



WORKS

Domingos Passos – The Brazilian Bakunin **Renato Ramos and Alexandre Sami** *(2001)*

I woke at 5.00 am. Passos, who had been up and about for hours, was sitting on his bed reading *Determinism and Responsibility* by Hamon. I grabbed a towel and went downstairs to wash my face. When I came back from the yard, after drying off, I saw two individuals. It was a moment or two before I realized who they were. With revolvers drawn they spoke to me and asked me harshly:

“Where’s Domingos Passos?”

Anticipating another of the attacks that our comrade had been through so often before, I was keen to cover for him and said that he was not around. I told them:

“There’s no Domingos Passos living here!”

A Young Anarchist Militant

This brief extract from a 16 March 1923 declaration by the workman Orlando Simoneck, carried in the newspaper *A Patria*, clearly reflects a few features of the situation sampled by the Black youngster, carpenter by trade, anarchist and active member of the Civil Construction Workers’ Union (UOCC): by 1923 ‘Comrade Passos’ had become a special target for the Rio police as well as one of the best loved and respected worker militants in the (then) Federal District. Another feature of this comrade, rightly identified by Simoneck, was his relentless self-educational drive, his thirst for learning and culture, which found him spending his mornings poring over books in the little collection belonging to Florentino de Carvalho who lived in the same house in the Rua Barão in São Félix, only a couple of paces from the union local.

We do not know the precise year of Passos’s birth (it was probably towards the end of the 19th century), but, from the books of Edgar Rodrigues, we know that he was born in Rio de Janeiro state. We find his first appearance in social struggles of the time as a UOCC delegate at the 3rd Brazilian Workers’ Congress (1920) at which he was elected as travel secretary for the Brazilian Workers’ Confederation (COB). Passos had been selected for that post because he stood out in the ranks of the

