



# Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World

By James H. Sweet

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Between 1730 and 1750, powerful healer and vodun priest Domingos Alvares traversed the colonial Atlantic world like few Africans of his time--from Africa to South America to Europe--addressing the profound alienation of warfare, capitalism, and the African slave trade through the language of health and healing. In *Domingos Alvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World*, James H. Sweet finds dramatic means for unfolding a history of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world in which healing, religion, kinship, and political subversion were intimately connected.

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*By James H. Sweet*

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#### Review

[This book] will be of significant interest to specialists of the Atlantic World, particularly those of the Black Atlantic, and will likely generate lively discussions in graduate seminars.--*Register of The Kentucky Historical Society*

[A] laudable and exemplary new study. . . . This richly detailed account will be considered among the best of a generation of Black Atlantic histories.--*International Journal of African Historical Studies*

Sweet offers not only a glimpse into the intellectual life of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world but perhaps even an epistemological model for the struggles of our own time.--*HAHR*

*Domingos Alvares* imaginatively re-creates the life of a fascinating character brought before the Portuguese Inquisition, and in so doing the book highlights the social and political ramifications of *vodun*-inspired healing practices and other forms of cultural diffusion linking the Bight of Benin to Brazil during the eighteenth century.--*William and Mary Quarterly*

[An] insightful examination of the politics of healing.--*Early American Literature*

[A] well-written narrative. . . . Sweet exposes one of the many ways in which African cultural practices profoundly shaped the interactions between 18th-century Africans and Europeans.--*Journal of African American History*

Sweet's contribution to the literature is profound as he brings Africa to the center of an Atlantic historiography.--*Latin American Research Review*

This book should become mandatory reading for graduate students as well as faculty working on Atlantic history. . . . The skillful prose of this work also should be a model for other historians.--*Journal of World History*

A fine, well-constructed and cogently argued piece of microhistory.--*The Americas*

Demonstrates an interesting, well-written, and rigorous methodological approach to studying the commonalities of the life and politics of Domingo Alvares. . . . Sweet has produced a comprehensive examination of the African diaspora with emphasis on the Black Atlantic.--*The Historian*

#### Review

Engage[s] and expand[s] both biological and historical-cultural approaches to colonial epidemics and medicine.--*Early American Literature*

James Sweet's fascinating narrative is a superb social and cultural history of the eighteenth-century Lusophone Atlantic world. One will read this groundbreaking, extensively researched, and imaginative book with great interest.--Luis Nicolau Pares, Universidade Federal da Bahia

This exceptionally creative, engaging, and provocative book is a tour de force of historical imagination and sensitivity and a hallmark of Atlantic history.--Joseph C. Miller, University of Virginia

#### From the Inside Flap

By tracing the steps of Domingos Alvares, a powerful African healer and vodun priest, James Sweet finds dramatic means for unfolding a history of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world in which healing, religion, kinship, and political subversion were intimately connected.

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