

Flux et reflux de la traite des nègres entre le Golfe de Bénin et Bahia de Todos os Santos du XVII^e au XIX^e siècle. By PIERRE VERGER. The Hague, 1968. Mouton and Company. Le Monde d'Outre-Mer Passé et Présent. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Notes. Appendices. Indices. Pp. 720. Paper. 68 Guilders (Dutch).

In his introduction to this large work Pierre Verger has announced that his intention was to reveal economic and political factors which brought about reciprocal influences between the Bight of Benin and Bahia. Accomplishing his goal, he has substantially expanded our understanding of the traffic in African slaves to Brazil and the aftereffects of that commerce on both sides of the Atlantic.

He shows convincingly that the trade between the Guinea coast and Bahia did not involve the manufactured products of a European power in the classic triangular pattern, but consisted of a simple two-way exchange of third-rate Bahian tobacco for African slaves. This arrangement resulted primarily from Dutch and Portuguese trade restrictions and a Bahian monopoly of the grade of tobacco most in demand on the coast. It had the effect of concentrating in Bahia slaves who originated from a limited geographic region in West Africa, including some sophisticated devotees of Islam.

Verger also shows that religious pride and comparative cultural homogeneity (added to the normal discontent brought on by lowly status) helped to produce a succession of conspiracies and revolts by both slaves and free Africans in Bahia and adjacent areas between 1807 and 1835. This unrest, particularly the famous uprising of the latter year, culminated in a forced deportation to West Africa of several hundred free Africans, followed by a voluntary migration brought on at first by government harassment but sustained for decades by the longing of hundreds of free Africans for their native land.

Some of the material covered here is familiar to us through the writings of Raymundo Nina Rodrigues, Gilberto Freyre, and others, but Verger has added a particularly valuable body of information concerning the tenuous social and cultural ties maintained during the nineteenth century between the Negroes of Bahia and the "Brazilians" of West Africa. As familiar as we are with the survivals of African customs in Brazil, we are much impressed by the author's revelations of the cultural influences brought back to Africa by those returning from Brazil.

These influences manifested themselves in language, diet, religious practices, architecture, popular diversions, and even in expressions of patriotic attachment to the South American empire. In 1880, we learn, a "Brazilian" theatrical company put on a dramatic performance in the American city of Lagos to celebrate the birthday of the Emperor, Dom Pedro II, and in 1888 Brazilian immigrants and their descendants celebrated the abolition of Brazilian slavery with a public meeting and a Catholic mass in their own quarter of the same Nigerian city. Brazilian communities survive in the West African towns of Whydah, Lagos, and Porto Nôvo, writes Verger, and in the last place the inhabitants still celebrate the festival of "Senhor de Bonfim" on the third Sunday after Epiphany "exactly as in Bahia" (p. 619).

The author accomplishes much more than he promises in his introduction. Digressing from his major theme, he provides the most complete modern account yet published of the British-Brazilian conflict over the slave trade between 1810 and 1851, including a detailed survey of the deceptive methods used by slave traders to evade the authority of the Royal Navy. The book contains an account of black liberation societies of Bahia, provides insights into the living conditions of Brazilian slaves, and tells of ambassadorial missions dispatched by African kings to Brazil in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The author's major failing, in fact (a decided advantage to those who will use his work for their own research), is his apparent inability to eliminate anything distantly related to his topic. Numerous documents from archives in Bahia, Lisbon, Paris, London, Ibadan, Porto Nôvo, and The Hague have been translated into French from their original languages and reproduced here in their entirety, sometimes without a hint of their significance. Valuable appendices include a list of 180 Bahian ships seized by the Royal Navy between 1811 and 1850, detailed information on the movement of ships between Bahia and the Bight of Benin between 1678 and 1851, and estimates of the number of slaves imported into Bahia during the same period.

The book also offers good photographs intended primarily to demonstrate Brazilian cultural influences in West Africa and three indices which will make the study eminently useful to students of Brazilian slavery and the slave trade. All told, the results of Verger's research are most impressive, but we regret that he did not reach

more of the conclusions which seem to be contained in many of the documents which he has reproduced.

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Fidalgos and Philanthropists. The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550-1755. By A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD. Berkeley, 1968. University of California Press. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Notes. Appendices. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 429. \$12.50.

Corporate groups and institutions in the Portuguese empire bound society together and placed all men within the social cosmography. Among these institutions perhaps none was more active or interesting than the multifunctional religious brotherhoods, and of these none possessed more prestige or power than the Holy House of Mercy. A. J. R. Russell-Wood has chosen the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia as the focal point of this stimulating study and has produced an excellent analysis of the structure and varied roles of that body. He has also attempted to use his data on the Misericórdia as the basis for a broader study of Bahian social history. *Fidalgos and Philanthropists* must be evaluated at these two levels, institutional analysis and general social history.

The opening chapters review the origins of social welfare in Portugal, how the Misericórdia of Lisbon was created, and most important, what was contained in its code of operations, the *Compromisso* of 1516. This code served as a model for the various colonial branches, which the author then discusses. After setting the scene in a chapter on the geography, ethnic composition, and early history of Bahia, Russell-Wood follows the Misericórdia of Bahia from its inception (1549-1552) to its moribund state in 1755. These chapters form the core of the study.

Drawing heavily on the little-used and poorly organized archive of the Misericórdia (but not on Portuguese materials), *Fidalgos and Philanthropists* opens our eyes to a whole new historical world. Here is the life cycle of colonial Brazilians as reflected in the records of the seemingly omnipresent Misericórdia. The topics treated are mundane—doweries and marriage, foundlings, prisons, hospitals, burials, and charity—but it is exactly this everyday quality that makes these matters so interesting and pertinent. Without resorting to romantic quaintness this book gives us a feel for the past by present-