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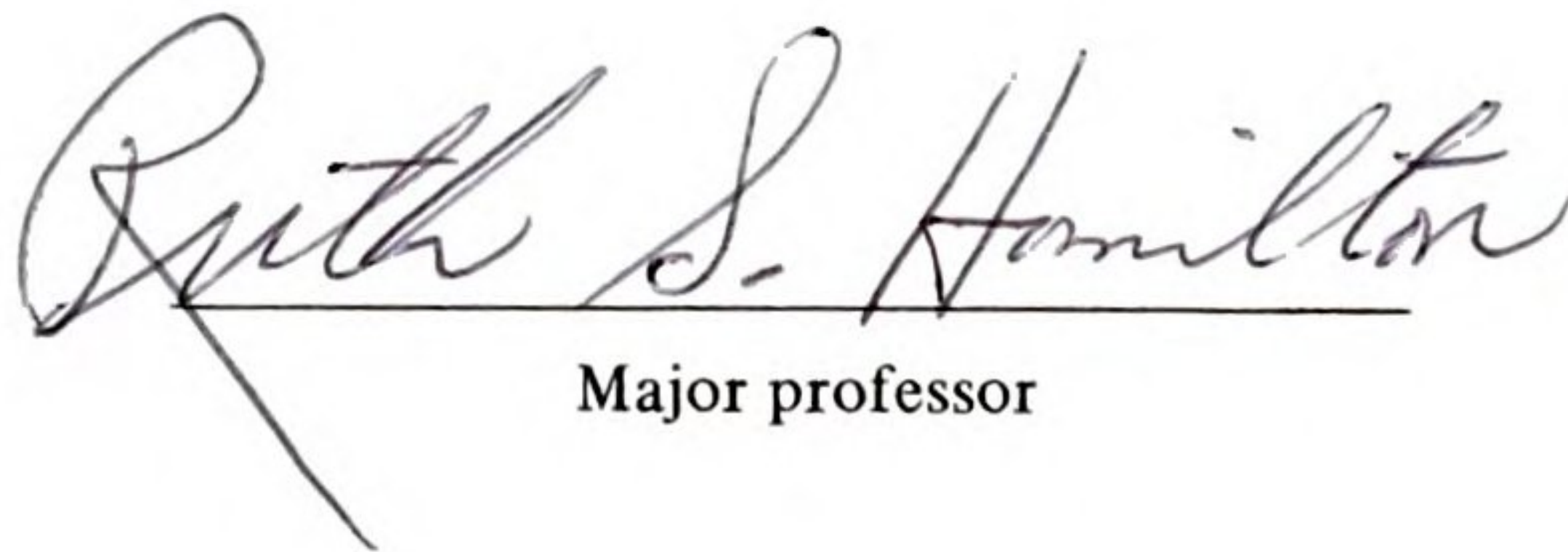
WEST INDIAN MIGRATION TO BRAZIL

presented by

VERA LUCIA BENEDITO

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

M.A degree in SOCIOLOGY/URBAN STUDIES


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WEST INDIAN MIGRATION TO BRAZIL

By

Vera Lucia Benedito

A THESIS

Submitted to
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

WEST INDIAN MIGRATION TO BRAZIL

By

Vera Lucia Benedito

This thesis deals with the migratory movement of labor from West Indies to Brazil from 1907 to 1912. The construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railway between the Brazilian border with Bolivia accounts for this migratory flow. The main questions aim to clarify: a) the interconnections between international capital and West Indian migration to Brazil; b) the role of the state and private enterprises in the consolidation of the international capitalism through the legal codes of emigration and immigration; and c) how racial division of labor is placed within this context. The major findings coming out this research attest: a) the state as unit of the broader world economic system regulates the flow, direction and size of spatial movement of labor through immigration laws; b) racial division of labor emerges as a mechanism of social control; and c) despite structural determinants workers act on their own behalf.

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1990

Dedication

In memory of Suzana Alves de Souza Benedito,
my mother, symbol of love and wisdom.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This thesis addresses an aspect of African diaspora studies that is little known, the labor migratory movement of West Indians to Brazil at the turn of the century. The construction of the Madeira-Mamoré Railway, on the Brazilian border with Bolivia, was the event directly related to the coming of almost five thousand West Indians to Brazil from 1907 to 1912.¹

"Bajan Hill" or "Alto do Bode" (Goat Hill) was the designated West Indian settlement in Porto Velho, capital of Rondonia state. Since most West Indians coming to the place were originally from Barbados, the expression "Barbadiano" was the signifier for all black people from the West Indies.² The name of the settlement tells us about the customs through which West Indians came to be known. It is said that they had the habit of raising domestic animals such as chickens, pigs and principally goats, in the backyard of their houses, therefore wherever the designation was applied to the West Indian settlement it indicated the origin and customs of their inhabitants.³

The formation of this settlement is markedly identified with the birth of Porto Velho Town. In this camp where the machine shop of the railway used to be located, administrators and some of the specialized workers such as carpenters and blacksmith, used to live.⁴

Forming a community of English-speaking people, they built their houses which resembled the Barbadian Vernacular Architecture with its rectangular form and gable-roofs.⁵ Moreover, they followed the religious and educational tradition of the British West Indies, a system adopted

until the 1930s.⁶

It is considered that Barbadians were responsible for the introduction of the residential construction industry in Porto Velho.⁷ When in 1930 the Brazilian government decreed the nationalization of all foreign investments in the country, the English technicians in charge of the management of the railway had to return to their country of origin and so did many West Indians. However, those West Indians that decided to stay had the option of becoming naturalized Brazilian citizens, many did. They replaced the technicians and managers of the machine shops of the Madeira-Mamoré railway.⁸ Officially, this was the process of integration of West Indians into Brazilian society. "Bajan Hill" became part of the old section of Porto Velho until the beginning of the 1970s, when it was finally leveled to make way for a new military settlement in the region.⁹

The purpose of this thesis is to understand why and under which conditions West Indians came to Brazil. An integral part of these questions is an analysis of the World Economic System as related to migratory movement of labor to a society based on the Plantation system operated in Brazil at a particular point in time. Given the nature of the restrictive immigration policies regarding African peoples, how did they become incorporated into Brazilian society?

All these questions and others will be addressed within the context of the World System theory based on migration models of the sociologists Elizabeth Mclean Petras and Alejandro Portes. Since the migratory process of West Indians to Brazil is just one dimension in their pattern of spatial mobility, a major theoretical concern is clarification of the extent to which these models help us to grasp the racial division of labor, a process during this phase of consolidation that remains a

characteristic of present day societies.

a) Rationale for the Study

International capital, labor migration and state regulations are fundamental aspects of the movement of African peoples and the formation of the diaspora in the Americas, and in particular in Brazil. In general, the above concerns will provide insights into the extent to which international capital and labor have operated within cross-national boundaries regardless of domestic state policies controlling the flow, direction and size of labor migration. For instance, by the time West Indians went to Brazil, the Brazilian state, through local administrations, was promoting a mass movement of European workers to Brazil.

b) The Scope of the Study

This study aims to focus on two interrelated problems. The first is the interconnection between international capital and West Indian labor migration to Brazil. Second, this study aims to clarify the role of the state and private enterprises in the consolidation of the international capitalism through the legal codes of emigration and immigration. The time frame will be from 1907 to 1912, the period during which the Madeira-Mamoré Railway was built.

c) Methodological and Analytical Approach

The methodological basis in which this research is grounded is historiographic and documentary. Secondary source material include journals, newspapers and magazines related to this study. Qualitative analysis will be drawn from the interpretative theories of labor migration, especially Petras's and Portes's model. Given the specificity of the movement of West Indian Blacks to Brazil, Ruth Simms Hamilton's theoretical approach of the African Diaspora at a global level, especially the concepts of geo-socio displacement: the circularity of a people will be of fundamental relevance.

CHAPTER I

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The flow of goods, natural resources and people from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia would be especially vital to the industrialization process in Europe and in North America. Industrialization, urbanization, and attendant processes have been directly related to the migratory flows of peoples of African descent.¹

Ruth Simms Hamilton

a) Macro Conceptual Context

Hamilton's conceptual framework of the African (Black) Diaspora, from which the quotation above was drawn, gives us a picture of the circumstances in which the dispersion of the African diaspora peoples throughout the world took place.

The Fifteenth century onward marked definitively the first order of displacement of the Africans, from the continent to the New World. Successive migratory flows, at a global level, spelled out the impact of this historical momentum, the effect of which is felt up to the present in societies where African descents are integrated.

In this sense, the concept of geo-socio displacement, the circularity of a people, is particularly relevant for the case-study of West Indian migration to Brazil. It facilitates the understanding, at least, of four fundamental aspects of this migratory flow: 1) it enables us to grasp the type of flow that characterized West Indian migration to Brazil; 2) it places the historical conditioning over time and space related to this process; 3) it facilitates the establishment of comparative patterns of

migratory flows; 4) it allows us to understand how the direction, size and magnitude of the flows are related to the social formations of a people from what they were, what they became, and what they will be.

1) Type of flows. In Hamilton's scheme, three types of flows, with sub-types, characterize the movement of African diaspora peoples throughout:

- Flows within each of the three geo-socio centers of Africa, New World-Old World, and Metropolitan
- Flows between the three geo-social centers of which there are two subtypes with Africa as the central point of reference
- Flows from Africa to New World-Old World centers to Metropolitan centers and back to Africa
- Flows from Africa to Metropolitan centers to New World-Old World centers and back to Africa
- Flows between two of the three major geo-social centers
- Flows between African centers and Metropolitan centers
- Flows between Metropolitan centers and New World-Old World centers
- Flows between New World-Old World centers and African centers.²

The historical geographical mobility of African peoples reflects the essence of these flows that can be translated in temporary or permanent spatial mobility such as labor movement whether coerced, indentured or spontaneous, refugees which can imply political, economic or religious movement, return movement characteristic of pan-Africanist movements throughout the world from the 1960s and 1970s decades onward, "brain-drain", and undocumented migration among others types of flows.³ All these spatial displacements involve complex processes, the significance of which express the circulatoriness of a people over time and space which in turn conditioned the emergence of the new social formations within the scope of the larger world economic system.⁴

2) Historical Conditioning - The successive displacements of African peoples derived from the first large-scale intercontinental migratory processes. Its inception relies on the development and consolidation of capitalism in Europe and North America culminating with the advent of the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century onward.⁵ Thus, the subsequent societal formations of the global diasporas are historically and materially located, where the changes introduced by the development of late capitalism led to the rearrangements of the societal structures establishing new guidelines for economic development, money transactions, business, values, ideas and migratory flow of people.⁶

3) Comparative Patterns - Derived from the historical conditionings, the size, direction and flows of African diaspora people can be comparatively evaluated, quantitatively and qualitatively, reflecting the substantial transformations of the geo-socio displacements over time and space.⁷

In summary, geo-socio displacement, in Hamilton's evaluation means that:

... circularity of a population, over time and space, occurs within a complex web of relationships involving people, objects and ideas, conditioned within and standing in relationship to the larger world system.⁸

Therefore, the conditions of the larger world system at the time of the migratory movement of West Indians to Brazil are to be discussed in the following pages.

Referring to the interconnection of Latin American countries and the World Economy prior to 1914, Mosk emphasizes that at least three institutional arrangements were basic for the consolidation of the World

Economy at that time.⁹ They were:

...(1) freedom for international trade; (2) freedom for the migration of people; (3) a flow of capital from the countries of western Europe to the less developed parts of the world.¹⁰

Explaining the significance of these three factors, he argues that, in fact, freedom for international trade meant literally multilateral trade whereby the system implied not only exchange in commodities, but also encompassed international transactions in services and finances.¹¹ Taking England as an example, he contends:

The export of capital and the transfer of earnings on capital invested abroad, particularly as these relate to England, were of the utmost importance for the functioning of the whole system.¹²

He complements this information stressing that protectionist laws before 1914 were minimal and consequently international trade in this period of time mushroomed.¹³

As for the second factor, intercontinental mass migration, Mosk asserts that governmental legislations controlling migratory flows were insignificant. This proved to be beneficial chiefly considering that Europe had undergone a process of readjustment caused by the pace of technological development.¹⁴ He illustrates this contention by saying that in the last half of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century several countries of eastern and southern Europe experienced a decline in their agricultural production due to the competition of the products of the new territories in the European markets.¹⁵ Therefore, immigration besides being a "safety-valve" for Europe, implied:

... a readjustment in European agriculture by which agrarian distress was alleviated through emigration. In thus relieving social and economic tensions in Europe, emigration kept down the incentive to adopt nationalistic economic policies which would have weakened and perhaps even destroyed the international economy.¹⁶

The third institutional condition, as Mosk poses, was linked to the international mobility of capital. He stresses that England, prior to 1914, was the great exporter of capital and so were other countries from Europe and the United States. As a result of this climate of economic expansionism, big enterprises were undertaken all over the world involving extraction of mineral deposits, construction of canals and railways where the foreign capital set the pace of network building of public facilities such as power companies, water works, street car systems, telephone and telegraphic lines.¹⁷ Going even further on these explanations of World Economy of that time, he points out:

Loans made to governments were often used for similar purposes, including railroad construction, and in this way additional sums of European capital were indirectly invested in overseas development. On the side of direct investment, in addition to what has already been mentioned, substantial amounts of foreign capital went into agricultural production in some areas where plantations were organized to supply specialty products for world markets (e.g., rubber).¹⁸

All these indicators of the World Economy at the turn of the century are of fundamental relevance to understanding West Indian migration to Brazil. However, theoretical consideration pertaining to small or large-scale labor migration over time and space are better explained by the literature on Labor Migration theories.

b) Labor Migration Theories

Competing theories in the field of Labor Migration attempt to explain the displacement of people from one place to another. The theoretical frameworks developed by several Social Science disciplines display an array of factors accounting for the movement of populations across space and national boundaries. These factors comprise: individual motivation, economic determinants, political unrests and refugees, natural cataclysms, religious persecutions, racial conflicts and so on.

The process of selection, transportation and settlement of foreign workers into alien lands came to establish, historically, a pattern of human movement that in migration theory has received many interpretations.

Among the interpretations of these social phenomena, two of them, still subject of intense debate, include the "push pull" model as the fundamental theoretical approach of the population movement. The alternative approach that is given to explain the large-scale migratory movement, particularly of the African Diaspora people, encompasses the historical and structural forces that have traditionally determined the flow, direction and size of the migratory movement.

The essence of the "push-pull" model stresses that individual's motivation, rather than the core of structural forces accounts for the act and decision to move. "Push" is translated as the prevailing socio-economic conditions in a given geographical space pushing the individual out of the distressed area to another region or place - pull - where opportunity for betterment of living conditions is maximized under the assumption of "want-satisfaction".¹⁹

Taylor has observed elsewhere that this "purposive-rational behavior"

is dichotomized in uniquely economic terms. In this sense, the individual's decision to move outweighs the dimension of the group's mobility through one single structural aspect: the economic.²⁰

Within the framework of the "push-pull" model, Henderson argues that a combination of factors such as civil wars, political coups, national autocracies along with economic distress and natural cataclysms provide the driving motivations inducing migration.²¹

But, even considering other variables as the return migration, "brain drain" and refugee perspectives, Henderson confines these factors to the "push-pull" model in which he stresses that:

Push factors result in involuntary migration choices where survival prevails over employment as a migratory motivation.²²

However, followers of this line of thought fail to explain other remaining aspects of the continuous displacement of the population, according to other students of labor migration.²³ They are:

- a) entire populations which do not abandon their places of origin despite economic, political and natural distress;
- b) the spatial mobility of people obeys specific forms of flows, the essence of which is historically conditioned;
- c) in general, the population movements follow patterns, the direction, size and flow of which are closely controlled by state regulation;
- d) the movement of people to and from countries occurs within geo-socio and political units of the world economic system;
- e) the dimension of the return migration;
- f) essentially, what characterizes large-scale migratory movement is labor movement.²⁴

These factors mentioned above are linked to another line of thought that consider that it is absolutely necessary to grasp the movement of population as historically conditioned to a complexity of structural factors where social forces, rather than individual's decision determines the flow, direction and size of the migratory movement.²⁵ To this respect, Hamilton has emphasized:

The genesis of a people cannot be divorced from their material existence, the political and economic context within which they come into being and within which they have endured for over five centuries. It follows that continuing dispersion must be viewed as directly related to the material realities, the conditioning factors, and to the strategies for coping with constraints and contradictions over time and space.²⁶

Therefore, the case-study of the migratory movement of West Indians to Brazil prioritizes this second line of thought. In doing so, a major theoretical perspective based on Portes's model will help to frame the questions of this investigation.

What makes Portes unique in the school of Labor Migration theory is his understanding of the convergence of economic reasons and the strategies of survival that human groups have developed throughout history.²⁷ Essentially, this is translated in what Hamilton has emphasized as the ability of group of people acting for themselves in a specific and historically defined context.²⁸

Advancing the historical framework in which international labor migration does occur, Portes elaborated four major processes by which labor migration is developed and conditioned.²⁹ In summary, they are:

1. Conditions under which labor migration can be induced;
2. Conditions under which labor can be released and transported;
3. Conditions under which migrant labor can be profitably utilized;

4. Conditions under which workers themselves can put migration to economic advantage.

1. Conditions under which labor migration can be induced;

Portes emphasizes that internal imbalances are induced from the outside forces when there is an interrelation between political and economic institutions of dominant societies and the subordinate ones. The result of this interconnection induces to labor displacement.³⁰

To clarify this point of how external forces end up promoting internal imbalances Portes asserts that there are three ideal stages of the process of incorporation of outlying areas into the capitalist economy.

In the first stage, the outlying area has not yet been incorporated into the expansion of capitalism. At this level he observes that spontaneous migration does not occur.³¹

The second stage represents the phase of trade and commercial relationships between colonial powers and outlying areas. Labor is a commodity obtained through the mediation of local chiefs, consequently spontaneous migration also does not occur.³²

The third stage establishes the incorporation of the outlying area as the periphery of the capitalist center. This process represents the articulation of political and structural powers. Therefore, new social structures emerge in the outlying region as a result of changes of cultural values and expectations, and consequently a migratory process occurs in response of these internal and external imbalances. The characteristic of this process is that displacement of labor is spontaneous.³³ Therefore, derived from internal and

external imbalances, manual and nonmanual labor migration occur as the strategies of survival undertaken by workers themselves to cope with the political and economic constraints.³⁴ As Portes emphasizes:

Migration becomes an economic movement for the migrants as well as for users of their labor. Economic inducements often lead workers to transport themselves to areas where their labor is needed and to assume all risks of the passage. This 'spontaneous' migration naturally cheapens costs relative to earlier forms of labor procurement.³⁵

In the case of nonmanual labor migration or "brain drain", Portes asserts that this type of migration is a complex process since the internal imbalancing results primarily as the articulation between peripheral and core institutions.³⁶

This specific migratory movement occurs due primarily to the technological hegemony of the center powers over the periphery. This proposition is summarized in the following terms:

The Technological hegemony exercised by the United States and other advanced countries has meant the continuous reproduction of new procedures and professional practices in the periphery. Advanced training programs implanted in the latter are congruent with professional requirements of the exporting nations, but often at odds with those in receiving ones. Structural imbalances leading to emigration occur when local labor market demand proves weak, or non-existent, for the cohorts of workers trained in externally induced modes of practices.³⁷

This perspective is also shared by Elizabeth Mclean Petras a global labor market theorist who argues that what markedly characterizes the difference between core, semi-periphery and periphery is labor remuneration, translated in social benefits. In her accounts, the core workers receive the benefit from a high level of urbanization and economic development translated into modern and advanced social welfare such as

medical care, education, housing and means of transportation while workers in low wages zones are faraway from sharing the same level of economic development. Moreover, the level of urbanization, though accelerated, is compromised by the internal migration caused by the constant displacement of agricultural workers to urban zones.³⁸ Therefore:

Unequal wage zone levels within a world division of labor are replicated within economic sectors, among geographic regions, and throughout labor markets.³⁹

2. Conditions under which labor can be released and transported;

In Portes's evaluation, labor migration occurs in favor of the interest of dominant groups in the periphery as well as in the core societies. It appears that the ever increasing penetration of world capitalism into outlying areas ease the resistance of local dominant classes whereby four major processes become essential to release labor:

a) the growing facilities to replace labor with machinery; b) the increasing interpenetration between places at different levels of development, which permits recall of part of the migrant labor force in times of need or the tapping of labor reserves from even less developed regions; c) the general adaptation of economic enterprise in the periphery to conditions set by an internationalized economy, of which migration is a central component; and, d) the role of remittances, both as a palliative to the condition of the work force left behind and, in the case of international migration, as a major source of foreign exchange.⁴⁰

Regardless of these factors mentioned above, Portes observes that what has characterized large-scale migratory movement over the last 150 years are deliberate recruitment and self-transportation. Comparing the recruitment process undertaken in similar basis in countries as Argentina,

Chile, Paraguay and Brazil at the turn of the century, he mentions that in all these countries attitudes of encouragement were present either by governmental financial support or even by private support where employers backed up the costs of transportation and settlement of immigrants.⁴¹ To this respect he observes:

Thus, active recruitment of migrant labor had to be conducted in many expanding economies not because objective opportunities did not exist, but because insufficient linkages existed to make available populations aware of economic opportunities or to make their physical displacement a straightforward matter.⁴²

Portes concludes that different from early times labor migration nowadays is self-transported and self-initiated given the pace of World Economy and the development of means of communication and transportation.⁴³

Regarding the exogenous social forces that also condition the release and transportation of labor, Petras observes that policies of state regarding the labor movement across-boundaries may reflect internal needs of a major economic sector whereby:

State legislation regulating population movement within a world labor market thus appears in response to sectoral economic needs, to cyclical economic patterns, to secular trends of individual economies as well as that of the world-economy in general, to evolving technological rationalization of production, and to historically specific events.⁴⁴

Consequently, restrictions based on state legislations might be centered primarily on the criteria of selection of candidates or groups willing to seek job opportunities abroad. Selection, then, can be grounded on racial or ethnic terms as expressed in the systems of quotas whereby only individuals of selected nationality can be granted permits to work overseas.⁴⁵

Within the frame of world-system, the state legislates the structure of inequalities, since the state does not treat all groups or sectors of capital at the same level:

Where legal regulations of immigration are concerned, state policies sometimes reflect conflict between sectors of capital.⁴⁶

This can be translated into conflicts derived from monopoly of capital vs monopoly of labor organization, or conflict of interests between large-scale capital sectors vs small-scale capital sectors.⁴⁷ In any case, those conflicts upon immigration or migration legal codes, constantly have served "to perpetuate the structure and location of states within the international division of labor",⁴⁸ following which:

It may take the form of government-to-government or government-to-industry labor recruitment or screening, granting of permission to another state to recruit from among its citizens, or cooperation over immigration restrictions as a trade-off for benefits received in another realm.⁴⁹

3. Conditions under which migrant labor can be profitably utilized;

The main thesis of this topic is to suggest that the continuum in the process of labor migration is to guarantee a supply of cheap labor rather than an eventual supplement of labor. The author backs this contention exemplifying the historical resistance of American working class to the mass immigration process that took place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁵⁰ What he observes is that basically the question of cheapness of labor is of a political nature. Workers having immigrant status are politically vulnerable and therefore subject to economic and political

manipulation.

Analyzing the political vulnerability of workers Petras ponders that workers abroad are under jurisdiction of national legislations of the receiving countries that regulate their rights to come and go as well as their rights to acquire citizenships.⁵¹ Moreover, the distinction between national workers as opposed to immigrant workers is only an artificial division created to attend the designs of the administrative boundaries of the world economic system.⁵²

As for the question of the cheap labor and political manipulation, Portes asserts that cheapness of labor per se is not an attribute inherent to migrant or immigrant workers themselves, nor is it a condition of the migratory process itself.⁵³ Exemplifying this question, he recalls the North American experience in the late nineteenth century and early twenty century when the American working-class opposed the coming of immigrant workers to the country due primarily to the condition under which their gains would be lowered in consequence of a surplus labor promoted by the capitalists.⁵⁴

In the same way, the condition of poverty of rural-urban migrants in underdeveloped countries exerts the same sort of political manipulation when these workers face the competition in the labor market in the urban areas.⁵⁵

Beyond political manipulation, migrant workers can also be trapped in the policies of exclusion. South Africa, for example, offers the best examples whereby the confinement of South African workers in protectorates has transformed them in immigrants within their own territory which ultimately excludes them from their political rights.⁵⁶

4. Conditions under which workers themselves can put migration to economic advantage;

This last proposition Portes calls network building. Essentially it discharges the traditional interpretation of the migration process characterized by human flows moving across space due solely to economic opportunities while leaving behind empty spaces.⁵⁷ His assertion is based on three visible indicators:

- (a) the survival and frequent growth of peripheral places of out-migration;
- (b) the survival of migrants in the urban centers;
- (c) substantial proportions of return migration and of multiple periodical displacements between two or more regions.⁵⁸

In-and-Out migration is perceived as a phenomena which is part of the same international economic order. The international economic system is unevenly distributed across space whereby the centers provide a better chance for wages, while in the periphery opportunities for the development of informal sector is increased.⁵⁹ The survival of in or out migrants is guaranteed by a continuous process of network building where:

The microstructures thus created not only permit survival of the exploited, but often constitute a significant undercurrent, running counter to dominant structures of exploitation.⁶⁰

This condition is appropriately analyzed by Hamilton's theoretical framework of the capacity of endurance, resistance and continuity of diaspora people throughout history in which despite the physical displacement of groups of people:

Accordingly, a people are not simply reactors but creators, devising their own mechanisms of survival, their own ideological

tools and social networks, their own vehicles of struggles over time and space. This is the cultural process, a dynamic creative expression of the totality of relationships which characterize their physical and historical reality.⁶¹

That is the mechanisms of survival that entices immigrants, migrants, undocumented workers to create and sustain informal sectors of the economies through the network building peculiar of all units of the broader world economy.⁶²

Therefore, the labor migration theories presented above do not exhaust the theoretical approaches accounting for the population movement. The works of the sociologists Alejandro Portes and Elizabeth Mclean Petras give us a better perspective of the implications of the labor migration process, at global level, where several variables are inextricably connected through the unequal remuneration of labor, state regulation regarding the size and direction of the migratory flows, the several conditions in which labor is utilized and the way migrants themselves take economic advantage of this intricate puzzle of the contemporary international economic order.

However, given these perspectives, in both theoretical frameworks the discussion of the implication of race as one of the major components of the making of immigration policies is lacking, hence, a topic dealing directly with this issue is absolutely necessary. Consequently, the following discussion brings complementary explanations of the ideological implications of race in the immigration policies.

c) Race and Immigration Policies

If the immigrant is to make a successful adaption to his new society, he should be able to identify and achieve the feeling of belonging to the new society.⁶³

Ramcharan observed in the quotation above that the degree of success immigrants achieve in a new society is measured by their ability to cope and identify themselves in a new environment.⁶⁴ It is also not by chance that the contention starts with a conditional conjunction - if - as the pre-requisite of a definitive action, especially if we consider the context of immigration policies in contemporary societies.⁶⁵

Historical records suggest that a large mass of potential nonwhite immigrants have been precluded throughout history from the opportunities to seek betterment of their living conditions across frontiers because of their racial affiliation.⁶⁶

It is exactly within the body of legislations towards immigration policies that the ascription of racial phenotype is highlighted as the condition sine qua non that has regulated the size and direction of the migratory process over time and space.

The sociological literature on the subject of ethnic membership and accessibility to spatial mobility offers a broad range of interpretations ranging from race relations, political economy to sociology of space. The later is primarily the realm of political geographers who have dedicated voluminous studies upon the mobility of social and ethnic groups in given national or cross-national boundaries⁶⁷.

Students of race relations have argued that race and racism as ideological tools, rather than structural concepts, have been reconstructed throughout history, according to the nature of the

socio-political, economic and ideological relations of a given social formation⁶⁸.

One of the followers⁶⁹ of this current of interpretation has suggested that racism based on the skin color is not coterminous with the genesis of the capitalist development. Rather, racism has been recodified in the process of the consolidation of capitalism. Its inception as an ideological attribute of differentiation among social groups goes back to the period prior to the fifteenth century. The Bible, in his judgment, is the most evident historical record accounting for this phenomena.

Another paradigm of race relations has placed the ascription of class structure, within the framework of capitalism, as the major event responsible for the emergence of racism based on the color line. The main assumption here is that the transformation of the modes of production of the capitalist system into a classless society would end the de-reconstructing nature of racism⁷⁰.

Another line of thought is one that refers to the development of capitalism from the fifteenth century onward as the historical and structural phenomena accounting for the contemporary globalization of racism or the racialization of the modern world.⁷¹

Modern societies have experienced transformations of their modes of production in one degree or another, but the ethnic hatred as an ideological apparatus of differentiation has become a characteristic of social formations.

It seems that in the case of Africans and African Diaspora people, the stigma of color goes beyond the legacy of slavery and the transformation of the relations of production. For instance, even societal formations of

African groups that did not experience the effects of the diaspora, and the slave mode of production, are still condemed to be permanently stigmatized as a distinct group subject of legal codes of social policies across national-boundaries throughout.

In the context of social policies, regardless of the multiracial character of most societies of the New World, the ascription of race has been one of the most defining factors accounting for the state regulations regarding immigration policies. And the weight with which those regulations fall upon nonwhite groups is widely reported as Ramcharan in the study of nonwhites in Canada has observed:

Given Canada's racist immigration policy prior to the amendments of the Immigration Act in 1962, the inability to extend equal opportunities in the social and economic structure is not surprising. The race relations problems that are developing are directly related to the presence of the belief that these newcomers are socially and culturally inferior, and as a such are fit for no more than an inferior role and status in the society.⁷²

In this contention, what is strikingly clear is the correlation between the existence of discriminatory immigration policies towards nonwhites and the limited life-chance opportunities these groups enjoy within the structure of Canadian society.

This example, however, is not confined to Canada. In Britain, Phizacklea and Miles⁷³ have analyzed the conditions in which the variables racism and migrant labor have been attached to black workers from New Commowealth countries. Forming the bulk of the labor migration to Britain from early 1950s to 1968, these workers had a distinct feature in relation to most other immigrant groups.

New Commowealth migrants upon their arrival in Britain had the same

political-legal rights assured as the native population. According to the legal codes they were considered "equal", but, in reality they suffered racial discrimination in housing and employment, since up to 1962 racial discrimination was not an offense punishable by law⁷⁴.

Social significance is commonly attached to any migrant group due to physical characteristics, language, cultural diversity and customs. But, it seems that the ascription of skin color is far the most identifying element of social differentiation as far as social, political, economic and ideological relations are concerned. In Britain's case, Phizacklea and Miles observe:

...there is evidence to demonstrate that governments, individual politicians, neo-facist political organisations, the mass media, employers, institutions of the labour movement and sections of the working class in Britain have all acted and articulated racist beliefs which have identified black migrant workers as an excluded racial category.⁷⁵

These trends, however, are not particular to Canada or Britain. Price⁷⁶ in his article about restriction upon nonwhite immigration has emphasized that in several Anglo-Saxon controlled countries as British Columbia, New Zealand and Australia, discriminatory attitudes against Asians and Africans were racially and economically motivated. And yet, Both factors were instrumental in the implementation of amendments such as the Goldfields Amendment Act in 1876 in Australia.

In the case of Australia, discriminatory practices economically grounded lead the government to implement immigration policies targetting Chinese workers. Given the fact that the Chinese were willing to work in the gold mines of Queensland in exchange for low-wages, white Australians perceived this attitude as a threat, a factor that could de-stabilize

their labor remuneration. As a consequence white Australians working in the gold mines of Queensland, went on strike demanding from the authorities prohibition on Asian immigration to the country. Therefore, in 1877, a new Amendment to the Act 1877 definitively prohibited Asians from working in any gold field.⁷⁷

Aside from those arguments economically motivated, racial discrimination permeated the applicability of the immigration policies towards nonwhite potential immigrants. Advocates of such a policies emphasized the necessity to preserve the homogeneity of the population.⁷⁸

The ideological justification for such attitudes, according to London,⁷⁹ relied on the philosophic character of the nineteenth century social Darwinism that inaugurated the scientific racism which in turn gained followers throughout the world. Rather than being an isolated phenomena, this same argument was employed by the majority of the countries experiencing small or large-scale migratory movement towards the nineteenth century onward.⁸⁰

Extraordinarily, the same arguments employed by Anglo-Saxon dominated countries regarding the race question was also found in the arguments of the multiracial societies of the New World as justification for regulating the migratory flows of nonwhite groups. It can be argued that those arguments were racially and economically motivated. Westerman has pointed out that the restrictive laws controlling immigration based on racial criteria go back to 1904 where Chinese were prohibited from entering Panama. Few years later other groups such as Syrian, Turkish and North Africans were also considered undesirable.⁸¹

In 1926, a new legislation prohibited the coming of West Indians and citizens from the Guyanas. This legislation was reinforced eleven years

later when all non Spanish-speaking African descents were excluded to perform any skilled or semi-skilled jobs.⁸² In the same study, Westerman observes that at least seven other Latino-American countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Venezuela and Bolivia excluded African descents from entering their countries.⁸³

In the case of Panama, the exclusion of African descent people, in particular the West Indians and other groups, was perceived as Panamanian nationalism. For example, Alfaro, in an essay addressed to the Federation of Panamanian Students stressed that:

...tenemos una civilización latina seriamente amenazada a menos que nuestros dirigentes tomen las medidas necesarias para contrarrestar el establecimiento de un poderoso núcleo de una raza extraña, con todas sus características manifestaciones en el corazón de Latinoamérica.⁸⁴

(We have a civilization seriously threatened unless our leaders take the necessary measures to counteract the establishment of a powerful nucleus of a strange race with all its characteristic manifestations in the heart of Latin America).

In summary, analyzing these restrictions in Latin American countries in sight of Labor Migration theories, this is not a surprise if we consider the countries of the New World as units of the broader World Economic System whether periphery or semi-periphery. Flow of capital also means flow of peoples and ideas.

Historically, the idea of race superiority of whites over the rest of the social groups throughout has led to a selectivity of groups moving across space. Banton refers to a social categorization of race as a way to preserve the division of labor in color bounds.⁸⁵

In this sense, aspects of Petras's analytical framework of Global

Labor Market make sense when she asserts that division of labor in the World Economic System places workers from the core in the highest rank in the economic order whereby they receive the real remuneration for their jobs translated in social benefits as medical care, education and housing, while workers from the periphery are those in the lowest rank selling their labor force for minimum social benefits in return.⁸⁶

However, what is not emphasized in most Labor Migration theories advocating the paradigms of the World System theory is that the division of labor in wage-zones also may correspond to a racial division of labor which has led scholars to conclude that the large-scale intercontinental migration along with the transformation of the means of productions over the last 150 years or so brought about the racialization of the modern world⁸⁷.

Seeing race as an ideological social construction of empowered social groups of dominant societies in the context of World Economy, social policies as immigration regulations are an appendix of the real nature of the structure of inequalities affecting most of the Third World constituted mostly by nonwhite groups.

d) Working Propositions

Given the explanations related to labor migration and state regulations and the character of race in the implementation of immigration policies, along with the theoretical concept of geo-socio displacement: circularity of a people, four working propositions derived from this review will guide our discussion towards West Indian Migration to Brazil:

Proposition 1: Uneven development among economic units within the larger world economic system induces cyclical migratory movement of labor over time and space:

- a) Regional socio-political and economic imbalances yields unequal remuneration of labor and this induces migratory movement of labor.

Proposition 2: The conditions in which labor is released and recruited depend on three interrelated phenomena:

- a) Workers themselves act on their own behalf given internal and external structural conditions;
- b) the dynamics of the World Economic system facilitates the penetration of the international capitalism across boundaries whereby labor mobilization over space constitutes one of the basis of the whole structure;
- c) state legislations over time facilitate or restrain the mobilization of labor across boundaries according to their own interests, national ideologies and its level of insertion in the world economy.

Proposition 3: The State as a unit of the broader world economic system regulates the direction, size and selection of the migratory movement of labor:

- a) at the national level, direction, size and

selection of migratory flows may occur attending regional and sectorial economies;

- b) at cross national level, direction, selection and size of migratory flows might occur according to the pace of international capital articulated politically and economically with local states.

Proposition 4: Within the frame of the world economic system, race as a social category becomes a tool of political and economic manipulation on behalf of the state and interest groups.

The organization of the remaining chapters reflect the working propositions discussed above. Chapter 3 emphasizes what was happening in Brazil at the turn of the century in terms of the international mobilization of capital and labor attending the development of regional economies of the North and the South regions, and how West Indian migration to Brazil was an important aspect of the expansion of international capital. Chapter 4 gives a perspective of the circulatoriness of West Indians throughout the Caribbean, Central and South America in search of their own survival. The final part of this chapter emphasizes how West Indians acted on their own behalf despite historical and structural conditionings over time and space. Chapter 5 focuses on the discussion of race and immigration policies in Brazil given the fact that West Indians were the only group of African descents allowed to come to the country in the contemporary period due primarily to national ideologies that prioritized european migration over others social groupings.

CHAPTER II

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER III

MADEIRA-MAMORÉ RAILWAY AND THE INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION OF CAPITAL AND LABOR IN BRAZIL

a) Expansion of International Capital in Brazil

External and internal structural forces account for the historical conditionings of the international mobilization of labor from Africa, Asia and Europe to countries of Central and South America. One of the external forces can be attributed to the expansion of international capital led primarily by European entrepreneurs in the second half of the nineteenth century, and by North American entrepreneurs in the first two decades of this century. This economic conditioning provided an opening of new job opportunities in this part of the hemisphere coupled with the development of industries and urban centers.

One of the elements of the internal structural forces can be related to the articulation of peripheral units with the larger World Economic System at the time, as Brazil, for instance, at the turn of the century. The southern states of the country, principally São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul had been promoting a migratory movement of labor from Europe since the early 1880s.¹

In the scope of the foreign investment in Brazil, for instance, England in the period between 1860 to 1902 had the majority of investments in the country, accounting for 77.6% of the money invested, followed by France, Germany and Belgium with 5.9%, 4.3% and 4.0% respectively, for a total of 104,925,815 sterling pounds, as the following table illustrates:

TABLE 1 - FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN BRAZIL BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
 PERIOD 1860-1902 - SUMMARY IN STERLING
 POUNDS

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	No. of COMPANIES	TOTAL	%
England	127	81,365,801	77.6
France	20	6,131,603	5.9
Germany	15	4,435,937	4.3
Belgium	23	4,113,216	4.0
Canada	1	2,456,164	2.3
United States	8	2,400,598	2.2
Austria-Hungary	2	1,631,034	1.5
Italy	5	1,833,041	-
Portugal	6	436,613	0.4
Argentina	2	120,000	0.1
Switzerland	2	1,810	0.0
Total	212	104,925,817	98.3

Summary data based on Ana Celia Castro. As Empresas Estrangeiras no Brasil 1860-1913. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores, 1979:83.

As the data above shows, England exerted absolute leadership in the amount of capital investment with 77.6% of the total amount, followed by France, Germany, Belgium, Canada and the United States. However, by the end of the first decade of this century, the United States would show an increase in the amount of capital invested in Brazil, jumping from 1.5% to 19.9% of the total amount of foreign investment during a period of ten years, from 1903 to 1913,² as presented in the following table:

TABLE 2 - FOREIGN INVESTMENT BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF THE
CAPITAL
(IN PERCENTAGE)

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	1860-1902	1903-1913	AMOUNT OF CHANGE
England	77.6%	53.0%	- 24.6
France	5.9%	7.0%	+ 1.1
United States	1.5%	19.9%	+ 18.4
Canada	2.3%	11.1%	+ 8.8
Partial Total	87.3%	91.0%	

Source: Ana Celia Castro. As Empresas Estrangeiras no
Brasil 1860-1913. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores, 1979:99

Among North Americans, it is interesting to observe that not only the United States, but Canadian investments also presented an increase, which altogether summed up about 30% of the total international capital invested in Brazil, from a total of 190 million sterling pounds.³

Graham⁴ considers that at least three major factors contributed to the decline of English monopoly in terms of investments overseas during the period of 1903-1913: a) development of Brazil itself; b) change in values, ideas and world-views c) increasing competition offered by other nations.

As for the first factor, Graham observes that even prior to the first World War, in 1914, Brazil had entered the phase of modernization and industrialization, a process that started in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁵ The second factor, still related to the first factor, expressed the world-view of a "well-defined sector of the population" represented by urban middle class and sectors of the rural oligarchy.⁶ The third factor was related to the competition offered by German, Belgians and French manufactured goods in the international markets against the old monopoly of English goods.⁷

Although the construction of railways in the North and extreme South of Brazil were primarily financed by British capital, a North American holding represented by Brazil Railway Co, along with other North American companies as Leopoldina Railway (Center-West) and The Great Western of Brazil Railway, Co. Ltd (Northeast) shared in the enterprise of railroad building, of which the Madeira-Mamoré Railway itself is the most significant example.⁸

The expansion and mobilization of international capitalism in Brazil along with the internal necessities for modernization of the means of transportation, industrialization and proliferation of the new urban centers, expressed what Graham stressed elsewhere as the new relationship between man, machinery and land.⁹ Labor, in this scenario, would again constitute the major element in this process of development.

The way the Madeira-Mamoré Railway Company came in to existence explains the process by which a foreign investment, was set up. The Railway itself had been a preoccupation for the Brazilian and Bolivian governments since 1872 when the whole region of Acre including Porto Velho was part of the Bolivian territory.¹⁰ The economic importance of the territory was measured by rubber, the major product exported abroad. Between 1890 and 1891 Brazil was already leading the world in exportation of rubber with 17,790,000 pounds, compared to 1,163,909 from Peru, 7,976 from Venezuela and 432,548 from Bolivia.¹¹ Because of the rubber fever towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of this century, more than 60,000 Brazilians were making a living from gathering and trading rubber with foreign merchants.¹² When Bolivia decided to intervene in the region of Acre, the population rebelled against the Bolivian government.¹³

After several confrontations, the local population of Acre claimed that the territory should be annexed to the Brazilian jurisdiction, which was done and finally recognized by the treaty of Petropolis in 1903.¹⁴

Under Bolivian control, several international projects aimed at to constructing a railway in the headwaters of the Madeira-River had been unsuccessful, whether because of the lack of capital or the numbers of workers that had lost their lives given the inaccessibility of the region.¹⁵ Bolivia needed desperately an outlet to the Atlantic ocean in order to export and import her goods to and from the international markets.¹⁶

With the Acre revolution and the subsequent incorporation of the Acre territory, the Brazilian government in agreement with Bolivian authorities decided to implement the construction of the railway, a plan that would ultimately favor both countries.¹⁷ In 1906 a Brazilian construction firm won the governmental concession to build the railroad. A year later, the Brazilian construction firm through its president Joaquim Catramby sold the concession to an American holding, one that was already in operation in Brazil: The Brazilian Railway Co., whose president was the American entrepreneur Percival Farquhar.¹⁸ This company, then contracted another American construction company, May, Jekyl & Randolph with headquarters in New York. This company had experience in railway building in Cuba, Honduras, Guatemala, Bolivia, Peru and other countries of South and Central America.¹⁹

This process was the subject of controversy, since it was said that the Brazilian firm was in fact operating in cooperation with the North Americans. One of the reasons for this suspicion was that even prior to 1908, the year that marked the transfer of the titles of concession from

the Brazilian to the American Madeira-Mamoré Railway Co. was founded in Portland, in August of 1907 in the United States.²¹

In sum, by the decree of November of 1907, the Brazilian government authorized the Madeira-Mamore Railway Co. to function in Brazil, and in 1908, decree 6838 of that year officially transferred the contract from the Brazilian builder to the Madeira-Mamoré Railway Co.²²

From then on, all transactions that concerned the railway would occur between the Brazilian government and the Madeira-Mamoré Co., and the company would in turn pay the constructors May, Jekyl & Randolp the costs of the construction.²³ The total cost of the Madeira-Mamoré railway project was presented to the Brazilian governemnt in 1912, and it estimated a total cost of 11 million dollars.²⁴

b) The Need for Cheap Labor.

As for the international mobilization of labor to Brazil for the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré Railway, at least four major considerations in Portes's model are consistent with the intercontinental migratory movement of labor to the country that took place between 1907 to 1912. These considerations can be summarized as follows: a) the bulk of the migratory process was essentially a movement of labor; b) the underlying forces were of the economic order; c) the migratory movement did not involve entire nations, but a specific group of people; d) this movement of labor was linked to the pace of the world economy at that time.

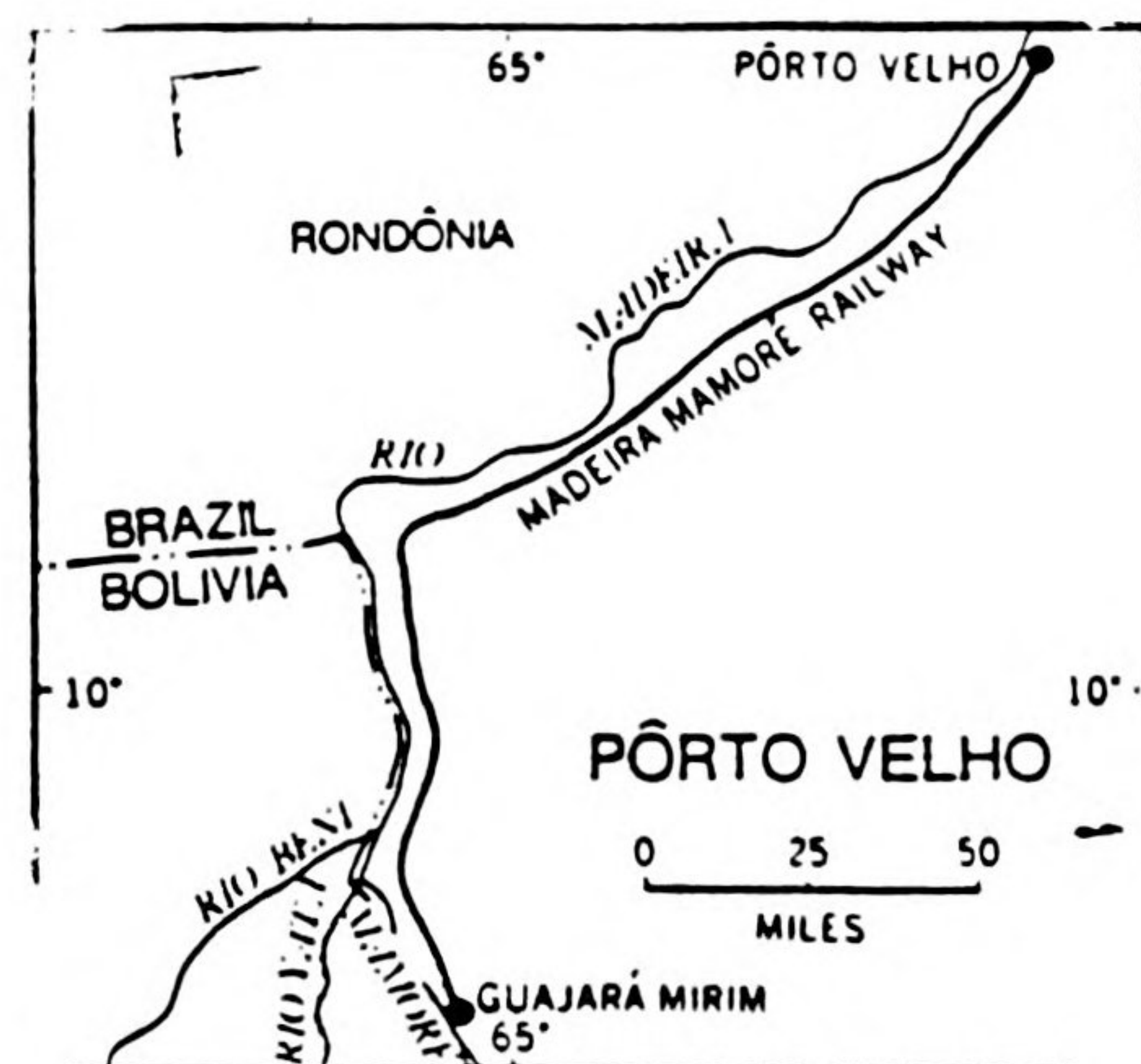
As mentioned earlier, even prior to 1907, a large-scale migratory movement of labor from Europe to Brazil was already in process since the

1880s and it represented a transfer of more than three million people.²⁵ The period from 1907 to 1912 was also characterized by massive foreign investment in the country, where a successful export-oriented economy based primarily on coffee, rubber and other raw materials had gained European and North American markets.²⁶ This period marked fuller incorporation of Brazil into the modern world economy with the development of means of transportation and communication.

As pointed out previously, the construction of railways in the North and extreme South of the country were primarily the result of foreign investment. Consequently, part of the mobilization of the labor force for those enterprises followed the pattern of recruitment employed by international companies such as May, Jekyl & Randolph Co, most of them with notorious experience in railroad building in other regions of the globe.²⁷

Given the bad condition of work and the high number of death directly related to the construction of a railway in the Amazon basin from 1872 to 1903, the scarcity of manpower was a critical issue constantly reported at an international level.²⁸ Consequently, Cuba became one of the alternatives considered by the North American company in terms of labor supply. The reason was that in 1907, a railway had been successfully completed by a pool of 4,000 workers from Spain. Thus, part of this

Map of the Region of Porto Velho, Brazil



Source: Sidney M. Greenfield, "Barbadians in the Brazilian Amazon." LUSO-BRAZILIAN REVIEW, Vol. 20, N. 1, Summer 1983:64A.

available labor force could be used in order to implement the Madeira-Mamore project.²⁹

At the national level, most of the potential Brazilian workers preferred to be their own bosses considering the high prices paid for rubber in the international markets. The possibility of making profits was real, since rubber gatherers (seringueiros) had opportunities to deal directly with the international merchants that usually stayed in the most famous hotels in Manaus, the world's capital of rubber.³⁰ Nevertheless, many Brazilians from the Northeast region of the country, especially from Ceara, fleeing drought and misery joined the company for the construction of the railway.³¹ Because of their condition of debilitation, malnutrition and hunger a large number of these workers died from diseases as malaria and yellow fever a few months after their arrival in Porto Velho.³²

The project was urgent, and the shortage of labor was crucial. In an attempt to solve the problem, recruiting agents, contracted by the company, went to Central America, several capitals of Europe and even other regions of Brazil in order to recruit workers.³³

It is exactly this aspect of recruitment of workers by companies that is an issue that needs to be addressed in sight of historical documentation: the level of articulation between state policies, national ideologies and international capital.

The period from the 1880s up to the 1930s was characterized by a strong national ideology led by the Brazilian intelligentsia³⁴ that stressed the necessity of promoting European immigration to the country in order to foster development, industrialization and modernization.

One of the major components of this ideology was to reject any social, cultural and physical values associated with African and Asian peoples.

The European and North American schools of thought, at the turn of the century, had already legitimated the "scientific" assertion of the backwardness of peoples coming from these continents, that by the end of the nineteenth century were subjugated by the politics of neo-colonialism.³⁵

Meanwhile, the Brazilian intellectual elite had been instrumental in influencing the state to decree the prohibition of African and Asian migration to Brazil in 1890.³⁶

Although the restrictions against Asians were dropped two years later, in 1892, the sanction against African immigrants - except those coming from Canary island- would continue until 1907 when new immigration legislation decreed free entry of peoples coming from all over the world.³⁷

Interestingly enough, foreign companies in operation in Brazil at that time were allowed by state policies to recruit and repatriate workers coming from other places.³⁸ This factor seems to explain the circumstances under which West Indian blacks officially came to Brazil from 1907 to 1912, despite national policy favouring European immigration to the country. Rather than being a contradiction or conflict between state policies, national ideology and interest of the international capital, this temporary migratory flow of African descent people from the West Indies clarifies the manner in which foreign capital acted in conformity with national and local state policies.

Therefore, early in 1908, the first international group of workers was recruited in Cuba. The majority of the workers were Spaniards.³⁹ About 350 were brought over to Para in order to continue the trip to Santo Antonio, a mandatory stop for those going down to the Madeira-River to the construction camps. As soon as they arrived in Pará, they were told by

local inhabitants about the conditions of work.⁴⁰ Newspapers as Folha do Norte and Provincia do Pará described stories of the countless deaths, and diseases assaulting workers at the Amazon Basin. Horrified, many of these workers cancelled their plans to build their "fortunes" in the construction of the railway. Only 65 arrived in Porto Velho.⁴¹

To make things worse, many of the articles were translated and published in several countries such as Spain, Portugal and Italy, and the governments of these nations alarmed by the news decided to prohibit emigration of their citizens to the Amazon basin.⁴²

Therefore, the alternative for the company was to search for workers in regions of Central America and the Caribbean. Consequently, between 1907 and 1912, 21,783 Brazilian and foreign workers came to Porto Velho to build the Madeira-Mamoré railway as the table below shows. Breaking down these numbers by years we have:

TABLE 3 - WORKERS ENTERING PORTO VELHO 1907-1912

YEARS	NUMBERS	%
1907	446	2%
1908	2,450	11%
1909	4,500	20.6%
1910	6,090	27.9%
1911	5,664	26.%
1912	2,733	12.5%
TOTAL	21,783	100.00%

Source: Ferreira, Manoel Rodrigues. São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1959:219

These numbers, according to Ferreira,⁴³ were presented by the company to the Brazilian government. We observe that in the years 1909, 1910 and 1911 Porto Velho received about 75% of the total workforce coming for the

construction of the railway. The year 1910, for instance, represented the peak with 6,090 workers entering Porto Velho. As it can be observed in table 4, West Indians constituted the largest single group among immigrant workers:

TABLE 4 - WORKERS BY NATIONALITY - 1910

NATIONALITY	NUMBERS	%
PORTUGUESE/ BRAZILIANS	1,636	27 %
WEST INDIANS	2,211	36%
SPANIARDS	1,450	24%
UNKNOWN ORIGIN	793	13%
TOTAL	6,090	100.00%

Source: Ferreira, Manoel Rodrigues. A Ferrovia do Diabo. São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1959:219

The statistics for the year 1910 confirm that West Indians constituted 36% of the total workers entering Porto Velho in that year. Although these numbers were reported in the official records of the May, Jekyl & Randolph company, they did not include the total number of deaths which occurred during the six year period of the construction of the railway, which was estimated to be around 3,600.

Another source⁴⁴ has considered, however, that at least 10,000 workers came each year. If we take into consideration the undocumented workers without company contracts, probably the number of West Indians would be increased considerably.

In summary, in this chapter, an attempt was made to delineate the principal characteristics of the mobilization of capital and labor in Brazil. First, the expansion and mobilization of international capitalism

represented one dimension of the historical and structural conditioning of the spatial mobilization of labor from countries of Africa, Asia and Europe to Brazil, at the turn of the century. Second, the need for cheap labor to set forward a multinational project, in the sector of railway building, brought together state and private enterprises operating through common agreement in their mutual benefit. Third, Despite national ideologies favoring European immigration to Brazil, it was the level of articulation between state policies and international capital that set the stage for the coming of West Indian blacks to Brazil.

Therefore, the next chapter will discuss the linkages between state policies, international capital and spatial mobility of labor from West Indies to other places, including Brazil.

CHAPTER III

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER IV

THE CIRCULATORINESS¹ OF WEST INDIAN LABOR: WORKERS, THE STATE AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISES.

a) British Colonial State Controls and Rationalizes the Movement and Circularity of Labor.

By the last two decades of the nineteenth century and prior to the construction of the Madeira-Mamore railway, West Indians, mainly Barbadians, had already initiated a migratory flow to Manaus and Para in the Northern part of the country since the last two decades of the nineteenth century.²

In 1909, two years after the railway construction had begun, West Indians constituted the largest single group among the workers contracted, and principally Barbadians proved to be the available labor force for the project.³

It was not until the last two decades of the nineteenth century that governments of the British West Indies decided to implement legislation controlling emigration from the island. Attempts were made in Barbados as early as 1838, the year of the unconditional abolition of slavery in all British Caribbean and in Jamaica, to inhibit the recruitment process of labor by agents in these islands.⁴

It appears that local administrators feared that the free system of recruitment would end up disrupting the plantation system based on the sugar industries. This same fear was manifested early after the emancipation period. In 1830, planters from British Guiana and Trinidad

decided to promote immigration to these islands. In order to prevent a shortage of labor, these governments

... in furtherance of the former policy, appointed in Barbados and in other islands, agents whose duty it was to induce labourers to emigrate and to facilitate their transportation.⁵

This event paved the way for a competition between planters from British Guiana, Trinidad and Barbados, since high wages were the most attractive offer driving West Indians away from their land of origin, particularly workers from Barbados.⁶

The precedent provoked an immediate reaction from governments of other islands that since then took the initiative to implement measures to control the migratory movement of labor.⁷

b) Patterns of Barbadian Labor Migration

At the turn of the century, Barbadians had already established a tradition of labor procurement in other places besides the British Caribbean.⁸ Several factors contributed to this migratory pattern of labor from Barbados to Central and South America: scarcity of land available for agriculture of subsistence in order to meet the needs and guarantee the survival of thousand of laborers; natural disasters such as droughts that had hit the island in 1895, and a hurricane in 1898 that left behind an impoverished population marked by diseases, lack of foodstuff and decent means of survival. Besides that, tropical diseases as smallpox, yellow fever and other epidemics reached the island in the first years of the twentieth century.⁹

Combined with this situation of natural disasters, epidemics and

economic depression, basic crops such as corn and even firewood had to be imported from Jamaica and the Windwards.¹⁰ Sugar that for more than three centuries had constituted the basis of the economic development of the island had suffered a drawback in the European markets due to the competition with the European production of beet sugar produced in large-scale and more cheaply than the refined sugar.¹¹

In face of these structural conditionings in Barbados at the turn of the century, one viable alternative for self-improvement was to pursue work overseas beyond the limits of the British Caribbean.¹² While internal structural factors restricted the possibilities for ameliorating the prevailing conditions, external forces represented by the advance of international capital offered a temporary relief for those dreaming to possess a small plot of land and have a better future for their parents, relatives and children.

However, the possibility to emigrate to other places could be threatened by the governing elites, landowners who would not be watching passively the departure of the young work force to work abroad leaving plantations at risk.¹³

c) Restrictions on Immigration from Barbados

As early as 1838, for instance, measures were taken in order to prevent immigration to as well as emigration from the island.¹⁴ While other colonies of the British West Indies, particularly British Guiana and Trinidad, were introducing indentured immigrants from Africa, India and Asia, Barbados was the only British Caribbean island that never experienced indentured labor.¹⁵ The Barbadian planters relied on the large

surplus of local labor, but also guaranteed low wages to the workers recently emancipated.¹⁶

One of the arguments used by the government at that time to curb emigration and restrain the recruitment of laborers by agents in the island was to implement an act in July of 1838. The text below, justified the measure because:

... 'the inexperience of the great body of negroes, just emerging from a state of restraint' they were peculiarly exposed to fraudulent practices on the part of emigration agents.¹⁷

In 1839, two new acts were implemented aiming to halt emigration. One prevented clandestine contracts of young people by recruiting agents, and another required from potential emigrants certificates issued by local authorities, which granted authorization to work in other British colonies.¹⁸ Those measures were in fact influenced by the planter class that tried through legal codes to secure a reservoir of labor for their own interests. Roberts¹⁹ points out that workers protested against such legal impositions. They perceived those acts as restriction on their freedom of movements as expressed by the petition workers sent to the House of Commons in 1840:

'Many unjustifiable attempts had already been made to prevent immigration, many improper restrictions imposed on the labouring classes to deter them in the exercise of their undoubted right to carry their labour to the best market.'²⁰

The restrictions referred to above were related to the provision that required workers to provide a financial coverage for their spouses and children while they were working abroad. This provision was seen as unfair by workers since the local labor markets did not provide enough money for

their own survival.²¹ Most of these acts however, were disapproved by British subjects who agreed that those legal impositions were too restrictive.²² In 1840, amendments were made to the Act of September 22, which prohibited and restricted the activity of recruiting agents unless permission was granted by the government.²³ This would establish a pattern of control over the migratory movement of labor from the island until the late nineteenth century. Roberts observes that:

In essence the legislation regulated but did not restrict emigration, which during the following years developed along three lines. Some of the emigrants left under fully organised bounty schemes financed by public funds of the receiving colony. Again many planters in British Guiana brought labourers from the islands at their own expense. It is also probable that many persons emigrating from Barbados and other islands went on their own initiative and at their own expense.²⁴

In 1846, the migration of laborers at public expense was forbidden, but planters from other lands were allowed to recruit workers at their own expenses. In the same way people willing to migrate on their own were free to do so.²⁵

By this time, British Guiana and Trinidad turned to import workers from India, Africa and Madeira under the system of indenture. So, Barbados was no longer the great market provider of labor force. Moreover, the fall in the prices of sugar in the European markets led to a decrease in the wages in all British West Indies.²⁶

In the 1860's governmental opinion started to change in relation to emigration. The early 1860's was marked by a period of difficulties where a lasting drought had left thousands of workers unemployed in a situation characterized by hunger, diseases and dissatisfaction.²⁷ Because of this, the government of Barbados saw the emigration process as the only way to

alleviate the prevailing condition of distress on the island.²⁸

Three years later, the Emigration Act of 1863 allowed workers to leave the country for other regions such as St. Croix, Antigua, St. Thomas and again to British Guiana and Trinidad despite the fear of the planter class.²⁹ From 1863 to 1870 15,808 Barbadians left for these islands, as it is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 5 - EMIGRATION FROM BARBADOS FROM 1863-1870

DESTINATION	YEAR	NUMBERS
British Guiana	1863-70	9,814
Dutch Guiana	1863-70	1,495
St. Croix	1863	3,500
Antigua	1863-66	999
Total		15,808

Source: G.W. Roberts. Emigration from Barbados.
Social and Economic Studies. Vol. 4, 1955:274.

The table shows that in fact during the period from 1863 to 1870 British Guiana received the largest number of Barbadians, followed by St. Croix, Dutch Guiana and Antigua. As Roberts³⁰ stresses, records giving account of the migratory flow to other islands in this period are not available. Nevertheless, it is estimated that of the 15,808 total at least 4,600 more can be included, considering the small flows to St. Lucia, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, Tobago, Nevis, Jamaica and other islands.

In 1877, a new amendment to the Emigration Act recognized the recruiting agents activities that until then were under restriction. Under this law a recruiting agent should pay to the Treasury one and a half sterling pounds per worker contracted.³¹ This would increase the government's revenue, and moreover, those emigrants would in turn send

remittances to their family and friends, increasing the government's revenue.

The conclusion is that the island gained materially from emigration-from the reduction in the population it produced as well as from the economic benefits flowing from the emigrant's readiness to remit or bring back savings to the colony.³²

d) Other Islands of the West Indies Stem Immigration

In Jamaica, local planters were also pretty much concerned with the exodus of the labor force to the Isthmus of Panama. By the time of the construction of the Panama Canal, an active pressure by this group influenced the local government to decree the Emigration Labourer's Protection Law of 1893.³³ This law definitively characterized the governmental interference in controlling and determining the flow of the migratory movement. Legally, workers were allowed to emigrate to countries under the rubric "proclaimed place", which meant that workers had to apply for a visa in order to have a legal right to migrate.³⁴

Allegedly, this requirement aimed to "protect" the workers's interest abroad, since there were many cases where sick and disabled laborers had to come back to their countries of origin under governmental expenses. On other occasions employers did not respect the contract signed with the workers in which they had to provide medical facilities, lodging and return tickets.³⁵ And again, when these events happened the government had to sponsor the return of these workers home.³⁶

In reality, one can conclude that this law aimed to guarantee a revenue in advance for the local government charging recruiting agents for each worker under contract.³⁷ Even the workers willing to emigrate

independently without negotiating with agents were required to pay a departure tax.³⁸ The new amendment to the Emigration Law of 1902 stated:

...if a native labourer who was emigrating to a 'proclaimed place' independently could not prove that he owned enough property to be able to pay for his own repatriation, he should deposit L 1,5s in the Treasury before being allowed to leave the island.³⁹

Because of these restrictions, the migratory movement from Jamaica declined considerably.⁴⁰ Other islands such as St. Lucia, for instance, issued a little later, a new Emigrant Protection Ordinance much more restrictive in comparison with all emigration laws of the West Indies.⁴¹ Under these amendments workers had to pay a departure tax:

However, the cost of these permits was higher than in Jamaica: L 4 for travel to Panama, L 6 to Nicaragua or Costa Rica, and L 9 to Brazil, south of Pará.⁴²

The present documentation did not provide an explanation of the basis on which the costs of these permits were determined.⁴³ Nevertheless, they were the official cost established by the government in order to grant the permits. Also these costs were to be paid by recruiting agents for each worker contracted or individuals willing to leave the island on their own.⁴⁴ However, historical records show that a large number of workers went abroad on their own. They did not have contract work with any specific employers at the time of their departure from Barbados, Jamaica and other islands.⁴⁵ In the case of the migratory movement of labor to Panama at the turn of the century, for instance, it is considered that at least 25,000 workers without contracts left Barbados to the Canal Zone in addition to the 20,000 contracted workers that went to the same place.⁴⁵ The dimension of the migratory movement of labor from Barbados is still a matter

requiring further investigation, but in sight of the present documentation it serves to attest to Portes's proposition regarding network building as one of the basic strategies of survival immigrants set forth in order to cope with the constraints of a new place. Thus, Richardson notes:

Apparently the extraisland network of families that had been established by Barbadian emigrants late in the nineteenth century had been activated during the Panama Canal era. And former Barbadians, or even children of former Barbadians, then traveled back home, probably staying with kin in Barbados, in order to take advantage of the recruiting station there.⁴⁷

However, this pattern of migratory flow with its network building cannot be said to be the rule for other places of South America such as Peru, Ecuador or Brazil. Further investigation is needed to ascertain the nature of historical trend.

It can be argued that the advent of the Emigration Laws in Barbados rather than protect the worker's interest, protected the dominant class interests, and moreover, that emigration in these islands was an economic alternative activity on behalf of the state.

This chapter suggests that the state as a unit of the broader world economic system regulates the direction, size and flow of migratory movement of labor. In the West Indies, the state and governing elites, depending on the favorableness of the circumstances sometimes encouraged migratory movements of labor. On other occasions there was a repression of emigration of work force to avoid depletion of local economies.

Nevertheless, despite the official attempts throughout British Caribbean history to curb emigration from those islands, workers themselves acted on their own behalf making migration, probably their main strategy of survival. One example of this coping mechanisms is the

historical evidence that a migratory flow from West Indies to Brazil had already been established prior to 1907. It can be suggested that network building, based on personal information by returning migrants, was probably used as a way to sustain the movement of workers from the West Indies to Brazil despite the unhealthy conditions of work in the Amazon basin.

Thus, an important aspect in understanding the circulatoriness of West Indian labor must be understood from another perspective: How West Indians acted on their own behalf despite the structural determinants related to the interconnections between state policy and international capital.

e) People Acting for Themselves

The major themes of West Indian culture reflect, and in turn shape, the attitude toward and experience of migration. In art, folklore, literature, and religion, the migration symbol finds expression as a dominant theme.⁴⁸

Orlando Patterson

Patterson in this statement above captures the essence and significance of the spatial mobility of the people from the West Indies throughout history. Migration became part of their strategy of survival and their peopleness.⁴⁹ As such, it reflects the attitudes of West Indians themselves acting on their own behalf against all kinds of uncertainties and constraints imposed by internal and external forces from the West Indies.

Internally, the struggle for survival is very well documented by historical records whereby, even prior to the emancipation period, in the 1830s, West Indians from the small islands such as St. Kitts and Nevis,

just to mention a few, migrated to the nearby territories where bigger extension of lands and forests served as refugee camps and basis for the social formations of maroon communities.⁵⁰

More than sporadic events in the history of the Caribbean societies, migration, for the African Diaspora people became the institutional means of struggle against the odds during and after the colonial system of domination.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the socio-political and economic basis of the slavocratic societies did not alter significantly the social institutions after the emancipation period. Economically, export-oriented plantation systems continued to be the center of the financial activities of most of the British Caribbean until the second half of nineteenth century.⁵¹ Therefore, the socio-political and economic conditions of West Indies societies did not provide the necessary means to incorporate and uplift the freedmen within its structures.⁵²

Politically, representation of black Barbadians was non-existent in the House of Assembly since land and government were in the hands of a colonial plantocracy.⁵³ At the individual level, technically Barbadians had acquired freedom in 1838 since the demise of slavery. However, the right to vote for the House of Assembly was a privilege for those that could earn a salary of at least fifty sterling pounds a year or those whose land could yield five sterling pounds a year. Another alternative for voting entitled those with a university degree the opportunity to fully exert citizenship, so in 1911, out of a total population of 172,337 only 1,986 electors fulfilled those requirements.⁵⁴

Moreover, in the second half of the nineteenth century, governing elites of the islands of Jamaica, Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent among

others tried deliberately to curb emigration of their citizens from these islands to the more prosperous regions of the Caribbean such as Trinidad and Tobago and Guiana.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, workers attracted by good wages left their places of origin regardless of the protest and countless attempts by the planter class to prohibit migratory movement of labor from those islands experiencing economic decline.⁵⁶

Coupled with this state of disenfranchisement, natural cataclysms such as drought, earthquakes and hurricanes, there was established a pattern of migration from West Indies to other places "beyond conventional limits" as Richardson well observed.⁵⁷

Barbadians, for instance, were said to be found in Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, the United States, countries of Central America and even countries of the African continent.⁵⁸ The small scale migratory flow of West Indians to Brazil was just one dimension in their pattern of their circulatoriness across boundaries.

A recent study shows, that in the 1980s, the second and third generation of Barbadian descendants migrated to New York, for the same reasons their grandparents and great grandparents had migrated to Brazil at the beginning of this century.⁵⁹ Through the act of migrating they were trying to escape poverty and increase the possibilities of betterment of their living conditions. They represent what Barrow brilliantly coined as "generations of persistence".⁶⁰

This example of the spatial mobility of Diaspora people seems to validate Hamilton's concept of geo-socio displacement: circulatoriness of a people. Successive order of migratory flows over time and space have paved the way for the emergence of new social formations that essentially

characterize who the people are, their sense of oneness and peopleness.

The pace of the world economy at the turn of this century mobilized a few thousands of West Indians to the country. Years later, many became Brazilian citizens expanding the historical dimension of what we know today as Afro-Brazilian communities. And yet, a peculiar legacy of the pioneer West Indians in Brazil is the tendency nowadays followed by their Afro-Brazilian descendants: Migrate to survive.

f) One Family's Roots of Persistence: The Rutherford Strategy.

The root of their life histories in Brazil may differ from the almost five thousand West Indians that entered Brazil from 1907 to 1912 to work in the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railway in Porto Velho. Terence Rutherford, carpenter, came to Belem, in the extreme north of Brazil, in 1912, searching for job opportunities in the construction industries.⁶¹ In the same year and still living in Belem he met Edna Peters also from Barbados, and a year later they were married. The construction company where Terence worked moved to Fortaleza, in the state of Ceara, and later on, the company moved again to São Paulo state.⁶²

Years later, two of Edna and Terence's children migrated to New York with the help of one of Terence's brothers. From the United States, their children helped to support the family left behind in São Paulo. In 1981, Alfredo, 54 years old, the youngest son born from Edna and Terence also migrated to New York hoping to improve his socio-economic condition and that of his family left in São Paulo.⁶³

Although the Rutherford's example seems to be far from our case-study, since this family, apparently, is not connected with the advent of

Madeira-Mamoré railway, it does serve to give us insights into what may have happened with many of those West Indians that came to Brazil during the time frame between 1907 and 1912.

g) Geo-Social Mobility As A Coping Mechanism.

This flexibility and willingness to move across space has led a student of the social psychology of Caribbean peoples to stress that given internal and external structural limitations for self-improvement faced by Caribbeans throughout their history, a pattern of strategic flexibility became part of their rationale in order to cope and strive for life.⁶⁴ This rationale is translated in the following example:

An elderly man, recently returned to St. Lucia having lived abroad since the age of sixteen, made the following point: 'A man must always be ready to move...if he sees there is no opportunity where he is, then he must move on to somewhere else'.⁶⁵

This quote exemplifies, appropriately, the Rutherford family as well as it helps to clarify the essence and significance of the migratory flows of West Indians from the Black Diaspora abroad.

Although the Rutherford's case is a contemporary example, it does not differ, in essence, from the migratory flows of West Indian blacks from the beginning of the century. Despite the socio-political and economic forces imposed upon them, they were able to act on their own behalf and strive for decency and opportunity.

h) Helping the Folks Back Home: The Significance of Remittances.

The period in which emigration from Barbados reached its peak was principally between 1901 and 1920, and the following table is an example of the economic return that migration brought to the island in terms of remittance.

TABLE 6 - ESTIMATES OF TOTAL REMITTANCES INTO BARBADOS
DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO EMIGRATION
1861-1920

Period	value of money paid in Barbados	Savings of returning emigrants	Other forms of remittances	Total remittances
1861-1900	285,000	70,000	-	355,000
1901-1910	549,000	200,000	100,000	849,000
1911-1920	822,000	200,000	100,000	1,122,000
Total	1,656,000	470,000	200,000	2,326,000

Source: G.W. Roberts. Emigration from Barbados. Social and Economic Studies, Vol. 4, 1955:286

As the above table shows, the period between 1901 and 1920 corresponds to the largest amount of remittances sent to Barbados. It is estimated that within the period from 1861 to 1920 more than 150,000 Barbadians left the island to other regions of the Caribbean or other countries.⁶⁶

Accurate data regarding the origins of each remittance sent to Barbados during this period is not available. Nevertheless, Table 7 shows an estimate of the sources and values of money orders sent by emigrants from the British Colonies, Canada, Panama and USA from 1901-20:

TABLE 7 - SOURCES AND VALUES OF EMIGRANTS' TRANSFERS
TO BARBADOS BY MONEY ORDER, 1901-1920

SOURCES	VALUE OF TRANSFER (STERLING POUNDS)		
	1901-10	1911-20	1901-20
British Colonies	171,315	105,193	276,508
Canada	16,084	64,726	80,810
Panama	245,433	300,506	545,939
U.S.A.	116,250	351,153	467,403
Total	549,082	821,578	1,370,660

Source: Reports on the Post Office of Barbados, 1901-20, in G.W.Roberts. Emigration from Barbados. Social and Economic Studies, Vol. 4, 1955:287.

The data shows that Panama presents the largest amount of money orders sent to Barbados, followed by British Colonies, (here it refers primarily to British Guiana and Trinidad), the United States and Canada. Also the table shows a decline of the remittances from British Colonies from 1911-20. Within the same period, remittances from the United States accounted for a total of 351,153 (sterling pounds). The increase in the total remittances from the United States to Barbados also indicates a new shift in the migratory movement of labor other than the previous migratory flows from the British Caribbean and other places. In fact the table above presents only a few countries from where Barbadians sent money orders back home. Ecuador, Peru and Brazil appear in the records of the Harbour Master which indicates that the total amount of money orders sent to Barbados during the period between 1901 to 1920 was even higher. To this particular issue, Roberts points out:

... from 1908-10 709 emigrants returned from Brazil with L 5,205; that is, transfers reaching the island in this way amounted to L 1,700 per year, and each emigrant brought back on the average L 7.⁶⁷

In the case of Brazil, unfortunately there is no data available at the moment of this investigation for the following years, 1911-1912, the final period of the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railway.

It can be argued that the state benefitted from the remittances and money orders Barbadians sent back home in order to support their family. Many family members used the money to buy plots of land, a possibility that could not be achieved otherwise.

In summary, West Indians have adjusted themselves to the dynamics of international capitalism throughout history. Towards the end of the nineteenth century until the middle of the 1920s the major economic enterprises undertaken by France, Britain and the United States promoted the expansion of several projects inside and outside the Caribbean based on a massive deployment of the black working-class population. From railroad constructions to banana industries, from domestic servant enclaves to war industries, tourism and manufacturing companies all sectors combined represented then and now the foundations of the accumulation of international capitalism and the basis for the creation of new black diasporas from the Caribbean. The connections between black labor and white capital become almost inseparable. To this respect, Watson has made the following observation:

As such international capital has shaped and defined, more or less, the racial, ethnic and class composition of Caribbean societies and therefore the political economy of the black diaspora. The survival strategies, self-concepts, resistance strategies, persistence and resilience of the diaspora have all been related to this process.⁶⁸

It is essential to understand how people act for themselves and on their own behalf despite structural determinants of oppression and exploitation. Before and after the emancipation periods West Indians have given an impressive account of their resilience and capacity to respond creatively to the major structural constraints generated by the advance of international capitalism. The historical evidence presented here seems to suggest that the international division of labor emergent from the capitalist economies has generated new social formations of the black diasporas. The case-study of West Indians in Brazil constitutes a magnificent example.

Therefore, migration as an institutional mechanism to cope with historical and structural constraints has defined the circulatory movement of a people through labor specialization. And yet it has singled out the uniqueness of this experience within the African Dispora in Brazil.

The next chapter clarifies why a large-scale migratory movements of labor from the West Indies to Brazil did not happen given the geographic proximity between the regions, and the availability of a surplus labor force. It will also provide some insights regarding the extent to which race - as an ideological mechanism of control - has been used in the formulation of immigration policies in Brazil.

CHAPTER IV

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER V

RACE AND IMMIGRATION POLICIES IN BRAZIL

a) Background of Racially Exclusive Immigration Policies

In Brazil towards the end of nineteenth century, the steady transformations of the means of production followed by a process of urbanization, modernization of the means of transportation and communication, also meant an increasing demand of labor. It could have been expected that African countries, would continue to provide manpower based, principally on the 350 years of history of trade and labor migration to Brazil. At least, four different episodes that took place between 1890 and the 1930s help to clarify why this did not happen. First, on June 28, 1890, the decree 528 established the free entry of "healthy and able people to work" in the country, except for Africans and Asians who could be admitted only with the approval of the National Congress.¹ Second, in 1921, the governor of Mato Grosso state suspended a land concession to developers linked to a group of North Americans since the project included the recruitment of black North American immigrants to the region.² Third, the Constitution of 1934 incorporated the system of national quotas, based on the North American model, through the article n.121, section 6, which clearly imposed ethnic restriction upon immigrants willing to come to the country.³ The content of this article stressed:

The entry of immigrants into the national territory will be subject to the restrictions necessary to guarantee the ethnic integration and the physical and legal capacity of the immigrant; the immigrant arrivals from any country cannot, however, exceed an annual rate of two percent of the total number of that nationality resident in Brazil during the preceding fifty years.⁴

A few years later, a new immigration law was issued n. 767 of September 8 of 1945 stressing:

...the necessity to preserve and develop, in the ethnic composition of the population, the more desirable characteristics of its European ancestry.⁵

The fourth episode is related to a survey of 1926 conducted by the Sociedade Nacional de Agricultura (National Agricultural Society). Members of this group - composed of rural and urban elites - expressed their views on immigration. The context of this survey is discussed later.

Although these episodes occurred in different periods, they reflect a deliberate and consistent disposition of the governing elites towards controlling the entry of non-whites to the country.

The contextual framework on which those episodes occurred reflects an international trend since the first half of the nineteenth century onward. This trend was translated in the emergence of a worldwide phenomena of white supremacy dictated by European and North American thinkers. The scope of such a phenomena was based on the framework of pseudo-scientific theories such as Social Darwinism, Eugenism and Positivism among other theories accounting for the scientific validity of the inferiority of non-white groups in relation to the Anglo-Saxon groups.⁶ These theories reflected the European and North American feelings of modernization and progress which ultimately mirrored a specific phase of the advancement of capitalism. Therefore, the expansionism of the world economy implied subordination and exploitation of peoples and social groupings not belonging to the same sphere of power of the major capitalists countries in the world. And yet, these peoples and social groupings belonged to the majority of non-white groups.

b) Debating the Merits of Japanese, Chinese and African Immigration to Brazil.

As mentioned earlier, in a survey conducted in 1926 by the Sociedade Nacional de Agricultura (National Agricultural Society), regarding immigration, a total of 166 members from the major regions of the country, including planters, judges, and prominent figures of Brazilian society expressed their views on race and immigration in Brazil.⁷

When asked if they favored the continuation of immigration, out of a total of 166, 161 answered no, and 5 answered yes, but when inquired about whether they favored oriental immigration 75 declared yes and 79 no. Proponents for Asian immigration regarded the Japanese as self-disciplined and hard working while the opponents considered the Japanese dishonest, cynical, possessing an odd language and religion, and being inferior to whites.⁸

As for black immigration, in the same survey, out of a total of 166, 124 opposed the immigration of this group. Even those that favored and recognized the contribution of the blacks to Brazilian history, in general considered African descendants as an inferior race. Members of this group expressed the opinion that although African groups were seen as resilient, doting, and resigned, they were suitable to work in hot regions of the country, and that they should be confined only to the regions of the north and northeast.⁹

The opponents such as Dr. Antonio Americano do Brazil declared:

...black immigrants to be 'filled with defects, carrying hatred of whites, their former persecutors.' They should be excluded, he wrote, on 'biological, social, and economic grounds'.¹⁰

The advocates of the exclusion of the future black settlements in Brazil, according to Levine, were also hostile toward Japanese and Oriental immigration.¹¹ A contradictory attitude regarding race and immigration is demonstrated in the opinion of Judge Gabriel Bandeira de Faria who was against both types of immigration, on the following grounds:

We should simply keep our own colored people, who are honest, dignified, upright, excellent citizens, magnificent workers, an integral part of our nationality. They must not be confused with the foreign...pernicious and exotic products of Africa and the United States.¹²

This survey was conducted in 1926, a period in which Japanese immigration to the country was increasing enormously. The debate among the governing elites about African and Asian immigration will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

c) Social, Political and Economic Context of Racial Exclusion.

Subordination, exploitation and exclusion were materialized through the social policies, as for instance, emigration and immigration laws. In countries of Central and South America native elites eager to be accepted within the sphere of the well developed world imitated and recodified social policies of exclusion without much contest.¹³ Several countries of the South Atlantic hemisphere were still in the initial stage of industrialization, and much of the capital sustaining this process of modernization originated in the capitalist centers in the world. After all, flow of capital also meant flow of ideas and peoples. Therefore, decree 528 of 1890 prohibiting the coming of African and Asian groups to Brazil was a concrete example of the spirit of that time.

Between the 1870s and the 1880s Brazil was characterized by socio-political and economic changes set in motion by growing urban centers, the emergence of urban middle classes composed of businessmen and engineers: Individuals that had received professional training in European schools, and public servants.¹⁴ From this group emerged defenders of the abolition of slavery which exposed the conflict of interests of this group and the traditional rural oligarchy that for more than 300 years had established the political, economic and social rules of the society.¹⁵ One example of the type of conflict of interest between these two groups was that this urban middle class favored a European immigration, a fact that the traditional landowning elites opposed.

These diverse perspectives were articulated by advocacy organizations. The viewpoint of most of these organizations was that immigration would bring modernization of technology, economic progress, and more opportunities of upward social mobility.¹⁶

d) Aryanism, Racism and the Emergence of Pro-European Immigration Organizations.

The Sociedade Central de Imigração, founded in 1886, promoted ideas and schemes that facilitated the coming of European immigrants. The promotion of these ideas was propagated through the Society's newspaper called A Imigração, and its members served as a pressure group lobbying for the reforms.¹⁷ Their ideal was to transform the Brazilian scenario into the image of the European country scenario, whereby small farming should be carried out by European agricultural colonists.¹⁸

Frequently, this group attacked planters's attempts to introduce a

Chinese workforce as a substitute for the black labor force in the coffee zones of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro states, in the southern part of the country.¹⁹ In his analysis of the world-views of members of this society and the rural oligarchy, Hall points out:

While the landowning elite imported clothes and furnishings from Europe, these frustrated and somewhat isolated intellectuals imported ideas. Like their European models, the leaders of the Society supported anticlericalism, free trade, racism, small farming, education, and the belief that 'the nineteenth century is the best, most perfect, most Christian, most advanced one' in human history.²⁰

Hall observes that the ideals of Sociedade Central de Imigração reflected the view held by many groups regarding immigration, and the possible transformation of the social structures at that time. Hall's observation also reflects the mentality of an epoch where Europe was the center of attention due mainly to technological discovery, high levels of urbanization, modernization and industrialization, patterns that should be followed by the rest of the "civilized world". Members of this urban Brazilian elite read and discussed French, English and German authors. They absorbed the principles of Social Darwinism that postulated the natural selection of the human species, and the determinist conviction of the salvation of the less advanced countries in the world through cultural and biological amalgamation with white Europeans.²¹

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, European countries such as England, France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands utilized the principle of scientific racism as ideological tools to divide the African continent,²² a concrete example of the expansion and accumulation of capital at global level.

It seems that at the same time that societies such as the Sociedade

Central de Imigração urged the abolition of slavery, as an inhuman institution inconsistent with human development, they did not perceive any contradiction in the propagation of the widespread racist ideas as the superiority of Aryan and Anglo-Saxon groups over the rest of non-white groups of the world.²³ Consequently, for years members of this modernizing group attacked the planters's attempts to introduce Chinese labor force in the country, since Chinese as well as Africans were primarily seen as an inferior group. In the years to come, groups such as the Sociedade Central de Imigração would be instrumental in influencing government immigration regulations.²⁴

What is interesting in this historical period is that until the mid of the 1880s, the planter class had not demonstrated an active interest in recruiting a European labor force.²⁵ What they needed was cheap labor. When the possibility of abolition of slavery became a real threat to their interests, they were the ones who decided to promote Chinese immigration to the country, which ultimately did not succeed. Moreover, part of the planter class considered European labor force expensive. It was also considered that an eventual demand by European workers of different working relationship between employers and employees could jeopardize the basis of the plantation economy that until then relied on coerced labor.²⁶

It was not until a few years before the eminent Abolition of Slavery, that the cry of a shortage of labor from planters of Western São Paulo led them to set forth an immigration program in order to protect their interests. In 1886, they founded the Sociedade Promotora de Imigração (Society for the Promotion of Immigration) a private recruiting agency, subsidized by public funds. During the first ten years of its existence, the Society implemented a program in which immigrants, primarily from

Italy, received free tickets to São Paulo, and upon their arrival they had contract work on coffee plantations.²⁷

By 1889, the administration of the Society was transferred to the government of the state that took over the control of the immigration policies until 1928.²⁸

Since the Constitution of 1891 granted autonomy regarding immigration issues to the states, São Paulo became the leading state in the elaboration of programs and job placement for immigrants.²⁹ The steps taken by the Sociedade Promotora de Imigração became the model that would regulate immigration policies for the rest of the country for the next 30 years or so.³⁰

Due to the action of societies such as this, from the 1880s until the 1930s more than three million immigrants came to Brazil, especially to São Paulo state that absorbed about 2,321,130 foreign workers.³¹ From this total about 60% were originally from Italy, from the Northern and Southern regions. At the turn of the century, Northern Italians were predominant. But, in the first half of this century, and toward the end of the 1930s, Southern Italians became the predominant flow. Most of them were unskilled agricultural workers.³² From the total immigrant population of 2,578,992 coming to São Paulo state from 1889 to 1934, about 1,151,354 came subsidized because of the scheme implemented by the Sociedade Promotora de Imigração in the early 1880s.³³

e) State Collusion Against North American Black Immigration to Brazil:

A Tale of U.S. and Brazil in Consort.

A recent study shows how North American and Brazilian authorities

worked in co-operation in matter related to emigration of African Americans to Brazil during the 1920s.³⁴ Since the international campaign to attract North American and European potential immigrants culminated in far reaching consequences, African-Americans from the United States readily answered the call of recruitment advertisement found in prominent African American newspapers such as Baltimore Afro-American, Crisis, Chicago Defender among others.³⁵ As the campaign promoted by the Brazilian government did not stipulate exclusion of any single group based on race, sex or religion, African Americans saw the opportunity to emigrate to a country where in their opinion a black man could even become president without much concern of the white population.³⁶ Their expectation was to found a republic governed by people of color following the same imperialists steps of their white countrymen.

African-American colonization companies were founded such as the Brazilian American Colonization Syndicate (BACS) housed in Chicago.³⁷ Lots of land were said to be bought in Pará, a northern region of the country where a group of 31 people came to be established.³⁸ The success of the call of African American newspapers immediately provoked reactions by white North Americans and Brazilian authorities not willing to accommodate black immigrants.³⁹ Still in 1921, the federal government of Brazil issued decree 4247 of January 6, article 5 clearly stated that immigrant blacks were prohibited from entering Brazil.⁴⁰ Local states also decided to issue a complementary decree to that of January 6, as for instance, the state of Bahia issued the law n. 1,729 in 1924 stressing that:

...the immigration service sought 'to promote the settlement of Brazilians and of acceptable foreigners of the white race, preferably agriculturists, on the unoccupied lands of the state'.⁴¹

It is obvious, that African-Americans were unaware of the complexity of race relations in Brazil. And yet, during the 1920s a growing number of civil rights organizations promoted by Afro-Brazilians were emerging in the big cities as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre.⁴² There was a fear that black activists from other countries would stir racial conflict in Brazil. One of the reasons for government concern was that Afro-Brazilian civil rights organizations through their newspapers such as Clarín da Alvorada in São Paulo clearly manifested on its pages ideological affinities with the UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Association) led by Marcus Garvey in the United States.⁴³ To complicate the situation, a section of the UNIA, Springfield, Massachusetts collaborated with the colonization syndicate business with a major focus of interest in Brazil.⁴⁴ As Meade and Pirio pointed out, from 1921 until the end of that decade of the twenties consular officials refused to grant permit to of black North Americans to enter Brazil.⁴⁵ The same authors observe that:

The case was probably a delicate one for the Brazilians since they did not want to discourage white immigration, but wanted to prevent the entrance of blacks. Moreover, Brazil seems to have been unwilling to go public, at least internationally, with its policy of denying entrance to blacks.⁴⁶

Moreover, the US State Department acknowledged the Brazilian policy of the exclusion of blacks:

... the Brazilian government ascertained that a syndicate had been formed in the United States to send American negroes to the states of Mato Grosso and Goyaz for colonization purposes...the Government issued confidential instructions to its consuls in the United States to discourage American negroes from going to Brazil.⁴⁷

Prior to the 1920s, the nature of race relations which developed in

the country eventually culminated in social policies of exclusion in relation to blacks and other groups.

f) The Chinese are no Solution to the Need for Cheap Labor.

Although the decree 528 of 1890 declared that Africans and Asians had to have special authorization for entering the country, two years later, in 1892 a new immigration law n.97 of October 5th was introduced guaranteeing the free entry of Chinese and Japanese workers.⁴⁸ As for Africans, only those coming from the Canary islands were allowed to enter the country, even so, most of the inhabitants of this island were of Portuguese background.⁴⁹

Article 1 of the decree reestablished the promotion of a Treaty with China that had been previously signed in September 5 of 1880, but up to 1892, had not been executed; Article 2, celebrated a treaty of commerce, peace and friendship with Japan; and Article 3, proposed the establishment of consular representation in both countries.⁵⁰

In Brazil, in the 1870s, most of the arguments against Chinese immigration were racially grounded. Skidmore, quotes a passage of a report written by Menezes e Souza. This opponent of Chinese immigration, stresses that:

Brazil needed 'new blood', not 'old juice' from 'degenerate bodies.' He based his racism on 'anthropological truth', which had established that the 'Chinese race bastardizes and makes our race degenerate'.⁵¹

In a formal report written to the Minister of Agriculture, another political leader, Joaquim Nabuco, expressed dissatisfaction with Chinese

immigration because

... they will provoke race conflict and degrade our present population; economically because they will not solve the labor shortage; morally, because they will introduce into our society that leprosy of vices that infects all cities where Chinese immigration occurs; politically, because instead of freeing labor it will only prolong the present low moral level of labor and at the same time help to preserve slavery.⁵²

In the heat of the debates on this subject the Brazilian government sent a representative to the United States in order to investigate the viability of Chinese immigration. Later on, the representative wrote a report favoring the use of Chinese workers, stressing that they were "intelligent, frugal and industrious workers".⁵³

Those that favored Chinese immigration, planters and some politicians, argued that these workers would come only temporarily, and not as colonists, since they would serve merely as the transitional manpower substituting black slave with free labor.⁵⁴ Conrad observes that planters in fact supported the use of Chinese laborers:

The laborers they desired were to be much like the Negroes in terms of cost and the ability of the planters to dominate them. However, unlike the slaves, they were not to be absorbed into the population, or even to be Christianized like the Indians and Africans of an earlier age. Rather, they were to be nothing more than a transitory solution to the labor problem.⁵⁵

And he concludes:

Brazilians have a reputation for racial tolerance, but both supporters and opponents of Chinese immigration, notably the later, often used racist arguments to advance their cause. In fact, while advocates of Chinese immigration sometimes praised the Chinese as 'a paragon of virtue', the opposition often denounced him as 'a demon of depravity'.⁵⁶

Apparently, two major factors contributed to the failure of the

large-scale Chinese immigration to Brazil: a) Brazilian abolitionists, influenced by British opponents to the "coolie traffic", were able to convince the Chinese government that the real intention of the planters class was to introduce a new form of slavery; b) The experience of the Chinese in Cuba and Peru whose mistreatment and situation of misery had already motivated concern of the Chinese government in relation to their citizens.⁵⁷

Even the attempts of the planter class to found the Society for Importing Asiatic Workers of Chinese Ancestry, in 1870, in order to promote large-scale Chinese immigration to Brazil, did not succeed. The later may be attributed to several causes, but may be linked particularly to racially grounded internal debates, external pressures opposing "coolie traffic", or the conditions of work recognized nationally and internationally as not being satisfactory.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, from 1810 to 1893, almost 3,000 Chinese workers came to Brazil to work on the plantations of south Brazil. The following table gives us an estimate of total entry of Chinese by year:

TABLE 8 - CHINESE WORKERS SAID TO HAVE REACHED
BRAZIL DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

YEAR	NUMBERS
1810	500 (approximate)
1856	360
1859-1866	612
1874	1,000
1893	475
TOTAL	2,947

Sources: Conrad, Robert. "The Planter Class and The Debate Over Chinese Immigration to Brazil, 1850-1893", International Migration Review, Vol. IX, Number 1, Spring 1975:42

As the table suggests, the year 1874 corresponded to the largest influx of Chinese to Brazil in the nineteenth century. Historical statistics show that after this period, Chinese immigration to Brazil would cease completely from 1954 onward.⁵⁹

g) Unwillingness to Accept Japanese Labor but Necessity Prevails.

Regarding Japanese immigration, not until 1885 did the Japanese government implement measures to control and protect Japanese immigrants abroad. Prior to this year, immigration from Japan was unrestricted. After the first legislation in 1885, new laws required each potential emigrant to obtain a permit to travel abroad.⁶⁰ The introduction of Japanese to as the United States, Hawaii and Canada was an attempt by employers to substitute the Chinese workforce. However, in Brazil, Japanese workers came not as substitutes for the Chinese, but as an alternative, since large-scale Chinese immigration to Brazil did not succeed.⁶¹

One factor that calls attention to the migratory flow from Japan was the strong interference of Japanese government in this matter. For instance, authorization to emigrate was granted only to the countries that offered certain guarantees to the Japanese.⁶² In Brazil, the internal restrictions on the Japanese were similar to the ones made on the Chinese. They were considered the "yellow peril", they were blamed for the high rate of fertility among the group, which could jeopardize the national security of the countries where they were established.⁶³

The same arguments led governing elites of countries on Central America to enact restrictive legislations, for instance, Costa Rica in 1896 prohibited Japanese immigration. This act was followed by similar legislation in other Central and South American countries including Guatemala in 1909; Paraguay and Colombia continued the trend later.⁶⁴

In the first years of this century, the conditions of work in the coffee zones of São Paulo were not satisfactory. Denoucements came primarily from Italians whose complains were reported by the international press motivating the Italian government to restrict immigration of its citizens to the coffee regions in Brazil.⁶⁵

The decision of the Italian government would definitively affect the business of the coffee industry. Although the immigration law of 1892 guaranteed free entry of Chinese and Japanese to the country, through the pressure of the planter class, a new immigration law was issued in 1907, stressing that these immigrants did not require authorization of the National Congress to enter Brazil.⁶⁶ The same law of 1907 dropped the conditions under which Africans could come to the country.

The situation on the international market forced Brazilian employers to look at the Japanese migration as a necessary migratory flow: The

superproduction of coffee provoked a sharp drop in the European market, as can be seen in the table below:

TABLE 9 - SÃO PAULO COFFEE PRODUCTION AND PRICES

YEARS	PRODUCTION (MILLIONS OF SACKS)	BRAZILIAN PRICE	WORLD PRICE
1880-90	1.9	4\$950*	70
1890-95	3.1	12\$200	97
1895-190	5.1	9\$700	52
1900-05	8.1	4\$950	39 1/2

Source: Hall, Michael McDonald, based on A. Laliere, *Le cafe dans L'Etat de Saint Paul*, appendix in *The Origins of Mass Immigration in Brazil, 1871-1914*, Phd. dissertation, Columbia University, 1969:187.

* Former Brazilian currency was called real(singular) or reis (plural).

The table shows that in fact the price of coffee in the world market between 1900-05 was 39 1/2 (sterling pounds) relative to the production of 8.1 million sacks. In comparison with the period between 1880-90, for a total production of 1.9 million sacks, coffee was quoted at 70 (sterling pounds), a significant drop on the coffee prices.⁶⁷

Consequently, for the national economy, the Japanese labor force would represent two major advantages: 1) they would supply the coffee with an abundant labor force, and; 2) in exchange, the Brazilian production would have a new outlet destined to the Far East markets.⁶⁸

Despite the negative attributes implied by Japanese immigration, in 1908, a steady migratory flow became a reality.⁶⁹ Therefore, from 1908 to 1941, Japanese immigration to Brazil reached more than 150,000 people as the following table illustrates:

TABLE 10 - JAPANESE IMMIGRATION TO BRAZIL
1908-1963

YEARS	NUMBERS	%
1908-1923	31,414	13,4
1924-1941	157,572	67,1
1952-1963	45,650	19,5
Total	234,636	100,00

Source: Suzuki, Teiiti. The Japanese Immigrant in Brazil. Japan: University of Tokyo Press, 1969:16

As the table shows, the period between 1924 and 1941 corresponds to the highest number of Japanese entering the country. Regarding this period, Levine suggests that Japanese workers totalled the highest number of immigrants coming to Brazil between 1924 and 1934. Consequently, the new state policy targeted control of the entry of this group.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, while in many Brazilian circles the Japanese were regarded as excellent and efficient agricultural workers, negative opinions resulted in restrictions on the number of Japanese coming to the country through a system of quotas not unlike the North American model.⁷¹ One of the interesting points in this discussion is that most of the Japanese coming to the country were subsidized by Japanese colonization societies. These societies used to purchase or contract tracts of uncleared lands in the states of Paraná, Mato Grosso, Pará, Amazonas and São Paulo.⁷² The fear of the economic and political advancement of the Japanese in Brazil was such that in the Constitution of 1934 provisions were made to restrict Japanese immigration as well as to "the right of states to sell or lease agricultural land."⁷³ To this issue, Hastings has observed that:

From 1925 until 1935 between 6,000 and 25,000 Japanese entered Brazil, establishing agricultural colonies on the jungle frontier. However, foreign tensions (the threat of war and North American pressure exerted on South American nations to close their borders to further Japanese immigration) and domestic unrest (labor unions lobbying for immigration quotas) forced the Brazilian legislature to enact immigration quota laws. In a series of legislative acts (1930, 1934, 1935, 1936 and 1938) Japanese entry to Brazil was restricted to between 2,280 and 2,850 per annum.⁷⁴

h) The Role of the States and the Implementation of Immigration Policy: Mediating Racial Division of Labor.

In 1929, the First Congress of Eugenics received a proposal, similar to one sent by Azevedo Amaral, aiming to apply a color bar to future immigration. The bill did not pass. Referring to this provision in relation to black immigrants, Skidmore asserts:

...perhaps in part because there seemed so little real prospect of black immigrants coming from anywhere (including the United States).⁷⁵

Given the character of the restrictive legislation in Brazil regarding non-whites, it is not surprising that a large-scale migratory flow of African descent people from neighboring countries, apparently, did not occur. An exception like the 5,000 West Indian blacks that came to work on the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré Railway is justifiable, since legislation allowed foreign companies to bring workers to the country at their own expense, but under control of government officials.⁷⁶

As for the impact of restrictive immigration regulations upon non-white national workers, it seems that the cry of a labor shortage hid another aspect raised by Hall in his analysis about the origin of mass European immigration to Brazil. He suggests, based on historical records,

that the shortage of labor was in fact due to the unwillingness of national laborers to work for low wages and in unsatisfactory conditions.⁷⁷ He backs up his argument on the fact that between 1882 and 1914, about 686,200 workers left São Paulo compared with 1,553,000 who arrived within that period. Going even further, he clarifies:

Approximately 300,000 workers were required to care for and harvest the coffee crops of about 10,000,000 sacks a year which came to market between 1910 and 1914. Yet since 750,000 workers at the very least had arrived after 1884, the overwhelming majority of whom were destined for the coffee fields, it is clear that if any labor shortage existed, it was because of the planter's inability or unwillingness to retain their work force on the fazendas.⁷⁸

Hall considers that the whole issue of immigration and shortage of labor had, in reality, a firm purpose benefiting by the planters: to present a labor market with a "surplus of labor" in order to keep down wages.⁷⁹

The discussion of race and immigration regulations during almost 40 years in Brazil, since the advent of the Republic, followed an international trend whereby race became a factor of political and economic manipulation. However, a factor that cannot be overlooked is the role of the state in the implementation of social policies such as immigration. It is necessary to consider the relative autonomy of the state in the formulation of policies within the context of a World Economic System. The cases of Asian, African and European immigration to Brazil are concrete examples. It was exactly the condition of the North American legislation which almost prohibited the coming of Japanese laborers to her country. Thus, the governing elite in Brazil took advantage of and established in 1892 legislation allowing Chinese and Japanese immigration to the country.

In the case of the later it materialized from 1908 until the mid 1920s, when a more urbanized and organized working class started to cry out against Japanese immigration and the threat that the entry of Asians could pose to national and economic interests. What is evident is the role of the Japanese state in the process of regulation and organization of emigration from Japan, as Hastings confirms.⁸⁰ Despite racial prejudices addressed to it, Japan at the turn of the century emerged as another leading industrial and economic power, and what ended up prevailing, in the case of large-scale Japanese immigration to Brazil, were the interests of well-defined groups in both states, who acted through the states on their own behalf. China as well as Africa were in a relatively disadvantaged position in terms of trade, business and transactions. The late nineteenth century had witnessed the division of the African continent among European countries, and African peoples and their descendants throughout the world would receive the impact of this rearrangement of the world economy. In this sense, ideologies of racial inferiority and backward civilizations would serve the purpose of capitalist accumulation at a global level, through which racial divisions of labor worldwide, and would structure the inequalities affecting most of the African Diaspora people in present societies.

In summary, this chapter demonstrated the way the state through interest groups, ideologically oriented, implemented state policies aiming to control the migratory movements of workers coming from the African and Asian continents. And yet, given the level of insertion of the Brazilian state in the world economy those restrictions over a period of time changed in order to facilitate the movement of capital. Consequently, the examples on the restrictions upon blacks, Chinese and Japanese clarifies

how the racial division of labor came into play in Brazil.

CHAPTER V

ENDNOTES

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70. Donald Hastings. "Japanese Emigration and Assimilation in Brazil.
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76. C.R. Cameron. "Colonization of Immigrants in Brazil". Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 33, N.4 (October 1931): 36-38.
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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This study is closely related to what has been termed historical sociology, whereby the arguments developed are a meaningful interpretation of a group's experiences, and from which, events of the past can be best related to the socio-political and cultural dimensions of the present.¹

As such, this research has focused on the West Indian migration to Brazil from 1907 to 1912. The primary event responsible for their coming was the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railway, on the Brazilian border with Bolivia.

The leading questions grounding this research were concerned with four major interrelated issues: a) to what extent international capital and West Indian migration interconnected in Brazil; b) what was the relationship of state legislations to international capital with the clear purpose of controlling the direction, size, selection and magnitude of the migratory movement of people; c) given the specificity of the migratory movement of African descendents across national boundaries, what were the implications of race in facilitating a racial division of labor in relationship to immigration policies; and d) how the geo-socio displacement of African group throughout history becomes a major indicator of the social formation of African Diaspora communities throughout the world.

Based on these questions, four major working propositions were outlined. The findings coming out of this research seem to confirm the working propositions which guided this study, and which attest:

1) UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT AMONG ECONOMIC UNITS WITHIN THE LARGER WORLD ECONOMIC SYSTEM INDUCES CYCLICAL MIGRATORY MOVEMENT OF LABOR OVER TIME AND SPACE:

a) regional socio-political and economic imbalances yield unequal remuneration of labor and this induces migratory movement of labor.

The case-study, West Indian migration to Brazil, attested that the expansion of international capitalism represented by Britain prior to the emancipation period in the 1830s had precipitated a migratory movement of workers from the West Indies to other territories under British control. These first flows, characterized by successive migratory flows occurred in two different levels: a) workers of the black diaspora fled to escape the harshness of the colonial system of domination; b) workers attracted by better wages in other islands of the Caribbean migrated first under unsupervised official administration, and second, after emancipatory period, they migrated under specific conditions stipulated by the governments officials of their places of origin.

2) THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH LABOR IS RELEASED AND RECRUITED DEPEND ON THREE INTERRELATED PHENOMENA:

a) workers themselves act on their own behalf given internal and external structural conditions;

b) the dynamics of the world economic system facilitate the penetration of international capitalism across boundaries whereby labor mobilization over space constitutes one of the basis of the whole

structure;

c) state legislations over time facilitate or restrain the mobilization of labor cross-boundaries according to their own interests, national ideologies and its level of insertion in the world economy.

3) THE STATE AS A UNIT OF THE BROADER WORLD ECONOMIC SYSTEM REGULATES THE DIRECTION, SIZE AND SELECTION OF THE MIGRATORY MOVEMENT OF LABOR:

a) at the national level, direction, size and selection of migratory flows may occur attending regional and sectorial economies;

b) at a cross national levels, direction, selection and size of the migratory flows might occur according to the pace of international capital as articulated politically and economically with local states.

The study shows that towards the end of the nineteenth century and until the middle of the 1920s, successive migratory movements of labor became institutionalized by state regulations inside and outside the West Indies. Thereby, an ever expanding process of capital accumulation at international levels, in several countries of Central and South America, provided the basis for the implementation of intercontinental projects such as railroad building.

The rigidity of the internal structures of West Indian societies for improvement of living conditions and social mobility, combined with natural cataclysms such as droughts, hurricanes and earthquakes, to make workers of the black diaspora the primary source of labor for those intercontinental projects. It was under this state of affairs, that almost five thousand West Indian blacks went to Brazil responding to the call of

recruiting agents sent by the North American enterprise in charge of building the Madeira-Mamore railway between the Bolivian and Brazilian border in the period from 1907 to 1912.

And yet, this study took under consideration only those workers that came under contract with the company in Brazil. But, historical records coming out of this research suggest that an undocumented migratory flow of West Indians to Brazil had already been established even prior to 1907, which confirms what other students of West Indian migration have stressed: Despite mechanisms of control of the movement of people across boundaries, through state legislation of immigration, workers themselves acting on their own behalf created imaginative ways to cope with structural inequalities.

4) WITHIN THE FRAME OF THE WORLD ECONOMIC SYSTEM, RACE AS A SOCIAL CATEGORY BECOMES A TOOL OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MANIPULATION ON BEHALF OF THE STATE AND INTEREST GROUPS.

This research provides insights on how race and racial division of labor is placed within the frame of the world economy. Race as a component of the analysis of structural inequalities does not stand on its own. It emerges as an issue according to the ideological mechanisms of social control. In this case through immigration policies, and as such it is subject to political and economic manipulation. In the course of this project, one attempt was to demonstrate how the race factor was a tool of manipulation for the governing elites. By the time West Indians went to Brazil, a policy aiming to attract European workers to the country was under way.

Prior to 1907, towards the end of nineteenth century, a policy de jure, curbed the migratory flow of Asians and Africans to the country. This policy lasted only two years. By 1892, Asians were allowed to settled in Brazil, given the necessity of the coffee industry to expand its economic ties to the East. Despite the fact that no specific policy was drawn to prohibit emigration of African descent to the country, after 1907, a policy de facto was implemented as seen through the examples of Brazilian and North American attempts to curb emigration of North American blacks settling in Brazil. Within this context, West Indian blacks constituted an exception of the migratory movement of African Diaspora people to Brazil in the contemporary period. This exception was deeply rooted in the international mobilization of capital whereby the North American company had the authorization of the Brazilian government to recruit workers from "non desirable places" to work in Porto Velho, Brazil. It was also the company's responsibility to repatriate those workers as soon as the work on the construction site was finished. Some West Indians, in fact, returned to their places of origin or emigrated to other countries in search of work opportunities. But, others remained, established their community in Porto Velho, and raised their families there. Under the auspices of political and economic changes, the workers of the Madeira-Mamore that still remained in Porto Velho after the construction of the railway, had the option to become Brazilian citizes, which many did. Today, Afro-Brazilians of West Indian descendants are said to be scattered in many of Brazil' s major cities as São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro. Others such as the Rutherfords, migrated to the United States for the same reasons their past relatives did 90 years ago. They still are in search of better chances of improvement for themselves and their families,

a fact that tells us that the circulatoriness of West Indians is still a major characteristic of the African Diaspora in the contemporary world. Migrate to survive.

a) Implications of this study

This research improves our knowledge about the dimension and significance of the migratory movement of labor of African peoples. This historical event, little studied by social scientists in Brazil, contributes to the discussion of labor migration theories, and also to an understanding of migratory flows from the Caribbean to Central and South America.

Given the limitations imposed by models of labor migration theories concerning the factor race in the formulation of social policies as immigration laws, this research attests to the necessity of incorporating a comprehensive model of race relations in case-studies such as this. The model elaborated by the sociologist Ruth Simms Hamilton and employed in this case-study of West Indian migration to Brazil fulfils this need. In a broader scope, Social Science disciplines dealing with theories of labor migration can benefit from this model. It provides a useful analytical framework for the global dimension of African Diaspora experiences.

b) Future Research

The findings coming out of this research suggest a set of new questions that need further investigation. For example, the undocumented migratory flows of West Indians prior to 1907, indicate that a pattern of

labor procurement from West Indies to Brazil had been already established. Consequently, the questions emerging from this particular context provide new insights for a better understanding of the dimension of this migratory flow. Another aspect that requires future studies is concerned with the encounter of the two African Diasporas: one from West Indies and the already established Afro-Brazilian community in Porto Velho. What was the level of their relationship? Based on the historical evidence, it seems that the West Indian group had a distinct position in relation to other groups given the language factor. They were the ones that established their settlement close to the machine shop camp. Does this indicate that the pioneer West Indian community in Porto Velho had better life-chance opportunities for their families as compared to the Afro-Brazilians? This case-study also seems to indicate that essentially this migratory movement of labor was male oriented. What about the women from the West Indies? How many women from the West Indies came in order to contribute to the formation of a West Indian community in Porto Velho? Historical records emphasize that the governmental decision to nationalize all foreign investments in the country accounts for the official integration of West Indians into the Afro-Brazilian community. Given this evidence, did they constitute a separate group or did they marry with Afro-Brazilians in Porto Velho? These and other relevant issues open new avenues for future investigations about the migratory movement of labor from the West Indies to Brazil. This study owes many of its insights to the pioneering scholarly research undertaken by Sidney Greenfield. Hopefully, this thesis on West Indian migration to Brazil can contribute for the advancement of the studies pertaining to this relevant matter.

CHAPTER VI

ENDNOTES

1. Theda Skocpol. "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent strategies in Historical Sociology" in Vision and Method in Historical Sociology, edited by Theda Skocpol. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press:368.

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