly or explicitly engulfed in slavery. As slavery developed in America, Peter Kolchin describes how owners came to care for their slaves and even took keen interest in their lives (Kolchin, 50 & 112). A system of paternalism was created in America which was a new phenomenon to slavery and different from all other forms of slavery (Kolchin, 61). Additionally, American slavery was based on race and the premise that slaves were children who needed “loving and firm but above all consistent management if they were not to be spoiled” (Kolchin, 119). The political jousting climaxed with Lincoln’s election and prospects of slavery expanding into new regions meeting fierce opposition (Bergad, 31 & 269). By 1860, thirteen percent, approximately 3.9 million, of the thirty one million people in America were enslaved (Bergad, 29). Since the south had most of the slaves, a third of its population in 1860 (Bergad, 29), the only way they would concede to ending the system was through war. This version of American’s history of slavery is grossly oversimplified; however, it does highlight key events and provides a background for the analytical work that is to follow. American slavery was a profit maximizing system in which capitalists exploited workers and used moral and political suasion to continue its institutionalization. The system was supported by the English merchant ships supplying slaves, as well as the other major European powers of the time. Out of the three nations, slavery was first outlawed in America, thus it faced the greatest opposition.

III. Daily Life & Characteristics of Slavery

Slaver populations in Cuba and Brazil fell, while in America the number increased. Slavery in Cuba and Brazil was a result of being overworked and poor conditions (physically, emotionally, and mentally). Slaves in all three nations faced diseases like “cholera, tuberculosis

(often referred to as consumption), typhoid, gastrointestinal illnesses (such as dysentery), tetanus, lockjaw, and leprosy” (Bergad, 101). It was more common for slaves in America to contract diseases and for them to spread because of the “southern tropical lowland regions” that they farmed; however, due to lower standards of living and poor diets, slaves in Brazil and the Caribbean had a higher incident of deaths (Bergad, 101). Not only that, but slaves in America began to reproduce thus the newborns had immunizations against these diseases and survival rates increased dramatically (Bergad, 101). This is not to say that natural population growth didn’t happen in Cuba or Brazil. During the years of 1870 to 1808, in the Minas Gerais Region of Brazil, due to a more balanced male/female ratio as well as more people of African descent being of Brazilian birth the population briefly increased (Bergad, 109). Cuba never saw a slave population increase, but historian Jack Ericson Eblen argued that the large number of death rates on the island “masked” the true demographic figures and prevented historians from discovering if there was any kind of natural reproduction (Bergad, 112). All three nations had periods of positive and negative population growth, but it was America that was able to sustain this event. In each nation, slave replacement from importation or interregional slave markets made replacement an acceptable and economically feasible solution (Bergad, 103). Since America outlawed slave importation of new slaves in 1808, it was in owner’s best interest to breed and maintain healthy slaves as opposed to Cuba and Brazil who could get new slaves for low prices and save money by starving the currently employed one. To reinforce this idea America had a growing black population, Cuban slaves decreased by 580,000 from 1867 to 1877, and Brazil had four million in the 1850s with only 1.5 million surviving by 1872 and 720,000 living by the time of emancipation (Bergad, 96-97). As is demonstrated by the numbers, Brazil imported extraordinarily large quantities of slaves that they killed, while Cuba practiced the same thing to a lesser degree. Slave populations increased and decreased but were dependent on the nation’s acceptable treatment of them and import/export laws.

Generalization of daily life in the three nations depicts a system where slaves sought to affirm their humanity. Most slaveholders had five or less slaves (Bergad, 189). Slave quarters provided a degree of autonomy and privacy where slaves could visit other estates and small groups could congregate, despite its illegality (Bergad, 190). Many masters in all three countries granted slaves the ability to hunt or tend gardens to produce their own food when all the necessary tasks and chores were completed which lowered owners’ production costs, granted

slaves autonomy, and provided another mechanism in which slaveholders could manipulate their slaves (Bergad, 188-189). Due to economic demands and cost/benefits of land use and production, this trend was broken in Cuba during the 1850s where they experienced more regulation on their daily lives and less access to land cultivation for personal use (Bergad, 190). Those with the most autonomy were city slaves who could hire their time out and were able to generate income (Bergad, 193) (Douglas, 54-57). Daily life for most slaves depicted in these generalizations sounds quiet pleasant and possibly attractive to some. The number and severity of laws and punishments that slaves faced cannot be generalized on a daily basis. The only brutality that can be generalized for all societies is rape. Rape existed in all societies (Bergad, 48) and Frederick Douglass's autobiography states that female slaves were a "constant offense to their mistress" because white men would ravage them (Douglass, 2). Daily life as a slave required long hours, little food, rare days off, and little to no independence.

A final commonality that existed in all three societies is the way slaves celebrated and fell into the habit of inebriation. Mohammah Gardo Baquaua, a Muslim slave from Brazil's interior region that arrived in the 1840s and wrote about his experiences stated: "My companions in slavery were not quite so steady as I was, being much given to drink, so that they were not so profitable to my master. ... I found I had a tyrant to serve, nothing seemed to satisfy him, so I took to drinking likewise, then we were all of a sort, bad master, bad slaves"(Bergad, 87). Frederick Douglass autobiography details that slaves in America experienced a similar appetite for alcohol. During holidays slaves readily consumed it while slaveholders insured inebriation of slaves thus when returning to work after the New Year slaves had a "feeling, upon the whole, rather glad to go" (Douglass, 45). Esteban Montejo narrative of slavery in Cuba hinted that slaves also drank during celebrations (Bergad, 177). Drinking is what got slaves through the drudgery of the day and allowed them to continue living. Esteban Montejo stated that celebrations were important events and marked such events by dressing in "their best clothes, prepared elaborate meals, played festive music, danced, drank, and" asserted their humanity through participating in rituals that enabled them to rejoin society (Bergad, 177). This same sentiment was echoed by Douglass and Baquaua in their narratives. Slaves did what they could to assert their humanity and celebrate life, this included getting drunk and creating a false sense of momentary freedom.

IV. Difference in Slave Practices Between the Three Nations

Before continuing to discuss the similarities and generalizations that each of the three nations shared, it is important to discuss the ways they all differed in regards to labor. In America, ninety percent of all slaves were employed as agriculturalists, while a small minority worked in the urban settings employed in a diversity of trades (Bergad, 150). Cuban and Brazilian employed many slaves, mainly women, at food markets, as traveling sales persons, and as retailers (Bergad, 194). Freed and enslaved people would thus have constant contact and opportunities for black communities based not on ownership but on occupation were created. Additionally, field hands on plantations were comprised of both slave free wage laborers working side-by-side, a situation that was very rarely encountered in the United States (Bergad, 151). The diversity of work and skills slaves were able to participate in these other nations resulted in greater interactions between slaves and non-slaves, as well as creating a deeper and wider societal acceptance of the practice.

Cuba, America, and Brazil employment of slaves and rights bequeathed upon them by society was very different and is evident by the laws that governed them. Slave code in Cuba were the most defined out of the three nations regarding protections that were granted to families with the principle that all families and marriages were not to be broken up (Bergad, 176-177). Enforcement of the law was supported by maintaining “no interregional slave trade” where families could be torn apart (Bergad, 177). Brazil was like Cuba in that it rarely intervened in a slave’s marriage, especially because it was legal recognized by the state (Bergad, 173). America though refused to recognize the legality of slave marriages, and allowed families to be separated (Bergad, 170). This calls into question an interesting dichotomy in which slave populations naturally reproduced in America and enabled slavery to continue, yet families were broken apart more frequently and marriages were not recognized. Whether it was due to the fact that America’s system was racially based or Cuba and Brazil had a population of freed blacks within its society, the codified rights of blacks in these countries demonstrate that slaves had less rights and dignities afforded to them in America.

Slaves’ legal status and social acceptable norms produced different laws and abilities to organize. Since America’s first slave revolt in New York City in 1712, the nation has done everything possible to prevent slaves from being able to organize and present a united front

against whites (Bergad, 239). Daniel Walker Howe's chapter entitled *Awakening of Religion in What God Hath Wrath* masterfully depicts the influence the Second Great Awakening had on slaves and the trepidation whites had when slaves attended the meetings in such large droves. Cuba and Brazil were unlike America in that they had secret societies and slaves were able to organize. The main organizations created in Cuba were Abakua and Santeria (Bergad, 181), while Brazil found Candomble (Bergad, 183). Brazil and Cuba had a brotherhood that was created within these societies and bonds were formed while organization and leadership was held by slaves themselves (Bergad, 184-185). The Catholic Church attempted to employ the Brazilian black societies of Candomble to spread Catholicism through its members (Bergad, 185). Bergad is careful to clarify that even though these organizations were united and organized, internal strife resulted in continuous bickering (Bergad, 187); thus ideas that these groups could have independently created an independence movement would be impossible to conclude. The degree to which slaves could join such organizations and autonomy, or permission granted, to participate in them demonstrates that the slaves of Brazil and Cuba were different from America. They actively sought to unite and improve their situation in life, while Frederick Douglass depicts an American slave society that rewarded tattlers and actively worked as informants (Douglass, 52). The desperation for slaves to organize demonstrates the dire situation that slaves faced in Cuba and Brazil, as well as the lack of unified rebellious spirit that existed in America.

A fundamental major difference between these three nations is that even though all relied on slaves to maximize their economic profits, American slavery was racially based. Slavery in Cuba and Brazil could be encountered throughout the country, with the majority of owners being white (Bergad, 91). America slaves comprised a limited portion of the overall population, with freed persons of color representing a miniscule 1.5 percent of all residents mainly residing in the north (Bergad, 113). America's racially based system meant that blacks were further marginalized and public opinion of such people was subjected to extreme racism.

V. Slavery Similarities Practiced in Cuba, Brazil, and America

A principle reason for slaveries disbursement and continuation in Cuba, Brazil, and America is because of technological advancements and new discoveries. The cotton gin, short-staple cotton, "steam-driven riverboats, the construction of canals," and railroads each

contributed to the spread of slavery in America (Bergad, 149). Primarily it was the cotton gin and the new cotton seed that created an explosion of businesses and economic opportunities that rivaled the tobacco trade of the eighteenth century. Like America, Brazil's slave trade spread as a result of supply and demand. At first concentrated only in the northeast, the discovery of gold and other precious minerals in the Minas Gerais interior region called for mass amounts of slaves to engage in the treacherous and arduous task of mining it (Bergad, 153). America and Brazil slavery can thus be characterized as *mobile* institution that spread geographically due to better infrastructure and the fundamental economic principles of supply/demand which enabled cities, towns, and regions to reap tremendous returns on capital (Bergad, 157). Elites speculation in sugar plantations, the development of sugar mills, and the creation of a transportation system that linked plantations to mills and then cities to ports in the nineteenth century advanced the island's dependency on slaves (Bergad, 145). Expenditures spent on technology were frontloaded and required large amounts of capital; however, as a result of such investments, "slavery became more profitable to planters with the resources to utilize new technologies" (Bergad, 146). "The gross income produced per slave labor on [a] sugar plantations" from 1859 to 1878 increased by thirty four percent, or ninety-four pesos (Bergad, 147). Technologies and discoveries enabled slaveholders to find new ways in which to employ slaves and helped to further solidify their position as their "masters" became more powerful.

Another obvious similarity, and equally as import to the narrative of slavery, is that each of the nations employed the majority of slaves in agricultural labor (Bergad, 159). Working on a farm is difficult and when faced with the option whether to do it yourself or force someone else to do it for little or no money, then the choice is obvious. As crops and commodities prices' rose, all three nations turned from less profitable activities to more profitable backbreaking and slave dependent systems (Bergad, 161). Additionally, once the principle crop production increased in one of the three slave nations in absolute terms, the other two quickly mimicked that increase (Bergad, 159). Ultimately, all slaveholders wanted to maximize their profits and produce a product that was in constant and high demand. Since the slaveholders from Cuba, Brazil, and America were all agricultural producers they followed similar patterns and enabled basic developmental patterns to be produced.

A similarity that is not frequently as discussed as the fact that Cuba, Brazil, and America were all agricultural societies in which discoveries and technology assisted in the growth of

slavery is the influence that the each nation's predominant religion influenced the slave population. In all three nations, African rituals were incorporated into regional religious practices. In America, after the Second Great Awakening, slaves adopted the Protestant religious system. Even though they converted, they incorporated African religious customs such "as the clapping of hands, call-and-response preaching, and much of the tradition of singing and dancing among slaves during religious ceremonies, weddings, baptisms, and burials" into the celebrations (Bergad, 178). America slaves prescribed to the same religion as their masters did, but did preserve some African traditional "magic" incantations involving "potions, ceremonies, invocations of deities and superstitions" (Bergad, 179) (Kolchin, 147) (Douglass,41). Americans were more susceptible to conversion because most slaves after the Revolutionary War were born in America, opposed to Cuba and Brazil which had large quantities of new slave arrivals (Bergad, 180). Catholicism was the predominant religion in Cuba and Brazil. A fusion between African Gods and Catholic saints melded together and society both respected and quickly adopted many of the African's beliefs (Bergad, 180 & 182). Since religious beliefs converged and created a common platform slaves and masters alike were able to use Biblical justification for the institution and create common moral norms. A sense of community was created through these religious experiences and a certain amount of slave discontent was muted.

Slave resistance in Cuba, America, and Brazil all shared a common thread. The most common form was running away (Bergad, 202). Once slaves fled, Cuban slaves would enter into cities to hide and blend into the crowd (Bergad, 203), Brazilian slaves would travel into remote unpopulated areas (Bergad, 213), and American slaves would travel north. If slaves were unable to escape they challenged the institution of slavery nonviolently. Examples of Cuba nonviolent resisters were the sailors on the ship *Amistad* and Father Felix Varela (Bergad, 209 & 275). American examples of nonviolent reformers were Fredrick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and William Lloyd Garrison who produced publications to sway public opinion. Far more common were violent slave revolts. Famous Cuban revolts were the Aponte Conspiracy in 1812 (Bergad, 206), Matanza Rebellion (Bergad, 224), slaves held a small rebellion in 1814 (Bergad, 228) (Bergad, 209), and the largest was in March of 1843 where approximately one thousand slaves participated with half being killed, "most were hanged after being captured, and those who survived were viciously flogged in public" (Bergad, 210). Even though records of Brazilian had conspiracies are and a bigger one on Sunday January 25, 1835; where "African-born Muslim

slaves” and freed men who were also African-born and Muslim participated in the uprising in Bahia (Bergad, 230). Significant American slave revolts were in New York City in 1741 (Bergad, 239), the Stono Rebellion in South Carolina in 1739 (Bergad, 241), and the Nat Turner Rebellion of August 13, 1831 (Bergad, 248). Slaves resistance in Cuba, America, and Brazil most commonly resulted in either escape or violently assault of their captors and the society that imprisoned them.

VI. Emancipation

The internal mechanics and mechanisms that lead to emancipation for America, Cuba, and Brazil were very different and dependent on a previous nations slave liberation movement to act as a catalyst; however, all three movements were deeply influenced by the British. It is ironic that the British would be the group who created the model of slavery employed in the West Indies that served as the prototype for each of these three countries, and the nation that would be the most active and vocal in its dismantlement. Beginning in 1787, the London Abolition Committee created by the London Quakers printed pamphlets that created tides of anti-slavery sentiment sweeping the nation and culminating in public discussions, as well as convincing religious groups like the Protestants to adoption of such principals (Bergad, 255). Five years late in 1792, Parliament was presented with five hundred anti-slavery petitions with four hundred thousand signatures, nine percent of Britain’s population, calling for slavery to end (Bergad, 255). Pressure was mounting, as well as internal conflicts within England itself, thus an agreement that America and England would cease to be involved in all slave trade trafficking was signed in 1807, to take effect in 1808 (Bergad, 256). Soon thereafter a naval fleet, the African Squadron, was created by the British in 1819 that searched for slave transport ships, freed the captives and arrested the crew (Bergad, 258). The Slave Trade Department coordinate all of Britain’s efforts to end slavery, resulted in 570 seized ships and 150,000 slaves freed from its creation until 1867 when Cuba was emancipated (Bergad, 258). The British wielded their military might that made slavery more dangerous and pressured traders to reconsider such business. Not only that, but the British and Spanish signed treaties in 1817 and 1835 to abolish slavery, and again in 1862 to allow naval fleets to search Cuban ships (Bergad, 251). Brazil also signed agreements too. In 1815 Brazil and Britain signed a treaty limiting slavery to the northern

region, and then in 1817 it stated that it would abolish the practice (Bergad, 251). The newly independent nation of Brazil in 1826 and 1831 also signed two compacts with Britain designed to abolish slavery, but were never enforced (Bergad, 252). All of these agreements that the British created with the Americans, Cubans, and Brazilians amounted to growing political pressure and a recognition that this institution had to end. The British, as far as was evident in the sources utilized in this paper, never exercised economic diplomacy to curtail their demand for agricultural goods from these countries; however, the tactics that it did operate were enough for all three nations legislatures to take note.

Liberation movements in Cuba, America, and Brazil were not only influenced by the British, but were assisted by its citizens who helped to advance the agenda along. Father Felix Varela from Cuba was an agitator who after being elected as a legislative representative in 1821, his views on ending slavery and obtaining self-rule for Cuba was too radical for the Spanish authorities (Anton & Hernandez, 29). Two years later, he was exiled to the United States and begun the newspaper *El Habanero* which advocated emancipation and “became the intellectual life of Cuba” (Anton & Hernandez, 30-32). Father Felix Varela spend his life advocating liberation and published books and articles that condemned the practice of slavery and encouraged others to follow suit (Anton & Hernandez, 33). The American agitator who also resided in the state of New York in the 1840s and advanced the abolition movement by leaps and bounds was Frederick Douglass (Stauffer, 141) (Anton & Hernandez, 37). As described by John Stauffer in the novel *Giants*, he spoke at Pendleton Indiana describing slavery’s evil only to have the crowd shout “kill the nigger, kill the damn nigger” and almost killed (Stauffer, 88). Proslavery proponents were even more enraged when he published his autobiography in May of 1845 and thus was forced to flee to England for his life (Stauffer, 91). The newspaper articles and the private meetings he had with President Lincoln made him an active advocate that shaped American policy and direction. Brazil’s champion for emancipation was not an agitator that needed to persuade others to pass laws, but the last ruling Emperor of Brazil, Don Pedro II. After 1886, Brazil was the only nation that publicly institutionalized slavery and the pressure to reform both internally and externally was brewing (Bergad, 283). As a progressive thinker he began working towards abolition by ending the employment of slaves in governmental public works projects in 1866 (Bergad, 284). In 1886 and 1887 slaves began to leave plantations in large droves and there was enough popular support for the Gold Law to be passed in May of 1888

whereby all slavery was permanently barred in Brazil (Bergad, 287-288). Father Felix Verela, Frederick Douglass, and Don Pedro II were all important figures who challenged popular opinion of slavery and played fundamental roles in its abolition. Slavery in Cuba, America, and Brazil was not destroyed by one person, organization, or event; rather, it was cultivated by anti-slavery champions that never rested until freedom for all was achieved³.

VII. Conclusion and Classroom Application

Slavery in Cuba, Brazil, and America was an agriculturally based system that degraded humans, resulted in an extraordinary amount of death and cruelty, and utilized primarily for economic gains. This study on slavery in these three nations is not complete and has glossed over certain events, but it serves as a narrative that explains slavery's development and practice. It is difficult to make generalizations on these three countries because in many respects they are so different; however, there are more similarities and patterns that emerge between these nations than differences. Slavery's origination, spread, practice, rebellion, and end have definite common themes that were experienced in each of the three, but the level of brutality and the freedoms granted to slaves within society were very different because of the lack of universal national governance of this sphere. Cuban and Brazilian slavery must not be eclipsed by American slavery because it has the greatest volume of sources available. These two nations are equally as important, especially since they imported the majority of slaves from the slave trade, and need to be examined as methodically so that historians are able to have a complete narrative of slavery in the western hemisphere.

Teaching students about slavery must be expanded in both time and scope as to provide them with a proper understanding of the institution and its impact upon the world. Too often graduates leave high school with the misconception that slavery started in America which was the major importer of African slaves. As educators, a complete narrative must be provided to students explaining that slavery has been around since the dawn of time. Having students make a map that chronologically shows slavery's roots and spread from Rome to Europe and finally arriving at Cuba, Brazil, and then America will allow them to better comprehend why people

³ Please noted that Father Felix Verela died in 1853 at the age of 64 in Florida, before Cuba was liberated (Anton & Hernandez, 37).

thought the way they did; while, a project that explores modern-day slavery in America and around the world could be researched.

Delving into the comparison of the three nations in more depth at least one class should be utilized to transform the classroom into the three nations and have students experience slavery in each of the countries. As students arrive a slave trafficking log could be provided making the scenario more real and demonstrating the disproportionate amount of slaves destined for Cuba or Brazil. Once students have arrived in their respective countries/designated areas, narratives of experiences should be distributed where groups will discover what kind of a life they are going to experience⁴. Discussion of the said materials should follow as well as a writing piece that reflects the lesson in the form of a letter, essay, editorial, poem, or song. As slavery continues to prove problematic for American legislatures, events in Cuba and Brazil should be referenced to demonstrate the tragedy that was taking place in the greater western hemisphere. This frame of thinking will then enable the student, with guided questions/navigation from the teacher, to become more aware of their surroundings and comprehend that events occurring in once part of the world do impact their lives on a daily basis. Devoting at least one day to exploring the origins of slavery and its development in Cuba, Brazil, and America should be a requirement because students will have a deeper understanding of the topic that will flow like a narrative, helping with comprehension, while eliminating the misconception that some people have that slavery was created spontaneously by Americans.

⁴ For certain classes/groups ensuring that stronger readers are paired with weaker readers and maybe even providing guided worksheets might be advisable. Another way to ensure that all students are challenged in this task is to separate groups/nations by level of difficulty and disperse students appropriately.

VIII. Sources

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