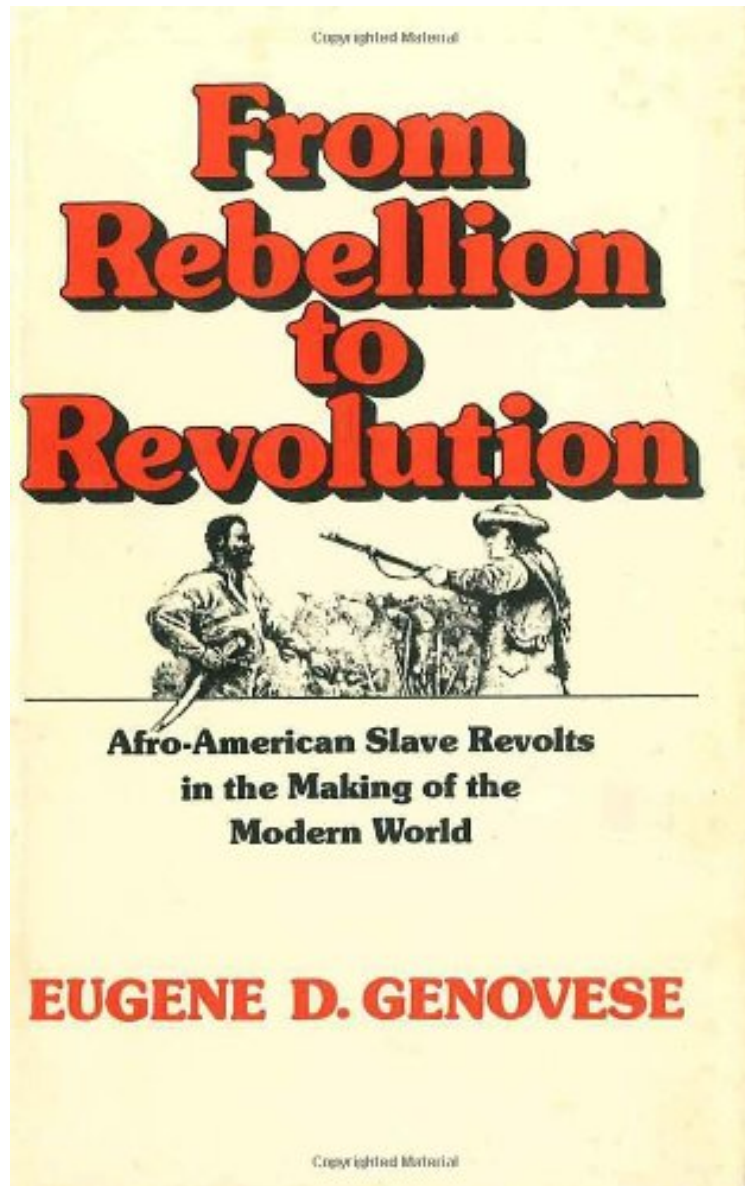


[Free pdf] From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World (Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History)

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Eugene D. Genovese

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History):

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. African-American Revolts By Paul B. Martin It is good to see someone using the term "REVOLT". Going on-line to Wikipedia or Encyclopedia to certain geographic locations. You must use the term "Race Riot or Race War" instead of revolt. To further seek deeper information on the Confederate Flag you must use the term "Lynching". Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner give further ideals of such activities. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. North American Slavery in Hemispheric Perspective By Peter H. Shulman The great thing about this book is the exceptionally concise contextualization of N. American slavery within the wider hemisphere. Genovese makes clear the uniqueness of this system, which might be summed up as follows: no other slave society existed in the midst of so many white people, who were well-armed, backed by a stable government, and relatively immune to foreign intrigue. While one might debate the number of slave revolts in the U.S., I think that Genovese is correct that given the huge odds against a successful slave revolt, it's remarkable that the relatively few revolts that did occur are striking acts of human courage. As far as the dialectical interpretation that Genovese pursues from "Roll, Jordan, Roll", well, good luck coming to your own terms with "accommodation" and "resistance." At times I find him maddening and at others quite wise. But the theoretical parts aren't what I'm particularly interested in at this point in my life. The opening chapter's comparative piece is factually grounded, broad ranging, and simply illuminating. Worth the read by all means. 21 of 35 people found the following review helpful. The Limits of Genovese's Notions of Resistance By A Customer In his *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, Genovese presented the black experience of slavery as fundamentally determined by white power. Yes, slaves were able to "make" a world for themselves to a much greater extent than U.B. Phillips or Stanley Elkins had allowed, but they did so under the constraints of white hegemony as defined by Gramsci. The paternalistic system granted slaves spheres of a sort of autonomy in return for the base acceptance of master control. Black cultural constructions, however innovative and powerful, were constrained within bounds that prevented the power of the dominant class from ever being called into question. Black doings were rife with resistance acts, but their struggles were taken on in the master class' terms and thus failed to threaten its authority at an essential level. The few uprisings that were planned (and the fewer still that were carried out) were directed only towards escaping, not overturning, the system. The "day to day" resistance manifested in malingering, feigned illness or stupidity, theft, or murder, presupposed an accepted status quo that whites had violated and for which slaves could legitimately protest. Thus, resistance among slaves was at its crux limited and "accommodationist." Even open revolts, while they may have made whites afraid, stimulated them to make ameliorative "reforms," and partially shaken their myths of black docility, didn't operate outside of an understanding of slavery as part of the equation of life. Genovese was criticized for making the conditions of the antebellum Chesapeake region normative for slavery as a whole. In attempting to explain the actions of slaves who did revolt frequently and violently, as was necessary when he shifted his gaze to the Caribbean in this book, however, Genovese only adjusted his understanding of the limits of resistance by expanding it. Significantly, hegemony played no explicit part in this larger schema: the complicated dialectic he described in the American South was replaced with a straightforward before and after scenario in the West Indies. Slave uprisings before 1804, the year of Haitian independence, were "restorationist" rebellions, in that they represented a rejection of the colonial world and an attempt to establish isolated African maroon communities that were fully separate from the slave societies from which they sprang. The revolt in St. Domingue, however, constituted a "revolution" for Genovese. Setting the events there between 1791 and 1804 firmly in the context of a "bourgeois-democratic revolutionary wave" beginning in Philadelphia in 1776 and continuing in France in 1789, he presented the Haitian Revolution as a part of a "modern" movement. Afterwards, slaves would no longer seek to establish "traditional" societies, but instead would break away from the "early maroon vision" and work to join the societies that had enslaved them, albeit on equal terms. St. Domingue represented a vital turning point in the direction of slave resistance in that it comprised a revolutionary bid for nationhood. Accommodation on the mainland, it seems, was assimilation in the islands. In this book Genovese continues his search, at a fundamental level, for an explanation of resistance -its prevalence and nature in the Caribbean and its paucity and impotence on the mainland. His stories must end, however, with Toussaint or Lincoln respectively: blacks either forcibly pushed white ideology to its fullest implications, or waited for whites themselves to bestow its fruits upon them. While he grants slaves agency, clearly the important actors are white. Until "revolutionary" Haitians adopted and applied "white" ideas to overturn the slave system altogether, "restorationist" maroons and American slaves hedged in by paternalism were doomed to inhabit the limited spaces granted to them. Of course, the slaves of St. Domingue didn't overturn the slave system, and Genovese's reasons for their failure suggest the limits of his approach. Despite the preeminent place he grants it in the history of slave uprisings, Genovese ultimately sees the Haitian Revolution as a flop. While Toussaint and his successors Jean Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe worked to set up a nation state that participated in the world market with its bourgeois capitalist compatriots, the "counter-revolution" of later leaders such as Alexandre Ption and Pierre Boyer relaxed the dictatorial

discipline that had kept the Haitian masses on the sugar plantations. Thus released, Haitians succumbed to a "slave-bred land hunger" that drove them to acquire increasingly small plots of land, and "Haiti slipped into a system of peasant proprietorship and self-sufficiency - wonderful euphemisms for the poverty and wretchedness of bourgeois-egalitarian swindles- and the dream of a modern black state drowned in the tragic hunger of an ex-slave population for a piece of land and a chance to live in old ways or ways perceived as old." Genovese sees slavery as only a system of forced labor, albeit a peculiar one with a host of ideological ramifications including paternalism and Afro-Christian religion. Accepting Eric Williams' portrayal of the Atlantic slave system as a natural product of emergent Western capitalism, he describes the changes in that world as the products of forces (economic and ideological) generated by the market centered in Europe and operating through white minds, mouths, and hands. Evidence that slaves operated outside this world or independent of its mandates disrupts this conception by suggesting that Genovese himself has become a victim of planter hegemony. If Europe could be present in the socio-political baggage brought by the colonists, why could not Africa have an equal presence in that brought by slaves? What meanings did slaves make of slavery? Others than those dictated to them? How did they understand their condition? Such questions illuminate the constraints of seeing slavery only as a system of labor and make new evidence valid in explorations of slave resistance as "accommodation," "restoration," or "revolution." These terms in Genovese's mouth mark his inability to process evidence of slave doings in terms other than those set out by whites. They beg for an account of the struggles of slaves as perceived by blacks themselves.

In one of his most important books, the renowned historian Eugene D. Genovese examines slave revolts in the United States, the Caribbean, and Brazil, placing them in the context of modern world history. By studying the conditions that favored these revolts and the history of slave guerrilla warfare throughout the Western Hemisphere, he connects the ideology of the revolts to the ideology of the great revolutionary movements of the late eighteenth century. Genovese finds that the slave rebellion in Saint-Domingue, led by Toussaint LOuverture, constituted a turning point in the history of the slave revolts and, indeed, in the history of the human spirit. By claiming for his enslaved brothers and sisters the same right to human dignity that the French bourgeoisie claimed for itself during the French Revolution, Toussaint began the process by which slave uprisings changed from secessionist rebellions to revolutionary demands for liberty, equality, and justice.

This bold and brilliant essay upholds Eugene D. Genoveses reputation as the premier generalist in the slavery field and as a perennial gadfly. (American Historical)[Genovese] has taken what was a dreary and fruitless debate and cast it in new and provocative terms . . . he brings a breath of fresh air into a musty old room. (Nathan I. Huggins New Republic)About the AuthorEugene D. Genovese was the author of Roll, Jordon, Roll, winner of the Bancroft Prize in 1975; The Political Economy of Slavery; The World the Slaveholders Made; and In Red Black.