

VARIETIES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY IN CAPITALISM WITH SLAVERY: COMMENTS ON DAVID ELTIS'S ESSAY AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO BRAZILIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY¹

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ABSTRACT

This essay dialogs with David Eltis's article in this issue of *Almanack* and highlights Eltis's contributions to Brazilian studies of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade. It focuses on the historical relationship between "capitalism" and "slavery", particularly the "second slavery" of the nineteenth century, with an emphasis on changing Anglo-American and Luso-Brazilian "political economies". Like Eltis's article, it is especially concerned with the synergy, or lack thereof, between "external" and "internal" factors in determining regional and national economic growth. In the spirit of the forum at the Universidade Federal Fluminense in which Eltis's article was originally presented and debated, this essay emphasizes a historiographical approach particularly aimed at undergraduate and graduate students in History, the main audience at the original seminar.

KEYWORDS

David Eltis – slave trade – second slavery – historical capitalism
– Brazilian slavery – political economy.

1 My title echoes a line in BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. Introduction. In: _____. (eds.). *Slavery's capitalism: a new history of American economic development*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016, p. 3-4: "the history of American Capitalism is a history with slavery, yet it remains to be shown how exactly slavery is embedded within that larger story of capitalism".

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VARIEDADES DA ECONOMIA POLÍTICA DO CAPITALISMO COM ESCRavidÃO: UMA APRECIACÃO DO ENSAIO E DOS APORTES À HISTORIOGRAFIA BRASILEIRA DE DAVID ELTIS

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RESUMO

Este ensaio dialoga com o artigo de David Eltis neste número de *Almanack* e enfatiza as contribuições de Eltis aos estudos brasileiros sobre a escravidão e o tráfico atlântico de cativos. Enfoca a relação histórica entre o “capitalismo” e a “escravidão”, em particular a “segunda escravidão” do século XIX, com ênfase na evolução das “economias políticas” anglo-americanas e luso-brasileiras. Como o texto de Eltis, o ensaio é especialmente voltado ao estudo da sinergia, ou da falta dela, entre os fatores “externos” e “internos” afetando o crescimento econômico. Consoante com o espírito do fórum na Universidade Federal Fluminense em que o artigo de Eltis foi originalmente apresentado e debatido, este texto enfatiza uma abordagem historiográfica dirigida especialmente a alunos de graduação e pós-graduação em História, o público principal no seminário da UFF.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

David Eltis – tráfico escravista – segunda escravidão – capitalismo histórico – escravidão brasileira – economia política.

In a career dedicated to the intensive study of the Atlantic slave trade and New World slavery, David Eltis has made major contributions to the history of Brazil. Particularly noteworthy in this respect is his first book, *Economic growth and the ending of the transatlantic slave trade* (1987), still a “must read” for students of Brazilian history⁴. I call attention to this work because of its careful use of both quantitative and qualitative sources, as well as its constant effort to place micro-history within a macro-, indeed “global”, context. His new study in this issue of *Almanack* shares these qualities. Furthermore, like his earlier book, it offers a lesson in how to go about writing a *political economy* of the diverse ways in which systems linking capitalism and slavery have evolved in the modern world.

“Political Economy”, the old name for “Economics” as a historical science, reminds us that economics and “politics” – more precisely, the struggle of diverse groups seeking to further their ideals and interests as they see them – are inextricably linked. In the intensive turn toward the professionalization of the historical profession in Brazil from the late 1970s on (involving the creation of new graduate programs in History), the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF) took the lead in the application of the concept of “political economy” to the study of chattel slavery in this country⁵. When I began to teach at UFF in August of 1979, Ciro Flamarion Cardoso was already there, supervising research on the “colonial slave mode of production”⁶. This

4 ELTIS, David. *Economic growth and the ending of the transatlantic slave trade*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

5 I do not believe the term was emphasized at UFF at that time; it did not need to be, in a context in which Marxist classics and dependency theory heavily influenced historiography. In the U.S., it has returned to prominence as part of a critique of neoliberalism. See, for instance: BOWLES, Samuel; ROOSEVELT, Frank; EDWARDS, Richard; LARUDEE, Mehrene. *Understanding capitalism: competition, command, and change*. 4th edition, revised. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017 [1st ed. 2005].

6 CARDOSO, Ciro Flamarion. O modo de produção escravista colonial na América. In: SANTIAGO, Théó Araújo (ed.). *América colonial: ensaios*. Rio de Janeiro: Pallas, 1975, p. 89-143. For a more “closed”, less heuristic approach to the concept, see: GORENDER, Jacob. *O escravismo colonial*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 1985.

term referred to the idea that chattel slavery in the New World was distinct from earlier forms of bonded labor, its “laws of motion” generated not just by local “factors and relations of production” but also by its linkages to the economies and politics of imperial Europe, as they projected outward into the Atlantic basin. Nonetheless, if the focus at UFF was on Brazil, the order of the day in its history program, in broader historiographical terms, was the Dobb-Sweezy debate, referred to in professor Eltis’s paper, over whether the transition to capitalism in western Europe resulted from internal class struggles within feudalism (Dobb) or from the play of market forces (trade) impinging from elsewhere (Sweezy)⁷. I suspect that this classic but still ongoing discussion regarding the primacy of change induced internally or externally, helped define the parameters of the research Brazilian scholars were undertaking on slavery and the transformation to free labor. In any case, Cardoso and other senior professors at UFF trained in the Annales school – in particular, Maria Yedda Leite Linhares and Eulália Maria Lahmeyer Lobo – were eager to plumb local archives, using theory heuristically as a model to be constantly revised in the light of new empirical data. The result was the production of a substantial number of graduate theses, many subsequently published as books, devoted to the micro-history of slavery and the slave trade, but done always with the intent of contributing to a nuanced macro- or systemic perspective on these questions. I mention this here to emphasize for present Fluminense students of history the importance of this encounter with Dr. Eltis, a kindred spirit and one whose work, over the years, has had a profound influence on research at their university and elsewhere in Brazil.

7 For an early overview, see: SWEEZY, Paul; DOBB, Maurice. The transition from feudalism to capitalism. *Science & Society*, v. 14, n. 2, p. 134-167, 1950; reprinted with further contributions in: HILTON, Rodney (ed.). *The transition from feudalism to capitalism*. London: Verso, 1978. Eltis does not mention Sweezy’s work in his article (see ELTIS, David. Iberian dominance and the intrusion of the northern Europeans into the Atlantic world: slave trading as a result of economic growth?”. *Almanack*, Guarulhos, n. 22, aug. 2019 [this issue], text on Dobb around note 56), but he did reference it in his original paper at the UFF Forum.

Professor Eltis's new article is based on research in the "Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database". available online since 2008 in English and Portuguese at "Slave Voyages". This is a major investigative tool, currently (in its second version, February 2019) with a wealth of information on 36,000 documented slaving expeditions from 1514 to 1866. Many scholars, working in a multitude of archives, have contributed to the database since the 1960s, with Eltis playing a major organizational role since 1990. It is under his guidance, with the significant help of Brazilian scholars – Manolo Florentino, Roquinaldo Ferreira and Daniel Domingues da Silva among them – that the coverage of the database with respect to the trade to Brazil and Spanish America has increased greatly since 2001⁸. The information cited in the present essay is from the database's "Estimates" section.

Eltis's paper does full justice to his extraordinary sources, which permit comparative micro-histories of the slave trade virtually everywhere in the Atlantic basin over several centuries. For me, his most fascinating finding is that Portugal, which created land bases on both sides of the South Atlantic – in Brazil, in the "Atlantic Zone" of what is present-day Angola, and later in Mozambique – was able to create the most "efficient" of the Atlantic slave trades.

Before commenting on this argument, however, I would like to say a few words about the horrific images and descriptions that Eltis has collected showing the "accommodations" provided to the enslaved in the Middle Passage. The number of images is small, a reflection of the sources, which usually provide many details on the individuals embarked but normally very little information on the precise space below decks in which they were transported. Nonetheless, these pictures fully substantiate his argument that one should not consider the "tight-packing" of people in the iconic *Brookes* – the late eighteenth-century English slave ship most often reproduced in

⁸ For a detailed history of the database as well as a list of contributors and collaborating scholars, see the website <https://www.slavevoyages.org/>. For analytical studies: ELTIS, David; RICHARDSON, David (eds.). *Extending the frontiers: essays on the new transatlantic slave trade database*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

abolitionist pamphlets – as the norm. In fact, this was a “model” ship, whose dimensions were within those defined by English law at the time (law not always observed, I suspect), ostensibly to discourage abuses. The reality, as seems evident in Eltis’s images and descriptions, was probably much worse, particularly since he notes that the average number of slaves carried by (intercepted) slavers in the nineteenth century increased, while the average size of the vessels decreased. Yet, the fact that so few sketches or descriptions of the below decks of slave ships have survived suggests that few were widely available in the public sphere to contemporaries. It is probably for this reason that abolitionist literature focused on the *Brookes* and a small number of other well-publicized images, which, in any case, to judge from the frequency of their use, must have been shocking enough to most people at the time. Eltis comments in a footnote that there is no evidence that one of the images most often reproduced today – the “Blacks in the ship’s hold” by Johann Moritz Rugendas – was based on sketches drawn from life. Indeed, I have argued that probably Rugendas based his original sketches of this scene on a high-profile case published by abolitionists in England, then also in Paris, in the 1820s: a case with a below deck height of 4 feet, 6 inches, English measure. Rugendas then “raised the ceiling” in his final lithograph to conform to the 5 feet, 8 inches height of the space in the *Brookes*. He did this, not to understate the suffering of the slaves, but to emphasize their desperation. His standing figure, seeking water from a sailor offering it through the hatch now had to stretch to the upmost to receive it⁹. (This, and the figure of a body being removed by sailors – not in his sketches – would have recalled to observers the famous case of the ship *Zong*, in which a lack of water resulted in living slaves being thrown overboard so that life insurance could be collected on bonds-

9 SLENES, Robert W. Overdrawn from life: abolitionist argument and ethnographic authority in the Brazilian ‘artistic travels’ of J. M. Rugendas, 1827-35. *Portuguese Studies*, v. 22, n. 1, p. 55-80, 2006. The stretched figure probably represents a child or adolescent, particularly common on slave ships in the 1800s.

men who ostensibly had died *on board*, during the voyage)¹⁰. One may compare these measurements with the worst case analyzed by Eltis, one from 1835 in which the deck where the slaves (almost all children) were squeezed together was one foot, eight inches high.

Let me return to professor Eltis's main argument. He notes that from the early 1600s on, western Central African captives – who formed the great majority (69.8%) of the total landing in Brazil during the history of the trade – were first gathered together over several weeks or months in well-guarded barracoons on land, then rapidly loaded onto ships shortly before the Atlantic crossing. In West Africa, however, where the imperial powers did not have such an extensive land (and economic-political) base as the Portuguese in western Central Africa, European ships of all origins (including from Portugal and Brazil) generally served as both barracoons and transport vehicles.

As a result, not only less time was spent crossing the Atlantic (traversing a shorter distance) in the trade from western Central Africa to Brazil than in the traffic from Africa to Spanish America and the Caribbean, but the total time that ships actually had slaves on board was even less. The same is true for rates of shipboard mortality and revolts (the latter, as Eltis shows, being more common in the barracoon phase of vessels than during the voyage itself). In effect, the costs of slave sustenance, mortality and revolts before ships set sail from Central Africa were transferred from merchants involved in the shipping trade to those who owned the onshore barracoons. Then too – again, as Eltis demonstrates – fewer crew members were needed for supervision during the voyage, and usually there was no need to alter the architecture of ships (with a structure that divided the open deck, maintaining bondspeople on one side) or have pea shot-loaded cannons aimed at the enslaved when on deck, to discourage uprisings.

¹⁰ Ibidem, note 7. Also, see: WALVIN, James. *The Zong: a massacre, the law and the end of slavery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

For Eltis,

From the slave traders' viewpoint, the success of this [efficient] system was less due to the island bases [of Portuguese and Brazilian slave traders] than to the interactions between the Portuguese and Africans. These were of a kind that no other Europeans were able to replicate. The links between coastal bases and the sources of captives in the interior were established and maintained by *lançado* traders of mixed Portuguese and African heritage.¹¹

I would only add to this that the *lançados* – originally Europeans married to the daughters of African chiefs – were a salient part of a much more effective coercive (“stick” plus “carrot”) Portuguese presence in the “Atlantic Zone” of Central Africa than an earlier historiography had posited: one in which not only official Portuguese policy (and military action), but also governing agents, frequently acting as private slave traders, created propitious conditions for an ever-expanding traffic in human beings¹².

Eltis's conclusion about the relative efficiency of the Portuguese-Brazilian slave trade leads him to ask a very relevant question: “if a large slave sector (and the attendant exports of produce) was a feature and a pre-requisite of industrial capitalism”, as Eric Williams argued¹³, why did the Portuguese-Brazilian system – the largest, ol-

11 ELTIS, *Iberian Dominance* ... op. cit., text just before note 25.

12 On this point, see particularly: HEYWOOD, Linda M.; THORNTON, John K., *Central Africans, Atlantic creoles, and the foundation of the Americas, 1585-1640*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011; FERREIRA, Roquinaldo. *Cross-cultural exchange in the Atlantic world: Angola and Brazil during the era of the slave trade*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012; CANDIDO, Mariana. *An African slaving Port and the Atlantic world: Benguela and its Hinterland*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

13 ELTIS, *Iberian Dominance* ... op. cit., text just before note 7, reacting to the argument of WILLIAMS, Eric. *Capitalism and slavery*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944.

dest and most efficient trafficker of people – lag behind “the north Europeans and north Americans” in their industrial development?

Until recently, the answer of the Brazilian academy to this question might well have been simply to repeat the old view of Marxist and liberal economists alike: that merchants, generally being a bourgeois group, are more attuned to profit-making than landed elites whose wealth is based on slavery, a supposedly pre-capitalist labor system. From this perspective, it would scarcely be surprising if slave traders were found, empirically, to be capitalist schemers, seeking to accumulate wealth for its own sake, particularly when conditions were propitious. Moreover, such a discovery would only strengthen the presumption that it was primarily planters who were at fault for Brazilian backwardness in industrialization. These were ‘feudal lords’, after all, who simply squandered their wealth on ostentation, not in fruitful, diversified investment - until, that is, the arrival on the scene of a new planter group in São Paulo, more attuned to modern times (or, in retrospect, more championed by *paulista* historians).

In 1986, I published an article that challenged the then common idea that coffee planters in Rio de Janeiro’s Paraíba Valley in the 1850-1880 period – unlike those in western São Paulo – mindlessly practiced an *agricultura de rotina* (agriculture of routine), completely unconcerned about extending the lifetime of their land (for instance, by using fertilizers or rotating crops)¹⁴. My argument was that they consciously and deliberately practiced an *agricultura de rapina* (agriculture of rapine). After all, good land for coffee (in Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais and western São Paulo) was still abundant and cheap and slavery was not particularly threatened politically until the early 1880s, when expectations about suddenly changed, leading to a crash in the slave market about the institution’s future¹⁵. Thus, it made good sense for

14 SLENES, Robert W. Grandeza ou decadência? O mercado de escravos e a economia cafeeira da província do Rio de Janeiro, 1850-1888. In: COSTA, Iraci del Nero da (ed.). *Brasil: história econômica e demográfica*. São Paulo: IPE-USP, 1986, p. 103-155.

15 CARVALHO DE MELLO, Pedro. Expectations of abolition and sanguinity of coffee planters in Brazil, 1871-1881. In: FOGEL, Robert W.; ENGERMAN, Stanley L. (eds.). *Without consent or contract*:

individual capitalists to extract all value from the land as quickly as possible and then move on. Indeed, this strategy was facilitated by the fact that a substantial part of the productive capital on a coffee plantation was invested in slaves and thus could easily be transferred (as 'driven' chattel) elsewhere.

Despite my efforts, however, the old ideas still lingered. In 1999, João Fragoso and Manolo Florentino - whose work I otherwise admire - wrote a book attempting to show that coffee planters in the first half of the nineteenth century likewise had an "archaic", non-capitalist mentality; they frequently invested in plantation agriculture unwisely, were spendthrifts, and put excess cash in government bonds or urban property rather than in industry¹⁶. Fortunately, Rafael Marquese and Dale Tomich have successfully countered this argument, showing that the heavy investments in coffee production in Brazil following the slave revolution in Saint Domingue and the end of the slave trade to the British Caribbean were extremely profitable¹⁷. Not only that, planters showed the same drive toward efficiency and profit that Portuguese/Brazilian transatlantic slave traders did according to professor Eltis's analysis - indeed, one might argue, that great leaders of industry in the nineteenth century United States did. When I was in college, the historiography of the time gave great attention to Andrew Carnegie, founder of a company that eventually became part of U.S. Steel, as a man who embodied capitalist rationality. Carnegie was particularly famous for the "vertical integration"

the rise and fall of American slavery. Technical Papers, Volume II: Conditions of slave life and the transition to freedom. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992, p. 629-646, esp. 638, 634; SLENES, Robert W. The Brazilian internal slave trade, 1850-1888: regional economies, slave experience and the politics of a peculiar market. In: JOHNSON, Walter (ed.). *The Chattel Principle: internal slave trades in the Americas.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004, p. 325-370.

16 FRAGOSO, João Luís Ribeiro; FLORENTINO, Manolo. *O arcaísmo como projeto: mercado atlântico, sociedade agrária e elite mercantil no Rio de Janeiro, c.1790-c.1840.* Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2001.

17 MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar; TOMICH, Dale W. O Vale do Paraíba escravista e a formação do mercado mundial do café no século XIX. In: GRINBERG, Keila; SALLES, Ricardo (eds.). *O Brasil imperial.* Vol. II: 1831-1870. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2009, p. 339-384.

of his industrial activities. By investing in iron ore and coal mines, as well as in railroads to transport the ore and coal to his steel mills, he was able to reduce dramatically the cost of the final product and win market share from competitors. In Brazil, recent studies by Thiago Campos Pessoa highlight similar paragons of vertical integration: the Breves brothers, coffee planters who, between them, owned perhaps the largest slave labor force in Brazil in the post-1850 period, spread over several properties in the Paraíba Valley¹⁸. Before 1850, at least one of the brothers controlled an onshore slave barracoon in western Central Africa. He used his own ship to transfer bondspeople to Brazil. And he owned a property near the Brazilian coast where the enslaved recovered from their voyage before making the forced march over the coastal mountains to the Valley. Once at this destination, the captives were sold to other planters or incorporated as workers on the Breves's own properties.

The brothers, of course, were unusual in taking vertical integration to extremes; but so too was Carnegie in his context. Furthermore, it now seems clear that, like Carnegie, the Breves set the standard that others strove to follow. The new bibliography on the "second slavery" in Brazil – the term was coined by American historian Dale Tomich in the late 1980s¹⁹ – makes clear that the events I have mentioned in Saint Domingue and the British Caribbean at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century did not sound the death knell of the slave trade and slavery in the hemisphere as an earlier historiography once thought²⁰. The center of slave-based commodity

18 PESSOA, Thiago Campos. *O império dos Souza Breves nos oitocentos: política e escravidão nas trajetórias dos comendadores José e Joaquim de Souza Breves*. Thesis (Master's in History), Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Niterói, 2010; Idem. *O império da escravidão: o complexo Breves no vale do café (Rio de Janeiro, c. 1850-c.1888)*. Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2018.

19 TOMICH, Dale W. *Through the prism of slavery: labor, capital and world economy*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing, 2003, ch. 3 [1988].

20 See especially: TOMICH, Dale W.; ZEUSKE, Michael (eds). *The second slavery: mass slavery, world-economy, and comparative microhistories, part I. Review: a Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center*, New York, v. 31, n. 2, p. 91-246, 2008a, and TOMICH, Dale; ZEUSKE, Michael (eds.). *The second slavery: mass slavery, world-economy, and comparative microhistories, part II. Review:*

production moved to new areas, primarily Southeastern Brazil, the Spanish islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and the American “Deep South” Gulf states. This shift occasioned a huge increase in the slave trade, from Africa in the case of the first two areas mentioned, and from the older Atlantic coastal areas in the case of the U.S. South, where the slave population had become self-reproducing by the early 1700s. In the case of Brazil, the Slave Trade Database now indicates that the African trade between 1811 and 1866 (most of it channeled to the Southeastern provinces of Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo)²¹ was 50.2% greater than Philip Curtin (1969) had estimated for that period²².

Furthermore, the new bibliography on the second slavery – in Brazil, spearheaded by Marquese, Tomich, Riccardo Salles and scholars associated with them, and closely aligned with recent studies elsewhere of “historical capitalism” (to be discussed shortly) – stres-

a *Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center*, New York, v. 31, n. 3, p. 251-437, 2008b; BERBEL, Márcia; MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar; PARRON, Tâmis. *Escravidão e política: Brasil e Cuba, 1790-1850*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010; MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar; PIMENTA, João Paulo. Tradições de história global na América Latina e no Caribe. *História da Historiografia*, Ouro Preto, n. 17, p. 30-49, 2015; MUAZE, Mariana; SALLES, Ricardo (eds.). *O Vale do Paraíba e o Império do Brasil nos quadros da segunda escravidão*. Rio de Janeiro: 7 Letras, 2015; MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar; SALLES, Ricardo (orgs.). *Escravidão e capitalismo histórico no século XIX: Cuba, Brasil, Estados Unidos*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2016; TOMICH, Dale W. (ed.). *The politics of the second slavery*. Albany: State University of New York, 2016. *E-book* (Amazon.com, Kindle ed.).

21 I place Minas Gerais first since I accept the argument that it was the largest importer of African slaves in the nineteenth-century Southeast. See: MARTINS, Roberto. *Crescendo em silêncio: a incrível economia escravista de Minas Gerais no século XIX*. Belo Horizonte: ICAM-ABPHE, 2018. [1980 doctoral thesis, expanded]; but note SLENES, Robert W. Os múltiplos de porcos e diamantes: a economia escrava [sic: escravista] de Minas Gerais. *Revista Brasileira de Economia*, v. 13, n. 1, p. 449-496, 1987, for a somewhat different explanation of why this was the case. Laird Bergad argues that the Minas slave population grew primarily by internal reproduction but his data on the percentage of Africans in Minas's population over time, if expressed on a semi-logarithmic graph instead of a normal graph, would clearly show a relatively small decline (from ca. 38 to 32 percent) between 1805-09 and 1845-49, followed by a steep fall – clear evidence of a large upturn in the arrival of Africans in the first half of the century. BERGAD, Laird. *Slavery and the demographic and economic history of Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1720-1888*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

22 CURTIN, Philip. *The slave trade: a census*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972. p. 234.

ses the increasing concentration of slave ownership. Along with this change, came a more extenuating work regime and probably a more violent system of punishment, no doubt reflecting the increased “panoptic” form of labor supervision on the larger estates. On the Paraíba Valley coffee plantations, for instance, coffee bushes were planted in rows that climbed “vertically” in straight lines, up and then down the other side of the region’s *terras de meia laranja* (“half-orange lands”), rather than following horizontally the curvature of these hills. This was not evidence of an imprudent ignoring of the problem of erosion, as historians once thought. Thanks to the work of Rafael Marquese, we now know that it was a calculated part of “rapine”, one aimed perhaps less at the land than at the worker²³. Coffee bushes, once mature, were too dense and tall for overseers in the working space between two rows of plants to see slaves in a neighboring space, or “around the corner” of a hill. But they could easily spot “shirkers” (in the periodic work of pruning the bushes, then finally in harvesting the beans) by standing at the foot of the hill between rising rows.

Such “rebels” would then frequently be punished before their peers, presumably more severely than those of smaller property owners who, not having the same resources to hire slave catchers (*capitães de mato*) or many overseers, were more vulnerable to slave flight and retributive violence. Edward Baptist has convincingly described the surveillance, harsh workload and physical punishment of bondspeople in the great cotton fields of the Deep South of the United States as a regime of constant “torture”²⁴. The same term probably applies to the large coffee plantations of southeastern Brazil and the sugar estates of Cuba/Puerto Rico. Witness Jean Baptiste Debret’s famous image of a slave receiving a severe beating while lying on the

23 MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar. O Vale do Paraíba cafeeiro e o regime visual da segunda escravidão: o caso da fazenda Resgate. *Anais do Museu Paulista*, São Paulo, v. 18, p. 83-128, 2010.

24 BAPTIST, Edward E. Towards a political economy of slave labor: hands, whipping machines and modern power. In: BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. op. cit., p. 48, 56-61. Also: BAPTIST, Edward E. *The half has never been told: slavery and the making of American capitalism*. New York: Basic Books, 2016a.

ground, immobilized by a stick running between the backs of bent elbows and bent knees, on a Rio de Janeiro coffee plantation in 1828²⁵, which is exactly like the verbal description of identical scenes on a cotton plantation in Georgia (ca. 1828) and a sugar estate in Puerto Rico (sometime before 1842)²⁶. The same form of immobilization (called “bucking” in English) has a long history as a way that slave dealers traders trussed bondspeople for transport. In the second half of the twentieth century, records indicate it was used by police in France, other Mediterranean countries and some Asian and African nations for interrogating suspects under torture. The military regime in Brazil (1964-1987) utilized bucking for this purpose with political enemies, calling it *pau de arara* (“macaw’s [large parrot’s] perch”)²⁷.

A curious thing about the second slavery is the speed with which information travelled between its various centers. Marquese’s group has called attention to the formation and articulation during the 19th century of an *internacional escravista* (pro-slavery international) at the highest political level²⁸. The same argument can be made for the sharing of understandings “on the ground”. Long ago, I called attention to the fact that the published preparatory debates (1870) for the Brazilian 1871 Law of Free Birth referred to earlier cases of top-down manumission legislation in the Americas and even printed in full the

25 See reproduction of original watercolor, held by the Museu Castro Maya in Rio de Janeiro, in: SLENES, Robert W. *Na senzala, uma flor: esperanças e recordações na formação da família escrava*. 2^a ed. Campinas: Editora Unicamp, 2011. p. 165.

26 CHAMEROVZOW, L. A. (ed.). *Slave life in Georgia: a narrative of the life, sufferings and escape of John Brown, a fugitive slave now in England*. London: [British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society], 1855, p. 234-235; transcription on-line (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Available at: <<https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/jbrown/jbrown.html>>. Accessed on: 27 February, 2019); BLASSINGAME, John (ed.). *Slave testimony: two centuries of letters, speeches, interviews and autobiographies*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977, p. 257 (from an interview in *The Anti-Slavery Reporter*, 1842, with an African who escaped from Puerto Rico).

27 REJALI, Darius. *Torture and democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, p. 347-349. Searching for *pau de arara* on the internet brings up Debret’s image (Debret himself did not use the term) and a simulation of a trussed victim of torture under Brazil’s military regime.

28 MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar; PARRON, Tâmis Peixoto. *Internacional escravista: a política da segunda escravidão*. *Topoi*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 12, n. 23, p. 97-117. 2011.

Moret bill, still being debated in Spain, that would liberate not only children henceforth born of slave mothers, but also sexagenarians. However, I further noted that this latter provision of the Moret proposal (turned law in 1870), must also have been widely known in Brazil at the local level, indeed so much so that it affected slaveowners' decisions in the subsequent 1872-1873 *matrícula*, an official registry of the country's bondspeople. My reasoning: the percentage of elderly persons in the *matrícula* was impossibly low given data on slave mortality and fertility rates, strongly suggesting that owners systematically reduced the ages of many mature slaves in anticipation of a similar sexagenarian law²⁹. More to the point, with respect to the focus of Eltis's article, Marquese has shown convincingly that the architecture of slave barracoon-prisons in Central Africa served as a model for the nineteenth century slave quarters of the great sugar estates of Cuba, as well as those of the coffee mega-plantations of Brazil³⁰.

The main thrust of this recent bibliography on the second slavery, however, is that the vigor of forced labor was thoroughly entwined with the spectacular changes brought about by the industrial revolution from the late 18th to the mid-19th century. These were, on the one hand, the explosive growth in the demand for tropical commodities in Europe, and, on the other, the advances in "capitalist" methods of production, industrial and ship-building technologies, and institutions. This is not an entirely new discovery; for instance, in a classic comparative article on the U.S. South and Brazil, Richard Graham pointed out several links (present in both regions, albeit much stronger in the northern one) between nineteenth century "capitalism" and slavery. Among things he cited: the growth of railroad mileage, banks, industry, and life insurance (bought by masters to cover their

29 SLENES, Robert W. O que Rui Barbosa não queimou: novas fontes para o estudo da escravidão no século XIX. *Estudos Econômicos*, São Paulo, v. 13, n. 1, p. 129-132, 1983.

30 MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar. Moradia escrava na era do tráfico ilegal: senzalas rurais no Brasil e em Cuba no século XIX. *Anais do Museu Paulista*, São Paulo, v. 13, n. 2, p. 165-188, 2000. Idem. Revisitando casas grandes e senzalas: a arquitetura das plantações escravistas americanas no século XIX. *Anais do Museu Paulista*, São Paulo, v. 14, n. 1, p. 11-58, 2006.

investment in slaves, so as not to suffer losses due to worker mortality³¹. The new bibliography, however, substantially expands the geographical scope and sophistication of what was previously known. It demonstrates, for instance, the extent to which many “tools” produced by modern capitalism were appropriated by slave traders cross-nationally: for instance, advanced American-built sailing ships, used extensively by Brazilian slave traders at mid-century; also bank credit in the American northeast used by merchants in New York to finance the Cuban slave trade in its final years³². Then too, it shows that commodity and industrial markets linked together, for mutual benefit, enterprises and regions employing free workers with those relying on slave labor: for instance, free fishermen in New England furnished dried cod to Caribbean planters (for their slaves' consumption) in exchange for the goods “extracted” by the latter from their workers³³. Likewise, mechanical wheat harvesters were developed in the northeastern United States, at first for the market of wheat-producing slave plantations in Virginia, before shifting the focus of their concerns to the rapidly growing free-labor wheat farms of the Middle West after 1840³⁴. One final example: ship owners on the Gulf coast of the southern United States used a form of vertical integration to

31 GRAHAM, Richard. Slavery and economic development: Brazil and the United States South in the nineteenth century. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Cambridge, v. 23, n. 4, p. 620-655, 1981.

32 MARQUES, Leonardo. *The United States and the transatlantic slave trade to the Americas*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Idem. A participação norte-americana no tráfico transatlântico de escravos para os Estados Unidos, Cuba e Brasil. *História: Questões & Debates*, Curitiba, n. 52, p. 87-113, 2010. Idem. Um último triângulo notório: contrabandistas portugueses, senhores cubanos e portos norte-americanos na fase final do tráfico transatlântico de escravos, 1850-1867. *Afro-Ásia*, Salvador, v. 53, p. 45-83, 2016.

33 KIMBALL, Eric. 'What have we to do with slavery?' New Englanders and the slave economies of the West Indies. In: BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. op. cit., p. 209-224.

34 ROOD, David. An international harvest: the second slavery, the Virginia-Brazil connection, and the development of the McCormick Reaper. In: BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. op. cit., p. 87-104.

carry the diverse mix of passengers and “commodities” traded there during the nineteenth century, including slaves³⁵.

One could argue, of course, that what changed in the period under study, in this respect, was not substance, but scale and complexity. For instance, many examples can be cited of the intense interest on the part of plantation owners in improving their production techniques and profits. Two particularly relevant cases, recently described, involve the planters of Saint Domingue and the British Caribbean, who as a group had taken great strides toward modernizing their production processes and increasing profits *before* the slave revolution in the former and the abolition of the slave trade to the latter³⁶. Eric Williams, who accepted historian Lowell Ragatz's (now discredited) argument that slavery was a declining institution in the British West Indies at this time, has definitely been proven wrong on this point; and Seymour Drescher's 1977 thesis that Great Britain committed “econocide” in 1807, meaning that it ended the slave trade to its colonies when the mother country derived great – and still rising – profits from them, has been vindicated³⁷. (Vindicated, it should be noted, with Eltis's help: in the preface to the second edition of *Econocide* [2010], Drescher stresses the importance of Eltis's *Economic Growth* in showing that the islands Britain had recently acquired in the Caribbean had a large capacity for expanding slave-based production at the time the slave trade was abolished.) These examples from late eighteenth-century Jamaica and Saint Domingue have additional relevance for this discussion because in both cases planters – indeed, particularly large planters with capital – increased the work

35 SCHERMERHORN, Calvin. *The coastwise slave trade and a mercantile community of interest*. In: BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. op. cit., p. 209-224.

36 BURNARD, Trevor; GARRIGUS, John. *The plantation machine: Atlantic capitalism in French Saint Domingue and British Jamaica*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

37 WILLIAMS, op. cit.; RAGATZ, Lowell. *The fall of the planter class in the British Caribbean, 1763-1833: a study in social and economic history*. New York: Century Company, 1928; DRESCHER, Seymour. *Econocide: British slavery in the era of abolition*. 2nd. ed. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010 [1st ed., 1977].

and punishment burden of slaves in ways that resemble what occurred later in the regions of second slavery.

Yet, the fact that the “second” slavery had roots in the “first” (or “colonial” slavery, as Robin Blackburn calls it)³⁸, is scarcely surprising. Indeed, what is most striking about the slavery of the nineteenth century is not its similarities with its own past, but precisely its greatly increased role as an important enabler of the growth of capitalism, particularly in the Anglo-American world. (For this reason, I think it would have been more appropriate if “second slavery” had been translated into Portuguese as *segundo escravismo*”, that is, “second slave system”, rather than *segunda escravidão*, which points more toward “second [form of] slave labor”).

It is important to state here that, by “capitalism”, I refer to “historical capitalism”. The scholars who use this latter term clearly mean it in the sense defined by Immanuel Wallerstein in 1983:

What distinguishes the historical social system we are calling historical capitalism [c. 1450 to the present, expanding out of Europe into the Atlantic, then to the rest of the world] is that in this historical system capital came to be used (invested) ... with the primary objective or intent of self-expansion. In this system, past accumulations were ‘capital’ only to the extent they were used to accumulate more of the same.³⁹

Note that this definition – albeit in a book that pays tribute to Marx as a “comrade involved in the [same] struggle” – reflects the discovery that for most of the twentieth century to the present the process of capital accumulation has not brought about an ever-increasing growth and institutionalization of a formal wage-labor sys-

38 BLACKBURN, Robin. Por que segunda escravidão? In: MARQUESE; SALLES, op. cit., p. 13-54.

39 WALLERSTEIN, Immanuel. *Historical capitalism: with capitalist civilization*. New York: Verso, 2011. E-book (Amazon.com Kindle ed.). pp.13-14 [1st ed., *Historical capitalism*, 1983].

tem globally, as Marx predicted. Indeed, in recent decades the trend seems to be in the opposite direction, toward “informal” work, the “precarization” of labor, greater social inequality and, indeed, even “modern day slavery”⁴⁰. (Primitive accumulation, it would appear, is still with us). Thus, either “capitalism” is now on the wane, or formal, ever-more-common wage regimes are not part of its central, enduring characteristics. Wallerstein opts for the latter position, then emphasizes (immediately after the passage cited above) the need to focus, in effect, on political economy to understand the varieties of historical capitalism in different times and places:

[I]t was this relentless and curiously self-regarding goal of the holder of capital, [that is,] the accumulation of still more capital, *and the relations this holder of capital had therefore to establish with other persons in order to achieve this goal* [my italics], which we denominate as capitalist.⁴¹

Twenty years before Wallerstein's book, historian Barrington Moore Jr. raised a key question about the history of the United States that offers insight on how to approach the variegated history of capitalism from the perspective of comparative political economy. In *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1967), he asked why the alliance between “iron” and “rye” (respectively, major industrialists and large, market-oriented landowners) that occurred in Prussia at the end of the nineteenth century did not also arise in the United States in the middle of that century, in the form of an alliance between northern “iron” and southern “cotton.”⁴² (If such a conservative coali-

40 VAN DER LINDEN, Marcel. *Workers of the world: essays toward a global labor history*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

41 WALLERSTEIN, op. cit., p. 14. On the new bibliography regarding “historical capitalism” and its relation to slavery, see: ELTIS, David. *Iberian Dominance...op.cit.*, footnote 5.

42 MOORE JR., Barrington. *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy: lord and peasant in the making of the modern world*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967. Ch. 3, particularly p. 130-131.

tion had occurred, the Civil War might have been averted and the life of slavery extended.) Moore's answer: the configuration of capitalist interests (including in this category southern slaveowners) and the political alliances they engendered in the U.S. context ca. 1860 were quite different from what they were in Prussia later in the century. In this U.S. case, many northern industrialists tended to be aligned with other northern groups, among them mid-western yeoman commercial farmers who feared they might be driven out of business if big, slave-based agriculture was allowed to expand into their region⁴³. One could call this an alliance between "iron and wheat"; remember the shift in the market focus of the industry producing mechanical wheat harvesters, from Virginia to the Middle West. Yet, the context was more complicated than that. As Moore and subsequent authors have noted, many northern middle-class urban men and women, as well as many industrial workers and free blacks, had their own reasons for engaging in political struggle to stop the expansion of the institution of slavery into the free states⁴⁴. One thinks particularly of slavery's pernicious effect on wages, its tendency to concentrate land ownership, its strengthening of social hierarchies, and its promotion of the political power of large slave owners, who were not very favorable to the expansion of public education and other opportunities for social mobility⁴⁵. Within this context, runaway slaves, through nar-

43 FONER, Eric. *Free soil, free labor, free Men: the ideology of the Republican party before the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.

44 See, particularly, SINHA, Manisha. *The slave's cause: a history of abolition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016, emphasizing the impact on public opinion of published slave narratives and the important role of free blacks and slave runaways in the abolitionist movement. Also: GOODMAN, Paul. *Of one blood: abolitionism and the origins of racial equality*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998; FONER, Eric. *The fiery trial: Abraham Lincoln and American slavery*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2010; BROOKS, Corey. *Liberty power: antislavery third parties and the transformation of American politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016; GABRIEL, Brian. *The press and slavery in America 1791-1859*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2016; BLIGHT, David. *Frederick Douglass: prophet of freedom*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018.

45 On the last point, see: MAJEWSKI, John. Why did northerners oppose the expansion of slavery? Economic development and education in the limestone south. In: BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. op. cit., p. 277-298.

ratives published by the abolitionist press, had enormous impact on northern debates. (Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, based on ex-slave testimony, was a best seller in the decade before the Civil War. Her subsequent book, detailing and naming her sources in response to southern critics, was in the hands of president Lincoln, on loan from the National Library, during the months he wrote the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation)⁴⁶. In the South, in contrast, it would seem that most white southerners – even non-slave owners – coalesced around the defense of racially-based forced labor⁴⁷. Perhaps one reason was that slave ownership was accessible enough there that many young whites with middling resources had reasonable expectations of eventually becoming small masters. (The Civil War's outcome definitely put an end to such hopes *in the U.S.*; perhaps this was one reason that most southerners who relocated to the state of São Paulo after the Civil War were not prior slaveholders)⁴⁸. For white workers, the specter of abolition probably raised fears of increased competition in the labor market, decreasing wages and further “de-classification”.

Yet, with the development of financial and monopoly capitalism in the northeastern United States, a convergence did eventually occur between northern industrial interests and large southern planters⁴⁹. Indeed, according to Moore, this was one of the main factors

46 STOWE, Harriet Beecher. *The key to Uncle Tom's cabin*. Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1854. On Lincoln and Stowe's second book, see: BROCK, Jared. *The road to Dawn: Josiah Henson and the story that sparked the Civil War*. New York: Public Affairs, 2018, p. 217-218. (Henson was one of Stowe's most important informants.)

47 FORRET, Jeff. *Race relations at the margins: slaves and poor whites in the antebellum Southern countryside*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006; MERRITT, Keri Leigh. *Masterless men: poor whites and slavery in the Antebellum South*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

48 MORENO, Alessandra Zorzetto. *Propostas imigrantistas em meados da década de 1860: a organização de associações de apoio à imigração de pequenos proprietários norte-americanos – análise de uma Colônia*. 2000. Thesis (Master's in History) – Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp), 2000.

49 The seeds of this were perhaps already present on the eve of the Civil War. See: BECKERT, Sven; ROCKMAN, Seth. Introduction ... op. cit., p. 26; note that “Charles Sumner [a northern politician

explaining the post-Reconstruction suppression of the voting rights of African-Americans in the South (upheld by the Supreme Court in 1896) and the rise of racial segregation and violence toward blacks in that region at the turn of the century⁵⁰. Moore's thesis has since been substantiated, most forcefully by Douglas Blackmon's recent *Slavery by Another Name*⁵¹. This book examines the effective enslavement of large numbers of southern blacks who, having been condemned to long prison terms, often for trivial offenses, were leased out by local governments to labor intensively in private agriculture and industry *for no wages whatsoever*. In the center of Blackmon's canvass: a portrait of the terrible conditions of forced black workers in Alabama coal mines purchased in 1907, in a vertical integration move, by U.S. Steel (a northern firm formed in 1901 by the merger of four steel companies – one of them Andrew Carnegie's). This "internal colonialism" based on cheap, coerced labor, was mirrored in twentieth century Africa by European commercial-industrial interests; see, for instance, the studies by Jules Marchal and Eric Allina, focused respectively on the Belgian Congo and Mozambique⁵².

With this as backdrop, knowing now that both Portuguese/Brazilian slave traders and Brazilian planters were keen seekers of profit – apparently not very different from planters, merchants and captains of commerce and industry elsewhere – we may return to Eltis's question. Of all the "slave powers", why did those of the North, particularly Great Britain, followed by the United States, take

and abolitionist] decried the alliance of the 'lords of the lash and the lords of the loom.'"

50 MOORE JR., op. cit., p. 149. This argument impressed me greatly when I read it because I had written a research paper in 1967 showing that the northern conservative press not only tended to approve the 1896 decision, but also proposed making voting difficult for newly-arrived immigrants in the North (a majority of whom were from eastern and southern Europe – many of them Jewish or Catholic – and Asia).

51 BLACKMON, Douglas. *Slavery by another name: the re-enslavement of black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. New York: Anchor Books, 2008.

52 MARCHAL, Jules. *Lord Leverhulme's ghosts: colonial exploitation in the Congo*. 2nd ed. London: Verso, 2017; ALLINA, Erik. *Slavery by any other name: African life under company rule in Colonial Mozambique*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012.

the lead in industrialization, not the Portuguese-Brazilian system? Eltis's answer to this question is to cast doubt on Eric William's assertion that England's trade with its colonies, generated ultimately by the latter's cheap African slave labor, was the key to its industrial revolution. Eltis suggests instead that it was primarily internal developments in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that laid the groundwork for further industrialization and, indeed, created the capital for English entry as an important player in the slave trade (yet, as he notes, behind Portugal/Brazil in that enterprise, except during 1751-1800). In his words: "the secret to the partial British...success [in the slave trade] was their strong economic growth, and their associated ability to make the metals and some of the textiles that Africans wanted"⁵³. In sum, in classic historiographical terms, Eltis takes more of a "Dobbian" approach on this question, emphasizing "internal factors" in British capitalist development and rejecting William's Sweezy-like stress on "external factors."

For this view to be fully sustained, however, Eltis would have to engage with Joseph Inikori's closely argued study, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England* (2002), which is substantially supportive of William's interpretation, albeit based on a nuanced evaluation of the interplay of internal and external forces in British industrialization⁵⁴. Inikori asserts that it was the Atlantic commerce – involving the exchange of commodities produced largely by enslaved Africans

53 ELTIS, Iberian dominance ... op. cit., text just before note 53. Eltis also refers here to the Dutch entry into the slave trade, which he sees as likewise propelled by internally generated economic growth.

54 INIKORI, Joseph E. *Africans and the industrial revolution in England: a study in international trade and economic development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Inikori sees the export trade to foreign markets as a "vent for surplus" which stimulates employment, internal investment and production for domestic (and foreign) consumption. This is a concept created by Adam Smith, recently developed further by Hla Myint, and influential today in analyses of the recent growth of the "Asian Tigers" and China. It also is applicable to Kenneth Pomeranz's explanation of why the Yangzi river valley in China, about on an equal stage of development as England ca. 1750, but without major foreign markets, stagnated. See discussion in: INIKORI, op. cit., p. 126, 383-384. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. p. 126, 383-384. Also: MYINT, Hla. The "classical theory" of international trade and the underdeveloped countries. *The Economic*

and afro-descendants in New World colonies for metropolitan manufactures consumed in western Africa and the Americas – that was the major factor responsible for the economic growth of key regional economies in northern England and the Midlands from the late seventeenth century. Note that, according to Inikori, the agricultural relations of production in these regional economies were less progressive – i.e., more feudal than capitalist – than in the south of England. In this latter region, international trade had much less impact; thus, economic development stagnated after a certain point – until the integration of English markets by railroads in the nineteenth century inserted it fully into international trade⁵⁵.

Beginning ca. 1660, Inikori argues, the key English regions engaged in international trade began a process of import substitution industrialization, centered on manufactures for their own internal markets: cloth (initially woollens, followed from the eighteenth century on by cottons) and metallurgical products (made of copper, brass, then particularly iron) for their own internal markets. This process soon turned into industrial growth led by the export of these manufactures. Inikori notes that “increases in overseas sales accounted for more than half of the increments in British industrial output between 1700 and 1760, and between 1780 and 1800 respectively”, in addition to having a further multiplier effect on the growth of the domestic market. And where were these exports destined? Primarily to the Americas and West Africa, and even the exports to Europe went principally to Spain and Portugal, many of them destined to the respective American colonies of these nations.

Also important, however, is that England's lead as a military maritime nation in the late sixteenth century was subsequently matched by the expansion of its merchant marine, whose ships were built largely in Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, in British North America.

Journal, New Jersey, v. 68, n. 270, 1958; POMERANZ, Kenneth. *The great divergence: China, Europe, and the making of the modern world economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

55 INIKORI, op. cit., p. 475.

These developments and the competitive advantage that they gave to English ships meant that Great Britain acquired an important role in the carrying trade to other nations (in the form of “re-exports” of goods arriving in British ports). This advantage – shared to a lesser extent by the Dutch – carried over into the slave trade. Here, then, Inikori’s analysis lends support to Eltis’s argument; at the very least northern European intrusion into slave trading in the eighteenth century was driven to a significant extent by that region’s prior economic development.

Yet, note that inikori also stresses that the expansion of shipping and ship-building – including that related to the slave trade – was an important stimulus to English manufacturing, particularly of metallurgical products, as well as to the country’s overall employment, income and internal demand for goods⁵⁶. Then too, Inikori also points to internal social-political factors, alongside both internal and external “accidents” of nature, that strongly contributed to English industrialization prior to the seventeenth century as well as during the subsequent decades, including the period of the industrial revolution itself. He notes that social and political changes in England from the late middle ages to the seventeenth century created favorable conditions for market-led economic growth, something argued earlier by historical anthropologist Alan Macfarlane⁵⁷. In addition, England was blessed with the raw materials for a woolen industry, which prepared the way for the move on to cotton cloth, the latter produced initially in great part from the raw fiber grown in Britain’s Caribbean colonies and then, in the 1800s, from that cultivated in the United States Deep South – at that time politically “external” to England, yet “internal” in terms of the integrated Anglo-American trading system. Furthermore, Inikori gives full attention to England’s large iron ore resources, as well as to the huge high-quality bituminous coal depo-

⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 308.

⁵⁷ MACFARLANE, Alan. *The origins of English individualism: the family, property and social transition*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1988.

sits that were essential for the development, beginning in the eighteenth century, of a technically advanced iron industry not based on wood charcoal for fuel. It was the combination of all these internal and external factors that created an incentive for inventors to come up with new ways of mechanizing industrial production, particularly from the late eighteenth century on, thereby making it more efficient.

In sum, the Dobbian approach - favored by Eltis for explaining English industrialization - is surely relevant, particularly over the long run. Yet, Inikori's primary argument, essentially vindicating William's explanation for the process leading to the British industrial revolution, still seems convincing. The key piece in the puzzle appears to be the impetus provided by the export-import trade to England's favorably-endowed internal economy and society, particularly the trade with its New World colonies (and then former colony, the United States) as well as with western Africa. This was an exchange system ultimately built on the backs of enslaved African laborers and their descendants, but one that worked in powerful synergy with "internal" economic, social and political factors to produce Great Britain's industrial development⁵⁸.

The contrast with the Portuguese-Brazilian system could not have been greater. Brazil's commodity exports intrinsically had less of a multiplier effect on the development of its own industry or that of its mother country than did the exports of England's colonies on the Anglo-American system. After all, cheap (slave-produced) coffee and sugar were important items of consumption for Europe, but they did not play the central role in the industrialization process that the availability of cheap (slave-produced) cotton did⁵⁹. Likewise, Portugal

58 Also relevant is another "external factor" (yet, "internal" to Europe) that stimulated English industrial growth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: substantial Dutch investment. See: ARRIGHI, Giovanni. *The long twentieth century: money, power and the origins of our times*. London: Verso, 2010. Arrighi also draws attention (chapter 3) to the massive British investment in the nineteenth-century United States.

59 "Political economy" also played a role here. Much emphasis has been placed on the fact that Portuguese authorities accepted the terms of the Methuen treaty of 1703, which opened Portugal

lacked iron ore deposits and Portuguese attempts to compensate for that, by developing an iron industry (blast furnaces) in Angola and in Brazil in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, floundered, certainly in part because of a lack of known mineral coal deposits in the vicinity of iron ore⁶⁰. In any case, England by that time had a lead in this area that would have been difficult to overcome, even if the post-Independence elite and government of Brazil - increasingly dominated by the interests favored by the second slavery - had made determined and costly efforts to foster industrial development.

Small-scale smelting operations using native iron ore and wood charcoal to produce low-grade iron for making tools and more elaborate instruments for local consumption existed in Brazil in the first half of the nineteenth century, particularly in the regions of Minas Gerais dominated by English gold mining companies⁶¹. But the cost of transportation (done almost entirely by muleback) beyond a certain distance made their production too high-priced to otherwise compete with cheaper imported pig iron (*ferro gusa*) produced in blast furnaces⁶². (Note that Brazil did not have the relatively low internal

(and its New World colonies) to English manufactures, particularly woolen fabrics, in exchange for England's importing of Portuguese wine – in retrospect, clearly an unequal trade in terms of these products' different multiplier effects for economic development.

60 On Angola, see ALFAGALI, Crislayne. *Ferreiros e fundidores da Ilamba: uma história social da fabricação de ferro e da real fábrica de nova Oeiras*. Luanda: Fundação Dr. António Agostinho Neto, 2018b. On Brazil, with a focus on small-scale smelting (*baixo-fornos*), see: ALFAGALI, Crislayne. *Em casa de ferreiro: os artesãos do ferro nas Minas Gerais do século XVIII*. São Paulo: Alameda, 2018a.

61 BAETA, Nilton. *A indústria siderúrgica em Minas Gerais*. Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1973, p. 106-110; MARTINS, op. cit., Part II.

62 BAETA, op. cit., p. 106-110; even as late as 1883 one observer in Minas Gerais noted that pig iron came "all from abroad" (Ibidem, p. 282). Note that Brazil first began producing pig iron on a small scale in 1814, in a blast furnace (the *Real Fábrica de Ferro Morro do Pilar*) in Minas Gerais (MENDONÇA, Marcos Carneiro de. *O intendente Câmara: Manuel Ferreira da Câmara Bithencourt e Sá, intendente geral das Minas e dos Diamantes*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1958.). Fourteen years later, however, the highly efficient hot-blast furnace was invented in Great Britain. (See Wikipedia, "Blast Furnace", with links to relevant sources. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/1Q6rsb5>>. Accessed on: 20 Feb. 2019.) This, combined with the declining cost of ocean shipping, made it even more difficult for Brazil to catch up.

transportation costs provided by the rivers and canals of England and the United States.) Pig iron was carried inland from the ports in bars that, according to a description in 1817, “must not only be reduced to a proper weight [so as not to overload the mule], but be doubled into a proper form, about two feet in length”⁶³. In Brazil’s Southeast at that time, itinerant smiths carrying their own bellows would commonly use stores of these imported bars on or near large estates outside the market range of the small iron-ore smelters; there, using charcoal from local trees as fuel, they forged horseshoes and other necessary items⁶⁴. (In the eighteenth century, their iron apparently entered Brazil mostly from Sweden and Vizcaya, Spain, through Portugal⁶⁵; in the nineteenth, however, it probably came increasingly from England, since, according to Eric Williams, “Britain’s production of pig iron increased ten times between 1788 and 1830” and “bar iron exports more than doubled between 1815 and 1833”)⁶⁶.

63 LUCOCK, John. *Notes on Rio de Janeiro, and the southern parts of Brazil*: taken during a Residence of ten years in that country, from 1808 to 1818. London: Samuel Leigh, 1820, p. 370. (Idem. *Notas sobre o Rio de Janeiro e partes meridionais do Brasil*. Belo Horizonte/São Paulo: Itatiaia/EDUSP, 1975. p. 246.)

64 LUCOCK, *Notes* ... op. cit., p. 395 (Idem. *Notas* ... op. cit., p. 263); BAETA, op. cit., p. 103-112.

65 BAETA, op. cit., p. 50

66 WILLIAMS, op. cit., p. 129-130.



Mule train arriving in Rio de Janeiro from the interior carrying charcoal, 1822

Watercolor by Jean Baptiste Debret. Original in Museu Castro Maya, Rio de Janeiro.

In Figure 1, I reproduce a watercolor sketch by Jean Baptiste Debret, dated 1822, which portrays a mule train carrying charcoal from the countryside into the city of Rio de Janeiro⁶⁷. On the back of the lead mule there may be a bar of pig iron, “doubled into a proper form” like those described by Luccock. But one cannot be sure, since the image is somewhat indistinct. Furthermore, such bars would normally be travelling away from this city-port, not toward it, althou-

67 Debret's description: “Vê-se chegar diariamente ao Rio de Janeiro um grande suprimento de carvão de lenha, trazido do interior, seja a lombo de burro, seja por embarcação.”. See: BANDEIRA, Júlio; CORRÊA DO LAGO, Pedro. *Debret e o Brasil: obra completa, 1816-1831*. Rio de Janeiro: Capivara Editora, 2007. Picture and description, p. 242. The watercolor is in the collection of Museu Castro Maya, Rio de Janeiro.

gh Debret – seeking like other “ethnographic” artists of the time to pack as much information as possible into a single picture – may have portrayed the object precisely to suggest the return trip. In any case, this watercolor provides a fitting complement to professor Eltis’s illustrations of ships, since mule trains, often quite large⁶⁸, were the “vessels” used to transport goods and persons, including the enslaved (whether on foot or riding), from the ports into the interior. Furthermore, the people involved with them as workers were usually bondsmen, agents of “the common wind” – like black sailors in the Caribbean – who carried news and sometimes plans of insurrection between slave communities⁶⁹. But in the context of the present discussion, Debret’s picture – if we also imagine the mules returning from Rio loaded with doubled-over iron bars – is particularly apt as a portrayal of the Luso-Brazilian world’s abysmal state of iron mining and smelting (also of transportation) in the early nineteenth century. Contrast this with Eric William’s depiction of the explosive growth of the British iron industry – mostly producing pig iron – in the same period, accompanying a five-fold increase in coal production between 1780 and 1836:

There were three times as many furnaces in operation [smelting iron] in 1830 as in 1788. ...In 1800 the proportion of home make to the foreign import was four to one; in 1828, fifty to one. ...Iron was being put to a variety of new uses ... But the greatest victory was in the construction of machinery.⁷⁰

68 LUGGCOCK, Notes... op. cit., p. 370 (Idem. Notas... op. cit., p. 246), reporting on a train with 49 animals (seven groups of seven mules).

69 SCOTT, Julius. *The common wind*: Afro-American currents in the age of the Haitian Revolution. London: Verso, 2018 (an influential doctoral thesis from the 1980s, finally published). The title refers to a line in a poem by William Wordsworth in honor of Toussaint L’Ouverture: “There’s not a breathing of the common wind that will forget thee”. On enslaved muleteers as go-between linking slave communities, see the examples in: SLENES, Robert W. *L’arbre nsanda replanté*: cultes d’affliction kongo et identité des esclaves de plantation dans le Brésil du sud-est (1810-1888). *Cahiers du Brésil Contemporain*, Paris, n. 67/68, p. 217-313, 2007.

70 WILLIAMS, op. cit., p. 129-130 (for passage cited and information on coal production).

In the increasingly free-trade environment of the nineteenth century, Britain's import and export trade – arguably ultimately still based on slave labor in the New World, particularly that in U.S. cotton production – continued to be a major motor of its economic growth⁷¹. Nonetheless, William's explanation of Britain's abolition of the slave trade (1807), then slavery itself (1833-1838), in its New World colonies has not withstood the test of time. Rather than being the result of the political pressure of British industrialists, who supposedly perceived they had more to gain from free trade than from commerce limited to their own country's colonies, these events were the result of a much more complex political economy: one in which new social groups produced by growing trade and industrialization, harboring values of self-reliance and human equality, viewed the violence and exploitation inherent in slavery as anathema; and one in which growing numbers of rural workers, displaced from the land to poorly-paid industrial jobs, saw their condition as mirroring that of the enslaved in the Americas. In these circumstances, and in a time and place in which both religion and science tended to embrace monogenesis (and thus racial and ethnic equality)⁷², bondspeople and freed men and women could address themselves to a large sympathetic audience, either directly, as Frederick Douglass did in a speaking tour of Great Britain, 1846-1847⁷³, or indirectly, through abolitionist literature. (Just as there was a "pro-slavery international", so too was there an "anti-slavery international", inspired particularly by enslaved witnesses to the horrors of the institution.) Significantly, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the English political system gave voice to many who opposed slavery, if not with the vote, at least with the

71 By the 1820s, the U.S. provided "80 percent of the world's most widely traded commodity [cotton] in its most important markets". BAPTIST. *Towards a political economy...* op. cit., p. 41. See also: BECKERT, Sven. *Empire of cotton: a global history*. New York: Knopf, 2014.

72 CURTIN, Philip. *The image of Africa: British ideas and action, 1780-1850*. 2 vols. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964.

73 FENTON, Lawrence. *'I was Transformed': Frederick Douglass, an American slave in Victorian Britain*. Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2018.

right to petition Parliament, a right that was used frequently and decisively by abolitionist organizers⁷⁴.

I close this essay with two brief comments, one on the implications of analyzing “capitalism” and its relationship with “slavery” from the perspective of “political economy”, the other on professor Eltis’s seminal contribution to current debates on the political agency of various groups in Brazilian society in abolishing the country’s slave trade. Regarding the first, I completely agree with Dale Tomich that “the narrative of a presumed linear movement from slavery to freedom needs to be called into question.” Not only that, but “the all-too-often-assumed opposition between liberal [progressive] antislavery and antiliberal proslavery must be critically reexamined”⁷⁵. What this means is that “slavery” can raise its head in many guises (it does not have to be “chattel slavery”); remember the books cited here on *Slavery by Another Name* and *Slavery by Any Other Name*, respectively on the post-abolition American South and colonial Mozambique. Furthermore, “progressive” attitudes built in one epoch can be mobilized politically in another for non-progressive ends. A case in point is the support that “antislavery” sentiment in Britain and elsewhere in Europe provided to colonialism in Africa, which was frequently portrayed to the home public as a crusade against forced labor⁷⁶. These

74 DRESCHER. *Econocide*, op. cit., shows that Williams’s chronology is wrong; it was only after the abolitionist laws had been passed that industrialists, as a group, became convinced that free trade would be viable and more profitable than continued dependence on British Caribbean production and markets. See also: DRESCHER, Seymour. *Capitalism and antislavery: British mobilization in comparative perspective*. London: The Macmillan Press, 1986; Idem. *Abolition: a history of slavery and antislavery*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009; Idem. *Paths from slavery: British and colonial mobilizations in global perspective*. New York: Routledge, 2018; BROWN, Christopher Leslie. *Moral capital: foundations of British abolitionism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006; HUZZEY, Richard. *Freedom burning: anti-slavery and empire in Victorian Britain*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012.

75 TOMICH, Dale W. Introduction. In: _____. *The Politics ...* op. cit., Kindle edition, location 84.

76 HUZZEY, op. cit. But note that many who had been opposed to slavery recognized its continuity in some colonial labor regimes: HOCHSCHIEDL, Adam. *King Leopold’s Ghost: a story of greed, terror and heroism in colonial Africa*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.

are important lessons in a world in which social inequalities and various forms of “modern-day slavery” are on the rise.

My second comment is on the debt owed to professor Eltis by scholars currently working on the political economy – indeed, the politics – of slavery in Brazil in the decades preceding the abolition of the slave trade in 1850. In his thorough research in the British Foreign Office files on Brazil, reported on in *Economic Growth*, Eltis made key discoveries about the internal opposition to the trade, noting the names of some Brazilian officials – sometimes on the British payroll – who provided England with secret information regarding this commerce: among them a minister of the *Conselho de Estado* (Imperial Council) that directly advised the Emperor, and the mulato captain of Rio de Janeiro's port⁷⁷. In recent years, Tâmis Parron and Beatriz Mamigonian have advanced further in this research, using Brazilian as well as British documentation. Parron showed that the first abolition of the slave trade by Brazil's Parliament in 1831, was not a law *para inglês ver* – that is, a deceitful gesture to keep the English happy – but was actually meant to be applied, and was indeed enforced until the rise to power of the Conservative Party (and the new coffee-producing elite) in the mid-1830s. He also made a thorough review of the debates over slavery within the Brazilian Parliament up to and following the second abolition of the trade in 1850⁷⁸. Mamigonian, in turn, made significant advances in identifying the networks of proponents of the abolition of the trade, who mostly acted in the Liberal Party⁷⁹. Finally, Parron showed that, in late 1849 and again early in 1850, key members of the Liberal Party visited the English delegation in Rio to implore Britain to force the end of the trade by threatening

77 ELTIS, *Economic Growth* ... op. cit., p. 113-116, 213-216.

78 PARRON, Tâmis. *A política da escravidão no Império do Brasil, 1826-1865*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2011.

79 MAMIGONIAN, Beatriz. *Africanos livres: a abolição do tráfico de escravos no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2017. Chapter 6, esp. p. 271-283.

a blockade of Brazilian ports⁸⁰. This would have deprived the government of customs revenue and the ability to pay military expenses against enemies, either external or internal – for instance the slaves.

Debate is still in progress on these questions, as well as on the degree to which the threat of slave uprisings played a role in bringing about abolition – particularly one planned, but discovered and quashed, in Vassouras, a major coffee county in Rio province, in 1848⁸¹. There is no space here to review this debate. Suffice it to say that, once again, a combined Dobb-Sweezy approach seems necessary, that is, a focus on the synergy between external and internal factors. It is well to remember that the British government's steadfast pressure for abolition was influenced in part, directly or through the British political system, by the "anti-slavery international". (Did Frederick Douglass's year and a half tour of Britain, for instance, combined with reports on slavery in Cuba and Brazil, contribute to the maintenance of English pressure on the Brazilian government into the 1850s?) At the same time, the documentation on the 1848 plan, occurring at the height of British pressure, suggests that the bondsmen involved rested their hopes for success on the (exaggerated) expectation of English intervention. Then too, certain groups of free people threatened by the slave trade may have swelled the ranks of supporters of the Liberal Party. I refer here to free(d) blacks, perhaps reacting to the exacerbation of racism and of social inequality brought about by the trade⁸²; also to smaller slave owners who were on the "front line" of social tensions and perhaps were more fearful of the effects on themselves of slave flight and rebellion than very large,

80 PARRON, Tâmis Peixoto. The British empire and the suppression of the slave trade to Brazil: a global history analysis. *Journal of World History*, v. 29, n. 1, p. 1-36, 2018 (esp. p. 29, 31).

81 SLENES, *L'arbre nsanda...* op. cit; GRADEN, Dale. *Disease, resistance and lies: the demise of the transatlantic slave trade to Brazil and Cuba*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014; ARAÚJO, Thiago Leitão de. *Desafiando a escravidão: fugitivos e insurgentes negros e a política da liberdade nas fronteiras do Rio da Prata (Brasil e Uruguai, 1842-1865)*. Thesis (Doctorate in History) – Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp), 2016.

82 GRINBERG, Keila. *O fiador dos brasileiros: cidadania, escravidão e direito civil no tempo de Antonio P. Rebouças*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2002.

often absentee, planters. Whatever the future results of this research, I want to register here my thanks – our thanks – to David Eltis for leading the way.

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