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PRESENTS

Santo Domingo, the Staging Ground for Plantation Slavery in the Spanish Caribbean

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The emergence of full-blown slave societies in nineteenth-century Cuba and Puerto Rico is a well-known historical phenomenon. However, scholars have missed that the political and legal origins of this turn towards plantation slavery are to be found in Santo Domingo, where local elites first devised the political architecture of plantation slavery during the second half of the eighteenth century. Although the plantation dreams of Santo Domingo's elites remained unrealized, their political successes served as a basic blueprint for Cuba and Puerto Rico in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. By centering Santo Domingo's political maneuverings, this project fundamentally reconsiders the emergence of plantation societies in the Spanish Caribbean.



A scholar of the eighteenth-century Spanish Atlantic, Fidel J. Tavárez is Assistant Professor of History at Queens College, City University of New York (CUNY). Before joining the faculty at Queens College, he held postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Chicago (2016-2018) and the Freie Universität Berlin (2018-2020). He earned a Ph.D. in history from Princeton University (2016) and a B.A. in history from The City College of New York, CUNY (2011). He is the author of *Assembling an Imperial Machine: Spanish Commercial Reform in the Age of Enlightenment* (Oxford University Press, 2026).

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