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João Pedro Marques. *Sá da Bandeira e o fim da escravidão: Vitória da moral, desforra do interesse.* Imprensa de Ciências Sociais Series. Lisbon: Instituto Ciencias Sociais, 2008. 140 pp. EUR 13.90, paper, ISBN 978-972-671-223-7.

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João Pedro Marques stands out among Lusophone scholars for the virtuosity of his revisionist thesis published in English as ***The Sounds of Silence: Nineteenth-Century Portugal and the Abolition of the Slave Trade*** (2005). The ironic title refers to the almost inaudible echoes of the Portuguese campaign against the slave trade. At a time when such campaigns reverberated through the politics of northern Europe, the campaign in Portugal was so low key that Marques had to dig deeply into media files and parliamentary records to understand the subtlety of the interplay of political and economic interests. In the end, he came to the conclusion that the great liberal statesman, Sá da Bandeira, who is remembered across Portugal as the national icon for his humanitarian speeches, was so constrained by the financial interests of his supporting factions that he failed to get the international carrying of slaves outlawed based on the British model. Instead, it was the conservative interests, dependent not on the colonies but on comprador economic relations with England, which decided that trading in slaves in the 1840s was endangering their good relations with London and therefore had to be at least formally curtailed.

In his new and equally controversial book, Marques examines the second half of Sá da Bandeira's high profile career. He does so once more with telling attention to detail. The epoch of liberal "regeneration," which began in Lisbon in 1851, did culminate--in parliamentary and juridical terms--in 1875 in the abolition of slavery in the Portuguese empire. But the path was far from smooth, and, although victory for the abolitionists was assured by the time Sá da Bandeira died, that victory was gained at the price of so many concessions at each step of the long road that abolition was almost meaningless in 1876.

One key stumbling block to emancipation was compensation. Not, of course, compensation to the slaves who had been kidnapped in the backlands of Angola, but compensation to the slave owners who held tens of thousands of slaves prisoner on their coastland island estates. By 1851, Britain, France, and Scandinavia had all smoothed the path to emancipation with large allocations of taxpayers' money to plantation owners. Portugal, rudely dubbed by some "the sick man of western Europe" did not have a tax base capable of such largesse. Compromises had to be sought and Sá da Bandeira was a sad but wise master of compromise. He conceded that when slavery was finally outlawed, it was replaced not merely by fixed-term apprenticeship or indenture but by compulsory forms of labor conscription

and draconian "vagrancy" laws. In effect, labor conscription became, and for the next thirty years remained, a life sentence. Even the reforms, which altered the imperial discourse in 1908, brought only marginal comfort to black workers under the rule of the Portuguese--or, indeed, the Germans, the French, or the Belgians.

Marques's presentation of Sá da Bandeira's life is not only a brilliant piece of research into Portuguese domestic and colonial history, but also a wonderfully well-written account of the global context in which phase two of the Portuguese struggle to free slaves was acted out. The book's subtitle, "moral victory and mercantile revenge," emphasizes that this is a piece of work that should be read by all those who have followed the paths of Seymour Drescher, David Brion Davis, and the precursors who have plotted the twists in this subtle pathway from slavery to freedom.

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