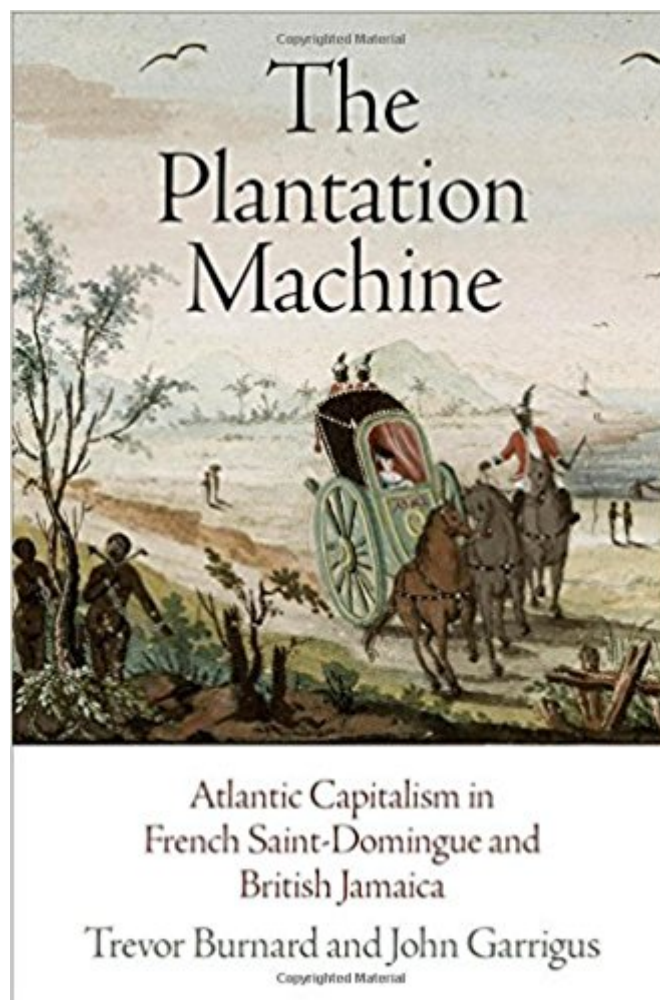




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The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism In French Saint-Domingue And British Jamaica (The Early Modern Americas)



Synopsis

Jamaica and Saint-Domingue were especially brutal but conspicuously successful eighteenth-century slave societies and imperial colonies. These plantation regimes were, to adopt a metaphor of the era, complex "machines," finely tuned over time by planters, merchants, and officials to become more efficient at exploiting their enslaved workers and serving their empires. Using a wide range of archival evidence, *The Plantation Machine* traces a critical half-century in the development of the social, economic, and political frameworks that made these societies possible. Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus find deep and unexpected similarities in these two prize colonies of empires that fought each other throughout the period. Jamaica and Saint-Domingue experienced, at nearly the same moment, a bitter feud between planters and governors, a violent conflict between masters and enslaved workers, a fateful tightening of racial laws, a steady expansion of the slave trade, and metropolitan criticism of planters' cruelty. The core of *The Plantation Machine* addresses the Seven Years' War and its aftermath. The events of that period, notably a slave poisoning scare in Saint-Domingue and a near-simultaneous slave revolt in Jamaica, cemented white dominance in both colonies. Burnard and Garrigus argue that local political concerns, not emerging racial ideologies, explain the rise of distinctive forms of racism in these two societies. The American Revolution provided another imperial crisis for the beneficiaries of the plantation machine, but by the 1780s whites in each place were prospering as never before—and blacks were suffering in new and disturbing ways. The result was that Jamaica and Saint-Domingue became vitally important parts of the late eighteenth-century American empires of Britain and France.

Book Information

Series: The Early Modern Americas

Hardcover: 360 pages

Publisher: University of Pennsylvania Press (May 24, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0812248295

ISBN-13: 978-0812248296

Product Dimensions: 1.2 x 6.2 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #655,340 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in [Books > History > Americas > Caribbean & West Indies > Jamaica](#) #59 in [Books > History > Americas >](#)

Customer Reviews

"The Plantation Machine is an ambitious and important book. The collaborative work of Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, combining deep research into French and British Caribbean plantations and slavery, depicts the two leading plantation slave societies at the peak of their wealth, power, and brutality. This book should be read by early Americanists and Atlantic World and even European historians who want to understand plantation slavery and its place in the Atlantic and Euro-American worlds." — Simon Newman, University of Glasgow

"Jewels in the crowns of the British and French empires, the neighboring sugar islands of Jamaica and Saint Domingue dominated the Atlantic economy of the eighteenth century and were central sites in the period's world-shaking wars. This pathbreaking dual history by two leading experts shows us how the ruthless exploitation of slaves in the Caribbean produced the wealth that inspired the period's faith in progress and shaped the rivalry between Europe's two leading powers." — Jeremy Popkin, University of Kentucky

Trevor Burnard is professor in and head of the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne. He is the author of *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*. John Garrigus is Professor of History at the University of Texas at Arlington and author of *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue*.

I wrote a college paper on how the Seven Years' War affected the age of Revolutions. This is the ONLY source I could find (in English) that provided a direct link between the war and the Haitian Revolution.

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