

constructions” of this volume’s title and, in my view, they all played a role in the “formation of national states” of its subtitle.

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PATRICIA PESSAR, *From Fanatics to Folk: Brazilian Millenarianism and Popular Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004

It can be exceedingly difficult to piece together the history of popular religious movements and even more challenging to situate their emergence and development within larger societies. In *From Fanatics to Folk*, Patricia Pessar succeeds admirably in her analysis of the relatively unknown 20th century millenarian movement that was inspired by a man named Pedro Batista in Brazil’s storied northeastern backlands. Millenarianism is a perennial topic in Brazilian scholarship owing to the nation’s legacy of apocalyptic religious movements and their brutal repression. But the author aims to complicate the picture of popular resistance that dominates the field by charting the development of a community that simultaneously pursued millennial dreams and sought to be integrated into modern society. Pessar has based her book on anthropological fieldwork carried out in spurts over the last three decades, as well as historical archives, thus she provides us with a rarely nuanced glimpse of how a devotional movement evolved over a considerable span of time. This book is refreshing because the *romeiros* (Batista’s followers), their relationships with each other, their beliefs and practices and their approach towards life in 20th century Brazil truly hold center stage.

In her efforts to reach better understanding of the Pedro Batista movement and Brazilian millenarianism, Pessar employs a combination of methodologies and theoretical approaches from anthropology, history and political science. She argues that we should not look at such movements as “finite events,” but rather as part of a long-standing, ever-mutable “set of cultural meanings and social practices regarding power, identity and destiny.” Pessar regards individual movements as “social and cultural productions” subject to a wide array of influences and representations. She stresses the role played by a variety of institutions and social agents that transcend states, civil authorities and even the devotees themselves. These include the modernizing reforms of the 20th century Catholic Church, journalists, documentary filmmakers, academics, and curators. In Chapter 1 the author sets out to describe the history of Brazilian millenarianism from the colonial period to the 20th century. In fact this is the weakest portion of the book, providing only the skeletal outlines of the Batista movement’s pre-

decessors. The author mistakenly assumes that the majority of her readers are familiar with the Canudos, Contestado and Juazeiro movements; this represents a lamentable oversight and limits the book's usefulness as a classroom text.

The rest of *From Fanatics to Folk* is devoted to Pedro Batista and the *romeiros*. Pessar offers an interesting discussion of how 2,000 poor residents of Brazil's blighted *Sertão* gradually recognized Batista to be a living saint (and the reincarnation of Padre Cicero, the spiritual leader at Juazeiro) and formed a community called Santa Brigida in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The book's third and fourth chapters chart the movement's expansion, particularly among women, as well as Batista's successful engagement in local patronage networks and regional and national politics. His growing status as a landowner and labor broker raised the community's agricultural production to impressive levels by the 1950s. However, Pessar is careful not to simply chart socioeconomic gains. She shows that although religion was intertwined with all aspects of life in the community, Batista and his followers downplayed these beliefs and practices in their interactions with the secular authorities. One of the more remarkable events related here is Batista's 1950s involvement in government land reform projects and the subsequent creation of a government agricultural cooperative at Santa Brigida, although these arrangements subsequently proved to be disappointing for community members. Batista predicted an impending end of the world in 1950 (when this passed without incident he revised his prediction to 1960) and inspired thousands of *romeiros* to live according to strict moral guidelines and dedicate themselves to extensive devotional activities. However, the Day of Judgement failed to materialize, and in 1967 Batista died. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the manner in which the community has endured without clear millenarian expectations or an uncontested new charismatic leader. In this portion of the book Pessar gives the impression that Santa Brigida is gradually dissolving as a unique religious community within Brazilian society. Nonetheless, there is a fascinating account of how one faction seeks greater integration with the outside world, another one presses for a more purely religious orientation and a third group feels caught in between. In the final chapter the author describes the way secular society has penetrated Santa Brigida as a result of the recent popularity of nationalist folklore; Brazilian millenarianism appears today to be a time capsule of inherently authentic Brazilian folk culture in face of the cultural impact of globalization.

At the outset of *From Fanatics to Folk*, Pessar claims that the book is "more than a case study," but a more comprehensive historical overview of millenarianism would be necessary in order to achieve this goal. Nonetheless, this book represents a solid and unique case study. Pedro Batista and the *romeiros* indeed come alive in a way that is rarely achieved in studies of popular religion.

We not only get a good sense of their beliefs and how the community evolved around these beliefs, but also a glimpse of intimate religious practices and social and spiritual quandaries within Santa Brigida and a detailed account of the community's relations with other Brazilians.

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LAURENT DUBOIS, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution & Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

The French Caribbean has been the subject of several studies over the last two decades. Unsurprisingly, Santo Domingo has received most of the attention at the expense of places like French Guyana, Martinique and Guadeloupe. *A Colony of Citizens* is a welcome addition in that it enriches our knowledge regarding one of these peripheral colonies during what was probably the most exciting historical period of modern times: the convulsive fifteen years that followed the outbreak of the French Revolution.

This book is divided into three parts, each of which is subdivided into several chapters. Part I, "Prophecy, Revolt and Emancipation, 1787-1794" examines the role of Guadeloupe's slaves in the political events of the period. Starting with the slave rebellion of Trois Rivières in 1793, Dubois examines the ways in which slaves and free coloured took part in the political drama of the time. He looks at the impact of the French Revolution upon Caribbean slaves, arguing that the new epoch brought fresh ideas which the slaves enthusiastically embraced and modified to their needs. Interestingly, Dubois is not quick to deny the importance of the traditions and beliefs of the many African "peoples" that constituted an important segment of the slave population.

After carefully analyzing the Guadeloupe slave system, he proceeds to explore the, tense new situation and its effect on all the island's inhabitants. A particularly intriguing aspect of his argument involves the transformations undergone by the slaves' language of resistance. Part I constitutes a good example of how scholars should approach the historical sources at their disposal. Despite the many problems he had to confront, Dubois has succeeded in mapping the social structure of late 18th century Guadeloupe society. Part I concludes with the arrival of the French Decree of Emancipation, which ushered in a new epoch of ceaseless debate and development surrounding the significance of Republican citizenship and ultimately the concept of Freedom itself.