

# Destiny Divina

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*Ideology and Confederado Migration From the American South to Brazil, 1865-1877*

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the nineteenth century migration of un-Reconstructed Confederates from the American South to the Empire of Brazil in the immediate aftermath of the American Civil War. This group came to be known as the Confederados – the Portuguese translation of “Confederates.” They played a relatively unexamined role in the history of the postbellum era in American as well as in Brazilian immigration history.

It is rare that organized groups of natives emigrate from the United States, yet this is one such story. The dominant narrative of America as a receiver of immigrants, however, overshadows the idea that there particular people might even consider exodus. While the post-war destruction of everything they understood to be “home” certainly provided the impetus for immigration, I will argue that the ideology of Manifest Destiny which would allow them to leave the United States, but remain “American” was crucial to the decision to make the difficult trek southward.

Brazil was in the early years of a number of massive changes to come. Slavery and the Empire would end by 1890, and by the 1920s the ethnic makeup of the country would be drastically different. This was by design. While most historiography of government solicited immigration in Brazil focus on the policy of *embranqueamento*, or whitening, and modernization which were certainly aspects of this action, I will argue that they had additional aims in encouraging immigration. The existence of a similar but unarticulated national philosophy to Manifest Destiny, passed down from the Portuguese, known as *Divina Providência* spurred them to push their borders. This required immigrants capable of living on the frontier.

Finally, this thesis will assert that conditions in the two nations brought together these two people, who with the mutual belief in a God-given right to expand saw an opportunity to each accomplish their goals – the Confederados to maintain a way of life they no longer could within the U.S., and the Brazilians to simultaneously whiten, take advantage of the Southerners’ planting expertise to modernize the economy, and populate the frontier.

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It is also necessary to extend a warm gratitude to the descendants of the Confederados who showed unbelievable kindness to me during my time in Brazil. The Fraternidade Descendência Americana sent me the seminal work on the topic by Judith MacKnight Jones before I had even paid for it, simply on good faith. The wonderful Betty Antunes de Oliveira and her son, Lincoln, who compiled one of the most beautifully put together books I have ever seen (documenting the gravestones at the Campo Cemetery), offered me a copy as a gift. The spirit of Southern hospitality is still demonstrated by these warm, welcoming people.

An expression of gratitude also goes out to the friends and professors who have taught me the beautiful Portuguese language. Without their lessons, it would have been impossible to complete the research for this thesis.

Finally, I must thank my family for encouraging my obsessions for both Civil War and Brazilian histories. They listened to my ramblings and provided invaluable comments on various drafts, as well as on their experiences writing theses. They also helped me to spend a semester abroad in Brazil, during which I was able to collect many valuable resources for this paper I would never have otherwise been able to.

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## Introduction – The Star-Spangled Cross and the Pure Field of White

“You have never lived until you’ve been surrounded by folks eating fried chicken, watermelon and corn-on-the-cob, wearing Confederate flag T-shirts and speaking Portuguese!”<sup>1</sup> A visiting member of the Georgia Sons of Confederate Veterans reacted with some surprise upon attending a peculiar party in Santa Barbara d’Oeste, in the state of São Paulo, Brazil (see Figure 1). The Festa Confederada is a meeting of Brazilians whose ancestors – mostly white, but some of slave birth – made their way by steamship from across the American South to Brazil between the end of the American Civil War and the end of the nineteenth century. Although most are now Brazilianized, the older generations still speak English with a distinctive Southern drawl. In addition to those with Southern lineage, the festival draws many sympathizers who proudly declare, “I’m Brazilian, but my heart is Confederate.”<sup>2</sup> The present day Confederado community works hard to keep its history alive. The Festa Confederada plays an important role in the effort, but it may be a while before the party will be held again. As the website of the Fraternidade Descendência Americana (Descendants’ Fraternity of Americana) announces, in light of severe damage from a storm in the fall of 2011, “The 2013 edition of the traditional Festa Confederada (Confederates’ Festival), celebrated annually on the grounds of the Campo Cemetery, will not be celebrated due to interference and renovations still in progress at the site.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tavares, *The Confederate Flag Still Flies in the South*, pt. 14:56.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pt. 21:07.

<sup>3</sup> Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present*, 27.

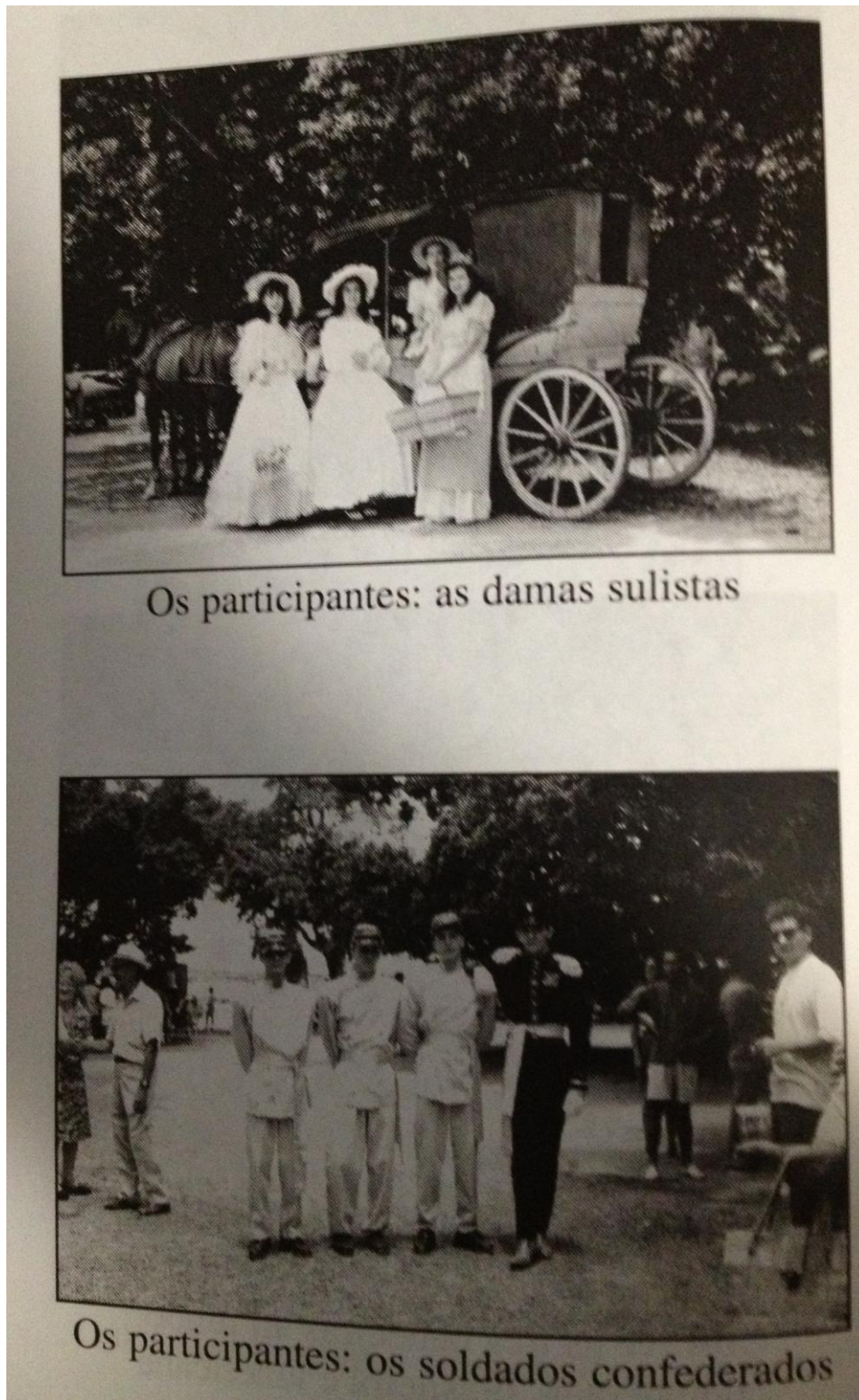


Figure 1: Festa Confederada: Top - “The Participants: the Southern dames”; Bottom – “The Participants: the Confederate soldiers.” (Gussi, *Os Norte-americanos (confederados) Do Brasil*, 74.)

Brazil is well known as an immigrant country, but less studied than those German, Italian, Eastern European, and Japanese migrants is the story of how thousands of Americans came to the country. They left a nation in conflict, and a home torn apart by violent Civil War. The impending, though uncertain, transformations of the post-war period drove them from the land of their birth. Upon Reconstruction of the South, the political status and power of former Confederates was in question. Some wanted leaders punished while others doled out pardons. Physical destruction, interrupted business connections, and the abrupt shift from slave to free labor created an unstable economic outlook. Southern society was based around slavery as a cultural foundation, the elimination of which left the region socially tense as relations among freedmen, yeoman farmers, and planters became antagonistic. The Confederados generally consisted of families left somewhere in the middle. They were usually not political leaders, large planters, or even slave owners. They had been, however, invested in the Confederacy and slave society. Coming predominantly from a kind of professional “middle class”, they had resources enough to relocate, but not enough to feel comfortable remaining in the uprooted South.

In this combination of highly unforeseeable climates – political, social, and economic – groups across the South began to coalesce. Agents, intent on scouting out lands and making necessary arrangements for mass emigration, led them. While most restless Confederates migrated within the United States and its territories, large numbers began to consider colonization efforts in Latin America. While Mexico and British Honduras became preferred destinations of some, Brazil received constant attention. No fewer than six relatively large,

organized colonies formed in the land of the Southern Cross<sup>4</sup> where they were dubbed the Confederados (see Figure 2).<sup>5</sup>

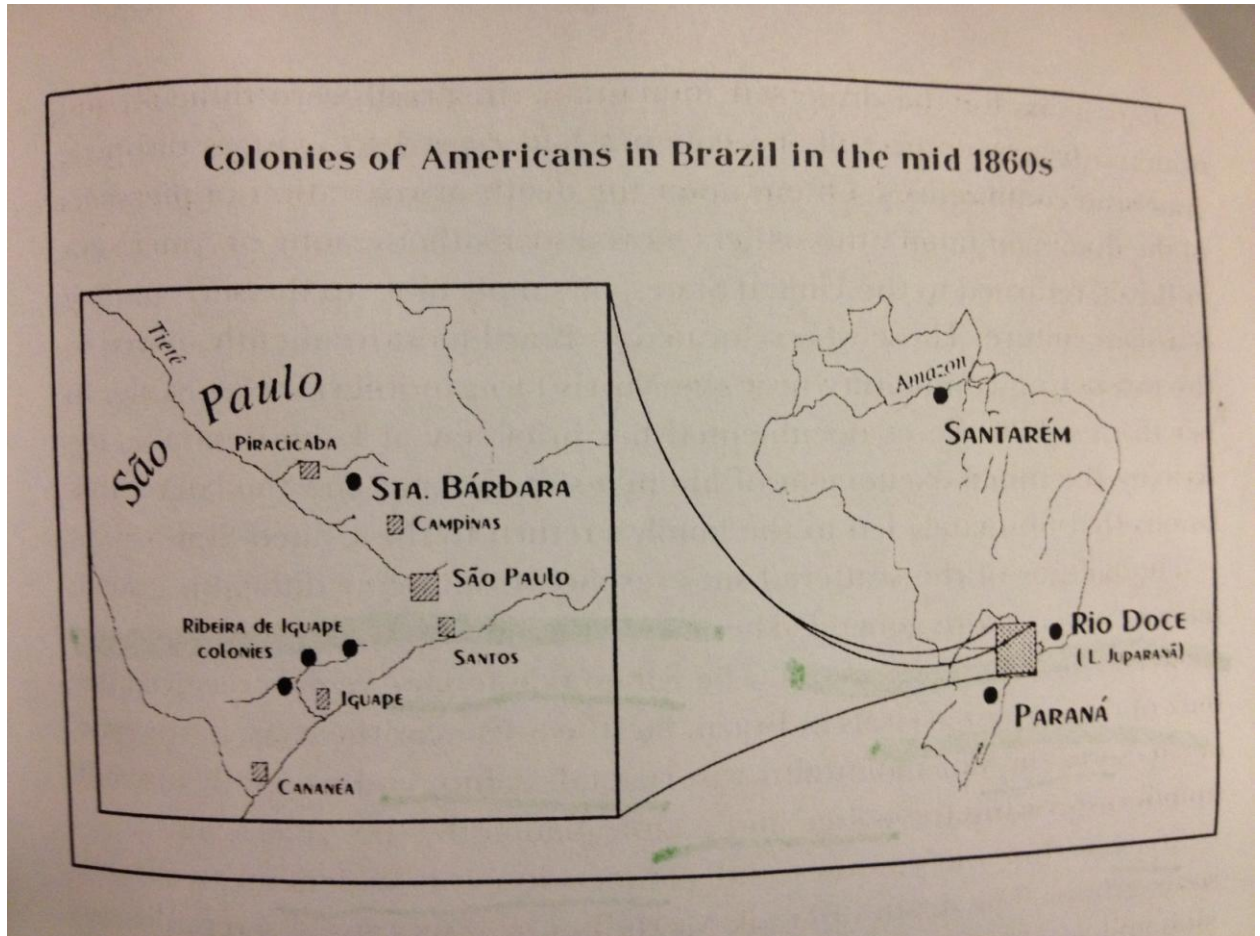


Figure 2: Map of Colonies of Americans in Brazil in the mid 1860s. (Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 19.)

The story of Confederate refugees is considered fringe, if at all, in the American historiography regarding the period. Emigration is generally ignored as a consequence of the American Civil War, and forgotten as part of the Reconstruction narrative. Brazilian historiography proves slightly more adequate. The Confederados, however, were a small group

<sup>4</sup> The Cruzeiro do Sul, or Southern Cross, is a constellation and common symbol in Brazil. Many Confederados referred to the country by this poetic pseudonym.

<sup>5</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 16–17.

compared to their contemporary immigrant nationalities. Many of the primary sources – promotional reports by agents encouraging emigration, newspaper articles, and diaries – are in English, and there is a spattering of secondary literature.

Scholarship on the Confederados seems to have mostly come in jolts, sparked by the work of select individuals. Lawrence Hill's work, "Confederate Exiles to Brazil," published in 1927, spawned early research and articles throughout the 1930s. In 1967, a Brazilian-born descendant of emigrants from the South, Judith MacKnight Jones, set in motion the more modern trend in Confederado interest. Her book, *Soldado Descansa! Uma Epopéia Norte Americana Sob os Céus do Brasil*,<sup>6</sup> was in penned Portuguese, but it nevertheless had a powerful effect on the study of the subject by Americans.<sup>7</sup> Jones was not a trained historian, and neither were many of those who followed after her. Publications increased again in the 1970s and '80s sparked by *Soldado Descansa!*. At least some of these descendants had taken to history as a primary occupation. One resulting book, *The Elusive Eden: Frank McMullan's Confederate Colony in Brazil*, was completed on a Fulbright grant by William Clark Griggs in 1987.<sup>8</sup> The fact remained, however, that the vast majority interested in recording this history were those with Confederado ancestors.

In attempting an historical analysis of a distinct group, it becomes somewhat complicated when the secondary literature comes charged with the dual bias of personal connection - in this case wrapped up with a sense of Southern pride – that one must take into account. Far from trying to discredit the serious work of these researchers, who are often extremely dedicated and

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<sup>6</sup> Jones, *Soldado descansa! Uma epopéia norteamericana sob os céus do Brasil*.

<sup>7</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 4–5.

<sup>8</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*.

interesting to read, this caveat merely serves as a constant reminder of the topic's particular idiosyncrasies.

The hobbyist nature of many, though not all, of these accounts compounds the matter of finding sources, as many of the authors are less than meticulous in their citations. The authors are not solely to blame for the difficulty in locating historical evidence. The documentary record of the period is extremely inconsistent, especially with regards to immigration. Though digitalization is a godsend in allowing access to various primary sources, many potentially valuable resources remain in archives in Brazil, unpublished in private collections, or simply lost to the ages.

Despite the missing pieces, it is still possible to glean much from the stories of these self-exiled refugees. Intercontinental travel was not easy to arrange or complete, so such a proposal was taken very seriously and carefully calculated. The Confederados' eventual resolution to pack up their families and settle in an unfamiliar land resulted from myriad factors both pushing them out of the postbellum South and pulling them towards the Empire of Brazil. Nervousness due to political and economic instability during Reconstruction coupled with anxiety over massive social change was channeled into the successful promotion of an alternative by emigration societies. The demand for a destination was met by the lure of Brazil, which offered government-subsidized travel and land, religious freedom, and assurances of economic support. Perhaps the most significant draw of Brazil was the fact that it was one of the last surviving slave economies, built upon similar paternal ideals to those of the Old South.<sup>9</sup> While all of these important components of the movement have previously been discussed, the element of destiny has not been addressed. Both America and Brazil have a heritage of viewing themselves as fated

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<sup>9</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 16–17.

to be great nations, and the unique circumstances of the 1860s and '70s allowed for the simultaneous expression of these philosophies.

The migration of the Confederados to Brazil from 1865 to 1877, which slowed to a trickle into the later part of the century, is unique in American history as one of the token examples of mass, organized exodus from a nation whose dominant narrative is one of enticing the world's people with the promise of the American Dream. Southerners at the time, however, were living a nightmare that, unlike the Tories who escaped to British-controlled Canada after the American Revolution or the Mormons who fled religious persecution within the borders of the United States for Utah – then a Spanish territory, left them willing to leave the continent and the English-speaking world entirely in order to escape.

Study of this movement can also contribute to a deeper understanding of late-nineteenth century immigration to Brazil. The Confederados were far from the only, or even the majority of, migrants during this period. Experiments with European settler societies in Brazil began as early as 1817 with the foundation of the Swiss immigrant village of Novo Fribourgo.<sup>10</sup> German immigrants arrived on and off throughout the decade, and were joined later by Italians and Eastern Europeans. Brazil's desire to whiten the population led to encouragement of Europeans entering the country, even though the vast majority came from the peasantry and was brought in as inexpensive labor by individual planters. The Southern contingent, however, was drawn from the middle class and was seen as a desirable enough addition to the citizenry that they were invited directly by the Emperor, Dom Pedro II. Unlike the European manual laborers, they were to be independent landowners.

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<sup>10</sup> Assu, *Brazilian colonization, from an European point of view*, 9.

Not all was encouraging. As the preparations solidified, these temporary nomads were met with many setbacks, not to mention the daunting prospect of life in a land where few of them, if any, spoke the native tongue. However, by taking into account the factors pressuring Southerners to seek alternatives to Reconstruction as well as the positive circumstances attracting them to a seemingly kindred spirit in Brazil one can situate the Confederados in American, Brazilian and Global history. Only then it is possible to understand why whole families uprooted themselves and made the arduous journey from the American South to South America.

An air of defeat and cynicism over the future of the South following the American Civil War led the Confederados to take up the banner of Manifest Destiny, an American ideal par excellence, to establish colonies in South America. Only in a foreign land could they preserve the America they knew and loved. Meanwhile, Brazil was a nation in the balance. They spent much of the nineteenth century searching for an alternative to slavery, in order to become a modern, civilized (i.e. white, European) people. The Emperor, Dom Pedro II, also recognized not only the need, but also the divine right to expand the extent of his control throughout the empire.<sup>11</sup> Drawing on the Portuguese belief of a “Divina Providência,”<sup>12</sup> the government looked fulfill its fate by building an internal empire that would encompass the entire territory on the map known as Brazil. In order to accomplish these goals, they sought immigrants, principally from Europe. The convergence of domestic and global circumstances at this particular time in history led these two seeming soul mates – the Confederados and Brazil – to come together in an effort to fulfill a reciprocal *Divina Destiny*.

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<sup>11</sup> Also to stave off Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay as the mid-century brought border wars among all of these powers.

<sup>12</sup> “Divine Providence”

## Chapter I – Dear Old Southland

The journey from the United States to Brazil never seemed an easy venture in the 1860s and often proved even more perilous than could possibly be imagined. For many the voyage took its toll. One group wound up in Cape Verde en route. Another was castaway in the Caribbean before being rerouted to New York, caught in another storm, and eventually making it to Rio. The perhaps too-fearless leader of yet another colony, Lansford Warren Hastings died in St. Thomas before ever reaching the Amazon River where his followers would to struggle to survive by themselves. Yet they made the voluntary and deliberate decision to embark on the arduous passage across the ocean. What inspired them to do so, even when faced with immense obstacles?

While it may seem as if the story of the Confederados is atypical, it has a clear place in American, Brazilian and global history. The post-war circumstances in the South led many to doubt the security of their immediate future. Political confusion and disorder resulted from conflicting plans for Reconstruction, the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, and earlier threats the Union had made towards rebels. Physical devastation during the war compounded by widespread vandalism afterward created an atmosphere hard to call home. The collapse of Confederate currency and bank failures left the economy in shambles. Many were perhaps most apprehensive about the pending shift in labor and social relations as nearly 3.75 million slaves suddenly became freedmen, so that the longstanding commitment to white supremacy would be challenged.<sup>13</sup> While relatively small, select groups actually resolved to immigrate to Latin America, the topic was one of national discussion for a time. Newspapers from the Natchez

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<sup>13</sup> Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*, 1, 6.

Daily Courier to the New York Times reported on the actions of colonization societies and emigrants from inception to eventual return home.

The Confederados' selection of Brazil as a new homeland was not by chance. Americans, and particular Southerners, had long had an interest in Latin America, including Brazil. Dom Pedro II, the Emperor, had also officially recognized the Confederate States of America during the war, indicating sympathy due to shared values.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the Brazilian government had actively encouraged immigration. In an effort to "whiten" the population, both public and private agents made special offers to immigrants - principally from Germany, Eastern Europe, Italy and the United States. Concessions could include arrangements for transportation, land, work, and religious freedom. Brazil was particularly interested in attracting Confederates as it was they were in the process of growing the cultivation of cotton, something which it was believed Southerners could push forward (See Table 1).

*Statement of principal exports in four periods of five years each, and in 1863-64.*  
The canada is nearly two gallons; the arroba, 32½ lbs. avoirdupois.

ARTICLES.		1st Period. 1844-5 to '48-9. Average.	2d Period. 1849-50 to '53-4. Average.	3d Period. 1853-4 to '57-8. Average.	4th Period. 1858-9 to '62-3. Average.	1863-64.
Rum .....	canadas	2,709,669	2,654,820	2,847,935	2,313,782	1,784,993
Cotton.....	arrobas	714,959	956,237	979,365	846,034	1,297,228
Rice .....	"	291,262.	256,865	.....	.....	.....
Sugar .....	"	7,591,885	8,652,252	7,765,695	8,364,918	7,941,310
Hair .....	"	31,740	47,081	44,537	40,381	52,756
Cacáo .....	"	190,203	276,506	223,058	273,746	284,190
Coffee .....	"	7,873,952	8,850,183	11,224,544*	10,933,697*	8,183,293*
Hides, salted...	number	680,028	512,078	498,884	634,454	764,336
Hides, dry.....	arroba	675,283	533,653	448,498	369,748	445,625
Diamonds.....	oitavas	632	6,364	.....	.....	.....
Tobacco .....	arrobas	326,343	499,204	548,504	693,126	997,218
India-Rubber..	"	38,336	105,781	143,130	161,380	232,288
Maté.....	"	254,474	404,221	461,952	549,615	719,969
Gold (bullion).	oitavas	194,808	195,756	75,401	370,686	31,898
Sarsaparilla....	arrobas	3,469	5,993	.....	.....	.....

\* Average for these two periods is much affected by the partial destruction of the coffee-trees by an insect in 1861-62. In the year 1860-61 there was the greatest crop ever raised in Brazil. It amounted to 14,585,258 arrobas. In the year 1865 no less than 9,584,611 arrobas of coffee were exported from Rio and Santos alone: so that there is a great gain on 1863-64.

Table 1: Growth of cotton production relative to decline for most of other crops in the 1860s. (Kidder and Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians*, 614.)

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<sup>14</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 17.

Brazil was not the only possible destination for those looking to migrate, nor was it the only country to proffer special treatment for Southern Immigrants. Mexico for a time was a hugely popular target, and British Honduras also welcomed a number of disgruntled Confederates. Despite being more remote, however, Brazil ended up garnering most of the attention. This likely was the result of a combination of political turmoil in Mexico and the survival of the institution of slavery in Brazil.

The Confederados were part of a global surge in immigration. As Eric Hobsbawm claims, “The middle of the nineteenth century marks the beginning of the greatest migration of peoples in history.”<sup>15</sup> Brazil was a nation intent on modernizing. If “population movements and industrialization go together,”<sup>16</sup> by both distributing labor and technological resources, then Brazil sought to gain both. In attempting to attract German, Swiss, Polish, and Italian immigrants, they aimed to replace the outdated mode of production that was slavery. The predilection for American immigrants sprang from the aspiration for specialized tools and techniques to increase production.

This domestic, international, and global framework is necessary to truly understand the motivations of those individuals who packed their bags. Each of these aspects of Confederate migration in the 1860s and 1870s will be addressed in greater detail later on, but for the time being this brief outline will serve to orient the discussion of this unique group’s narrative.

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<sup>15</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 193.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 194.

## Chapter II – The Morning Found Me Miles Away

Traveling in the late 1800s was an onerous task. Although it had become considerably easier over the course of the century with the continual improvements to the steamship, it was far from luxurious. Conditions were described as spacious, though “the food was horrible and there wasn’t the slightest concept of hygiene.”<sup>17</sup> Before enduring such hardships, potential migrants needed a complete picture of what prospects awaited them, and a clear course of action. This state of affairs led to the formation of colonization or immigration societies. Particular individuals took on leadership roles and gathered family, friends, and like-minded strangers together to increase their influence. These agents served as both scouts and negotiators. They made preliminary trips to Brazil in order to survey the land and select plots on which their associations would settle. While there they made contacts with government officials who could plead their cases for special treatment.<sup>18</sup>

These men did not board ships for South America completely uninformed. Many in the United States, especially the Southern region of the country, had a long-held interest in Latin America. As the debate over the peculiar institution of the South intensified in the years before civil war broke out, powerful Southerners were intent on expanding slavery southward. The filibusters, notably William Walker, were a radical manifestation of this desire. America also sought diplomatic expansion. In 1854, the Pierce Administration issued the Ostend Manifesto, which suggested that “The United States ought, if practicable, to purchase Cuba with as little

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<sup>17</sup> Jones, *Soldado descansa! Uma epopéia norteamericana sob os céus do Brasil.*, 100 Original. “A comida era horrorosa e não havia nenhum princípio de higiene.”

<sup>18</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 15.

delay as possible.”<sup>19</sup> It also indicated in typical American diplomatic fashion that if this request were not met, then force could accomplish the goal. While the U.S. neither bought nor took Cuba, it is clear that Manifest Destiny applied not only westward, but also to the south.

Indeed, the years before the Civil War saw similar discussion in the media and among national personalities about the future that awaited Americans in Brazil. Even as early as 1817, Brazil was a proposed target of American filibusters, touching off a steady interest in the South American giant throughout the 1800s.<sup>20</sup> Brazil was also the focus of Protestant missionaries. In the 1840s Reverend Daniel Parish Kidder published his first account of the country. In the following decade, joined by fellow Reverend James Cooley Fletcher, he released *Brazil and the Brazilians Portrayed in Historical and Descriptive Sketches*. Between 1857 and 1868 this book went through eight different editions, simultaneously setting the stage for and responding to the Confederado immigration. While Kidder and Fletcher were primarily interested in the prospect of spreading Protestant Christianity to the heavily Catholic nation, in doing so they provided readers with a brief historical analysis of the country. They also captured the sights, people, and experiences they encountered. They attempt to break down the reader’s stereotype of Brazil as a backwater jungle. Kidder and Fletcher redefine it as a

Stable constitutional monarchy, and a growing nation, occupying a territory of greater area than that of the United States, and [in which] descendants of the Portuguese hold the same relative position in South America as the descendants of the English in the northern half of the New World!<sup>21</sup>

The editions published after the Civil War not only included a chapter on the newly established communities of Southerners, but also begin with “Notes For Those Going To Brazil” ranging from a basic pronunciation guide for Portuguese to currency conversions and tips about clothing.

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<sup>19</sup> Buchanan, Mason, and Soulé, “The Ostend Manifesto.”

<sup>20</sup> Horne, *The Deepest South*, 26.

<sup>21</sup> Kidder and Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians*, 3–4.

They may lead the reader slightly astray in indicating that “English is taught in all the higher schools” by not mentioning that the number of said institutions was infinitesimal.<sup>22</sup>

Misinformation or not, information about Brazil was becoming more readily available to the American public.

By mid-century the individual most invested in schemes to populate Brazil with citizens of the United States was renowned oceanographer and commander of the U.S. Navy, Matthew Fontaine Maury. In the early 1850s this son of Virginia conceived of an interesting solution to the slave question in the U.S. Maury, following a tradition stretching back to the 1830s, sent his relative and subordinate William Lewis Herndon to explore the Amazon River Valley on behalf of the United States. Maury was not simply interested in a scientific report of the area. His end goal was to reduce political pressure and increase economic growth in the U.S. by transferring slaves from the American South to the Amazon in order to set up plantation colonies there, creating an Amazon-Mississippi Valley commercial axis.<sup>23</sup> The Brazilian government never allowed this plan to come to fruition, despite Maury’s arguments that in no way could it “prevent American citizens from the free, as well as from the slave states” from setting up a colony there in order to use “the Valley as a safety valve for our Southern States, when they become over-populated with slaves.”<sup>24</sup>

The question Maury raises of colonizing slaves raises an interesting point regarding the idea of emigration from the United States. Just as slaves were forced to immigrate, there were also constant discussions of forced emigration. In 1816 the American Colonization Society was formed with the express purpose of establishing a returnee colony of former slaves in West

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>23</sup> Horne, *The Deepest South*, 114.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 113.

Africa. Those who were transported by this group formed the country of Liberia.

Understandably, many African Americans were outraged at the idea of being thrown out of the country without much say. Some, however, did support colonization efforts by black-led groups aiming to move to the Caribbean or Africa.<sup>25</sup>

Abraham Lincoln himself, through the early part of the Civil War, was in favor of the colonization of former slaves. Even though he stated that he believed African Americans deserved equal rights, he also argued that, “there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality.”<sup>26</sup> While he may have believed in the humanity of black people, he did not envision a future in which cohabitation led to security and equality. Up until the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln actively promoted the expatriation of former slaves as the best “solution”.

These antebellum colonization efforts by and large failed; however, they set the precedent. It was clear that Americans thought they had a God-given right to go where they pleased. The Confederados, and the terms of their migration can be interpreted as embodying a peculiar combination of the Lost Cause and Manifest Destiny. They may have been negotiating terms with the Brazilian Emperor, and even though some adopted Brazilian citizenship, they were setting up (Southern) American colonies, not trying to assimilate into Brazilian society. The officials they were brokering deals with also used the term. The idea of colonization, in which the Confederados would bring with them close ties to the North American cultural and material heritage, though not the government, is crucial to understanding their history.

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<sup>25</sup> Blackett, “Lincoln and Colonization,” 19.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 20.

As the Civil War drew to a close, drawing upon the information provided them by previous individuals interested in Brazil, and bearing the onus of Manifest Destiny, groups coalesced throughout the American South with the aim of forming colonization societies. As will be discussed in more detail at a later point, Brazil was not the only option for restless Southerners. What made the Brazilian contingent unique was that they came from across the South, whereas, for example, migrants to British Honduras came almost exclusively from Louisiana and Mississippi.<sup>27</sup> According to a collection of various data by Judith MacKnight Jones, they traveled from Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Virginia, Mississippi and Florida over the course of thirty-six years between 1866 and 1902.<sup>28</sup>

That data fails to capture a few important aspects of American immigration to Brazil in the time period, however. Though they note a small Northern presence, these figures fail to account for the fairly large numbers of fresh-off-the-boat (in America) “German and Irish immigrants who had sailed from New York without money or the prospects of making it,”<sup>29</sup> who were held in contempt by the Confederados with whom they traveled. They were seen as not of substantial pedigree to be even remotely linked to this organized movement. That brings us to the next important point – identity.

The Confederados were a heterogeneous group, yet there was a particular image with which they were identified: “A Southern aristocracy, and, within this, many Confederate soldiers.”<sup>30</sup> In 1866, a reporter for the *Cleveland Daily Herald* on the steamer *South America* took special note of a group of “ten patriarchal looking gentlemen” from the South who appeared

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<sup>27</sup> Simmons, *Confederate Settlements in British Honduras*, 116.

<sup>28</sup> Jones, *Soldado descansa! Uma epopéia norteamericana sob os céus do Brasil.*, 411–414.

<sup>29</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 120.

<sup>30</sup> Gussi, *Os Norte-americanos (confederados) Do Brasil*, 83. Original “Uma aristocracia sulista, e, em meio desta, muitos soldados confederados.”

to “belong to that middle class of farmers, so common in the South – the men who did most of the fighting at the behest of their superiors – who are still belligerent, though confessing to a lost cause.”<sup>31</sup> In reality, however, “there were businessmen, mechanics, dentists, workmen, people from all walks of life. Some rich, but almost all were poor, becoming more poor due to the voyage,” and the destruction of the war.<sup>32</sup> There were even a few ex-slaves, despite the wishes of the Brazilian government. While an admittedly diverse group, the idea that they constituted a resourceful middle class with strong patriarchal values and some assets, or at least the ability to gain them, was important in explaining the favorable treatment they received from Dom Pedro II.

The last important bit of analysis of the above data marking the period of immigration from 1866 to 1902 regards this date range. The vast majority of immigrants came in the first few years following the collapse of the Confederacy in 1865. Due to mixed reviews of the experience upon arrival combined with greater confidence in conciliatory Reconstruction under Johnson, many prospective immigrants decided against making the trek. Though Radical Reconstruction again cast doubt over the South’s future, by the time it ended in 1877 there was significantly less domestic incentive to leave.

In 1865, however, these professionals, teachers, doctors, etc. came together determined to venture south. Though some went individually, the majority sought safety in numbers. They had the option of joining immigration societies created by individual agents. Oftentimes the societies would be formed of family and friend groups. The agents would then either travel to Brazil themselves in order to scout out land, or they would hire another already making the trip to report back to them on their findings. While there were at one time perhaps as many as twenty

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<sup>31</sup> Special Correspondent HSS, “From Cleveland to the Brazils.”

<sup>32</sup> Gussi, *Os Norte-americanos (confederados) Do Brasil*, 84. Original “Havia negociantes, mecânicos, dentistas, operários, pessoas de todos os ramos. Alguns ricos, mas quase todos eram pobres, ficando mais pobres por causa da viagem.”

associations, many were small and either never amounted to anything or left unnoticed.<sup>33</sup> Six of these societies came to be generally considered the most notable – those founded by Hastings, Gunter, Norris, Gaston, McMullan, and Dunn.

Lansford Warren Hastings was well known by the 1860s for his work in the American West. He had been active in the exploration of Oregon and the establishment of the Californian Republic. He gained infamy when he promoted the Hastings Cutoff as an alternative route to California in *The Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California* before he had traveled the path himself, resulting in the Donner party tragedy.<sup>34</sup> Despite his track record, Hastings gained the trust of dissidents in Tennessee and Alabama with *The Emigrants' Guide to Brazil*, in which he followed in the footsteps of Maury by advocating a settlement in Santarém, Pará on the Amazon River. He encountered numerous logistical and financial problems in the course of arranging for his party, and while he sent his companions to one of the most unforgiving regions of the world, Hastings himself seems to have died en route.<sup>35</sup>

Charles Grandison Gunter, a reasonably wealthy Alabama planter, selected land along Lake Juparanã and the Rio Doce in Espírito Santo. Despite relatively fewer early trials and tribulations, compared to those of most other colonies, the Rio Doce group was subject to a series of natural disasters from torrential rains to a mosquito epidemic ending its hope of success.<sup>36</sup>

Former Alabama State Senator Colonel William H. Norris also became interested in the prospect of moving to Brazil. While many colonies were established on inexpensive government land, Norris found exactly what he was looking for external to the offered acreage. Upon

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<sup>33</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 17.

<sup>34</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 19.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 63–64.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

visiting Campinas, São Paulo, he was sold. He bought land in Santa Barbara d'Oeste, near the aforementioned city and, perhaps just as importantly, near a railway line.<sup>37</sup> The Norris colony would be the only long-term success. Many Southerners who originally settled in other parts of the country migrated once more to form the nucleus of the Confederado community in Brazil. The city that grew around Santa Barbara d'Oeste came to be known as Americana in honor of this population.

Dr. James McFadden Gaston of South Carolina also looked to settle in São Paulo, though a little further south in the Juquiá Valley on the Xiririca River. He was one of the early agents to engage the Brazilian bureaucracy. In *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, his promotional book for his colony, he recounted many of his negotiations with Dom J. C. Galvão, a Brazilian agent with the connections to get him audiences with important ministers. Their conversations included not only discussions about the price of land for those with the means to purchase outright as well as those in need of loans, but also the “great inconvenience in affecting the transportation across the ocean, unless some systematic means of assistance could be devised by the Brazilian government.”<sup>38</sup> The Xiririca settlement eventually was deserted in favor of Norris’s colony, but Gaston’s early involvement as an agent was extremely important in gaining a number of concessions from the Brazilians.

Frank McMullan led the Texas contingent southward. In his youth he had participated in one of William Walker’s filibustering expeditions. He was well-educated, an experienced traveler, and determined. Unfortunately, he was also sickly. McMullan had played an active role in Texas’s 1860 Democratic Convention which took the stand that, “Whilst we claim to be second to none in patriotic love and devotion to the Constitution of the Union of the States,

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<sup>37</sup> Jones, *Soldado descansa! Uma epopéia norteamericana sob os céus do Brasil.*, 150.

<sup>38</sup> Gaston, *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, 23.

nevertheless, it is our solemn and deliberate opinion that, without *all* the rights to *all* the states, which that instrument guarantees, the Union is not worth preserving.”<sup>39</sup> Shortly after, he suffered a bout of consumption, but he remained active in the Cause. Following the fall of the Confederate States, McMullan maintained his commitment to American values, but did not see a future for himself in Texas. Through many trials and tribulations, he shepherded a group of Texans to “New Texas” or “El Dorado”, as the plot of land that he and his compatriot, William Bowen, had selected came to be called. The recollections of young McMullan acolyte Sarah Bellona Smith Ferguson, which is one of the few first-person narratives of this odyssey available, tells in detail of the experience of a little girl making such an arduous journey. Their colony on the Azeite River in the Juquiá Valley was, like many, short-lived. McMullan died soon after arrival, and isolation along with lack of transportation infrastructure forced many of his followers to Norris’s settlement near Campinas.

The final major colony was Lizzieland, named after the wife of Reverend Ballard S. Dunn. He departed from Louisiana with the purpose of scouting out a parcel for his associates. Like Gaston and McMullan, Dunn determined the ideal area for settlement was public land in the Juquiá Valley. This was a remote area offering little in terms of roads and rivers that were only partially navigable by steamship. In fact, it is interesting to note that not much has changed. As recently as 2005, the dearth of transportation infrastructure in this area as compared to the region in which Americana lies is stark (see Figure 3). Dunn did, however, write and publish a book promoting immigration, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, which is readily available and informative for the modern researcher.

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<sup>39</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 10. Emphasis in original.



Figure 3: 2005 Transportation Infrastructure in areas of former Confederado settlements. 1) Americana (Norris Colony); 2) Juquiá Valley (Gaston, McMullan and Dunn Colonies). (IBGE, “Infra-estrutura de Transportes.”)

The reports produced by scouts such as Dunn and Gaston followed in the tradition of their precursors, Maury and Kidder. While more detail on the content will be provided in Chapter Four, roughly, the focus was threefold. Promoters were quick to provide information on the relatively misunderstood political and social climate of Brazil, the most important point being the examination of its “organic law; comparing this with the constitutions of other countries.”<sup>40</sup> Their audience would not likely be tempted to jump from the frying pan into the fire. It was also vital to convince them of the political “stability of this empire, independent of its constitution

<sup>40</sup> Dunn, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, 42.

and laws,” which could be attributed to “the pacific character of [the Brazilian] people, and their great proneness to adhere to an existing state of things.”<sup>41</sup>

They also had to convince readers that they would be living among a similar kind of people. Kidder concentrated a good portion of his work on describing the inhabitants of Brazil, a practice that the Confederado writers continued. Gaston noted that, “Brazil embodies the character and sentiment among the better class of citizens, very much in keeping with our standard of taste and politeness,” and that a part of this was “the same relative status of races that was formerly a line of distinction between the black and white population with us.”<sup>42</sup> Trying to alter perceptions of Brazil as a backwater country, they made an effort to depict the people as having a certain “neatness and even elegance,”<sup>43</sup> or at the very least a welcoming cordiality.

In the spirit of Maury, or perhaps more accurately Herndon, Dunn and Gaston spent the majority of their time discussing the physical properties of the land. In this era, agricultural production was relatively common knowledge, even for those who did not make their living in this pursuit. Newspapers would routinely include reports regarding crop yield, farming techniques, and the latest machinery. Southerners interested in relocating aspired to be planters on some scale. The pages of their travelogues concentrate predominantly on soil types in various locations being considered, geological and geographical formations, and the potential for planting certain crops (particularly cotton).

The similarities in the promotional materials of the various colonization society agents were not by chance. They all were familiar with and drew from previous available works on Brazil. Moreover, they frequently would chance upon one another while surveying the land and

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<sup>41</sup> Gaston, *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, 21.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 373.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 36.

would compare notes. Reverend Dunn even included wholesale reports by McMullen and Bowen and by Gaston in his work.<sup>44</sup>

While the aforementioned agents, along with lesser-known men, did establish colonies in Brazil, there is a question as to how successful they ultimately were in recruiting. At the time there was fear of a mass migration from the South amounting to perhaps as many as 50,000 or 100,000 individuals. While it is clear that the emigration movement of the Reconstruction Era never reached this level, it is difficult to assign a numerical value to the Confederados. The biggest obstacle is the imprecise or nonexistent recordkeeping of the time. While there are some ship records, even those are distorted. From the data available, ambiguous as it is, one can at best capture the number of passengers from the U.S., but not all American immigrants during this period were Confederados (see Table 2). That said, by the estimates of Aureliano Tavares Bastos – himself a liberal force in the Brazilian government, and therefore highly interested in the immigration question – provide some insight. In the years 1866 and 1867 alone, at least roughly 3,500 disembarked in Rio.<sup>45</sup> The most realistic total numbers seem to “suggest that about twenty thousand arrived between 1865 to 1885.”<sup>46</sup> There are still doubts due to the array of criteria that can be counted creating an enormous range of estimates – how many signed on to go, how many actually left, how many turned back part way or failed to make it, how many arrived, how many remained there after disembarking. Even with proper records, determining an exact number would be a gargantuan task. While even the number of 20,000 is dwarfed by the statistics of European migrants just a few decades later, the Confederados mark a significant

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<sup>44</sup> Dunn, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, 152, 180.

<sup>45</sup> Bastos, “Imigração.”

<sup>46</sup> Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present*, 45.

moment of potential in the growth of Brazilian immigration, and did indeed constitute a sizable portion of the incoming population during the 1860s (see Figure 4).

Once settled on the reality of expatriation, these migrants still had a long and difficult journey ahead of them. Many of the colonists were met with unfathomable hardship. The McMullan contingent, in particular, went through the horrors of a recalcitrant captain, a shipwreck off the coast of Cuba which had many convinced they “would be in Heaven or Hell within twenty-four hours”, and a state of limbo as they were eventually sent to New York to wait for another steamer to Rio.<sup>47</sup> The United States and Brazil Steamship Company had been granted exclusive authorization by the Brazilian government to transport immigrants wishing to reap the benefits of advances on travel costs. They refused to leave from any port other than New York, which was highly inconvenient for Southerners, and were soon revealed as a corrupt enterprise (see Figure 5).<sup>48</sup> Eventually the McMullan colony could board one of their ships for Rio, but even then the odyssey was far from over. The fact that few turned back home from either Havana or New York demonstrates a determination drawn from desperation and a sense of destiny.

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<sup>47</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 56–67.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 28–29.

**Immigração.**—Em seguida damos um mappa estatístico da immigração dos Estados-Unidos e outras procedencias, que tem entrado no Brasil, de Agosto do anno passado a Julho do corrente :

DOS ESTADOS-UNIDOS.

Mozes.	America-nos.	Inglezes.	Irlande-zes.	Francezes	Allemaes.	Hespanh. <sup>a</sup>	Italianos.	Portugue-zes.	Suissos.	Belgas.	Hollande-zes.	Polacos.	Suecos.	Dinamarq.	Canadien-ses.	Argelinos.	Maltezes	Total.
1866	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Agosto.....	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Setembro....	33	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	33
Outubro.....	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Novembro....	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Dezembro....	11	27	72	6	22	4	2	...	...	...	1	4	...	...	1	...	...	250
1867	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Janeyro.....	236	74	...	43	47	7	3	...	...	2	1	...	7	...	...	...	...	411
Fevereiro....	189	61	...	41	3	...	4	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	272
Março.....	157	31	...	17	4	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	246
Abril.....	55	42	...	16	19	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	133
Maió.....	462	8	...	22	32	7	11	1	3	1	...	1	2	1	2	...	...	546
Junho.....	29	59	...	79	9	1	...	1	3	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	133
Julho.....	46	46	...	19	9	1	1	4	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	103
Total.....	1417	263	208	132	74	24	21	7	11	6	2	6	10	3	3	1	1	2192

DE OUTRAS PROCEDENCIAS.

Mozes.	America-nos.	Inglezes.	Irlande-zes.	Francezes	Allemaes.	Inglezes.	Suissos.	Suecos.	Sem de-clarção.	Total.
1866	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agosto.....	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Setembro....	33	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Outubro.....	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Novembro....	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dezembro....	11	27	72	6	22	4	2	...	...	...
1867	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Janeyro.....	236	74	...	43	47	7	3	...	...	...
Fevereiro....	189	61	...	41	3	...	4	1	...	...
Março.....	157	31	...	17	4	2	...	1	...	...
Abril.....	55	42	...	16	19	1	...	1	...	...
Maió.....	462	8	...	22	32	7	11	1	...	...
Junho.....	29	59	...	79	9	1	...	1	...	...
Julho.....	46	46	...	19	9	1	1	...	...	...
Total.....	1417	263	208	132	74	24	21	7	11	103

Table 2: Data demonstrating the ethnic diversity of migrants coming from America as well as the high portion of total migrants from that country in 1866 and 1867. (Bastos, "Documento - 22 - Dados de Immigração.")

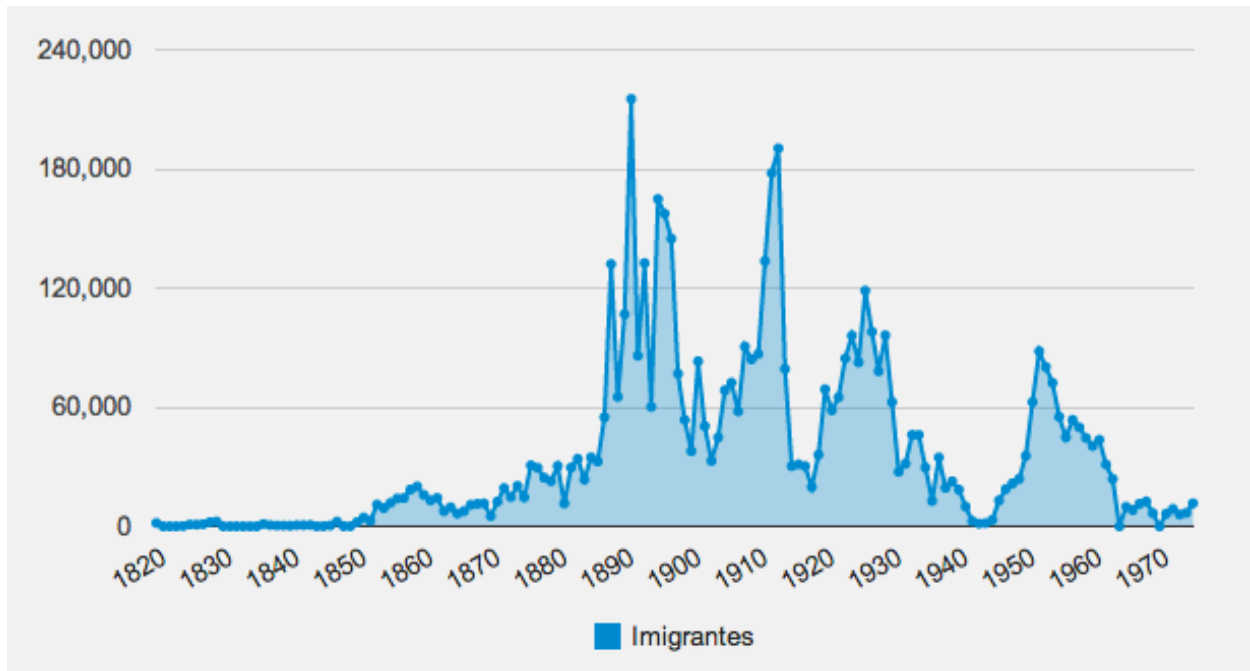


Figure 4: Note the fall in immigration, principally German, in the 1860s. The Confederados were a significant percentage of immigrants and came at a turning point in Brazilian immigration. (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística 2000.)



TIME TABLE OF THE UNITED STATES AND BRAZIL LINE.  
(From the agent, W. R. Garrison, Esq., 5 Bowling-Green, New York.)

Passage from New York to Rio de Janeiro.			Passage from Rio de Janeiro to New York.		
	Day in Port.	hours.		Day in Port.	hours.
Leave N. Y. 23d of each mo. of 30 days, 3 p.m.			Leave Rio the 25th of each month, at 3 p.m.		
Arrive at St. Thomas (1400 miles) the 29th	12		Arrive at Bahia (725 miles) the 2nd	12	
" Para (1010 " ) the 7th	22		" Pernambuco (375 " ) the 1st	13	
" Pernambuco (1080 " ) the 15th	11		" Para (1080 " ) the 6th	24	
" Bahia (375 " ) the 17th	12		" St. Thomas (1010 " ) the 14th	12	
" Rio Janeiro (725 " ) the 20th			" New York (1400 " ) the 21st		
Total . . . . . 5200 miles run.			Total running time, 22 days 16 hours.		
Total running time 25 days, 15 hours.			Four calls, 2 " 23 "		
Four calls 2 " 9 "			25 days 15 hours.		
28 days.			From New York to Rio and back 53 days 15 hours.		
N. B. — In months having 31 days the steamers leave New York the 23d.			N. B. — The steamers will leave Rio the 25th of months having 31 days.		

The United States and Brazil Mail Steamship Company corresponds, first, at St. Thomas with the English, French, and Spanish steamers which run to 43 ports in the West Indies, Mexico, Central America, New Grenada, Venezuela, and the Guianas; with the English and French lines to Europe; 2d, at Para it corresponds with the Amazon Navigation (Brazilian) Company's steamboats, which run up as far as Peru and are in connection with Peruvian steamboats on the upper Amazon, and with Brazilian coast steamers for Maranhão, Ceará, &c.; 3d, at Rio with the French and English steamers which go to Montevideo and Buenos Ayres, (the French line leaving Rio on the 22d of each month.) We understand that the time is to be shortened. Mr. A. Arango, of New York, was the successful advocate of the company at Rio in 1866. Mr. J. F. Navarro was the New York agent until June, 1866.

Figure 5: Map of the United States and Brazil Steamship Company route from New York to Rio. (Kidder and Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians*, 636.)

## Chapter III – The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

“You people of the South don’t know what you are doing. This country will be drenched in blood, and God only knows how it will end,”<sup>49</sup> presaged William Tecumseh Sherman on December 24, 1860. South Carolina had seceded from the United States just four days earlier, setting in motion the chain of events that led to the American Civil War. Sherman bore out his own prophecy four years later in his infamous March to the Sea. In doing so he made himself perhaps the second most condemnable man in the South, after Lincoln. His campaign left large swaths of the Deep South desolate and, for many, signaled an end to the slave labor system, “even if the South won the war.”<sup>50</sup> They did not, however, and the Emancipation Proclamation, Sherman’s total war, and Lee’s surrender to Grant at Appomattox Court House shook the foundations of Southern slave society – a society based around and dependent upon slavery - in ruins.<sup>51</sup> The incredible physical and societal destruction perpetrated by both the Union and Confederate armies throughout the American South only amplified the fear of an uncertain and unknown future. Many Southerners – slaveholders and non-slaveholders alike – felt helpless, lost, and desperately in search of a new home, even if it meant exodus from the land of their birth. Under these conditions, a sizeable group seized the standard of Manifest Destiny as they made their way to Brazil in the decade following the demise of the Confederate States of America in search of a new start and a new South.

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<sup>49</sup> Blaisdell, *The Civil War*, 8.

<sup>50</sup> Levine, *The Fall of the House of Dixie*, 276.

<sup>51</sup> Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*.

The most substantial looming doubt as the American Civil War wound down regarded the undetermined definition of Reconstruction. With the exception of an end to slave labor, little was definite, and even that certainty was inadequate. No one quite knew what form free labor would take in the South, or what the place of the new freedmen would be.<sup>52</sup> Beginning in 1863, Abraham Lincoln hinted at just what his conception of Reconstruction was to be. On the heels of the Emancipation Proclamation and a turn in military fortunes beginning with Gettysburg, Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction. This statement was most well known for instituting the Ten Percent Plan, which would allow a new government to be formed if ten percent of a rebel state's population pledged loyalty to the Union and accepted abolition as law, for which they would be pardoned and returned their rights as U.S. citizens.<sup>53</sup> Eric Foner argues that this was typical of Lincoln's malleable policies. Rather than being "hard-and-fast," it was a "device to shorten the war and solidify white support for emancipation," though stopping short of demanding equality for freedmen.<sup>54</sup> The war would rage on for another year-and-a-half, however, and though much about Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction would change, he maintained a conciliatory rather than vengeful stance.

The end of the Civil War in 1865 did not produce an iota of clarity. Lincoln's assassination on the fourteenth of April of that year threw the future of the South into even further chaos. Andrew Johnson now held its fate in his hands. This was a man who, as Governor of Tennessee, had declared, "Treason must be made odious and traitors punished."<sup>55</sup> The reality of Johnsonian Presidential Reconstruction was one of clemency. Johnson's disdain for the plantocracy did not stop him from granting pardons to planters, though he did require

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<sup>52</sup> Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*, 16.

<sup>53</sup> Lincoln, "The Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction."

<sup>54</sup> Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*, 17.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

them to appeal directly to him in person. Despite his radical rhetoric as governor, he adopted a milder approach as president due to his belief in small federal government. Johnson quickly became the “white South’s champion” by doing little to punish secessionists.<sup>56</sup> Theoretically, he sought to increase the political power of the yeomanry, but his policies more likely pleased one Virginia member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy who wrote in 1865 that, “political reconstruction might be unavoidable now, but social reconstruction we hold in our hands and might prevent.”<sup>57</sup> Johnson’s only assurance of what was to come was “reference to the past”<sup>58</sup>, and indeed his actions “envisioned less a New South than an improved version of the old.”<sup>59</sup>

Lenient Presidential Reconstruction was met with staunch opposition from the Radical Republicans in Congress who believed firmly in free labor ideology and black suffrage. This did not mean they agreed on everything. One of the leaders, Thaddeus Stevens, fought for land redistribution. While most were not so tenacious, the Republican veto-busting majority gained in 1866 temporarily shifted the balance of power in determining the direction of the South.<sup>60</sup> Despite having to temper their desires somewhat to keep moderate Republicans in the fold, the Radical Republicans managed to push through revolutionary civil rights legislation. For a time they seemed to have altered the future of the nation. In 1877, however, the triumph of conservatism led to the “Bargain of 1877” which, among other things, sacrificed military occupation of the South in order to keep the presidency Republican, essentially bringing the

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>57</sup> Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 248.

<sup>58</sup> Blaisdell, *The Civil War*, 171.

<sup>59</sup> Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*, 99.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 107, 119.

Reconstruction Era to a close. The door opened for Redemption – a white supremacist, Southern pride movement that reversed the progress gained in the years since the war.<sup>61</sup>

While the political landscape during Reconstruction was clearly volatile, the physical terrain of large parts of the South was reduced to wasteland. Sherman is still reviled by many in the South for his brutal tactics, but the pillaging of the Southern home front began long before the Military Division of the Mississippi swept through. Even as early as 1862 there were state laws allowing the Confederate army to impress whatever property necessary to aid their effort. Resistance to such policies required a national edict legalizing compensated impressment, though the amount paid tended to be far below market prices and was paid in rapidly devalued Confederate currency.<sup>62</sup> The Union had its own official stance on the seizure of property. The United States Congress passed two Confiscation Acts, the First in 1861 and the Second in 1862. The First Confiscation Act made any property “employed in aiding, abetting, or promoting such insurrection or resistance to the laws...lawful subject of prize and capture wherever found,” including slaves.<sup>63</sup> The Second served as a precursor to the Emancipation Proclamation. Rather than just allowing the expropriation of slaves from rebels, it declared them free. This only could be enforced in areas occupied by the Union Army, but was a terrifying prospect nonetheless. Perhaps just as distressing was the threat that rebels would be “forever incapable and disqualified to hold any office under the United States.”<sup>64</sup> The reversal of military fortune in favor of the U.S. Army following Gettysburg made the enforcement of such edicts more tenable. Further intrusion made for a more dire reality for those on the home front.

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 244–245.

<sup>62</sup> Levine, *The Fall of the House of Dixie*, 221–222.

<sup>63</sup> “Confiscation Act of 1861.”

<sup>64</sup> “Confiscation Act of 1862.”

Upcountry farmers were trapped in a dreadful situation in which those “least receptive to secession” occupied the principle battlegrounds. They were equally susceptible to raiding and pillaging by either army, leaving naught but “ravaged earth and sprouting weeds” where once there had been green fields.<sup>65</sup> Economically, the South was isolated, depressed, and destroyed by the end of the war. Vagrancy and destitution ran rampant, and it became difficult to view this scorched earth as anything resembling home for many Southerners.

The emotional and physical losses were primary motivators for many as they considered removing their families from the South. As previously mentioned, though there were small planters amongst those who sought a new homeland in Brazil, many among them were professionals. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, it was precisely this middle class engaged in the service economy that was hit the hardest. Many merchants closed up shop, as they were “exhausted of all ready means upon which to do business.”<sup>66</sup>

In time the yeoman farmer was to be the greatest (White) casualty of the Southern economic decline. While plantation owners had lost their source of labor, they quickly rebounded by forging deals with the government and by the extension of the “realm of staple agriculture” through the tenant and sharecropping systems. In the process they absorbed the resources of small producers, further deepening their economic woe.<sup>67</sup>

By the end of Reconstruction shopkeepers were also profiteering from the crop lien, just as planters were. Despite the initial setbacks, they found their place in the new staple crop economy by selling goods on credit to small farmers or tenants. Other professionals may have had a more difficult time recovering. A depressed economy does not favor artisans, cobblers or

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<sup>65</sup> Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism*, 159–160.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 198.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 189.

dentists. Just as factors (agents who bought and sold various items on behalf of planters) were ruined by a wave of bank closures, those dependent on credit to do business were affected negatively.<sup>68</sup>

Beyond purely political or economic frustrations, many of those deliberating the pros and cons of leaving the re-United States of America had been fully invested in the Confederacy. While many Southerners still refer to the war as the “War for States’ Rights”, the right over which it precipitated was undoubtedly that to property. The peculiar institution of slavery became the object of the war in the North over time, whereas in the South it had been since the beginning. Vice President of the Confederate States of America Alexander Stephens made quite clear that the fledgling government’s “cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition.”<sup>69</sup>

While many of the eventual émigrés were not slave owners (or owned but few), they were nonetheless devoted to the now lost cause. More than an individual property right, slavery was the primary cultural institution driving the South. It could draw in those who did not participate directly by giving them an advantage over the permanently subordinated slave. One who may not have lost slave property was still concerned with the reversal of a hierarchical system based on the color of one’s skin. Upon recalling her childhood experience leaving Texas for São Paulo with the McMullan party, Sarah Bellona Smith Ferguson cites her father’s refusal to “submit to nigger rulers appointed by the Yanks,”<sup>70</sup> as his reason to make the long journey to Brazil.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>69</sup> Stephens, “Cornerstone Speech.”

<sup>70</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 27.

The fact that prominent Southerners supported the notion of Latin American migration undoubtedly aided the efforts of colonization societies. Unlike Mexico, Brazil did not directly receive any ‘big name’ Southern figures. Familial connections, however, linked the movement with prominent politicians. Included in a list of the families who settled Santa Barbara d’Oeste with Colonel Norris are the names Brooks and Yancey.<sup>71</sup> Benjamin and Dalton Yancey were sons of the well-known proponent of secession, William Lowndes Yancey. Though his name has mostly faded out of modern study of the era, at the time he was an influential leader as Representative from Alabama in the U.S. Congress. John C. Calhoun, famous for his role in nullification among other controversies, was tied to Confederados by the Brooks family, which was intermarried with his.<sup>72</sup>

Where the promoter-migrants held more sway, perhaps, was in their positions they held in the Freemasons. In the Cemitério do Campo in Santa Barbara d’Oeste there are more than twenty gravestones with the distinctive square and compass indicating a member of the Masonic Order.<sup>73</sup> William Norris himself was not only a member of the Alabama State Senate, but also rose through the ranks to become Grand Master in his hometown as well as a Venerable Master in Montgomery’s Masonic Lodge.<sup>74</sup> Links to such a powerful organization likely helped give a stronger voice in certain circles to those wishing to assemble colonies. It also provided a pre-existing network of contacts with as a number of successful expatriate businessmen already in Brazil were Masons.

Clearly, the champions of Southern exodus were met with staunch criticism. The press included not only complementary reports of the prospects in the land of the Southern Cross, but

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<sup>71</sup> Jones, *Soldado descansa! Uma epopéia norteamericana sob os céus do Brasil.*, 12–13.

<sup>72</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 74–75.

<sup>73</sup> Antunes de Oliveira, *North American Immigration to Brazil*, 13–30.

<sup>74</sup> Jones, *Soldado descansa! Uma epopéia norteamericana sob os céus do Brasil.*, 42.

also the rebuttals. One reverend on vacation for medical reasons wrote in his observations to the *New York Times*. He condemned the treatment of “deceived men and women,” who, “having *paid for their passage* trusted themselves to the guidance of the schemers,” who had lured them in. That said, Beecher did support the idea of organized colonization societies, but lamented “any poor man” who is “wretchedly fooled [and] leaves the States expecting to do better on his own hook in Brazil.”<sup>75</sup> These individuals were, however, often from the ranks of newly arrived Irishmen and Germans put right back on a boat by the U.S. and Brazil Mail Steamship Company, and therefore not Confederados. Lucian Barnsley, one of the McMullan party, reacted to a similar article. He blamed the Yankees and Irish from New York for the poor public image of American immigrants observed in Rio.<sup>76</sup> The shipping company that took advantage of its contract with the Brazilian government was more to blame for the disappointment of individual emigrants than what he refers to as, “the diseased brains of disappointed and ambitious men, willing to sacrifice others.”<sup>77</sup> The May 23, 1873, issue of the *Anglo-Brazilian Times* reported that due to fraudulent business practices, the managing director, John Mervin Carrere, was arrested.<sup>78</sup> While agents of organized migration may have unwittingly led their constituents astray following brief surveys of the land, those who followed through and made the journey themselves are difficult to accuse of being premeditatedly duplicitous.

Surely, the agitation to quit North America was expedited by a certain sense of restlessness and adventure in the tropics among some. Frank McMullan, the Texan who led a group to São Paulo province<sup>79</sup>, surely earnestly believed in the endeavor for the very solemn

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<sup>75</sup> Beecher, “Americans in Brazil - The Folly of Emigration.”

<sup>76</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 121.

<sup>77</sup> Beecher, “Americans in Brazil - The Folly of Emigration.”

<sup>78</sup> Scully, “US-Brazilian Navigation Company Highly Fraudulent.”

<sup>79</sup> Under the Brazilian Empire what are now “states” were known as “provinces”.

reasons cited earlier. Yet even he yearned for a taste of adventure. He had been engaged in antebellum expeditions to Latin America. In 1857 he joined William Walker's second filibustering campaign to Nicaragua as a lieutenant in his private army. Although the venture was an utter failure, McMullan acquired a taste for excitement, as well as a map to a supposed lake of gold somewhere in the Serra (mountains) of São Paulo, Brazil. Predictably, after surveying for a good plot of land, he chose the highest quality as close as possible to the location of this legendary lake.<sup>80</sup> The Barnsley brothers, George and Lucian, are perhaps a less extreme example of fortune seekers, yet they were also impelled by the promise of prosperity. Having lost much of the family fortune gained through their father's business as a factor, they sought success and excitement in South America. They left the Georgia estate of their youth in order to join the McMullan party, with George as their doctor.<sup>81</sup>

Diverse factors ranging from the threat of political exclusion in a Reconstructed South to the reality of lost property and the dissection of traditional socio-economic relations to a spirit of adventure contributed to the decision-making process of any Southerner contemplating the voyage to a faraway new home. It was not an issue to be taken lightly, or to be resolved on a whim. The very public nature of the debate over these very questions led directly to the influx of American emigrants immediately after the surrender of the Confederacy, as well as to the deceleration of this phenomenon by the 1870s.

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<sup>80</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 2, 6–7.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 47–48.

## Chapter IV – As Luzes do Rio (The Lights of Rio)

For Southerners seeking to avoid the great unknown of post-war life and Reconstruction, Brazil was not the only viable candidate for a new home. Brazil was to receive a large contingent of disgruntled migrants, yet Mexico and British Honduras<sup>82</sup> also attracted those in search of a fresh start. Packing up one's family, and indeed one's entire life, and moving to a new place where you cannot speak the language is no small task. Fittingly, the Confederates who considered it contemplated and analyzed various options, the simplest of which was often to stay where they were. Many did not choose to take the easy route, and instead left all they had known. Their latent sense of a need to spread American values throughout the hemisphere overpowered the risk of relocating. In Brazil, they found a new home that would encourage such an impulse.

Distinct categories of people were most attracted to particular countries, based on careful examination of the pros and cons of each possibility – often lured by governments' formal overtures and concessions to lure these Confederate immigrants. Just as Americans looked to Latin America as a target of Manifest Destiny, Latin America looked to Americans as an opportunity for internal growth.

Perhaps the most appealing destination immediately following the war was Mexico – likely due to the few well-known Southerners who had already fled there, as well as its close proximity to the South. At the time, the country was under the control of the French via the figurehead Emperor Maximilian, an Austrian of the House of Hapsburg. As the Civil War ended in the United States, however, the Mexican monarch was embroiled in a battle against ousted

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<sup>82</sup> British Honduras is modern day Belize.

President Benito Juarez. With the help of his friend Matthew Fontaine Maury<sup>83</sup> who gave up the Confederate cause to join Mexico, he encouraged further American immigration – in particular from the South. Maury was appointed commissioner of colonization and assigned the task of recruiting migrants for “New Virginia,” named after his home state.<sup>84</sup> Maury realized that under the proposed Reconstruction policies he would not be given a pardon, and many of his fellow high-ranking officers, Generals, and important politicians had similar concerns. Maximilian used these circumstances and Maury’s prominence to his advantage. With guidance from both Maury and General John B. Magruder, his new chief of the land office, he formulated an offer that included “free passage, 640 acres of land to heads of families and 320 acres to single men, religious tolerance, freedom from taxation for one year [sic] and freedom from any military obligation for five years.”<sup>85</sup> While this was an attractive offer, some believed he did in fact want military officers to aid his efforts in his own civil war against Juarez.

The arrival of Jo Shelby tested this hypothesis. General Shelby’s Iron Brigade had left Arkansas with around three hundred men and fought its way fifteen hundred miles to Mexico City, arriving with only half of the soldiers remaining.<sup>86</sup> Magruder had been among his company but had gone ahead and established himself by the time Shelby arrived. Shelby offered his services in Maximilian’s army as a recruiter as well as a fighter. The Emperor denied his offer, but did issue a general invitation to foreign, especially American, immigrants wishing to farm. Shelby accepted the opportunity willingly.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> The very same Maury who had, in the decade before, promoted slave colonization of Brazil.

<sup>84</sup> Arthur, *General Jo Shelby’s March*, 145.

<sup>85</sup> Dawsey and Dawsey, *The Confederados*, 16.

<sup>86</sup> Arthur, *General Jo Shelby’s March*, 143.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 147–149.

Perhaps due to the trend of high-profile Confederates taking refuge in Mexico, Jefferson Davis himself was rumored to share these ambitions. Following the fall of the Confederacy and the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, Davis attempted to hold out, but eventually went on the lam. He managed to evade Federal forces for some time, only being captured in May 1865, presumably attempting to flee the country. On April 21, 1865, *The New Hampshire Statesman* speculated that the former President of the CSA was “probably already in direct flight for Mexico, and it may be that he will reach that refuge,” as they thought it “doubtful whether he will ever be captured.”<sup>88</sup> Whether or not Jeff Davis was en route south of the border, the fact that many assumed he was is indicative of the category of person who set their sights on that country.

Mexico quickly fell out of favor as a terminus, however, because one thing it could not offer was political stability. Maximilian’s position became increasingly more precarious, and in 1867 he was executed and Juarez regained power. The deceased Emperor’s guests from up north were left once again to find a new home, whether that meant returning to the United States or proceeding on to one of the other Confederate settlements in Latin America.

British Honduras was likely one of the beneficiaries of the failure of Mexican colonization. Donald Simmons, Jr. argues that the primary factors that differentiated those who chose British Honduras and the Confederados who went to Brazil were crop preference and socioeconomic status. British Honduras drew almost exclusively from the Mississippi Delta region, especially Louisiana. Even within this geographical constraint, it only attracted those wishing to plant sugar. Those interested in cotton agriculture were more likely to join one of the

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<sup>88</sup> “What Shall Be Done with Jeff. Davis?”.

Brazilian societies.<sup>89</sup> Similarly to Mexico, British Honduras received the upper echelon of the Confederacy – generals, former governors of Louisiana and Mississippi, Beauregards and Benjamins.<sup>90</sup> The extremely limited nature of this group, coupled with more difficult negotiations for favorable terms, deterred many from the much shorter trip to Belize City.

In many ways Brazil was perfectly situated to attract more attention than both Mexico and British Honduras. Brazil's liberal Emperor Dom Pedro II was in a much more stable position than his Mexican counterpart. The vast territory and willingness to compromise allowed for a wider range of immigrants. Brazil could accommodate a variety of professional and/or planting aspirations; the government was amenable to selling land at very low prices in addition to subsidizing transportation. These were the primary concerns of those in the American South interested in removing southward – political stability, the cost of land, and the price of transportation.

Beyond these more pragmatic considerations, there were a number of other factors incentivizing resettlement in Brazil. As previously discussed, the Confederacy was a slave society. Brazil, along with Cuba, clung to the slave labor system well into the late nineteenth century, which to the casual observer made it appear to be a slave society. Debate over the moral and economic virtues of the practice raged, however, from the very early days of Brazilian Independence through the eventual abolition of slavery in 1888. The elite's muddled outlook on the institution as a necessary evil marked nineteenth century Brazil as more of a society with slaves<sup>91</sup> searching for a way to replace them. In 1823 a newspaper in Rio de Janeiro, *O Espelho*, published a letter signed simply by, "The Philanthropist." The letter stated that, "Slavery is the

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<sup>89</sup> Simmons, *Confederate Settlements in British Honduras*, 116.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>91</sup> See discussion of Berlin's differentiation between the two in Chapter III.

cancer gnawing at Brazil and it must be eradicated.” The mysterious Philanthropist advocating for an end to slavery in Brazil was Dom Pedro I himself.<sup>92</sup> His son, Dom Pedro II, displayed a similar feeling on the subject. Many of the liberal Brazilian elite, especially in the Southeast, viewed slave labor as backward, inefficient and incapable of modernization. They “did not believe that freed slaves could be productive wage laborers,” and therefore, “favored immigrants as a workforce” by the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>93</sup>

To those Americans considering migration whose only desire was for a slave economy, it would have been naïve to think Brazil would provide that long-term. While promoting the cause, James McFadden Gaston discussed this precise issue, citing the English influence in Brazil pressuring abolition as the primary reason that “Brazil regards the institution of slavery as precarious.” Yet he hit on another key aspect of the contemporary public discussion: the “gradual accomplishment” of emancipation.<sup>94</sup> A political, rather than militaristic, end to the practice indicated potential for the maintenance of “the elements of society which have resulted from the mastery of the white man.” Gaston ends his account of Brazil with this discussion, making special note of the patriarchal, hierarchical system of interpersonal relations, which mirrored that of the Southern aristocracy:

There is a dignity and a hospitality among these people that correspond in many respects to the lofty and generous bearing which characterized the Southern gentleman in former times. We find people in Brazil capable of appreciating the Southern character, and ready to extend a cordial greeting to all who come.

I HAVE SOUGHT AND FOUND THEM A HOME.<sup>95</sup>

Another draw for migrants (regardless of profession) within which the pinnacle was to become a planter was the availability of land in Brazil. The physical borders bound “almost 3.3

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<sup>92</sup> Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present*, 27.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>94</sup> Gaston, *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, 228.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 374. (emphasis in original).

million square miles [that] had only four million people, making it appear largely unpopulated.”<sup>96</sup> Brazil’s disproportionate ratio of territory to population facilitated the government’s ability to sell homesteads to the Confederados at extremely low prices – as little as “twenty-two cents per acre, with the privilege of five years to pay for it.”<sup>97</sup>

Not only was the land plentiful, it had productive potential. In the reports produced by Rev. Ballard S. Dunn and James McFadden Gaston, among others, the majority of their pages are filled with discussions of the agricultural conditions of the tracts of land they surveyed. Even the Reverend talks with authority of “coarse loam, in which decomposed granite, and decayed vegetation, from the mountains, around, and above on [the] river are the principal ingredients.”<sup>98</sup> His analyses praise the land he observed during his travels across the country with a steady stream of superlatives: “fertile,” “excellent,” “rich,” “productive,” etc. Dunn showed his pleasure at the conditions with suppressed exclamations of “Eureka! Eureka!” upon viewing the “magnificent valley of the Juquiá,” on which he was to settle with his followers. By his account, the “four great commercial products of Christendom” – cotton, sugar, tobacco and coffee – would all flourish on this terrain.<sup>99</sup>

While even the soil in Brazil was “genial” to agriculture, the lack of modern methods of cultivation provided the real spark of hope for potential immigrants. For small farmers or non-planters tempted by an opportunity to climb the economic ladder agriculturally in a way that seemed impossible in the United States, Brazil seemed ideal. While the land seemed optimal for planting, and indeed did produce large amounts, “the culture of the land in all parts visited [by Dunn was] performed with the hoe exclusively.” Ballard S. Dunn did come across “three

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<sup>96</sup> Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present*, 22.

<sup>97</sup> Gaston, *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, 229.

<sup>98</sup> Dunn, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, 121.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

persons who used the plow at all,” but in a limited fashion that would not significantly impact the crop yield, especially for cotton and corn.<sup>100</sup> And those few plows he did see were “very large, very clumsy,” and “after the pattern in use in Europe two centuries [before].”<sup>101</sup> He fantasized over the possibilities should more modern techniques be applied to Brazilian farmland.

Indeed, Aureliano Tavares Bastos, a Brazilian Senator and avid advocate of American immigration took special note of a report that, “an American Groen Furguesson and a partner bought at \$3 per acre 24 acres of land,” of which, “on 11 of the 24 acres they planted corn and on the remaining 13 cotton.” By applying the American-style plow and planting techniques, they were able to harvest significantly more than the surrounding farms, and in turn double the value of these lands to \$6 per acre and convince neighboring farmers to use the plows they made.<sup>102</sup>

Religion also played a role in drawing the Confederados towards Brazil. Kidder and Fletcher’s popular book of 1868 gave some indication of the state of religion in Brazil for those in the conservative Protestant South to consider prior to embarking. For these missionaries, Brazilian religion was in a poor state. “The ecclesiastics [were] notoriously corrupt.”<sup>103</sup> Therefore, the congregations were weak, attending festivals “not for religious edification,” but for entertainment, being “made to think themselves doing God’s service while mingling in such amusements and follies [which was] painfully lamentable.”<sup>104</sup> They conclude that while the

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 201.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 150–151.

<sup>102</sup> Bastos, “Documento - 06,” 32. “Immigrantes americanos, vantagens do arado.” Original: “O americano Groen Furguesson e um companheiro compraram a 3\$ o acre 24 acres do terra.” “Em 11 dos 24 acres plantaram milho e nos 13 restantes algodão.”

<sup>103</sup> Kidder and Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians*, 588.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 562.

country had incredible potential for growth, “before such an event can be reasonably anticipated, how great must be the changes in the moral and religious condition of the Empire!”<sup>105</sup>

From its inception, though, Brazil had sought to appear open for potential migrants such as the Confederados. The Brazilian Constitution of 1824 established the Empire of Brazil, “its Government Monarchial, Constitutional, and Representative.” While this system led to a relatively stable government, an important factor for war-weary nomads, the key to encouraging migration from Northern Europe and America came later in the document. With regards to worship it declared that, “The Roman Catholic religion is constituted that of the State; but the exercise of all others is permitted,”<sup>106</sup> though services must be held in unmarked buildings for non-Catholic denominations.

The apparent possibility of compatible social systems, including the promise of religious freedom, as well as descriptions of readily available, high-quality, land were the focus of the agents when reporting back to the societies for whom they worked. These very tangible considerations served to reinforce the underlying ideology motivating many Confederados – Manifest Destiny. John O’Sullivan, the articulator of said doctrine, dubbed America, “The Great Nation of Futurity.” The advantage of a young nation, “unsullied by the past,” founded on “the truths of God.” O’Sullivan declared, “We are the nation of human progress, and who will, what can, set limits to our onward march? Providence is with us, and no earthly power can.”<sup>107</sup> A few years later he called for the “fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence.”<sup>108</sup> The growing tensions over which form of “progress” – slave or free labor – was destined to spread indicated an increasing ideological schism within the nation and

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 588.

<sup>106</sup> Dunn, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, 42.

<sup>107</sup> O’Sullivan, “The Great Nation of Futurity,” 428.

<sup>108</sup> O’Sullivan, “Annexation.”

led to the Civil War. Though some Southerners could no longer envision themselves cohabitating the same land as Yankees and freedmen, they maintained the fundamentally American belief in Manifest Destiny and sought to realize it overseas.

Aside from the social similarities stemming from the institution of slavery, these émigrés, consciously or not, found a kindred spirit in Brazil. Though the term was only coined in the mid-twentieth century, Brazil is widely known as *o País do Futuro*, or *the Country of the Future*. If you ask nearly any Brazilian about this she will quickly answer, “It is, it always has been, and it always will be.” This idea was not alien to Dom Pedro II, either. Just as the Americans believed themselves destined to expand, Brazil inherited its version of Manifest Destiny from Portugal. The myth of Divina Providência tells of a Portugal that was “an expression of the will of God,” whose people “were the *people of Christ*, whose principal role was that of discoverer and colonizer of the lands of Africa, of the Orient and of Brazil.”<sup>109</sup>

This belief in a predestined imperialism was transferred to South America along with the Portuguese Royal Court in 1808. Previously the philosophy was applied *to* Brazilians as subject, but now that Rio de Janeiro was the seat of the Portuguese Empire, the mantle of imperial ambition seemed to belong to them as well. Upon independence, Brazil lacked overseas territories, but it was a sparsely populated country with expansive borders. Pedro II and his confidants viewed their Divina Providência as an internal imperial ambition. Their fate was to conquer the vast terrain that lay within Brazil’s physical frontier but outside of its control. In order to accomplish this goal the government needed to augment the population from the outside.

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<sup>109</sup> Hernandez, *A África na Sala de Aula*, 505. Original “Portugal era uma expressão da vontade de Deus,” “era o *povo de Cristo*, cujo principal papel era o de desobridor e colonizador nas terras da África, do Oriente e do Brasil.” (emphasis in original).

Pedro II was, like his predecessor, regarded as a modernizing emperor. The desire to expand was coupled with an aspiration to Europeanize the populace, both in culture and in color. Though the infamous official policy of *embranquecimento*, or *whitening*, would only come with the First Republic, during the period considered here there was a clear aversion to adding to the population of African descent. James McFadden Gaston took note that, “Negros are not admitted into Brazil from other countries unless free-born, and even should they be citizens of the latter after being in slavery, it does not authorize them to be received here.”<sup>110</sup> This meant that by and large, any former slaves who could be convinced to travel with the Confederados would not be accepted.<sup>111</sup> While there were notable exceptions to this rule – “one former slave, Steve, went to Brazil with the McMullan colony,”<sup>112</sup> and even prospered under the Southern Cross – it was plain that not only was slavery winding down, but in the eyes of the elite, so should the presence of Afro-Brazilians as a whole.

Official immigration policy reinforced the idea that a European Brazil (though interestingly, not a Portuguese Brazil) would fulfill the *Divina Providência*. By encouraging frontiersmen of an “industrious, enterprising, light-skinned” nature, they would prosper; yet, those who arrived were “refugees, political and religious exiles, those in jails, and the poor.”<sup>113</sup> While the Confederados were also refugees of war, they were refugees with a purpose. Their social status and aspirations differentiated them from the migrants who crossed the Atlantic during the first century of Brazilian independence.

Germany furnished the numerical bulk of immigrants to the former Portuguese colony during the nineteenth century. Some of these people came fleeing wars and their consequences,

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<sup>110</sup> Gaston, *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, 227.

<sup>111</sup> The Confederados could, however, buy slaves once in Brazil, and many did.

<sup>112</sup> Griggs, *The Elusive Eden*, 50.

<sup>113</sup> Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present*, 8.

as did the Confederados. Eric Hobsbawm, though, argues that in the 1800s the amplified phenomenon of large-scale migration within and from Europe was spurred not by ideology (political, religious, or otherwise), but rather for “economic reasons, that is to say because [the masses] were poor” due to overcrowding.<sup>114</sup> The category of person interested in setting sail for Brazil, then, was one of unskilled desperation. They were hopeful of better economic opportunity than that afforded at home, but with little to offer up front other than labor. Brazilian *fazendeiros*<sup>115</sup> took advantage of this fact in a scheme to gradually phase out their reliance upon slavery. Though the government supported recruitment of German immigrants, authorizing agents to travel there and promote the country, these men tended to be hired directly by fazendeiros as private representatives of their plantations.

Briefly, German immigration went through a number of stages – those of the *picada*, Private Colonization Societies, and the *parceria*. The *picada* system was an early, but important, experiment by the government in an effort to turn immigrants into independent small farmers. It encouraged migration by offering each immigrant a “long, narrow plot of land” along with “free travel, immediate naturalization, freedom of religion, animals and money for two years, and freedom from taxes for ten years.”<sup>116</sup> The determination to create this middle class capable of independence on the frontier lands from early on prompted such generous offers. The failure of the *picada* can be attributed to scams perpetrated by supposed advocates in Europe in which they would take money from the government and from potential immigrants. The system also tapered off when it became apparent the government could not finance the liberal promises made.<sup>117</sup>

Though the *picada* plan was abandoned by 1830, the goal of a small-scale landowning,

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<sup>114</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 200.

<sup>115</sup> “Planters”

<sup>116</sup> Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present*, 28.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 29,33.

independent farmer class which could be encouraged to pioneer undeveloped lands remained on the backburner.

Between the *picada* and the eventual revival of this ideal for immigration with the Confederados, Brazil tested various other development plans. With a focus still on “populating frontier areas with small farms,” the methodology changed to the establishment of Private Colonization Societies. These independent enterprises supported by the regime would found immigrant colonies in the hinterlands. They achieved mixed results, as they depended on the ability of the recruits to pay back loans given.<sup>118</sup> Brazil was still trying to fine-tune its strategy in order to attain its primary goals through official endorsement of white, European immigration.

While they attempted to attract a particular class of people, fazendeiros saw an opportunity to advance the whitening aspect of national policy. They garnered support for the *parceria* - essentially an exploitative sharecropping arrangement. They would privately enlist and furnish transportation and other necessities for immigrants who would then work on their farms. Workers would then owe a portion of their production, as well as many other unanticipated costs, to the landowners. Large numbers came under such contracts, and, following abuses under the auspices of the fazendeiros, some revolted and many sent word of the tense situation back to Germany. Just as the American Civil War was beginning, regions of Germany began to prohibit emigration to Brazil.<sup>119</sup>

Brazil’s trials and tribulations with European, particularly German, immigration through the 1870s are necessary to understanding Pedro II’s position on American immigration when the opportunity presented itself. It is true that imperial ideology in the form of predestination was not the only factor, but it is as of yet unexplored in the discussion of immigration to Brazil.

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 34–35.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 39, 42, 44.

Economically, the possibility of drawing in Southerners was an attractive prospect, as “the War of Secession excluded temporarily the North American cotton supply from the global market,”<sup>120</sup> providing immense economic opportunity for whoever could satisfy Britain’s demand. Brazil was situated in a prime position to do so, yet lacked the technical expertise to capitalize on the opportunity.

The former Confederates seemed to not only fit the racial profile, but also fulfilled the Empire’s hunger for a modernizing force economically. Ironically, the Confederados, who were supposed to modernize the country, believed firmly in the obsolete institution Brazilians viewed as holding them back. Perhaps most importantly, however, was that this middle class gave the government hope that with an initial investment they had found the people destined to realize their long-held aim of pushing the back frontiers by way of landed, independent farmers.

Upon recognizing this opportunity, Pedro II’s ministers attempted to resurrect the portions of the *picada* system and the Private Colonization Society movement that had worked. They made social and economic concessions very similar to those offered participants in the *picada* experiment, while placing much of the responsibility on the individual agents such as Dunn, Gaston, Norris and McMullan to scout out land, make the necessary arrangements, and recruit settlers. What proved crucial to hopes for success was the fact that the agents themselves would be members of the community, and that their followers would largely be family and friends. It seems the best way to demonstrate the kind of faith the liberals in the Brazilian government had in the Confederados is to review the official circular by Dom Galvão, an immigration agent in Brazil, and the Brazilian Consul-General in New York:

#### Emigration to Brazil

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<sup>120</sup> Furtado, *Formação econômica do Brasil*, 167. Original “a Guerra de Secessão exclua temporariamente o algodão norte-americano do mercado mundial.”

The Imperial Government looks with sympathy and interest on American emigration to Brazil, and is resolved to give it the most favorable consideration. Emigrants will find an abundance of fertile land, suitable for the culture of cotton, sugar-cane, coffee, tobacco, rice, etc. These lands are situated in the provinces of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catherina, Paraná, São Paulo, Espírito Santo, and Rio de Janeiro; and each emigrant may select his own lands. As soon as the emigrant has chosen his land, it will be measured by the Government and possession given on payment of the price stipulated. Unoccupied lands will be sold at the rate of 23, 46, 70, or 90 cents per acre, to be paid before taking possession, or sold for terms of five years, the emigrants paying six per cent interest yearly, and receiving the title of property only after having paid for the land sold. The laws in force grant many favors to emigrants, such as exemption from import duties on all objects of personal use, implements of trade, and agricultural implements and machinery. Emigrants will enjoy under the Constitution of the Empire all civil rights and liberties which belong to native-born Brazilians. They will enjoy liberty of conscience in religious matter, and will not be persecuted for their religious belief. Emigrants may become naturalized citizens after two years' residence in the Empire, and will be exempt from all military duties except the National Guard (militia) in the municipality. No slaves can be imported into Brazil from any country whatever. Emigration of agriculturists and mechanics is particularly desired. Good engineers are in demand in the Empire. Some railroads are in construction and others in project: besides there are many roads to be built and rivers to be navigated. On sale, at the disposal of emigrants, lands of the best qualities, belonging to private persons. These lands, varying in price from \$1.40 to \$7.00 per acre, are suitable for the growth of coffee, sugar-cane, cotton, tobacco, rice, Indian corn, etc., and may be obtained in every condition, from virgin forest to that in a complete state of cultivation.<sup>121</sup>

It is clear that Galvão, who was in constant contact with Southern immigration agents, was listening to, and addressing their wants (inexpensive land and freedom) while making explicit the Empire's desire for a specific class of people capable of "civilizing" the Brazilian backlands. The Confederados' fundamental Americanness was not only to be unhindered, but actually desired. Working in concert, both parties sincerely believed in their ability to bring to fruition a mutual *Destiny Divina*.

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<sup>121</sup> Kidder and Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians*, 333.

## Conclusion – Tem Uma Cidade (There is a City)

The late-nineteenth century was a period of global mass migration in which Brazil looked to become a player. One lesser-discussed current – that of the Confederados, who contradicted the paradigm of immigration to America as opposed to expatriation from it – is extremely important to understanding the domestic climates of both countries, as well as their international roles in the movement of peoples. A confluence of circumstances allowed for the temporary union of American Manifest Destiny and Brazilian notions of a Divina Providência, as Southerners and the Brazilian imperial government worked in concert towards a mutually beneficial immigration project.

The Southerners were looking for a new place to call home in which they could prosper and maintain their cultural traditions following a destructive civil war. More than simply seeking a country in which slavery still existed, they were in search of an atmosphere of kindred spirit. In Brazil they found an aristocratic, patriarchal society similar to that which they felt had forever been erased from the American South. Underlying their actions, however, was the ideology of Manifest Destiny. Brazil had long been considered a target for American settlement in the spirit of this philosophy. For Confederados who longed for a place in which they could succeed as small planters without sacrificing their American identity, isolated agricultural colonies on the Brazilian frontier seemed the answer.

The Brazilian Empire had long sought to modernize and expand economically, and simultaneously to whiten the population by encouraging European immigration. The goal was to develop a spontaneous stream of middle class migrants capable of forming an independent farmer class within the country. In doing so, they could also accomplish their ultimate objective,

dictated by the legacy of a Divina Providência – to expand and eventually complete an internal imperial project that would fill in the borders of Brazil drawn on a map. Without the population necessary to do so, they required an influx of migrants who could survive in isolated communities on the frontier. The Confederados seemed to be exactly what they had failed to find in a number of experiments with German migration. As the liberal administration saw it, these Confederate exiles could provide a “civilizing” influence, both racially and industrially. Simultaneously, they were intrepid enough to voluntarily exile themselves from their homes in order to colonize remote regions of the empire.

While the eventual success of this experiment in accomplishing the express goals of each group is questionable, the potential and commonalities both perceived were enough to persuade the government of Brazil to make ample overtures and thousands of Southerners to pack up their entire families with the idea that they would never again return to the land of their birth.

Although the majority of the Confederate colonies in Brazil failed relatively quickly, the Confederados did manage to influence their temporary home in a lasting way. A full discussion of their experiences and impact once there should be reserved for another, much longer and more comprehensive work. In brief, however, it is worth mentioning that beyond the introduction of the moldboard plow, the Confederados’ contributions to Protestant religion and education in Brazil have often been lauded.<sup>122</sup> Perhaps their greatest success, in accordance with their ideological goals of colonizing Brazil while maintaining a both American identity that no longer existed within the U.S., and the ethos of the “Old South” in the land of the Southern Cross, is the presence of Americana to this day. The Confederados have fulfilled their *Destiny Divina* through their descendants who, though now largely assimilated, still dance Virginia Reels and

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<sup>122</sup> Weaver, “Confederate Immigrants and Evangelical Churches in Brazil,” 447.

celebrate the Fourth of July. Meanwhile, Brazil has not given up on its Divina Providência. If anything, it has supplanted Portugal almost completely, expanding its neo-imperial horizons to the broader Lusophone world.

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