

Asia combine their self-identity with a national identity, especially considering that many of them hoped to earn their *lac* (the minimum needed to establish a family in comfort)? Did their long absences from family, friends, and the United States make the new nation seem more idealized?

Morrison provides readers with four men's views of life overseas, yet only one woman's experiences. How representative was Harriet Low of the women who lived in southeastern China, India, or elsewhere? She appeared to complain about many things; was that common for American women? The book is an interesting look at a few Americans who sought their riches in the overseas markets of Asia and the Pacific. It opens other opportunities to research the lives of expatriate Americans about how they lived, how they experienced foreign cultures, and what impact the experiences had on their lives and futures, and even on how they viewed the United States.

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Working on the Dock of the Bay: Labor and Enterprise in an Antebellum Southern Port.

By Michael D. Thompson. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015. Pp. x, 284. \$44.95, cloth.

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Michael Thompson's book is a detailed study of the dock-workers of antebellum Charleston. For a large part of the colonial and antebellum eras enslaved men dominated this sector of the economy though, in the 1850s, they would face sustained and effective competition from immigrant Irish workers. Thompson's book is therefore a nice addition to the historiography of urban slavery.

We have known for a long time that c.100,000 enslaved people lived and worked in southern cities and as such had lives that departed significantly from the plantation slaves who constituted the vast majority of the enslaved labor force. The work of urban slaves was more varied and provided opportunities for interaction with other slaves, free blacks, visitors, and non-slaveholding whites. We have had studies of enslaved workers in specific industries before, such as Charles Dew's *Bond of Iron: Masters and Slaves at Buffalo Forge* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994), but not in urban environment. Charleston's dock-workers provide a neat and useful case study because they were crucial to the development of the city, particularly when it was the premier southern port in the eighteenth century. Despite being superseded by New Orleans, and challenged by Mobile and Savannah, Charleston remained a major locale for the export of cotton through the Civil War.

Thompson charts the rise of the black dock-worker, showing how the economic demands of shipping in effect gave rise to a class of workers whose very flexibility made them highly prized. The city of Charleston constantly legislated against the subtle resistance of dock-workers, but to little effect. Draymen who raced each other through the city streets, imperilling the lives of pedestrians, also delivered their goods promptly, a fact that encouraged infractions to be overlooked. Restrictions on rates of pay (for those who self-hired) were fairly easily circumvented when there were always ship owners willing to pay a little extra to get their goods unloaded or loaded quickly.

Dock-workers also pilfered small amounts of cotton from the bales being loaded, selling them to unscrupulous shopkeepers for liquor.

Some dock-workers were willing to push their resistance to the system even further. Several were implicated in the Denmark Vesey conspiracy in 1822, and the Negro Seamen's Acts passed shortly afterwards were intended to restrict the interaction between free black sailors and Charleston's native population. In reality there was little authorities could do to prevent illicit conversations imparting news between ship crews and those loading them. Several used their access to ships to stow away and find freedom in the North.

Like many other southern cities, Charleston underwent a demographic revolution in the 1850s as the rapid immigration of white working people, particularly from Ireland, shifted the balance from black majority to white majority. Thompson does a good job here showing how the immigrant Irish were willing to ignore previous color bars that had meant few white men undertook manual labor. The Irish, driven by the need to work and feed their families, began to make inroads into the docks, with employers rather unscrupulously preferring them for the most dangerous tasks since there would be no compensation to pay if an accident occurred. Sometimes competition between enslaved and Irish workers turned violent, as evidenced by the city's court and jail records.

Enslaved workers, however, had a secret weapon—their comparative immunity to yellow fever. Dock-workers were particularly vulnerable to yellow fever which was invariably imported on ships from the Caribbean. They were ones who went on the ships and entered the holds where the mosquitoes were hiding. When enslaved dock-workers dominated the wharves, yellow fever struggled to take hold—Thompson neatly describes them as a “human shield” against disease. Once white workers made inroads into the occupation, then so did yellow fever, taking advantage of the lack of immunity among immigrant whites. Thompson argues that the epidemics of 1854, 1856, and 1858 can directly be tied to the increased numbers of white dock-workers. This is an important insight and shows how the social impact of disease continues to be underestimated by southern historians. On the eve of the Civil War black workers regained something of their old popularity among wharf-owners.

Thompson's book is engaging and well-written. Once or twice I might have liked him to raise his gaze from Charleston and look at what was happening in comparable cities, Savannah and New Orleans in particular. Charleston's experiences were perhaps unique, but not totally so, and other municipalities were dealing with similar circumstances. As a case study of an unusual form of slave labor this can be recommended to all scholars of antebellum slavery.

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Golden Rules: The Origins of California Water Law in the Gold Rush. By Mark Kanazawa. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. Pp. xvii, 351. \$55.00, cloth. doi: 10.1017/S0022050716001157

Mark Kanazawa's *Golden Rules* is a timely book given that California in 2015 is at the epicenter of a lengthy drought and growing debate over water rights and allocations. Kanazawa examines current California water law and policy through the prism