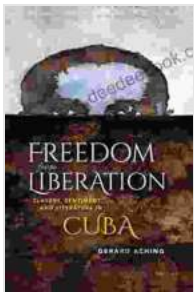


Slavery, Sentimentality, and the Literature of Cuba's Black Diaspora: An Exploration of Racial and Cultural Identity in the Face of Oppression

The history of slavery in Cuba is a complex and tragic one, characterized by centuries of brutal oppression and exploitation of Black people. Yet, amidst this darkness, the enslaved and formerly enslaved people of Cuba found ways to resist, assert their agency, and create new cultural and racial identities.



Freedom from Liberation: Slavery, Sentiment, and Literature in Cuba (Blacks in the Diaspora) by Gerard Aching

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2109 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 357 pages
Lending	: Enabled



This article examines the complex interplay between slavery, sentimentality, and literature in the context of Cuba's Black diaspora. Through an analysis of literary works, historical documents, and cultural practices, it explores the ways in which enslaved and formerly enslaved Black people in Cuba

navigated the dehumanizing conditions of slavery, asserted their agency, and forged new cultural and racial identities.

The Dehumanizing Conditions of Slavery

The institution of slavery in Cuba was a brutal and dehumanizing system that sought to strip Black people of their humanity. Enslaved people were subjected to unimaginable horrors, including forced labor, physical and sexual abuse, and the separation of families.

The dehumanizing conditions of slavery had a profound impact on the lives of Black people in Cuba. It led to widespread trauma, psychological damage, and a sense of alienation and hopelessness.

The Power of Sentimentality

In the face of such dehumanizing conditions, sentimentality became a powerful tool for survival and resistance for Black people in Cuba. Sentimentality, understood as the expression of tender emotions and sympathy, allowed enslaved and formerly enslaved people to connect with their humanity, find solace, and forge bonds with others.

Sentimentality was expressed through a variety of cultural practices, including music, dance, and storytelling. These practices provided a space for Black people to share their experiences, mourn their losses, and celebrate their resilience.

Literature as a Form of Resistance

Literature played a vital role in the struggle for freedom and self-determination for Black people in Cuba. Literary works, such as novels, poetry, and plays, provided a powerful platform for enslaved and formerly

enslaved people to voice their experiences, critique the institution of slavery, and envision a better future.

One of the most important literary works of the Cuban Black diaspora is Cirilo Villaverde's novel "Cecilia Valdés" (1839). This novel tells the story of a mixed-race woman who is forced to navigate the oppressive social and racial hierarchies of Cuban society.

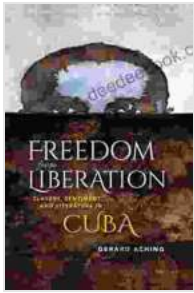
"Cecilia Valdés" was a groundbreaking work that challenged the dominant narratives of slavery and race in Cuba. It humanized enslaved people and showed the resilience and strength of Black women in the face of oppression.

The Legacy of Slavery

The legacy of slavery continues to shape the lives of Black people in Cuba today. Despite the abolition of slavery in 1886, racism and discrimination remain a pervasive problem in Cuban society.

The literature of Cuba's Black diaspora continues to play a vital role in the fight for racial justice and equality. Contemporary writers, such as Nancy Morejón, Miguel Barnet, and Leonardo Padura, continue to grapple with the legacy of slavery and its impact on Black identity and culture.

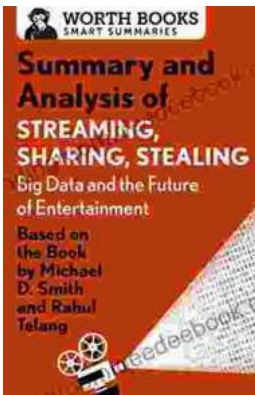
The story of slavery, sentimentality, and literature in Cuba's Black diaspora is a complex and multifaceted one. It is a story of oppression, resistance, and resilience. It is a story that continues to be told and retold in the present day, as Black people in Cuba continue to fight for their full liberation.



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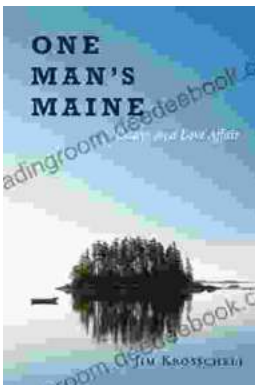
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