

this enormous and constantly expanding field. It is a vast undertaking—in fact, it is quite overwhelming. Numbers alone serve to set its proportions in relief: 2 volumes, 10 parts, 68 chapters, 1,387 pages, and nearly 20,000 separate entries citing books, articles, and newspapers in about a dozen languages from nearly 50 countries. Its dimensions are even more remarkable when one considers that it deals principally with the 25 years after the attack on Moncada in 1953.

The topics range far and wide. The ten general parts include library resources, general works, society, culture, social services, politics, economics, foreign relations, the revolution (1953–78), and revolutionary leadership (principally Fidel Castro and Che Guevara). Each chapter is introduced and concluded with cross-referenced information. An annotated list of Cuban newspapers and periodicals in the form of an appendix is, additionally, a useful reference section.

The focus of the bibliography is almost entirely the same 25-year period in which the materials were published. Thus, while the history section contains scattered references to general surveys and specialized works dealing with the pre-1953 period, the majority of the citations cover the period 1953–78. It would have been perhaps a bit sounder organizationally to have eliminated altogether the pre-1953 references.

Some omissions are conspicuous. The inclusion of African sources, for example, particularly in the section dealing with Cuban foreign relations with Africa, would have added an important perspective on Cuban activities there. Missing, too, is a subject index. How useful indeed one would have been, particularly in using a work of this magnitude. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that a subject index was not practical, precisely because of the magnitude of the bibliography. It would have undoubtedly necessitated the addition of one more volume, and presumably added \$150 to the cost of the set.

These oversights and omissions should not in the slightest diminish the importance of this work. It is a prodigious effort. It is a powerful testimony to the perseverance and fortitude of Chilcote and his collaborator, Sheryl Lutjens. Research has been made a bit more manageable as a result, and all who study Cuba will for years be in their debt.

University of South Florida

LOUIS A. PÉREZ, JR.

*Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor.* By REBECCA J. SCOTT. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. Notes. Maps. Illustrations. Tables. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 319. Cloth. \$44.00. Paper. \$13.95.

In this lucid and incisive study, Rebecca Scott has broadened the scholarly debate over the causes of the abolition of slavery in Cuba. After deft rebuttals of the traditional explanations that abolition either was a solely political process controlled from Spain or, alternatively, the inevitable result of the confrontation be-

tween the needs of new technology and the rigidity of slave labor, she in turn offers a refreshing new interpretation. She recognizes that abolition in Cuba, as a historical process, was “prolonged, ambiguous and complex” (p. xii). By concentrating “on the *links* among the different kinds of pressures—social, economic, political, military—and on the interactions among masters, slaves, rebels and administrators” (p. 6, emphasis in the original), she succeeds in revealing the inner dynamics of Cuban emancipation.

Cuban plantation slavery was remarkably resilient. In the 1870s it was capable of absorbing different labor forms, including indentured, contract, convict, and paid, without itself collapsing. Until the 1880s, it decayed without dying. The gradualist strategy of abolition adopted by Spanish politicians, and embodied first in the Moret Law of 1870 and later in the *patronato* law of 1880, enabled Cuban planters to devise intricate control mechanisms as they tried to preserve a system of plantation labor. Theirs was a slow, forced adaptation to new and unwelcome circumstances. Plantation owners, nevertheless, differed significantly in their response. Rebecca Scott summarizes their reaction during the critical *patronato* era; “some fought, some stalled, some conceded ground” (p. 196). Only when the Spanish government was convinced that emancipation would not be disruptive did it abolish the *patronato* in 1886, the final act of abolition. Preserving Cuba as a colony remained in 1886, as always, the bedrock of Spanish policy.

Slaves themselves played a key part in the transformation, as Rebecca Scott shows so well in examples taken from Cuban plantation records. Beginning in the period after the Moret Law, slaves began to challenge their status directly. Others, perhaps 16,000, obtained freedom by fighting in the ten-year civil war (1868–78). With the creation of the *patronato*, an intermediate step between slavery and legal freedom, the ambiguity of Cuban slavery deepened. Increasingly, slaves took advantage of any opportunity to free themselves and their families. In Cuba, slave response to slavery, especially as the system disintegrated, went well beyond accommodation and resistance.

Emancipation did not initiate the collapse of plantation agriculture in Cuba. Former slaves remained in sufficient numbers to provide continuity in the labor force, even if their labor became more seasonal, and sugar production actually rose to a record 1,000,000 tons in 1892. The last section of Scott’s book is a valuable analysis of the “fundamental re-organization of labor, landholding and social relations” (p. 255) which occurred in the island following abolition.

The final years of Cuban slavery saw low sugar prices, lack of credit, and economic depression. These economic pressures and the related political events of the mid-1880s might have been highlighted more to give a fuller context for the unfolding of emancipation, but this is a minor problem in an otherwise excellent and groundbreaking work.