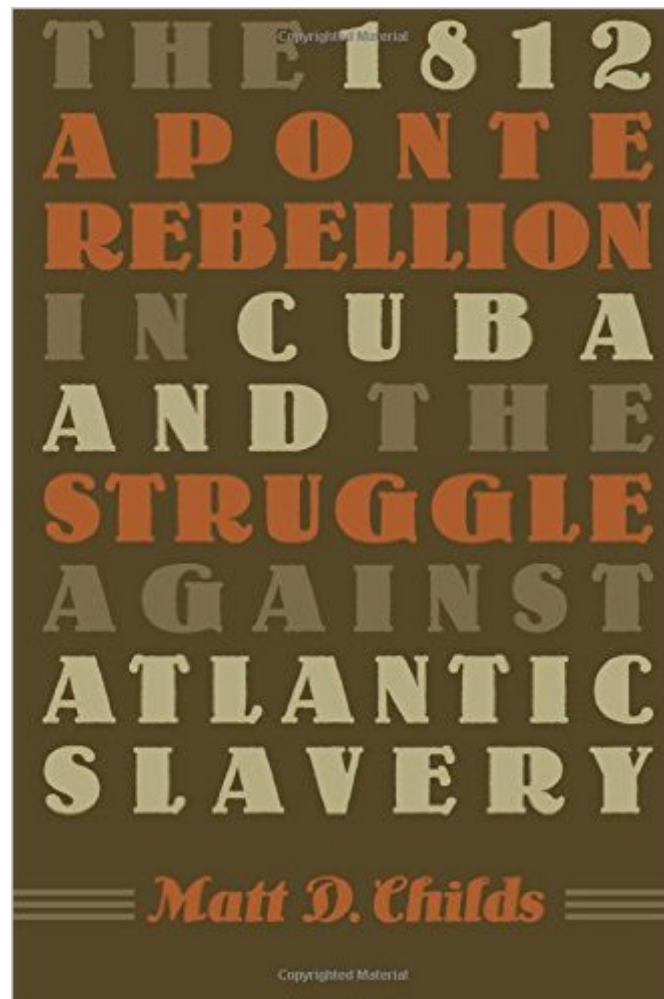


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# The 1812 Aponte Rebellion In Cuba And The Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery (Envisioning Cuba)



## Synopsis

In 1812 a series of revolts known collectively as the Aponte Rebellion erupted across the island of Cuba, comprising one of the largest and most important slave insurrections in Caribbean history. Matt Childs provides the first in-depth analysis of the rebellion, situating it in local, colonial, imperial, and Atlantic World contexts. Childs explains how slaves and free people of color responded to the nineteenth-century "sugar boom" in the Spanish colony by planning a rebellion against racial slavery and plantation agriculture. Striking alliances among free people of color and slaves, blacks and mulattoes, Africans and Creoles, and rural and urban populations, rebels were prompted to act by a widespread belief in rumors promising that emancipation was near. Taking further inspiration from the 1791 Haitian Revolution, rebels sought to destroy slavery in Cuba and perhaps even end Spanish rule. By comparing his findings to studies of slave insurrections in Brazil, Haiti, the British Caribbean, and the United States, Childs places the rebellion within the wider story of Atlantic World revolution and political change. The book also features a biographical table, constructed by Childs, of the more than 350 people investigated for their involvement in the rebellion, 34 of whom were executed.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Haitian Revolution remains a watershed in Atlantic world history. The real or imagined specter of black slaves and nonwhites slaying their masters devastated the white psyche. More than simply fear, the idea of a "terrified consciousness" nearly consumed entire classes of owners on all sides of

the Atlantic. In contrast, for free and slave alike, Haiti inspired and emboldened men and women to act. But the image of Haiti was never static. In places like nearby Cuba, as Matt Childs demonstrates, the Black Republic had multiple meanings. For Childs, Associate Professor of History at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Haiti's impact is evident in the so-called Aponte Rebellion in Cuba (1812). A somewhat chaotic and seemingly disjointed series of plantation revolts, only later did they appear as parts to a greater whole. Taking literal and symbolic meaning from the Haitian Revolution, leaders like Jose Antonio Aponte used words and images to convey both the significance and possibility of black freedom in Cuba. Socially and politically adept at surviving the all-encompassing plantation hierarchy, free and slave used those skills (what one might broadly call an "Atlantic consciousness") to overcome obstacles in geographical distance, language, class, and race (ethnicity). Despite what Crown officials believed, after the collapse of black militia importance in Cuban society, free and slave nonwhites organized a rather remarkable series of revolts aimed at destroying slavery. A revised, pared-down version of Childs's dissertation, 'The 1812 Aponte Rebellion and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery' weaves together several strands of historical methodology.

A pact with the devil can be most expensive Childs, Matt D 2006 The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery (Envisioning Cuba series). The University of North Carolina Press Chapel Hill ISBN-10 0807830585, ISBN-13: 978-0807830581 This book covers an abhorrent topic, slavery, specifically the Aponte rebellion of Cuban slaves beginning in January 1812. This is an important topic and of great interest. However, by necessity this book must rely on Cuban archives which are firmly in the hands of the present Cuban regime which demands an ideological toll be paid for access to them. The author's willing acceptance of this price, this pact to the devil, is made clearly apparent in the series of dedications at the beginning of the book. The first dedication reads: "For my *compañeros* and *compañeras* in this world and the next." These words *compañeros* *compañeras* are italicized in this text, a clear indication that they refer to the current vernacular in Cuba where these words substituting for "comrade" refer to association with the communist party. Then the author's reference to the "next" world then may be taken to refer to the Marxist vision of an earthly paradise always placed some time in the future. To make this point even clearer the quotations on the following page show this political allegiance to a revolutionary Marxist, rather than a scholarly, view of history. One should not overlook the possibility that the author rebelled against the price he paid for access to Cuban government archives, and thus unable to avoid the required shema of faith made his vow adherence to this credo so overdone that one is not

sure that he is sincere.

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