

bans, there was and continues to be much to criticize and even to deplore. But the Revolution is also complex, profound in its developmental implications, and hemispheric in its consequences. It is a sad commentary on American social science and social scientists that when faced with this richness, complexity, and human drama the response has so often been shallow, vindictive, and unoriginal, even among those nominally supportive of the Revolution. Lowry Nelson is only the latest in a long line of persons whose command of themselves and of the research enterprise does not seem equal to the subject that confronts them.

Chinese studies provide an instructive counterpoint. Despite linguistic, travel, and research difficulties that are many times more formidable than those posed by Cuba, a dignified and responsible literature on China continues to be produced. There are, of course, multiple explanations for both its quantity and its quality. But when set against the Cuban situation one is struck by the irony that we seem unable to come to grips either politically or intellectually with "the revolution 90 miles from home" while on the other hand making progress on both fronts with the more "difficult" and distant Chinese case. Perhaps Cuba is too close, too small, too available, and—the ultimate contradiction—both too unimportant and too threatening to call forth our best efforts. It is still "our island," and the old Cuba hands—and many of the new ones—are in their own way as fully prisoners of this historically conditioned mentality as are the cavemen in the White House and the State Department.

Stanford University

RICHARD R. FAGEN

The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil. By ROBERT BRENT TOPLIN. New York, 1972. Atheneum. Tables. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 299. Cloth. \$10.00.

This book is the first full-length study of abolition in Brazil to appear in English. Inevitably it must be compared with Robert Conrad's *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888* (Berkeley, 1972), whose nearly simultaneous publication illustrates the wastefulness of uncoordinated research even more acutely than did the appearances of Charles Cumberland's *Mexican Revolution. Genesis under Madero* (1952) and Stanley Ross's *Francisco I. Madero. Apostle of Mexican Democracy* (1955). Both Toplin and Conrad draw heavily on the annals of the Imperial Parliament and on the abolitionist press. Both reinforce many of the conclusions reached in 1966 by Emilia Viotti da

Costa in her still untranslated *Da Senzala à Colônia*, and by Richard Graham in his seminal article “Causes for the Abolition of Negro Slavery in Brazil” (*HAHR*, 46:12 [May 1966], 123-37). But the consensus is not complete, and Toplin does make a clear contribution.

His basic thesis, that “the demise of slavery in Brazil was sudden, not gradual” (p. 245), opposes Conrad’s stress on gradualism. After the international slave trade ended in the 1850s, Toplin believes that slave treatment improved and a slave breeding industry developed. The 1871 Free Womb Law failed to end natural increase of the slave population, for the *ingenuos*, children of slave mothers, rarely enjoyed real freedom. Accepting official estimates of slave numbers between the two registers of 1873 and 1887, and adding in the *ingenuos*, Toplin finds a .4 percent increase by 1885. Thus he can conclude there was “no significant shift downward in the slave population until the mid-1880s” (p. 20).

Until then, abolitionism had been frustrated. After only a brief mention of British pressure and the 1850 law closing the international slave trade, Toplin finds the origins of the 1871 law in “the combination of progress toward emancipation in other countries (U.S. and Cuba) and tensions created within Brazil by the Paraguayan war” (p. 45). He implicitly rejects Richard Graham’s contention that this law “was really the conclusion of the British phase of the story.” He explicitly minimizes the role of the Emperor Dom Pedro II, emphasized by Conrad, in bringing the issue to a head. The 1871 law constituted a “moderate compromise” negotiated by the conservative Visconde do Rio Branco, and was not observed.

Eight years later, planters suddenly provoked new debate by calling for more severe punishment of criminal slaves. In the spirit of Graham, Toplin invokes general conditions, such as increasing urbanization, industrialization, and improved communications with Europe and the U.S., to explain the new abolitionist vigor. The movement in the early 1880s achieved total abolition in Ceará and Amazonas (1884), and a series of gradualist measures culminating in the 1885 Sexagenarian Law freeing elderly slaves. But again the law was a conservative evasion more honored in the breach.

During this period abolitionists were trying to change attitudes and legislation through propaganda, appeals for benevolence, and example. Toplin examines leaders like Joaquim Nabuco and André Rebouças, who called for land distribution and extension of the suffrage in addition to abolition. He identifies three categories of slaveholders: Traditional and hard-core planters in the depressed sugar and coffee areas of the northeast and Rio de Janeiro, and progressive coffee planters

in western São Paulo, and analyzes their defending slavery with appeals to gradual emancipation and property rights. While complaining of a labor shortage despite considerable unemployment and low wages, the slaveholders for racist reasons refused to hire free Brazilians and instead tried to recruit European immigrants.

Anger over the failure of gradualist measures radicalized abolitionists after 1885. Tactics became more violent and revulsion against the stiffer fugitive slave law of 1885 popularized the cause in cities. Slaveholders also used force, but they lost control as whipping slaves was outlawed in 1886, and the army in 1887 refused to pursue fugitives. With abolitionists inciting mass escapes, “by April 1888 the foundations of Brazilian slaveholding society were collapsing” (pp. 223-4). After the *fait accompli*, the Golden Law of Abolition passed rapidly in May 1888.

Especially in its concluding chapters, Toplin’s study succeeds in conveying the drama and excitement of a cause whose time has come. But despite the clarity of this well-documented narrative, several problems remain. Toplin’s emphasis on radical tactics in the 1880s distracts him from the economics of slavery. He analyzes very little of the relation between the profitability of slave labor and the timing, intensity, and success of abolitionist efforts. Did specific economic conditions precipitate debates in the early 1870s and 1880s, and preclude discussion at other times? Did such factors frustrate abolitionist initiatives before 1886? How far can one rely on the slave population estimates before 1887, which were not based on independent counts but on deductions of reported deaths and exits from the 1873 register? Given the immaturity of most *ingenuos* in the 1880s, does including them in the slave population accurately reflect the economic importance of slavery? To what extent did the variety of pressures cause a wide-scale conversion to free labor before 1888, as Conrad affirms?

Having driven Brazilian society to the brink of revolution, the abolitionists after 1888 rapidly shifted from economic and political reforms to rear-guard battles over indemnification and sudden devotion to the previously slaveocrat republican cause. Toplin argues that the successful abolitionists yielded so quickly because “political power remained in the hands of the great *fazendeiros*” (p. 257). But this answer does not satisfy since the planters never lost political power even during the height of the anti-slavery campaign. To what extent, in other words, did planter success in coopting and defusing abolitionism depend upon the character and goals of anti-slavery leaders and their principal supporters?

Students of Brazilian slavery, probably the most numerous group

now working in Brazilian social history, will enjoy reading Toplin's fast-moving narrative. Its inclusion on course syllabi, however, will more likely depend upon its ability to compete with California's paperback edition of Conrad's book than upon its intrinsic merits.

Rutgers University

PETER L. EISENBERG

Socialismo e Sindicalismo no Brasil, 1675-1913. By EDGAR RODRIGUES. Rio de Janeiro, 1969. Laemmert. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 346.

Nacionalismo & Cultura Social, 1913-1922. By EDGAR RODRIGUES. Rio de Janeiro, 1972. Laemmert. Appendix. Bibliography. Pp. 462.

Edgar Rodrigues, sympathetic to anarchism, relies heavily on the proletarian press to give the best documented account yet to appear about the Brazilian labor movement during the first twenty-two years of this century. The narrative in his two volumes sometimes jumps quickly from topic to topic and place to place, and it describes events from a proletarian viewpoint that often omits mention of the immediate causes of specific acts of repression. Nevertheless, Rodrigues's pages, filled with prose and verse taken from heretofore uncited papers, constitute a rich storehouse of information about the thinking that prevailed in a sector much neglected by historians.

Early pages, dealing with past centuries, mention areas occupied by runaway slaves, the settlement at Canudos, and the colonies established by Giovanni Rossi, Artur Campagnoli, and other idealists, with the author, whenever possible, calling attention to the prevalence of anarchist principles (direct action, free love, collective work, equality, and freedom from the State). Mixed in with such information one finds mention of an extraordinarily large number of worker, socialist, and anarchist newspapers that appeared, usually briefly, in the nineteenth century. The first state labor congress to be discussed is that of Rio Grande do Sul, held in 1898.

Footnotes for 1905-1910 show the use of an excellent source, *A Terra Livre*, published by the learned anarchist from Portugal, Neno Vasco, with the help of Edgar Leuenroth and Manuel Moscoso. Neno Vasco employed a modern spelling similar to that later adopted in Brazil.

To a larger extent than may be apparent in these volumes, the strike movement occurred in waves related to business conditions and labor markets. At the crests, organizers would call for national labor congresses. For these, held in 1906, 1913, and 1920, Rodrigues has good