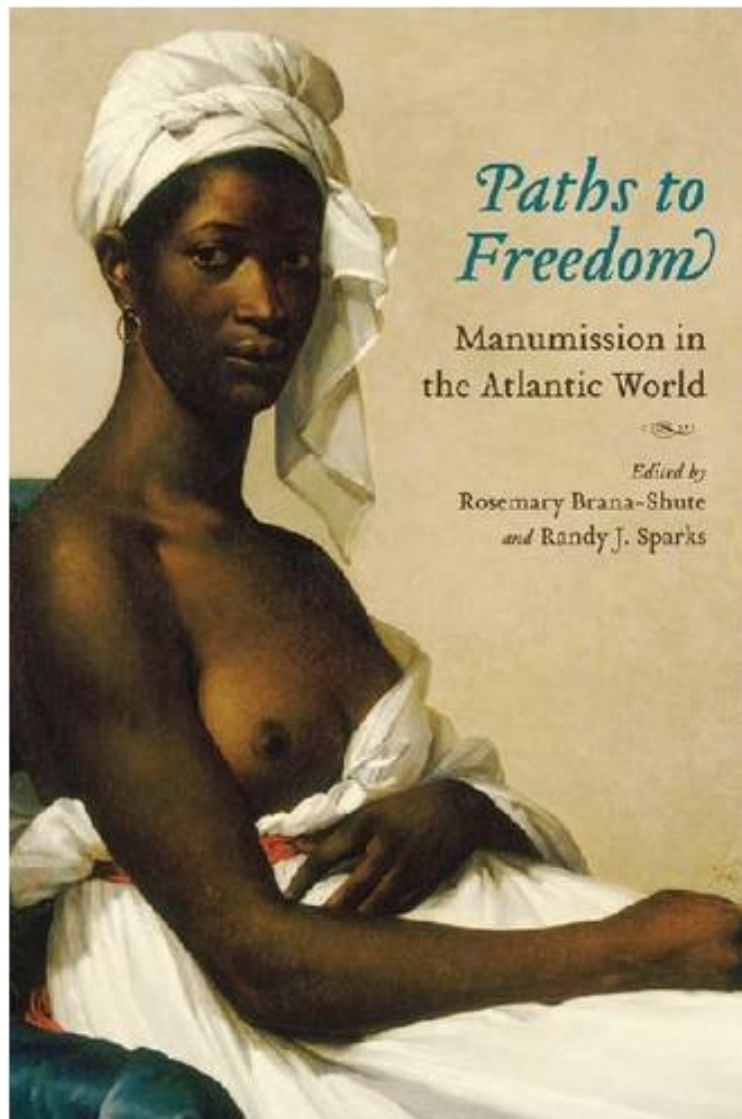


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Paths to Freedom: Manumission in the Atlantic World (Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World)

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Manumission--the act of freeing a slave while the institution of slavery continues--has received relatively little scholarly attention as compared to other aspects of slavery and emancipation. To address this gap, editors Rosemary Brana-Shute and Randy J. Sparks present a volume of essays that comprise the first-ever comparative study of manumission as it affected slave systems on both sides of the Atlantic. In this landmark volume, an international group of scholars consider the history and implications of manumission from the medieval period to the late nineteenth century as the phenomenon manifested itself in the Old World and the New. The contributors demonstrate that although the means of manumission varied greatly across the Atlantic world, in every instance the act served to reinforce the sovereign power structures inherent in the institution of slavery. In some societies only a master had the authority to manumit slaves, while in others the state might grant freedom or it might be purchased. Regardless of the source of manumission, the result was viewed by its society as a benevolent act intended to bind the freed slave to his or her former master through gratitude if no longer through direct ownership. The possibility of manumission worked to inspire faithful servitude among slaves while simultaneously solidifying the legitimacy of their ownership. The essayists compare the legacy of manumission in medieval Europe; the Jewish communities of Levant, Europe, and the New World; the Dutch, French, and British colonies; and the antebellum United States, while exploring wider patterns that extended beyond a single location or era.

From the Inside FlapAn international comparative study of a mode of emancipation that worked to reinforce the institution of slaveryAbout the AuthorRosemary Brana-Shute is a retired professor of history at the College of Charleston and a cofounder of its Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World. Her other books include *Crime and Punishment in the Caribbean* and *Money, Trade, and Power: The Evolution of Colonial South Carolina's Plantation Economy*.Randy J. Sparks is a professor of history at Tulane University and a cofounder of the Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World at the College of Charleston. His books include *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey*; and *Memory and Identity: The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora*.