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Gerald Horne. *The Deepest South: The United States, Brazil, and the African Slave Trade.* New York: New York University Press, 2007. v + 341 pp.

Gerald Horne. *The Deepest South: The United States, Brazil, and the African Slave Trade.* New York: New York University Press, 2007. 352 S. $75.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8147-3688-3; $24.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8147-3689-0.

Reviewed by Mariana Dantas (Department of History, Ohio University)

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Gerald Horne's latest book, *The Deepest South*, investigates the reciprocal influence which the United States and Brazil, the two main slave societies of the Americas, had on each other's commitment to the slave trade and slavery. His research has led him to a vast and varied body of sources, which includes accounts of travelers to Brazil, personal letters, published newspapers articles, and congressional debates. While he has ably built from these materials a compelling narrative of the involvement of U.S. nationals in the illegal commerce of African slaves, and of their experiences with and expectations of Brazil, perhaps the greatest contribution of this work is its hemispheric approach. As the author explains on the first page of the introduction, this book argues that U.S. slavery is better understood in hemispheric terms. Indeed, Horne successfully shows that certain events, developments, and ideas that were taking shape between the early and late nineteenth century throughout the Americas, particularly in Brazil, influenced debates over slavery and the fate of blacks in the United States before, during, and after the Civil War. Conversely, events, developments, and ideas taking shape in the United States at that same time, he argues, influenced Brazil's own dealings with the issue of slavery and the slave trade.

Horne develops the two main threads of his study–U.S. involvement in the African slave trade, and the hemispheric trajectory of slavery–in eleven chapters that span the ante- and postbellum periods. Focusing on the early nineteenth century, the first three chapters of the book examine slavery in, and the African slave trade to, Brazil, the different American positions on the trade, and the extensive role U.S. nationals and resources played in sustaining it. Chapters 4 through 7 delve further into the antebellum period, with a particular interest in understanding how various interactions with Brazil informed the growing sectional divide on the issues of slavery and the African slave trade. Thus, chapter 4 discusses the views of Virginian Henry Wise, using the example of this American diplomat who served in Brazil to illustrate the complex position some antebellum Southerners held, opposing the African slave trade at the same time they supported slavery itself. Chapter 5 investigates how witnessing Brazilian slavery informed the opposing opinions American sojourners in that country had on slavery and the slave trade during the late 1840s and early 1850s. Chapter 6 turns to another well-known figure, Matthew Fontaine Maury, and his potentially lesser-known schemes for the Amazon, including those of exporting U.S. slaves to the region, controlling the Amazon River for commercial purposes, and annexing South American territories. Finally, chapter 7 reveals the continuous involvement of U.S. nationals in the African slave trade after Brazil made it illegal in 1850. Together, the chapters that form this section of the book show how the shadow of Brazilian slavery hung over the increasingly contentious views on the institution and colored the arguments of both the pro-slavery and abolitionist sides of that debate. While chapter 8 quickly considers the impact of the Civil War on the trajectory of slavery in that country, and the involvement of U.S. nationals in the African slavery trade, chapters 9 to 11 return to the theme of American-Brazilian exchanges. By examining U.S. plans to deport free blacks to Brazil during and after the Civil War, the decision of a group of defeated Confederates to migrate to that South American country and, finally, the experiences, challenges, and disillusionments émigrés experienced in Brazil, this section reveals how Brazil initially fed the hopes of pro-slavery Americans and eventually forced them to come to terms with the

end of the institution in the United States.

Throughout the book, Horne develops a few themes that will attract the attention of scholars of the histories of slavery, the African Diaspora, and nation-building in the United States. Horne's treatment of documents that recorded the participation of American capital, ships, and crews in the African slave trade, for instance, suggests that were it not for U.S. involvement, abolitionists' mid-nineteenth-century efforts to end the inhumane, and by then illegal, commerce in human beings would have been more successful. Moreover, he shows that the persistent American participation in the trade allowed citizens of other countries to extend their own involvement in the slave trade: by using American vessels, employing American crews, hoisting the American flag, and even adopting American citizenship, Brazilian, Spanish, Portuguese, and other national groups were able to secure more tranquil passage across the Atlantic for themselves and their human cargoes. While his discussion of the African slave trade contributes to our understanding of the structure of a trade that promoted the involuntary movement of millions of people from Africa to the Americas, and is suggestive of the impact that migratory movement had on developments in the American continent, it also raises the question of how slavery affected nation-building in the nineteenth century. This question is perhaps the most intriguing and appealing part of *The Deepest South*. Thus, Horne presents the reader with evidence that suggests that, while some slave traders adopted U.S. citizenship as a means to continue their involvement in the African slave trade, Southerners felt their political and economic interests made an approximation with Brazil more interesting than the preservation of the Union. Similarly, émigrés from the Confederacy saw Brazil as a desirable refuge in the aftermath of the Civil War because of a common commitment to slavery. Slavery emerges from this discussion, therefore, as a disruptive force to the process of nation-building in the United States, not simply because Northern and Southern states could not agree on the issue, but because, for some, the commitment to slavery was perceived as a stronger foundation for the construction of a common political and economic identity than any other factor.

Scholars of Brazilian or African-American history, however, may find themselves frustrated with some aspects of Horne's study. The book is at its weakest when it tries to give the reader an idea of the debates or developments around the issue of slavery that were taking place in Brazil during the mid-nineteenth century. While it was not the intent of this study to closely examine Brazilian slavery, there are still a few points of the narrative that could be improved if more serious consideration had been given to the literature in that field. For instance, the author claims that the participation of U.S. nationals in the illegal African slave trade permanently transformed Brazil. While American involvement in the trade appears to have ensured the continuous transfer of a large number of enslaved Africans to Brazil, such a statement ignores the longer history of Brazilian slavery, and the internal developments that allowed for the rise of yet another major crop on the back of slaves. Similarly, the author's discussion of American accounts of the racial environment and racial attitudes in Brazil comes dangerously close to reproducing the image of a racially tolerant and equal society that emerges from his sources. A discussion of Brazilian sources and literature could have provided a useful counterpoint to the exaggerated or romanticized descriptions of a benevolent and permissive racial regime that American visitors to that country produced–descriptions that were probably more heavily informed by their expectations of what a racially divided society should look like, than by careful observation of local race relations. Finally, *The Deepest South* offers little discussion of what role Africans and their descendants played in such a crucial moment of the trajectory of Atlantic slavery. For instance, when examining colonization schemes that proposed the removal of free American blacks to Brazil, the author argues that one reason African Americans remained in North America was other countries' reluctance to receive them. The inclusion of this statement in a book that mostly focuses on the ideas, plans, and schemes of various white men (and a few white women), bent on the preservation of slavery, creates the wrong impression that blacks in the Americas had few ideas of their own about what they wished to do with their lives or where they felt they belonged.

Despite these shortcomings, *The Deepest South* provides an important and useful examination of the impact of the idea and persistence of Brazilian slavery on American positions on the issue and on the historical trajectory of slavery in the United States. It thus unquestionably ties together the history of these two countries, and invites scholars to consider what other aspects of American or Brazilian national history must be examined in a hemispheric perspective.

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