Everything Has Become Southern: The *Confederado* Colony in Santarém, Brazil

by

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Introduction

The Last Bastion of the Southerners: The US Civil War and the Amazon

“Oh! he had to repel this temptation, remembering the old reasons: never would Gordon obey the Yankee law, never by returning to Savannah would be make the Yankees believe that he recognized their victory. Santarem was the last bastion of the Southerners…They would refuse to surrender until death. Wounded soldiers, dying of hunger and thirst in their beleaguered redoubt, do not surrender themselves under the pretext that the life of a prisoner is more comfortable than the hell of heroes. By staying in Santarem, Gordon Locke and his people would forever testify to the failure of the Yankees; in spite of their military victory, the Cause would not have been betrayed. At Fort Sumter, Anderson had eventually surrendered, in Santarem, Gordon Locke would show that a Southerner resists better than a Yankee.”

The passage above is taken from Santarem, a novel published in French in 1959 by Jacques Guicharnaud, a French theatre scholar and Rollin Osterweis, a scholar of United States history. Though a novel, Santarem is not a work of pure fiction. It is connected to a true story – that of the two hundred indivuals who migrated from various parts of the southern United States to Santarém, a city locted in the Brazilian Amazon, following the conclusion of the US Civil War. The “Anderson” mentioned in this passage refers to Robert Anderson, a US Army commander. Anderson surrendered to the newly formed Army of the Confederate States of America on April 14, 1865, two days after the Confederate Army fired the first shots of the war at the Union’s Fort Sumter in South Carolina. “Gordon Locke” is a fictional character, based on many of the colonists who followed a man named Lansford Warren Hastings to Santarém in 1867. The characterization of Locke in the above passage is an attempt to narrate the story of these colonists, who would

1 “Oh! il fallait repousser cette tentative, en se rappelant les vieilles raisons: jamais Gordon n’obéirait à la loi yankee, jamais par son retour à Savannah il ne ferait croire au Yankees qu’il reconnaissait leur victoire. Santarem était le dernier bastion des Sudistes…On refuserait de se rendre, jusqu’à la mort. Les soldat blessés, mourant de faim et de soif dans leur redoute assiégée, ne se redent pas sous le prétexte que la vie de prisonnier est plus confortable que leur enfer de héros. En restant à Santarem, Gordon Locke et les siens témoigneraient pour l’éternité de l’échec des Yankees; malgré la victoire militaire de ceux-ci, la Cause n’aurait pas été trahie. Anderson au Fort Sumter avait fini par se rendre, Gordon Locke à Santarem montrerait qu’un Sudiste résiste mieux qu’un Yankee,” Jacques Guicharnaud and Rollin Osterweis, Santarem (Paris: Librairie Plon), 1959, 301.
become known in Brazil as *confederados*, and the meaning of their decision to emigrate, rather than remain in the US.

For Guicharnaud and Osterweis, the *confederados* of Santarém stand, without a doubt, as a symbol of a continued resistance to the Union victory in the Civil War. Osterweis was a scholar of the Confederacy whose writing combatted the myth of the Lost Cause, which he defines as the most persistent “regional legend” in US history. The myth recasts the nature of the antebellum south and the Civil War in an attempt to characterize the cause of the Confederacy as just and heroic. It seeks to diminish the role of slavery. At the end of Santarem, the year is 1898 and a US consul gives Locke the opportunity to return to the US. Locke refuses, however, unwilling to recognize the Union’s victory.

This thesis places the *confederado* colony in Santarém in its historical context, unveiling its deeper implications for nineteenth-century Brazilian and US history. I originally set out to study two separate communities in the Brazilian Lower Amazon:

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the confederados of Santarém and the quilombos (communities of fugitive slaves) of the Lower Amazon. While researching for a paper in Professor López Fadul's course on the History of the Amazon, I was struck by the finding that a US citizen and former member of the Confederate States of America – Romulus J. Rhome – co-owned a slaveholding plantation in the Amazon in the 1870s and 80s. Two aspects of this discovery were of particular interest to me: first, that someone who had owned slaves in the US had found a way to continue enslaving people in another country, following the abolition of slavery in the US, second, that this confederado's partner was a member of one of the region's biggest slaveholding families that, over the course of the nineteenth century, experienced the constant escape of slaves to quilombos.

Rhome led me to learn about Confederates who immigrated to Brazil in the first few years after the Civil War's conclusion. They numbered in the thousands. While the majority settled in the province of São Paulo, where they founded their own city, Americana, in homage to their nation of origin, a couple hundred made homes for themselves in Santarém and its surroundings. The confederados of Santarém, in contrast to the colony at São Paulo, have received little scholarly attention. The only extensive study of the colony is confederado descendant Norma Guilhon de Azevedo’s Os confederados em Santarém: saga Americana na Amazônia (1979). The scope of this project then shifted to the confederados of Santarém, in an effort to give this colony its due treatment.

My interest in the confederados led me to the annual Festa Confederada in Santa Bárbara d'Oeste in the province of São Paulo, Brazil in April 2018. Santa Bárbara is home to the largest community of descendants of the original US emigrants. It also houses a museum dedicated to the confederado colony in the region. Attending the Festa Confederada, a celebration of confederado “heritage,” allowed me to observe the enduring symbolic legacy of this migration and the continued appeal of the
Confederacy for Brazilians, both for those who claim southern US descent and for those who do not. My research then led me to Belém and the Arthur Vianna Library, where I combed through newspapers from Pará during the 1860s, 70s, and 80s. Finally, I ended up in the former home of the colony – Santarém, home of the Center for Historical Documentation of the Lower Amazon (CDHBA), where I discovered inventories and wills of the confederados. In my thesis, I use the information contained in these documents from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to shed light on some of the aspects of life in the confederado colony.

Figures 1.2 and 1.3 My photographs from the Festa Confederada in Santa Bárbara d’Oeste, April 2018.

Historians, most of them writing in the twentieth century, have tended to downplay the confederados’ interest in the perpetuation of the specific values for which they fought as Confederates, namely the right to profit from the subjugation of black people. One of the principal US historians to study the phenomenon of Confederate
emigration is Lawrence Hill. Writing in 1935 of Confederate immigration to Brazil, he credits prominent US scientist and naval officer Matthew Maury’s works, in part, for the very fact that southerners thought of going to Brazil after the Civil War. According to Hill, while in the antebellum South, interest in Brazil had been largely romantic, it became practical in postbellum life. The “transforming force” for this shift was “the state of complete desperation” triggered by the Confederate surrender. In explaining why emigration presented itself to southerners as a desirable option, Hill dramatically depicts a South torn asunder by Reconstruction. In his telling, the story of Confederate emigration becomes another aspect of the myth of the Lost Cause. After describing the ruinous state in which the southern states found themselves after the war, he writes: “Little wonder that several thousand of these victims of war were ready to flee from their native land and seek new beginnings under foreign flags! Four years of grim war had been hell! A yawning hell enveloped the future! It was too much for romantic souls!”

According to Hill, for white southerners, worse than the experience of the Civil War was that of Reconstruction, which he characterizes as “the most dastardly conceived and executed crime in the history of the American people.” The upshot of the re-instatement of Union control was that “it took control of southern society from decent hands and placed it in the hands of untutored blacks, unprincipled northerners, and unscrupulous and irresponsible southern whites.” The southern immigrant to Brazil, for Hill, then, was the noble, innocent victim of two-pronged disaster: the Civil War and Reconstruction. It was one thing to have lost the war, and it was another to undergo the domination imposed by the war’s victors in its

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4 Ibid., 108
5 Ibid., 109
6 Ibid.
aftermath. According to him, “the corruption and unbridled passions that followed in the wake of this crime fully justified the fears of the southern people.” Thus, Hill writes his narrative of emigration into the larger myth of the Confederate who had “lost the war but lost magnificently. He lost wholly, utterly, but out of the ashes of his homes and cities, his broken generation, he salvaged his sacred honor.”

Emigration, then, was one path out of many that southerners chose to pursue in this attempt to salvage their honor. While some managed to do so by remaining, others felt leaving was their best option.

Recently, some scholars have begun to re-interpret confederado history, in a way that resists incorporating it into Lost Cause mythology. Charles Willis Simmons, for example, writes in his 1982 article “Racist Americans in a Multi-Racial Society: Confederate Exiles in Brazil,” that for the confederados, “coexistence with a free and enfranchised exslave people was reprehensible...Hundreds of thousands of Southerners preferred exile to life in the new South and thousands did exile themselves from their country. Their racist views and in some instances fear of Yankee reprisals caused them to seek refuge in other lands.” He cites one confederado, who years after being brought to Brazil by her parents, asserted that the confederados had been “disappointed and sore over the Lost Cause, and fully resolved never to submit to nigger rulers appointed by the Yanks.”

Brazilian historian Ana Maria Costa de Oliveira, in her book O destino (não) manifesto: os imigrantes norte-americanos no Brasil (1995), shifts the discourse surrounding Confederate emigration. She chooses not to legitimize Confederates’ contempt for Reconstruction, as Hill does. Instead, she examines what it means that some

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7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 79.
10 Ibid.
Confederates felt that Reconstruction so severely threatened the basis of their Confederate identity, to the point that they could no longer bear to remain in the US. She argues that a belief in certain myths was central to the Southern colonists’ decision to emigrate. She draws a connection between the myths that came to define southernness in the antebellum period, and in turn became the justifications for rebellion against the US government, and that which allowed certain southerners to consider emigration as not only viable, but also necessary. “Defeated in the war, ‘violated’ in their rights, ‘aggressed’ before the mythicized concept of Southern culture,” she writes, the US southerner “had but to re-articulate himself.” ¹¹ Under the entirely new circumstances of the postbellum US, where slavery was no longer legal, “the southerner had to rethink the collective existential proposal and consider the impulses that would satisfy the old dreams.” These “old dreams” could be satisfied by harkening back to an “immigrant spirit” that US southerners believed was their heritage, and which they could re-animate in looking for new homes further south in Brazil. ¹²

Costa de Oliveira emphasizes that the emigrant movement was essentially a conservative one that sought to resist the changes overtaking the US. While the emigrants’ interests aligned with those of certain sectors of Brazilian government and society, Costa de Oliveira draws attention to the key differences between the ideologies that motivated the respective parties. While liberalism in Brazil encouraged the introduction of new people to Brazilian society, Costa de Oliveira writes, on the US side, it was a conservative impulse that rejected the end of slavery. Slavery, she writes, was “important not only for the maintenance of the Southern economic


¹² Ibid.
structure, but also indispensable for the survival of the entire socio-cultural and ideological apparatus that was created around this institution.”

The abolition of slavery, then, besides striking a blow to the southern US economy, symbolized an assault on every aspect of southern life. I take Costa de Oliveira’s arguments a step further to claim that the confederados who settled in the Amazon did so in a desperate attempt to re-assert their whiteness. They hoped to do so in Brazil, a nation that had not yet outlawed the institution upon which their whiteness relied. Together with Simmons’ articulation of the racism of the confederados as the catalyst for emigration, Costa de Oliveira’s formulation of the interconnected roles played by slavery and myth, serve as important frameworks with which I approach the Confederate colony in Santarém. I consider serious examination of the myths – the origin narratives the confederados created for themselves – as essential to understanding the community and its place in the wider world.

This thesis seeks to tackle many issues, which I see as interconnected and interdependent. The story of the several hundred US citizens who decided to settle in the Amazon after identification with the Confederate States of America was no longer possible, is also a story about slavery and the process of nation-making in the nineteenth century. The colony in Santarém demonstrates the linkages between nineteenth-century science, racism, and the imperial projects that targeted the Amazon as a region in need of a particular kind of development. In Santarém, after having lost the possibility of belonging to a nation dedicated to the defense of slavery, Confederates sought to take part in the building of another nation. Brazil’s continued existence as a slaveholding power, for them, superseded identification with the US.

13 “A manutenção dos escravos era não apenas importante para a sustentação da estrutura econômica sulista, mais imprescindível para a sobrevivência de todo o aparato sócio-cultural e ideológico que se criou em torno dessa instituição, tão combatida quanto superada,” Ibid., 73.
The story I narrate in this thesis also revolves around the concept of the “second slavery.”\textsuperscript{14} The nineteenth century saw the massive expansion of slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the US. Rather than the Age of Emancipation, as the nineteenth century is often referred to, I consider this time period as significant given that it was also the “heyday of black slavery in the New World.”\textsuperscript{15} During this period, the three societies named above, as the last regions in the Americas to abolish slavery, were “closely intertwined” “in a broad movement of mutually conditioned influences.”\textsuperscript{16} This phenomenon has its roots in the very origins of the Americas in general, where, as historian David Brion Davis argues, “black slavery was basic and integral to the entire phenomenon we call “America.”\textsuperscript{17} At the same time, the concept of liberty emerged as central to the auto-definitions of societies like that of Brazil and the US. As products of such a world, in the confederados’ conception, freedom was synonymous with enslavement of others.

This thesis considers one of the ways in which the histories of Brazil and the US intertwined during this period. After 1850, due to the abolition of the foreign slave trade in 1831, Brazil’s internal slave trade greatly increased, “rapidly reaching a scale comparable in relative terms to its US counterpart.”\textsuperscript{18} The US South, during the first years of the 1850s, served as a “political and demographic model” for those in Brazil who “conceived of slavery as the best way to insert Brazil into modernity” through the expansion of the internal slave trade, something the US had mastered since its abolition of the foreign slave trade in 1808.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 27.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} David Brion Davis, Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 102.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 45.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 46.
On the US side, I consider Matthew Karp’s understanding that “the most pronounced characteristic of proslavery foreign policy was neither a ravenous quest for fresh slave territory nor a desperate search for possible new slave states. Over and above these desires stood the need to protect systems of slave property across the hemisphere” as central to the confederado story.\(^{20}\) Karp argues that “southern secession itself…was a kind of foreign policy decision. The election of an antislavery president snapped the last and strongest bonds connecting the South to the Union.”\(^{21}\) He continues to write that “the position of the Confederacy itself was, in some ways, undeniably and irreducibly international— the southern republic was never anything but a state fighting for its survival against an outside invader.”\(^{22}\) I extend this idea into the post-war period, to argue that Brazilian emigration was a logical step for US southerners who envisioned themselves as defenders of an institution without which their world did not make sense.

Though the topic of this thesis became the confederados, the context in which I first came across them played a fundamental role in my approach to studying this community. As opposed to most scholarship dealing with the confederados, I seek to understand this specific group of colonists as people who emigrated from one slave society to another. The fact that members of a slaveholding society who fought in the name of the perpetuation of slavery actively sought refuge in the last nation to permit legal slavery in the Americas, provides an important framework for my study.

I see my thesis not as a comparative study between the United States and Brazil, nor as an attempt to highlight differences between life in the two countries for the US emigrants. Instead, through exploration of the Santarém community of


\(^{21}\) Ibid., 9.

\(^{22}\) Ibid, 249.
I hope to show the continuities represented by Confederate migration in general and illuminate the transnational aspect of this phenomenon. In her book *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories*, Brazilian historian Emília Viotti Da Costa notes that “we have grown so accustomed to studying history within national boundaries that we often fail to perceive the larger forces that shape our lives. But when we look beyond those limits and see similar processes occurring elsewhere, we recognize that to understand fully the history of one country we must place it within a larger picture.”

This constitutes the essence of my approach to this thesis. My objective is to treat immigration to Santarém on the part of US citizens from the South, and the subsequent *confederado* community that developed there, as a phenomenon with important implications for the history of the nineteenth-century Americas. Though the US colonists who settled in Santarém were few, their story needs telling because it speaks to the very natures of the social and political orders of the US and Brazil.

My hope is that the approach I take in this thesis can serve to pave a way forward for historians as they continue to investigate the history of the US, Brazil, and the second slavery.

In Chapter One, I discuss how prominent writers, thinkers, and politicians viewed Brazil and the Amazon in the antebellum US. I show how the decision to form a colony in an Amazonian city had its roots in a greater nineteenth-century phenomenon of thinking and writing about Brazil, particularly because, like the US, it was a slave society in a world that was on its way to abolition. I point to the ways in which both Brazil, and the Amazon in particular, appeared in discourses surrounding empire and slavery, and how these discourses manifested themselves in actual plans. I argue that though US citizens had never attempted to immigrate to Brazil *en masse*

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before the Civil War’s conclusion, the groundwork for such a movement had already been laid when it came time for Hastings to form his Santarém colony.

In Chapter Two, I show how the ideas about Brazil and the Amazon that prevailed in US discourse led to the movement for Brazilian emigration. I dedicate much of this chapter to analyzing Hastings’ book The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil, written following his post-war trip to Brazil to find a location for the formation of a colony of Confederates. I show how questions of race, labor, and land were central to Hastings’ promotion of the colonization of Santarém. I draw attention to the common themes in Hastings’ work and in those of other southern US colony leaders who scouted locations for settlement in other areas of Brazil. I also analyze various articles that were published in US newspapers, primarily southern ones, in order to demonstrate how US citizens were engaged in an active debate about the advantages and disadvantages of Brazilian emigration, which built on concepts about Brazil and the Amazon that had long been disseminated throughout the US. I also argue that similar ideas about the racial superiority of whites animated Brazilian encouragement of foreign immigration in general, and white US immigration in particular.

In Chapter Three, I discuss the arrival of the members of Hastings’ colony in Santarém and the ways in which the colonists first reported on their experiences there. I then examine the writings of US visitors to the colony, showing how these writers’ observations revolved around similar conceptions of race and labor that I discuss in the first and second chapters. I argue that the notion, unpacked in these previous chapters, of the Amazon as a space in need of white US influence in order to develop properly, continued to set the tone for how the colonists and outside observers alike described the Amazon and the colony’s impact on it.

In Chapter Four, I turn to an analysis of the ways in which these notions about race and labor played out in the lives of Santarém’s confederados. I focus on the
lives of specific *confederado* families to argue that life in Brazil allowed them to maintain core aspects of their antebellum identities, speaking to a great degree of fluidity. I show how they used their conceptions about race and labor to their benefit in Santarém. I also delve into Brazilian racism and the ways in which it played out in relation to the *confederados* of Santarém. I use my analysis of Brazilian and US racism, and the ways they interlinked in the *confederado* colony to resist common narratives about the *confederados* present in the historiography.

The epilogue returns to the novel *Santarém* and presents the story of the *confederados* who participated in Henry Ford’s (1863-1947) attempt to establish a now-abandoned city in the Amazon, not far from Santarém.
Chapter One

Empire Dreamers and the Amazon Frontier: Brazil and the Amazon in the Antebellum US Consciousness

In the conclusion to his appeal to southern emigration from the United States to Brazil, *The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil* (1867), Lansford Warren Hastings (1819-1870) paints a picture of a world both old and new. Hastings had once envisioned a US empire that extended to the Pacific Ocean. His dream of an empire with the United States as its center, however, effectively ended along with the surrender of the Confederate Army in April 1865. Having once devoted his energies towards the realization of his imperial ambitions in the name of the United States, Hastings shifted his allegiances to the Confederacy during the Civil War. With its collapse, his imperial gaze turned further south, beyond the borders of the violently shattered and then reunited United States. For Hastings, the results of the war, most significantly the end of slavery, were so devastating that many were left with no choice but to seek new homes abroad. The Brazilian Amazon, he determined, would serve the emigrant as an ideal location to rebuild the life that had been lost in the destruction of the Civil War.

The new world Hastings imagined southern settlers would inhabit in this next stage of their lives, would be based on old values that had long animated US citizens like him. Relying on the same premises of racial superiority and the US destiny to rule and conquer the continent, Hastings envisioned the relocation of southern US citizens to a new South along the banks of the Amazon River. What appears to be at first glance a simple representation of Amazonian geography, does important rhetorical and ideological work in defining Hastings’ vision of this old-new world. He writes:

In all tropical Brazil the American emigrant constantly beholds many things to him strange and new; the day presents a world of wonder, and as the sun at
eve passes the horizon, the sky is luminous with planets and fixed stars, which seemed to have waited impatiently for that event. This transition, at the equator, occupies less than thirty minutes; one now looks in vain for the north star; it is no longer seen, every thing has become southern. The southern cross now becomes our guiding star, which gives us the south, as the north star formerly gave us the north.24

The replacement of the north star with the southern cross is more than an astronomical observation. It is instead a declaration of re-dedication to the values and ambitions that animated the southerner in his defense of the Confederacy. Rather than accept the defeat of the Civil War, Hastings converts the Confederate call to arms into a call to exodus. In fleeing further south, these southerners would continue the struggle to live by the values that had incited them to rebel for four years against the United States. Amazonian exile, for Hastings, would not require adapting to life in a different nation. Instead, it would mean voyaging to a place that was waiting, arms wide open, for southerners to arrive and begin the work of realizing their dreams of empire. Life in the Amazon would not be so radically removed from the life southerners had once led in the US, despite the great geographical distance between the two places. If the climate and geographical features of the Amazon were to diverge significantly from those that the US southerner was accustomed to at home, the space they would carve out for themselves would not be so vastly different in ideological terms. In the Amazon, former confederates could recreate their former lives under circumstances more suitable to their needs.

This re-created world would have a broader and longer-lasting legacy. Hastings imagined that this legacy would extend far beyond his immediate community and transform Brazil. The Amazon region, in his view, was already the “astronomical and geographical centre of the world.”25 Its destiny, however, was to

25 Ibid., 235.
“become the great commercial centre of the New World.”\textsuperscript{26} The Amazon, then, was not a random choice for a people desperate to be anywhere but in the US. Settlement was carefully calculated to bring wealth and prosperity to the ruined southerners. The center of empire in the Americas was shifting, and the southern emigrants would shift with it. Colonists would also gain the opportunity to put their skills and talents in service of a greater project.

Echoing the words of previous US writers who looked to the Amazon as the next frontier, Hastings wrote that the emigrants, once “comfortably located in the delightful and prolific region, in the full enjoyment of profound peace and unrivalled prosperity” would “without the aid of prophetic vision, look forward to the period, as rapidly advancing, when the wilds of the great Amazon, and its vast tributaries, shall teem with human life and energy, enterprise and industry.”\textsuperscript{27} The transformations the Amazon’s new residents would bring about would cause the city of Belém, the province of Pará’s capital city, to “assume its wonted greatness among the commercial cities of the world” and the “great and growing Empire of Brazil” to “increase in wealth, power and grandeur, with a rapidity unparalleled in the annals of nations.”\textsuperscript{28}

Not only would Hastings’ followers participate in the progressive advance of hemispheric civilization, but they would, in part, be initiating this very process. If the southerner in the antebellum US had labored in service of a larger project of pro-slavery empire, Brazil would provide him with the opportunity to continue to perpetuate this system. In this way, the Amazon, yet to be properly cultivated and exploited, would finally reach its full potential. Such an opportunity, for Hastings,

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid. Note: Belém was often referred to as “Pará” by various writers, including some whose writing appears later in this thesis.
would result in the transfer of the colonists’ allegiance from their nation of birth to their adopted nation.

This chapter tells the story of how Hastings’ vision of a southern colony in Brazil is representative of broader movements and patterns in US history, and not an anomalous phenomenon. I begin by placing *The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil* in the larger context of the trajectory of Hastings’ life as an “empire dreamer.”29 I demonstrate that Hastings’ ideology and the types of projects that he imagined were not particular to him and were instead pervasive in US political thought across all sides of the political spectrum. Drawing on the writings of other thinkers and politicians who discussed the Amazon and articulated particular conceptions of the US-Amazon relationship, it becomes clear that Hastings’ mission to colonize the Amazon was one outcome of a combination of various commonplace US traditions of the first half of the nineteenth century. The establishment of a colony of Confederates in the Brazilian Amazon did not take place in a vacuum. Many like-minded US citizens had long been formulating ideas about the Amazon as a place that might serve an important function for the US. These men subsequently developed plans in response both to the desire to expand and perpetuate slavery, and to remove black people from the United States. This chapter tracks how conceptions of race and white supremacy were central to US designs on the Amazon before the Civil War, setting a precedent for the postbellum period when interest shifted from black to white settlement.

**Lansford Hastings, US Imperialist**

Following the end of the Civil War, Lansford Hastings conceived of the idea to settle southern US citizens in the Amazon. Hastings would establish the colony in the city of Santarém in 1867. Hastings, however, is best remembered for his earlier pursuits, before there was any indication of his interest in Brazil. In an article dealing mostly with Hastings’ role in the US annexation of California, Thomas Andrews argues that the project to settle Brazil was only a distraction from Hastings’ under-appreciated importance in the westward emigration movement of 1846. “It has been a relatively simple matter for most critics to cite his later Civil War and Brazilian exploits,” he writes, “as conclusive evidence that he was a schemer not to be trusted – an ambitious empire dreamer.”

The course that Hastings’ life took in his last years of life, however, is consistent with his pre-Civil War career. Hastings worked within institutional mechanisms throughout his life in the effort to turn his imperialist dreams into reality, whether they were to be found in the US, Confederate, or Brazilian governments. Andrews shows how Hastings’ efforts, did not always lead to failure, as

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30 Ibid., 474.
the term “empire dreamer” implies. But Hastings was not merely an empire dreamer when it came to Brazil. His dreams of a Confederate empire never came to fruition, but the project of Brazilian colonization did, resulting in a settlement of about two hundred people whose descendants would make their mark on local society. Though Hastings died in the colony’s earliest days, the continued presence in Santarém of the people he brought there, and their descendants, serve as reminders that Hastings’ ambitions had real-life consequences. Though at the point that Hastings embarked upon his colonial pursuit in Brazil, he was viewed by his contemporaries as a failure, whose plans had not come to fruition. His work establishing the colony in Santarém, however, tells a more complicated story.

The historical memory of Hastings and the Santarém colony parallel each other in that Hastings is seen as an unsuccessful, deluded version of Manifest Destiny’s biggest actors. Likewise, the immigration to Santarém is understood as an unsuccessful attempt on the part of misled southerners to build new lives for themselves in an unhospitable place. Yet, Hastings responded to the prevailing myths and aspirations that pervaded US political life at every step of the way. His dreams of US conquest of the West were in line with the dominant rhetoric of his time as was his dream of a Brazilian colony. Andrew’s characterization of the Santarém colony as a footnote in Hastings’ biography suggests that he strayed from his original commitments to Manifest Destiny. Instead, Hastings followed the logics of this ideology to a natural conclusion.

By the time Hastings conceived of a plan to establish his own colony in Brazil after the Confederate defeat in 1865, he was well-acquainted to soliciting the help of governments to facilitate the realization of his colonialist ambitions. While Andrews does argue for a revision of how historical scholarship treats Hastings, the scope of this revision is limited. He believes Hastings’ public role as an “effective agent of
Manifest Destiny” in the context of westward expansion to California and Oregon should be appreciated.\textsuperscript{31} Hastings’ interest in Brazilian colonization, however, does not factor into Andrew’s, or any other historian’s consideration of his dedication to the pursuit of Manifest Destiny. They ignore that, while it is true that upon the break-out of the Civil War, Hastings would never return to advocating for expansion under the aegis of the US government, the underlying principles that guided his work and the modes of executing it remained the same. Land and the wealth it had the potential to produce, were the natural rights of a certain class of people, and Hastings was committed above all to the acquisition of such land.\textsuperscript{32}

Hastings was born in 1819 in Ohio. Sixteen years before his birth, Ohio had been one of the many sites of the US frontier before its incorporation into the United States via conquest. Hastings was a trained lawyer who developed a passion for westward expansion, leading the first organized wagon migration to the then-territory of Oregon in 1842. Between 1843 and 1844, Hastings traveled to the then-territory of California through Mexico, where he developed relationships with various US consuls and others that he hoped would aid him in his plans for Californian conquest and emigration. Hastings’ interest in California was part of a broader trend within US society that had developed since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Men liked Hastings had wished to see US annexation of the territories of Texas, California, and New Mexico. The Spanish governed California until 1821, when it came under the jurisdiction of the newly independent Mexico.

US interest in California increased during the 1840s when it became a principal target of Manifest Destiny ideology. This ideology was first defined in 1845 by journalist John O’Sullivan who believed the US had been endowed by God with a

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 476.

right and duty to spread US democracy. O’Sullivan believed that Texas would be the first to fall to US control, followed by California. As he saw it, “already the advance guard of the irresistible army of Anglo-Saxon emigration has begun to pour down upon it, armed with the plough and the rifle, and marking its trail with schools and colleges, courts and representative halls, mills and meeting-houses.”

The establishment of Anglo-Saxon emigrants in California would soon become an “actual occupation,” that would make it “idle for Mexico to dream of dominion.” For O’Sullivan, it was inevitable that California, like other territories would come under US sway, for very presence of Us citizens in California constituted dominion.

Emigration, then, was an essential component of conquest. The emigrant, armed with a plow to settle and cultivate the land, as well as a rifle to defend his right to occupy the land, was the chief agent of US conquest. The emigrant/conqueror was also “Anglo-Saxon” in O’Sullivan’s conception. In claiming so, he foreshadowed the explicit articulations of Manifest Destiny as a racial project to be enacted by US whites who claimed to be superior to other races. Reginald Horsman argues that “by the 1850s it was generally believed in the United States that a superior American race was destined to shape the destiny of much of the world.” When applied to places outside the US, this ideology translated into a belief that these places were populated by inferior races “doomed to permanent subordination or extinction.”


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34 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
before the Gold Rush of 1848. Hastings ends his book with the assertion that the western lands the US would later annex would transform, in a not so distant time, from: “those wild forests, trackless plains, untrodden valleys, and the unbounded ocean” into “one grand scene, of continuous improvement, universal enterprise, and unparalleled commerce.”37 Fundamental to Hastings’ understanding of the territories he hoped US citizens would settle, was the belief that they were essentially empty. The way in which the people who already inhabited these lands lived did not qualify as genuine occupation in Hastings’ mind. Only US occupation would suffice for the region to become developed according to the US standard of progress. Hastings’ portrayal of these western territories relied on racial ideas that he used to prove the inferiority of their inhabitants.

In the future he envisioned for the land, the ideal US emigrant would become the primary occupant and completely transform it for the better. Like O’Sullivan and others who wrote to inspire and aid the westward-bound emigrant, Hastings invoked racial ideas about superiority and inferiority in the territories in question. He ranked the various classes of inhabitants of Oregon and California, placing the European and US foreigners at the top, followed by Mexicans, who he classified as non-foreign citizens. For Hastings, the blood of Mexican people was indelibly tainted by virtue of their adjacency to indigenous peoples. Lastly, he placed the indigenous populations of the region at the bottom of his hierarchy.

He then ranked different indigenous peoples according to various degrees of “civilization” and “intelligence.”38 Much of the Mexican population, however, via the curse of intermarriage and life in close proximity to indigenous people, was virtually indistinguishable from the indigenous population which suffered from “an entire

38 Ibid., 114.
want of moral principle, as well as a perfect destitution of all intelligence.”

The racial logics used by Hastings to categorize the people in the lands he hoped the US would conquer were not mere observations; they served an important function in justifying westward expansion. For Hastings, since these territories were primarily inhabited by uncivilized people, they had yet to experience the progress US conquest would bring. “The hardy pioneer” would cause this “almost unknown region” to be “fully and advantageously developed” so that Oregon and California would one day appear as Boston or New York. In order for this day to come, Hastings believed that first “the supreme darkness of ignorance, superstition, despotism” would have to disappear, vanquished by the “march of civilization.” “Democracy” and “republicanism” would be erected in its stead, as pillars of the “infinite kindness and protection, of an all-wise, and overruling Providence.” For Hastings, the substitution of the inferior Mexican population with a US white one that would implant its system of government, was ordained by God. It was his duty, he believed, to transform divine will into reality.

In Oregon in 1842, Hastings surveyed the townsite for Oregon City, and in California he participated in the planning process for two other cities, as well as a Mormon colony. Though not himself Mormon, Hastings played an important role in Mormon westward emigration movements. Mormon newspapers often re-printed The Emigrants’ Guide as a key source of information about a barely-understood region. Many of the areas that Hastings described in his reports of the Great Basin and Rocky Mountain regions would go on to become the loci of Mormon settlement.

39 Ibid., 113-114.
40 Ibid., 151.
41 Ibid., 152.
42 Ibid.
He even led the first group of Mormon emigrants over what was called the Salt Desert Cutoff, a path through the Salt Desert of Utah that he promoted in his guidebook as a shortcut in the emigrant’s journey to California. It would later be renamed the Hastings Cutoff.

In 1846, his early successes came to a halt. A group of 87 pioneers known as the Donner Party, most of the members of which were not Mormon, departed from Missouri to California. Upon Hastings’ urging, they embarked upon the cutoff in the hopes of traveling almost 200 hundred miles less than they had originally planned. This choice became a fatal one for 39 of the Party’s members due to the severe weather conditions they encountered. The failure of this mission reflected poorly on Hastings, and he is best remembered for his association with this event. In fact, the term “Hastings Cutoff” was coined in the aftermath of the Donner Party fiasco by critics who sought to lay blame on Hastings.

Hastings’ political career, however, was far from over at this point. It continued with his participation in the Mexican-American War of 1846-48 as a captain in the California Battalion. The war developed as a result of the US annexation of the Republic of Texas in 1845, which the Mexican government did not recognize as independent. At the war’s end, Mexico was forced to cede almost one-third of its territory to the US, including Texas, California, and much of the present-day US southwest.

In 1848, Hastings married Charlotte Catherine Toler, the daughter of a Virginian businessman and a Spanish woman. Charlotte’s father, Hopeful Henry, had spent years abroad conducting business in Venezuela, where he met his wife. When he returned to the US, he was appointed US Consul to Puerto Rico. In 1849,

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Hastings served as a delegate to the California Constitutional Convention, before moving to the Arizona territory where he served as a postmaster and judge. He was living in Yuma, Arizona when the Civil War broke out, and sided with the Confederate cause from the beginning.

The strength of his expansionist desires did not diminish during this time; instead, Hastings directed his ambitions towards the Confederate government. He plotted to achieve the Confederate conquest of New Mexico, Arizona, and California, sending letters to Confederate president Jefferson Davis and his Secretary of War James Seddon among others. In December 1863, Hastings submitted a plan endorsed by six western congressmen in a letter to Davis that he raise 3,000 to 5,000 troops in California in order to seize the Arizona and New Mexico territories for the Confederacy.46 The next month, he modified his plan, proposing that he return to California to “perfect the secret organizations throughout that state” and raise a smaller number of troops.47 Hastings then traveled to Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the CSA, to meet with Jefferson Davis to propose this plan to bring about California’s secession from the Union. Hastings’ plans of conquest were never realized given the weakness of the Confederate Army in these areas, but Davis responded to the meeting by promoting Hastings to Confederate Major, requesting that he form an Arizonan military unit to defend California.48 In 1861, Catherine Toler died, and shortly after, Hastings remarried, once again to the daughter of a US Southerner. His new wife was Janice “Jennie” Mendenhall from Mississippi, and Hastings’ incorporation into the Mendenhall family would make him a Confederate.

47 Ibid., 168.
Like in his pre-Confederacy days, Hastings made his objectives for expansion clear, and fit them into a larger narrative of empire. He promised Jefferson that he was dedicated to securing “a home under the Confederate flag for her [the flag’s] numerous friends and admirers on the Pacific coast.”\textsuperscript{49} Confederate expansion into the territories in question was not desirable for pure territorial or population purposes; rather, it would be of important economic value, as Hastings aimed to seize “the most valuable agricultural and grazing lands, and the richest mineral region in the known world.”\textsuperscript{50} Ultimately, Hastings was never given the full go-ahead or the funds necessary to complete his project, but his vision of a westward extension of the Confederate empire was consistent with the that of various other Confederate individuals, not to mention Davis, who had begun conceiving of “a sweeping proslavery vision of empire in the West” following the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848.\textsuperscript{51}

**US Expansionism and the Amazon**

Hastings was one of many Confederates who viewed the expansion of empire as central to their conception of the Confederacy. The dissolution of the Confederacy, however, did not necessitate an end to such thinking. Hastings turned to Brazilian colonization following the war, as did other ex-Confederates. The various imperial plots that Hastings developed all fit into a dominant US worldview. His decision to lead hundreds of individuals to the Amazonian city of Santarém did not take place in a vacuum. That is, the motivations behind the project were not limited to the trajectory of his own life or to the particular circumstances of the


\textsuperscript{51} Waite, “Jefferson Davis and Proslavery Visions of Empire in the Far West,” 536.
postbellum southern US. Hasting believed and acted in a world full of similarly-minded US citizens who had long employed comparable tactics. Throughout his career, Hastings attempted to wield any power he could to influence national governments to support the realization of his visions. He was by no means alone in this approach.

One such actor was a fellow Brazilian colonizer, Frank McMullan. In 1857, McMullan sailed from Mobile, Alabama, the same location from where Hastings would depart ten years later for Brazil, as a lieutenant in a filibustering expedition to Nicaragua. In the antebellum US, “filibustering” referred to the US phenomenon of invading foreign territories through private military forces. These were technically illegal according to US and international law, yet thousands of US citizens, and southerners in particular, participated in them. McMullan, a Texan, joined prominent Tennessean William Walker in what would become an infamous mission to extend the US empire to Central America through the invasion of Nicaragua. Walker had moved to California in 1849, seeking to participate in Manifest Destiny. Walker’s vision was tied to deeply-held racist views about US superiority and the inferiority of former Spanish and Portuguese colonies.

Historian Frederick Pike argues that as more “wilderness” was conquered and incorporated into the US, US residents began to turn to former Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Americas as the next frontier. They applied similar

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54 Ibid.
stereotypes that they used against black people and indigenous people in the US to Latin Americans in order to rationalize the fulfillment of Manifest Destiny southward of US borders. Historian Walter Johnson argues that Walker’s interest in Nicaragua was inextricably tied to an assertion of whiteness for white men who felt they inhabited a world in which their status was in jeopardy. For them, whiteness equaled superiority and the right to subjugation of races they believed to be inferior. Success or defeat in Nicaragua, then, would determine whether they “would have slaves or become slaves.” George Barnsley, a future postbellum immigrant to Brazil shared Walker’s dream, declaring: “this cause will yet triumph and the [government] will soon be under the sway of the Anglo-Saxon.” For Barnsley, Anglo-Saxon domination was synonymous with US domination: “no distant day will see the star-spangled banner waving over the land. The citizens of the U.S. will soon sweep the country like an avalanche.” The power of the US would also cause “the popish religion” to “fold like the evening shadow before the bright glare of Protestantism.” In this statement, Barnsley evoked an important aspect of dominant US views of former Spanish and Portuguese colonies as inferior and in need of US conquest – the fear and hatred of Catholicism. US residents attributed what they saw as the Latin American’s aversion to progress in part to the primitive influence of the Catholic religion.

Hastings’ choice of the Amazon as a colonization site was far from accidental and fit into this traditional mindset and behavior towards Latin America. The

58 Laura Jarnigan, A Confluence of Transatlantic Networks: Elites, Capitalism, and Confederate Migration to Brazil (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama, 2008), 33.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Pike, The United States and Latin America, 77.
imperial attitude towards Latin America was codified by the 1823 declaration of the Monroe Doctrine, which asserted the right of the US to defend Latin American countries if European powers intervened. The doctrine became an aegis for attempts to establish US influence in the region. By the time Hastings traveled to Brazil, the region was already present in US consciousness. One of the most influential voices regarding Brazil and the Amazon in the United States in the two decades leading up to the Civil War was Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873), a US naval officer and scientist who practiced geology, oceanography, meteorology, and astronomy, with significant influence in the US government. The strength of his influence is evidenced by his success in persuading Congress to fund an Amazonian expedition. The triumph of one of his most coveted policy goals confirmed his position within the upper echelons of US politics. In 1866, the Brazilian government decreed for the first time the opening of the Amazon river to international commerce and navigation after a long process of negotiation with other countries interested in gaining access to the Amazon river and region. Key US diplomats, as well as Brazilian statesmen became invested in this policy reversal partly in response to Maury’s forceful advocacy of it. The most primary Brazilian statesman in favor of this policy reversal was Tavares Bastos (1839-1875), whose 1866 book *The Valley of the Amazon* advocated such a move.

Historian Gerald Horne has argued that Maury was one of the essential players in forming a vision shared by many US citizens of a US-Brazil relationship defined by each country’s dependence on slavery. The hopes and dreams Maury promoted, according to Horne, challenged rigid definitions of the United States as a nation-state. Though Maury’s opinions emerged out of his strong attachment to US expansionist and slaveholding values, Horne writes that Maury’s extensive and active interest in coordinating proposals with foreign governments are in line with what was
fundamentally a “view of national boundaries as impermanent and transitory.” The belief in the fluidity of borders suggests that more important than loyalty to any national government was the maintenance of a world order with a slavery-based economy at its central axis. The political projects that Maury, Hastings, and others conceived of are consistent with an ideology that did not necessarily view governments and borders as obstacles in the way of the perpetuation of a particular world order. Border fluidity was not only theoretical. The phenomenon of Confederate migration and the ways in which settlers conducted their new lives in Brazil shows the degree to which borders were porous in practice, as well as in theory. This issue will be discussed further in the third chapter.

Figure 2.2. “Matthew Fontaine Maury,” 1923, Ella Sophonisba Hergesheimer, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.

The negotiations that Hastings, like other ex-Confederates made with the Brazilian and other governments following the Civil War, therefore did not emerge only as a consequence of the Confederacy’s defeat. One of Maury’s ideas that preceded the Civil War involved transferring enslaved people from the US to Brazil. In the 1850s, Maury anticipated the abolition of slavery and was concerned about

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how fellow southerners would respond to this drastic change in their lives. He could not conceive of a world in which southerners would willingly give up their enslaved property without receiving compensation, so he envisioned that Brazilians would pay US citizens for their human property, thus satisfying their interests in the perpetuation and growth of slavery in their country. His plan, therefore, would ensure the continued survival of slavery in the hemisphere, no matter what legal actions the US would take to end its perpetuation within its borders. Maury’s objective was not to promote slavery’s reduction or abolition in the US, but rather its perpetuation, choosing Brazil as the appropriate “safety valve” for US slaves. He viewed the Amazon as “empty,” a perfect coincidence for his slaveholding compatriots. Maury would have been aware of the 1850 Brazilian law that banned the slave trade, so his recommendation that the US transfer slaves to Brazil suggests a belief that such a move would not represent a violation of law. In 1831, the Brazilian government had legally freed all slaves that arrived from outside of Brazil and enacted penalties against slave smugglers. The law was not enforced, however, as the interests of the Brazilian elite lay in the preservation of slavery. In fact, a significant black-market slave trade began, with an average of 30,000 to 40,000 slaves being smuggled into the country every year between 1840 and 1850. This bespeaks of a worldview in which national borders were fluid, especially when it came to the question of slavery. The Amazon, according to Maury, was slave territory, and therefore, a transferal of US slaves there would be a transferal of slaves from one slave territory to another. The question of Brazilian sovereignty over Amazonian territory did not factor into his project.

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63 Ibid., 220.
65 Viotti da Costa, The Brazilian Empire, 131.
Maury was not alone in this. Slaveholding US citizens had long shown a deep concern regarding the fate of slavery in Brazil. Matthew Karp writes that “the most pronounced characteristic of proslavery foreign policy was neither a ravenous quest for fresh slave territory nor a desperate search for possible new slave states. Over and above these desires stood the need to protect systems of slave property across the hemisphere.”66 That is, US slaveholders felt secure in the future of slavery as an economic system as long as they saw evidence that it was thriving elsewhere. Brazil was one of the chief places they turned for evidence of this. Maury’s plan, therefore, echoes Secretary of State Abel Upshur’s statement in 1843 regarding the British attempt to abolish slavery “throughout the American continent.”67 Speaking of Brazil, he wrote that “what ever affects [slavery] in a neighboring country, necessarily affects it incidentally among us.”68 This meant not only that a threat to end slavery in Brazil was a threat to its continuity in the US. It also signified that the continued Brazilian reliance on slavery implied the survival of a larger hemispheric system of slavery. The US had neither to colonize Brazilian territory nor to violate Brazilian law in order to perpetuate US slavery there. Brazil, when convenient, was an extension of the US. Though Maury’s plan never received enough support to have been viable, the migration of his ex-Confederate compatriots was a profound reflection of the real-life implications of such a vision.

Horne articulates a connection between the fact that “those who had been so pro-Brazilian slavery were equally anti-U.S. after the Civil War.”69 This does not imply that those who were pro-Brazilian slavery had always been anti-US, but rather that as circumstances shifted, so too did the allegiances of those who believed they

66 Karp, This Vast Southern Empire, 6.
67 Ibid., 71.
68 Ibid.
69 Horne, The Deepest South, 214.
had the most to gain and lose from changes in official policy positions regarding slavery. The development of the Confederate States was not a reflection of the visceral hatred of southerners against the United States, but rather a response to what they saw as an unacceptable attack on the institution on which their entire economic system was based.\(^7\) The same logic, then, can be applied to the actions of Maury, Hastings, and other promoters of emigration, and the thousands of emigrants themselves, who saw in Brazil an opportunity to continue to profit from the same system they, their families, friends, and ancestors, had relied upon since long before the very founding of the United States.

Maury’s designs on Brazil as a “safety valve” for US slavery were not exclusive to him. One similarly-minded US citizen was prominent South Carolinian James Gadsden (1788-1858). Gadsden was a colonel in the US Army who served under General and later President Andrew Jackson during the War of 1812 and from 1816 to 1821 at the US southern border, fighting in Spanish Florida in battles with Native Americans and maroons. After leaving army service, Gadsden became a planter in Florida, and was appointed to a commission to help in the expulsion of the Seminole Peoples from Florida and southern Georgia along what would become known as the “Trail of Tears.” He went on to become the president of the South Carolina Railroad company, where he promoted the construction of a transcontinental railroad through the southern US. In response to the admission of California to the Union as a state where slavery would not be permitted, Gadsden became an advocate for South Carolina’s secession from the US eleven years before this state would become the first state to do so.

\(^7\) Ibid., 220.
In 1852, he developed a plan he shared with the Brazilian government to establish a company that would send slaves from the US to Brazil.\textsuperscript{71} The plan could not be realized, however because of the 1831 Brazilian law regarding slavery, though Gadsden, like Maury, never demonstrated any recognition of it. Gadsden went on to negotiate the Gadsden Treaty as a US diplomat to Mexico. The treaty defined the US-Mexico border and resulted in another major undertaking under Gadsden’s name – the Gadsden Purchase – in which the US acquired much of present-day New Mexico and Arizona from the Mexico in 1854.

While Gadsden himself was the owner of 235 slaves, ambitions to settle enslaved people in the Amazon, however, were not exclusive to southerners or slaveholders.\textsuperscript{72} Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) had a long-standing interest in promoting US black settlement abroad as a solution to the problem of slavery. It was not until he became president, however, that he was able to put these plans into action. The abolition of slavery became imminent with the start of the Civil War. As individuals like Hastings developed their own expansionist plans for the Confederacy, in the throes of the Civil War, Lincoln and others were crafting their own colonization plans. These plans had been in the developing stages since before the start of the war in 1861 and the publication of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

The Lincoln administration, however, was not the first to actively consider black colonization. The idea had, indeed, held an important place in US politics for much of the nineteenth century. It was discussed for the first time in the US House of Representatives in 1816 at a meeting in which prominent politician and planter

\textsuperscript{71} Nícia Villela Luz, *A Amazônia para os negros americanos (as origens de uma controvérsia internacional)*, (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Saga, 1968), 84.

from Kentucky, Henry Clay, defended his support of colonization by declaring that it would purge the country “of a useless and pernicious, if not a dangerous portion of its population,” referring to free black people.\textsuperscript{73} He also suggested that wherever they settled, presumably somewhere on the African continent, free blacks would spread “the arts of civilized life, and the possible redemption from ignorance and barbarism of a benighted portion of the globe.”\textsuperscript{74} Colonization, in this case, would be beneficial not only to the US by removal of an unwanted group, but would also serve to better the foreign society they would be joining.

Given their exposure to US civilization, free US blacks would be superior than the locals at the site of the imagined colony. Clay does not specify what this means to him, and many other promoters of colonization would make similar arguments without articulating specifics about what functions black colonies would serve, beyond removal from the US. In his book \textit{The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia}, Claude Clegg writes that “the paradoxical language of Clay and other colonizationists regarding free African Americans would, for decades to come, incorporate a tortured logic geared more toward effecting their ends than to proving the intellectual cogency of their position.”\textsuperscript{75} Rather than serving to diminish their movement, however, Clegg shows how the vagueness of colonization propositions actually made possible their persistent ubiquity in US politics. Colonization had a wide appeal that transcended regional and political boundaries, and it suited the interests of groups with diverging ideologies. That is, the movement was simultaneously pro-slavery and abolitionist. Constant in all this, however, was, as Clegg puts it, a fundamental belief in “irremediable difference, indeed dysfunction”

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
brought about by the presence of free black Americans.\textsuperscript{76} In order for colonization to be understood as a necessary solution to a problem that was impossible to ignore, the black and white races had to be categorized “as absolutely distinct and dissimilar in nature, interests, and aspirations, and consequently unsuited to coexist as equals.”\textsuperscript{77}

It was under the influence of this ideology that in 1861, Lincoln began publicly advocating for colonization outside the borders of the United States. He presented this option as a viable mechanism for winning the support of the border slave states of Maryland, Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, and later West Virginia. Lincoln hoped that slaveowners in these states would agree to relinquish ownership of their slaves and resettle them in colonization programs abroad “in a climate congenial to them” in exchange for monetary compensation.\textsuperscript{78} In March 1861, a month before the first shots of the war would be fired, Elisha Crosby became US Minister to Guatemala, where he would work with the Guatemalan president to design a colonization site there.\textsuperscript{79} Another member of Lincoln’s cabinet proposed colonizing parts of southern Mexico that were in need of laborers, while another proposed a colony in the Chiriquí province in Panama where a US company hoped to buy land and profit from its coal.\textsuperscript{80}

Members of Lincoln’s administration began preparing in earnest for the abolition of slavery across the United States after the publication of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. While plans for colonization only took off following this new policy, Lincoln had long been an advocate for black emigration and colonization, favoring the creation of the state of Liberia. Historian

\begin{footnotes}
\item[76] Ibid., 33.
\item[77] Ibid.
\item[79] Ibid., 242, 243.
\item[80] Ibid., 244.
\end{footnotes}
Robert May has argued that Lincoln “wanted pockets of Latin America preserved for U.S. free black laborers.”\(^81\) That spring, as a part of Lincoln’s colonization program, 453 US blacks left from Virginia to the Haitian island of Île-à-Vache.\(^82\) US businessman Bernard Kock obtained a ten-year lease on Île-à-Vache from the Haitian government. The deal stipulated that the black emigrants would become Haitian citizens upon arrival on the island and would work cutting timber, a percentage of which Kock would give to Haitian authorities.\(^83\) Lincoln eventually approved a smaller-scale version of Kock’s original plan. The plan proved to be a failure, in part due to the lack of communication and full agreement of Haitian authorities, and about 400 of the emigrants were transported back to the US in February 1864.\(^84\)

Lincoln’s Secretary of State James Seward was a fierce advocate of US interventionism abroad. May describes Seward’s approach to foreign policy as opposite from Lincoln’s in many ways. According to May, while Lincoln never explicitly mentioned the Monroe Doctrine and his political values existed in contrast with those of his predecessors who strongly favored proslavery expansionism, Seward encouraged a much more interventionist line.\(^85\) When it came to potential courses of action following the end of slavery, however, Seward did not believe as strongly as Lincoln in the necessity of resettling freed slaves on foreign soil. Black colonization, however, was essential to Lincoln’s vision for the course of the war, and Seward, among others, was responsible for directing various individuals under his supervision to conceive of new options for the transfer of freed slaves. Possible countries included British Honduras, Haiti, Liberia, Panama, Nicaragua, British

\(^{81}\) Ibid., 234.
\(^{82}\) Ibid., 230
\(^{83}\) Ibid.
\(^{84}\) Ibid., 233.
\(^{85}\) Ibid., 240, 239.
Guinea, and Costa Rica. The plan that won the most traction with Lincoln was that which was crafted by his Secretary of the Interior Caleb Smith. If Lincoln did not express his hopes for colonization as a product of his belief in Manifest Destiny, Smith did, arguing that if his proposal for a colony in Chiriquí were to come to fruition, the black colonists would establish an “influence” there that would “most probably secure to us the absolute control of the country.” Smith does not establish how the US government would formulate the political or economic relationship between the black colonists and the US. Instead, Smith merely implies that the US government could wield its desire to reduce the black population in the US in order to strengthen a US hold on foreign territories, where he hoped they might potentially establish sovereignty, though he never clarified how black colonization would enable this.

It was another strong believer in Manifest Destiny, Lincoln’s appointee to Minister to Brazil James Watson Webb (1802-1884), who would propose a colonization program in Brazil to Secretary Seward. Echoing William H. Edwards, the former US Consul to Buenos Aires in 1847, Webb argued that due to climate similarities between the Amazon and the US South, the Amazon would be the perfect location for black resettlement and labor. Webb proposed the creation of a “joint stock colonization company” that would facilitate the arrival of 50,000 black colonists in the Amazon, thus cheaply blessing the US with the “riddance of curse” – its freed slave population – and providing Brazil with valuable laborers who would win the equality granted by Brazilian citizenship.

86 Ibid., 263.
87 Horne, 176;
In his proposal, Webb portrayed Brazil as being in urgent need of a solution to “the labor question,” given that slavery there was on the decline.\(^9^9\) When Brazil officially abolished the slave trade in 1850, the elites that governed Brazil began planning new ways to acquire labor. One of the consequences of the quest for new sources of labor, which elites agreed should emanate from European immigration, was the Land Law of 1850. The law made it so that individuals could acquire public lands through purchase rather than through grants or squatting. One of the principal objectives of this law was the promotion of European colonization. In order to facilitate it, the law stipulated that the funds from taxes on property registration and public lands sales be used exclusively to finance land-surveying and the immigration of “free colonists.”\(^9^0\) Supporters of the Land Law were desperate to subsidize the acquisition of free labor in the face of the end of the slave trade.\(^9^1\) Opponents of the law were more concerned with the question of colonization than of labor. Instead, some proposed that the government provide land grants to immigrants.\(^9^2\) Tavares Bastos, the same politician who had worked tirelessly to open the Amazon to international commerce and navigation, believed that Amazonia, out of all of Brazil’s regions, was the most in need of receiving immigrants.\(^9^3\)

The decline of slavery, in Webb’s telling, is left disconnected from the abolition of the slave trade. Instead, Webb attributes it to the superiority of Brazilian slaves in contrast to the “ignorant and docile” slaves supplied to the US and West Indies.\(^9^4\) Their superior nature made slavery intolerable to them, Webb explained, leading to an ongoing “organized conspiracy to prevent the increase of slavery by the

\(^{9^9}\) Ibid., 495.
\(^{9^0}\) Viotti Da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 79.
\(^{9^1}\) Ibid., 84.
\(^{9^2}\) Ibid.
\(^{9^4}\) Ibid., 495.
mothers committing infanticide.” In reality, the end of the slave trade caused the slave population to decrease because of the high slave mortality rate in Brazil.

Webb did point out an important aspect of slavery in Brazil which was the prevalence of slave resistance, especially in the form of quilombos, autonomous or semi-autonomous maroon communities. Quilombos were present throughout the country, including in the Amazonian region that Webb hoped to populate with slaves. The decline of slavery, for Webb was a “great evil” to which the solution was US black colonization, of equal benefit to all parties involved – the freedmen, “the philanthropist, the capitalist, and the governments of the United States and Brazil.”

Aware of the Brazilian pursuit of new sources of labor, Webb represented his personal ambition to rid his country of part of its black population as a service to Brazil. Because of the growth of coffee production in Brazil, coffee growers in the southern provinces of Brazil were importing slaves from the norther provinces. Given the severe threat of the loss of slaves in northern Brazil and of “negro insurrection,” Webb believed that the Brazilian government had every incentive to desire the US government’s offer of “experienced and practical, negro labor.” The only means by which Brazil’s “wild lands, now utterly valueless to her” could at last become valuable was if the country placed “upon them the proper laborer for their cultivation.”

While Webb was not concerned with using freed slaves as cultivators for the purposes of the US government, he suggested the Amazon as a perfect location for black colonization because of his adherence to racist beliefs. In accordance with the

95 Ibid., 496.
96 Viotti da Costa, The Brazilian Empire, 132.
97 Ibid., 496, 498.
98 Ibid., 497.
popular racial ideology of the time, Webb believed that black people possessed
certain racial traits, opposite from those of whites that made them particularly
suitable to certain climates, and therefore, to certain places on the globe – that is, the
tropics. He was joined by many other prominent US citizens, like those
mentioned previously, across the political spectrum, who shared almost identical
beliefs about race. Webb’s racist attitudes influenced him to desire to remove black
people from the US and his solution to their undesired presence in the country was
equally grounded in racism. Like Lincoln and Maury, Webb never held slaves and
expressed interest in bringing about the end of the slave trade and the institution of
slavery itself. Yet, his anti-slavery views, like those of Lincoln and Maury, did not
emanate from a belief in racial equality. Lincoln, Webb, and the other men with
which they surrounded themselves in the Union government, were the natural
enemies of the staunch Confederate Matthew Maury, who devoted his life
throughout the Civil War to playing his part to sabotage the Union war effort. Yet
the racial logics of these men did not significantly diverge, and by extension, neither
did their beliefs about possible solutions to the problems of slavery and its abolition.

It is here where the ideologies and policy proposals of Maury and Webb
intersect. Maury was considered a scientific authority across the US for his role in the
study of oceanography, meteorology, and geology, among other disciplines. Many
consider Maury, the first head of the US Naval Observatory, as well as one of the
founders of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to be
the father of modern oceanography. While Maury lauded the richness of the
Amazon, he did not believe that the land provided suitable living conditions for
white people. Black people, inherently destined for servitude under the white race,

100 On tropicality, see Ikuko Asaka’s *Tropical Freedom: Climate, Settler Colonialism, and Black Exclusion in the
possessed a genetic makeup that made them the perfect instruments of the white race in the cultivation of this land, a sentiment with which Webb agreed. These views were founded in the authoritative science of the time, and the reception of such science was not a function of the North-South or Union-Confederacy divide. Both Maury and those involved in the black colonization debate in the Union during the Civil War subscribed to scientific beliefs about the relationship between climate and race, accepting as true that “the black race” was better suited to life in the tropics due to the hot climate.\textsuperscript{101} Lincoln and his administration are treated as heroes in the popular US imagination, but they shared racist ideologies with those who are more universally accepted as racist figures. This sort of ideology was anything but marginal; rather, it influenced the ambitions and decisions of those in the highest positions of power.

It also fit into a larger way of thinking about the Amazon that prevailed in European and US thought and science. Susanna Hecht explains how scientists and collectors in the European and Anglophone tradition developed a narrative about Amazonia that positioned it as a purely “natural” place rather than one that was shaped by human effort.\textsuperscript{102} These travelers depicted Amazonian locals in their writings as “gracious hosts, earnest bearers, slaves, helpers, or rowers and watermen” who they did not view as active agents in interacting with and altering the landscape.\textsuperscript{103} Hecht writes that the colonial imperative of scientific expeditions continued after the colonial era, or rather that “scientific institutions had replaced the coffers of kings.”\textsuperscript{104} While many of the most prominent scientists to travel through the Amazon “were not formally staking claims,” “they were providing

\textsuperscript{101} Johnson, \textit{River of Dark Dreams}, 300.  
\textsuperscript{102} Hecht, \textit{The Scramble for the Amazon}, 282.  
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 283.
information…to a larger imperial apparatus.” The scientists were joined by “adventure tourists” who reproduced the knowledge of the day regarding race, climate, and the tropics.

Assertions about race in the tropics are ubiquitous in discussions about black colonization in the Union. Senator James Doolittle of Wisconsin (1815-1897), a Lincoln devotee, pointed to the Haitian Revolution as a case of “the laws of climate” overtaking “the white man.” One of colonization’s most vocal advocates, Frank Blair, in fact, used Maury’s findings about the Amazon to bolster his arguments. Blair was a US Representative from Missouri who remained loyal to the Union and joined the Union Army in 1862. He opposed slavery and proposed colonization in Central or South America as the right course of action after emancipation. In a speech delivered to the House of Representatives in 1858, Blair cited Maury’s paper the “Valley of the Amazon,” which spoke of “the white man’s” inability to alter the wilderness there, to support his call for black people to be settled in the tropics. He then cites an article from the New York newspaper Courier and Enquirer, edited by James Webb as further evidence. The article argues that black people should be transferred to the tropical regions of the continent, as, according to “the same law of nature which has given the blacks exclusive possession of corresponding latitudes in Africa,” they would replace white people. White people were essentially unfit to inhabit the land, according to the article’s writer, as proven by the fact that they had never succeeded in supplanting “the Indians of the tropics.” The extensive reach of these beliefs shows the deep roots that US views about Brazil and the Amazon had in

105 Ibid., 285.
106 Ibid., 290.
107 May, Slavery, Race, and Conquest, 181.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
US politics. Brazil and the Amazon consistently appeared in US discourse as part of a broader discourse about slavery, abolition, and expansionism.

The Plow, the Rifle, and Religion

Maury believed that Brazil and the Amazon could become extensions of a US empire. He was part of a post-Civil War movement that ought to expand outside of the physical borders of the US. Maury’s ideas, however, had their origins in the antebellum era. They were consistent with pre-Civil War notions about empire and the elements that constituted it. An understanding of the Amazon as empty wilderness played a key role in the formulation of colonization projects in the region. Maury, and others like him, relied on a long tradition of writing about the Amazon, particularly dominant in the nineteenth century, to come to their conclusions. Maury’s writings present just one example of how one man proposed to shape the Amazonian landscape based on these widespread and entrenched notions.

The Amazon, both as an empty wilderness, and as a potential part of a larger sphere of US influence, made it an ideal tool to use in the resolution of the “question of slavery” in the US. Maury presented the transferal of US slaves to the Amazon as a way in which the burdens of slavery in the US could be alleviated. In doing so, he also revealed his vision of a borderless South.

Maury attempted, however, to show that his colonial ideas were not efforts to expand the practice of slavery. He viewed himself as merely ensuring the normal functioning of a system that was already in place. “I am not seeking to make slave territory out of free, or to introduce slavery where there is none. Brazil is as much of a slave country as Virginia, and the valley of the Amazon is Brazilian,” he declared.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{111} Diana Fontaine Maury Corbin, compiled, \textit{A Life of Matthew Fontaine Maury} (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1888), 131.
Therefore, to send US slaves to Brazil would be no different than the internal transfer and trade of enslaved people that happened with full legality within US borders. Though Maury labelled slavery a “curse,” he did not dare to envision the abolition of slavery. He argued in 1855 that in his state of Virginia, if slavery were to be announced illegal, Virginians would leave the state or sell their slaves further into the South.\textsuperscript{112} Maury took this claim to an even more extreme conclusion. He foresaw a war as inevitable if US slavery were threatened, and he believed that slaveholders, “in order to prevent this war of races and its horrors,” would “in self-defence [sic], be compelled to conquer parts of Mexico and Central America, and make slave territory of that which is now free.”\textsuperscript{113} In his mind, then, it was better to send black laborers to regions south of the US border with the agreement of foreign governments, than for US citizens to invade foreign territory and institute slavery where it was unwanted.

As “we must deal with mankind as they are, and not as we would have them,” the natural response to this predicament was to look to a far-away place like the Amazon that, according to him, demanded black labor.\textsuperscript{114} The inhabitants of the Amazon, Maury claimed, would always depend on slave labor, and the Amazon forest itself could only be properly subdued through black labor.\textsuperscript{115} According to him, “Brazil is a slave country, and all the travelers who go there, I am told, say that the black man, and he alone, is capable of subduing the forests there.”\textsuperscript{116} If this was true, then the only question left to ask was whether enslaved labor would be purchased directly from Africa or from within the Americas. If from within the Americas, then not only would the number of slaves in the world not increase, but it would also “be

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., 130.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Horne, The Deepest South, 113.
\textsuperscript{116} Corbin, A Life of Matthew Fontaine Maury, 131-2.
relieving our own country of the slaves, it would be hastening the time of our deliverance, and it would be putting off indefinitely the horrors of that war of races which, without an escape, is surely to come upon us.”\[117\]

While Maury wished to avoid the coming bloodshed that the battle to continue slavery would incite, he also argued for the perpetuation of white supremacy in the same place he hoped to deposit black slaves. If slavery might be reaching its end point, the system that enabled it was not. Maury wrote: “For more than three hundred years the white man has been established in that Amazonian basin, and for more than three hundred years it has remained a howling wilderness.”\[118\] This statement, which reveals a belief that Brazilians of European descent who lived in the Amazon were indeed white, also suggests a hierarchy within his conception of those who were white. Brazilian whites had failed thus far to cultivate the Amazon. This did not imply that no white man was matched to the task. He did not believe that the entire white race should be excluded from the opportunity to colonize the Amazon. What the region needed, in fact, was specifically a white US presence. According to him, “in the valley of the Amazon, the plow is unknown and the American rifle and axe, the great implements of settlement and civilization, are curiosities.”\[119\] Here, Maury mimics O’Sullivan in his listing of two crucial elements of successful US occupation of the western territories – the plow and the rifle. What Maury saw when he turned his gaze towards the Amazon was a landscape that had many of the same characteristics that previous foreign observers had noted. He also saw a land that was virtually empty, just as other lands conquered by the US had previously been viewed. Maury’s in his belief was

\[117\] Ibid., 132.
\[119\] Ibid.
specifically in the supremacy of US white settlers – the Amazon’s only and last chance for progress and cultivation after the failures of indigenous and European peoples. Hecht demonstrates how Maury’s racist beliefs complemented commonplace nineteenth century myths about the Amazon as bountiful but empty. English naturalist Henry Walter Bates, a prominent traveler to and writer about the Amazon, claimed that “everything in Amazonia remains to be done.” According to Hecht, “the tropes of emptiness, primitivity, and incapacity” combined with a new set of logics – economic, political, racial, and religious – to create what she terms the nineteenth century “Amazon Scramble.”

Maury’s belief in the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race was shared by many during this era. This ideology became dominant in connection with ideas of Manifest Destiny during the Mexican War. By 1850, according to Reginald Horsman, US Anglo-Saxons had come to view themselves as “a separate, innately superior people who were destined to bring good government, commercial prosperity, and Christianity to the American continents and to the world.” US citizens were choosing a narrative of their own history that would justify and glorify their current objectives of global conquest. Horsman writes: “From their own successful past as Puritan colonists, Revolutionary patriots, conquerors of a wilderness, and creators of an immense material prosperity, the Americans had evidence plain before them that they were a chosen people.”

One of the benefits Maury expected this chosen people might find in South America was gold. According to him, the Andean gold that could potentially be discovered might rival the quantity present in California. Therefore, one consequence

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120 Hecht, *The Scramble for the Amazon*, 148.
121 Ibid.
122 Horsman, 2.
123 Ibid., 5.
of US conquest of the Amazon was the possession of this gold, which could flow directly to the Atlantic. This claim speaks to the permanence of the myth of El Dorado, which held there was a golden city in the Amazon and other areas. This myth dates back to Columbus’ claim that more gold and items of value could be found south of the equator than elsewhere, a belief that would go on to influence European and US thought.\footnote{Nicolás Wey Gómez, \textit{The Tropics of Empire: Why Columbus Sailed South to the Indies}, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008), 40.} The southern journal that published much of Maury’s writings about the region disseminated the idea of the Amazon as “a gold and diamond country.”\footnote{Simmons, \textit{Racist Americans in a Multi-Racial Society}, 35.}

According to Maury, the status quo precluded the possibility of profiting from this gold, as it was to be found in “Indian country,” the inhabitants of which lacked the “energy and enterprise” to do the work necessary for it.\footnote{\textit{Direct Foreign Trade to the South},” \textit{DeBow’s Review of the Southern and Western States}, Vol. XII-New Series, Vol. V. New Orleans, 1852, 143.} The Andes, however, were not the focus of Maury’s vision; the Amazon Valley was. There too, the local inhabitants had failed to properly benefit from its resources. After three hundred years of unsuccessful European and indigenous attempts at “contending with the forests,” “no impression” had been made.\footnote{Ibid., 144.} Other than this myth, there would be no reason for Maury to believe that there were large gold deposits in the Amazon. The solution to the seeming immutability of the Amazon, though, was clear and singular: “If ever the vegetation there is subdued and brought under; if ever the soil be reclaimed from the forest the reptile and the wild beast, and subjected to the hoe, it must be done by the African, with the American axe in his hand.”\footnote{Ibid.}

The benefits, too, of a US presence in the Amazon, would be extended to the US in general, and not just to the southern slaveholder. The enormous wealth this

project would bring about was so evidently appealing to Maury he believed it would not “fail to find favor with every true hearted American, whether he come from the North, or the South, the East or the West.”\textsuperscript{129} This was the case because his project would connect the US directly to a whole other section of the globe: “Settlement there, will transfer the productions of India and place them in Amazonia at our feet; so that the ships of all nations that may flock there to buy and carry them away, will have to pass by our gates.”\textsuperscript{130} Rather than privileging the southern US so as to disadvantage other regions, his plan would unify the nation; the only factor that privileged the South in this scheme was its greater geographical proximity to South America.

In Maury’s worldview, “the South” was not limited to the southern US. Johnson, in fact, argues that what was now viewed as “the South” emerged entirely of the secession of a certain conglomeration of states from the Union, rather than the pre-Civil War reality. Instead, Johnson proposes that it might be more helpful to ask “where Southerners (and slaveholders in particular) thought they were going and how they thought they could pull it off in the first place” in the years before the war.\textsuperscript{131} According to Johnson, in the 1850s, “many of those who would later become Confederates were busily imagining and promoting a vision of a pro-slavery future – of pro-slavery time and space.”\textsuperscript{132} This harkens back to the notion of border fluidity to which Maury seemed to subscribe.

Maury’s writing betrays a vision of a pro-slavery space that was expansive and that he only vaguely defined. In an 1845 paper entitled “The Commercial Prospects of the South” and presented to the Virginia Commercial Convention, Maury first

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 143.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid. 142.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., \textit{River of Dark Dreams}, 16.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 17.
\end{flushleft}
proclaimed “Let the South look to the South! Behold the valley of the Amazon!” He repeated the same entreaty in his 1852 paper published in DeBow’s Review in 1852, imploring twice that “the South not forget to look to the South.” Rather than articulate a relationship between different sovereign nations, Maury implies that two slaveholding regions, separated by national and geographical boundaries, are in fact, parts of an expansive, unified system. The southern US and the Amazon were one and the same.

Maury’s arguments show that he was dedicated to a vision that was deeply rooted in the US tradition of expansionism. He was committed to ideals that were not confined to the borders of the nation. Walter Johnson argues that for Maury, “space was not defined by politics, and it was neither national nor regional; the economy produced space, rather than being bounded by it.” That is, at the moment at which the Amazon began to figure centrally in Maury’s imagination, many US southerners were conceiving of ways to respond to the heavy reliance of their economy on exports. Maury understood the slavery-reliant economy of the southern US to be under threat, and in response, he was resolved to extend US slavery into a greater South beyond US national borders. The Amazon river, in fact, was an “appendage” of the Mississippi, and by connecting the two, the “American Mediterranean” (the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean) would become the center of a new empire. This new empire would also be connected to Asia, as Maury hoped that the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans would be joined via the Isthmus of Panama.

When Maury compared the Mississippi Valley to the Amazon Valley, he participated in a long US tradition of invoking the Mississippi Valley as the central

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133 Corbin, A Life of Matthew Fontaine Maury, 130.
134 Maury, “Direct Foreign Trade to the South,” 133, 142.
135 Johnson, River of Dark Dreams, 299.
136 Vilella Luz, A Amazônia para os negros americanos, 56.
137 Maury, “Direct Foreign Trade to the South,” 137.
target of expansionism. Before US leaders like James Madison and Thomas Jefferson began envisioning and enacting the expansion of the US empire into the Mississippi Valley, it was the French who dreamed of its annexation. Napoleon thought of the region as a provider of food for the enslaved people employed in sugar cultivation in the French colony of St. Domingue.\textsuperscript{138} Before its fall as a result of the Haitian Revolution, St. Domingue had been one of the world’s most lucrative colonies, and after its fall, the Mississippi Valley lost much of its value to Napoleon.\textsuperscript{139} The Valley then became of principal interest to one of the chief architects of the early United States – Thomas Jefferson. In Jefferson’s view, by expanding the domain of the US into the Valley, the fledgling nation could create an “empire for liberty.”\textsuperscript{140} This liberty was the liberty of white male farmers whose livelihoods would depend on slave labor. In this way, the story of interest in expansion into the Mississippi Valley was inextricable from the expansion of the institution of slavery. Emphasis on the natural rights of US Anglo-Saxons would provide the perfect alibi for the institution’s expansion into new lands.

Belief in the racial superiority of Anglo-Saxons, however, did by no means develop exclusively in the US. As Maury and so many others were articulating a global role for the US that was justified by the racial superiority of the US citizen, Brazil was advocating for European immigration based on similar racial premises. As Brazil prepared for the abolition of slavery, it searched for a new labor force that would supplant the enslaved one. The determination on the part of those like Maury to mold Brazil and the Amazon on the basis of their racial ideology, then, coincided with the desires of elite Brazilians who had the power to act on such

\textsuperscript{138} Johnson, \textit{River of Dark Dreams}, 22.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 3.
beliefs. Viotti Da Costa writes that the Brazilian Empire prided itself on its adherence to liberalism, which served as a “utopia for the elites,” but as “empty rhetoric” for the large majority of the population. Instead of seeking radical change, those in power blamed the empire’s problems on Brazilian “backwardness.” For the most part, she argues, the colonial structure, dependent on slave labor and the patronage system, persisted following independence. The dependence on slave labor, as well as the attitude towards land it produced, fundamentally connected the US and Brazil. In the backlands of colonial Brazil, “anyone who was able to fight the Indians and survive in the wilderness could secure a piece of land.” Like in the US, land ownership, attainable through domination of indigenous people, was central to conceptions of the Brazilian citizen. The power of Brazilian elites also resembled that of US southern planters, though slaveholding Brazilians controlled the entire country, in contrast with the regional confines of slavery’s direct practice in the US. In the 1850s after abolishing the slave trade, “Brazil’s ruling planters worked consciously to duplicate the thriving US model: a slave society that could reproduce itself through better slave management, the internal slave trade, and a close slaveholding grip on the power of the central government.” “No two countries in the world have greater mutual interests than this beautiful Empire and our own Republic,” proclaimed Robert G. Scott, the Virginian serving as U.S. consul in Rio de Janeiro. The reason was simple: “[t]hey are the two greatest and only powers on the globe with negro slavery recognized and governed by law.”

141 Hecht, *The Scramble for the Amazon*, 142.
142 Viotti Da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 76.
143 Ibid.
144 Ibid., 91.
145 Ibid., 81.
146 Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire*, 80.
147 Ibid., 147.
In Maury’s argument for the changing of Brazil’s laws concerning foreign access to the Amazon, he refers to the context of US expansion westward in order to prove his point about the absurdity of the limitations of these laws. “Suppose the United States had established military posts in California to prevent the people there from going there and digging for gold, what would have been the condition of that State now in comparison to what it is? It would have been as the interior of Brazil is now.”¹⁴⁸ What he saw as the Brazilian government’s refusal to promote commerce amounted to a crime given that Brazil was “the finest country in the world.”¹⁴⁹

Brazilian law as it stood was insignificant to Maury in that he viewed it as an obstacle to overcome in the pursuit of his dream.

Though this dream was specifically a US one, its implications extended far beyond the nation’s boundaries. Níncia Villela Luz claims that Maury saw himself as a pioneer in the model of Christopher Columbus. He, too, would introduce the world to a new territory rich in resources, but in need of being domesticated and civilized.¹⁵⁰ Maury articulated the fated conquest of the Amazon as part and parcel of a longer arc of history. As he saw it, the US was still animated by the “spirit which moved men in the days of knight-errantry, which drove them in the time of the crusades, and which at a later period, carried them across the seas and conducted them to the New World in search of adventure and geographical discovery.”¹⁵¹ If this very same spirit was “permitted upon the wings of free navigation to enter the grand river basins of South America,” it would “cause the wilderness there to blossom.”¹⁵² Brazil owed it not just to the US to allow US steamships up the Amazon but also to “the

ⁱ⁴⁹ Ibid.
ⁱ⁵¹ Maury, “Direct Foreign Trade to the South,” 142.
ⁱ⁵² Ibid.
good of commerce, science, and the world.”153 The US had a destiny, in which the Amazon figured importantly, and it was the obligation of all involved to take the necessary steps to fulfill it. Maury consistently articulated his vision of the Amazon as something greater than simply an economic project. Not only did commerce demand the free navigation of the Amazon, but so did the “necessities of Christendom.”154

While Maury named Christendom as one of the larger motivating factors in the need to colonize and civilize Brazil, US Protestant missionaries had already been articulating the need for Christianization as a necessary tool in the promotion of civilization. Christianization, for them, implicated missionizing Catholics, as they did not view Catholicism as properly Christian. They considered Catholics as part of an inferior religion. Paul Naish argues that, during the 1850s, as the debate about slavery intensified in the US, pro-slavery southerners used anti-Catholic sentiment to bolster their arguments in favor of US slavery, as opposed to the slavery practiced in Latin American countries where Catholicism was the dominant religion.155 While Maury spoke of an expansive south that was limited by geopolitical borders, many southerners spoke disparagingly of slavery in places like Brazil and Cuba. Instead of articulating commonalities with other slave societies, southerners more often chose to distance themselves from Latin American countries. Religious difference was key in establishing this distance. Naish writes that southerners’ “enmity to Catholicism” was “reflexive and unselfconscious.”156 It was also racialized, as descendants of the Spanish and Portuguese colonists were considered to be tainted by the Muslim and Jewish blood of their ancestors.157 Maury, like other similarly-minded politicians,

156 Ibid., 197.
157 Ibid., 7.
targeted the Amazon not for its use of slave labor, but for what he saw as the unfulfilled potential of the land. In focusing on the land itself, these southerners ignored the question of the usefulness of slave labor in Amazonia. As a promoter of emigration after the Civil War, Hastings would perpetuate this willful ignorance.

Protestant churches had chosen the heavily Catholic Brazil as a target for proselytization and sent agents there for such purposes. In fact, one of the chief sources of information about Brazil in the US was a book entitled *Brazil and the Brazilians* written by Daniel Kidder, a New Yorker, who upon graduating from Wesleyan University in 1836, entered the Methodist ministry and traveled throughout Brazil on a mission. The book was widely read, especially in the South. Several editions were published, including new ones in 1866, 1867, and 1868, when southerners were considering emigration. In the book, Kidder sets forth a narrative of Brazilian history that commends the empire for its relative progress given its Portuguese origins. He argues that Brazil stands out amongst other nations of the “Latin race,” which he denotes as inferior and therefore not worthy of comparison to those of the Anglo-Saxon race. Like Maury, he believed Brazilian backwardness to be at fault for the large swaths of yet un-surveyed and uncultivated land existent in the country. Also like Maury, Kidder believed that immigrants were necessary in order to make proper use of this land and for Brazil to achieve its great destiny. At the same time, Kidder echoed the belief that, in the Amazon, the tropical climate might prevent permanent white settlement, writing that “whether the Amazon region...can ever be thickly peopled by a more Northern race, remains to be seen. It is in one range of temperature...and is as yet an almost unbroken wilderness.”

159 Ibid., 584
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid., 580.
The first Methodist reverend to visit Brazil, two years before Kidder, was Tennessean Fountain Pitts. Writing from Rio de Janeiro in 1835, Pitts claimed that the city – this “thoroughfare of Papal delusion, and mart of slaves and coffee – was “the most unchristian place” he had ever encountered, while expressing hope that “the day of gospel light will soon dawn upon” it.162 Pitts would later go on to become a chaplain in the Confederate Army and his son, Josiah would follow Hastings to Santarém. Fountain Pitts’ church, following his trip to South America, resolved that proselytization was the duty of all, as “every genuine lover of freedom should aid in the advancement of a religion that has always been the precursor of civilization, literature, and the rights of man.”163 Maury, then, was not alone in articulating progress in Brazil and the demands of Christianity as mutually dependent.

Like Hastings, Maury’s ideas for a different future for the US, however, were not relegated to his imagination. As mentioned before, he manipulated his influence in the upper echelons of US government to bring to fruition a government-funded exploration of the Amazon in the hopes of convincing the Brazilian government of the advantages of opening the river to international navigation and commerce. His goal was also to reveal these benefits to the US public for which the Amazon was largely a far-off land of little consequence to the US.

In 1851, Maury’s brother-in-law Colonel William Herndon (1813-1857) set off on an expedition that would begin to concretize Maury’s plans. Herndon’s expedition was directed by the Secretary of the Navy under President Millard Filmore. Herndon’s report was submitted to the both houses of congress. The Secretary of the Navy ordered that twenty thousand additional copies of it be

162 “LETTER FROM REV. FOUNTAIN E. PITTS,” Western Christian Advocate. August 21, 1835. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
163 “Methodist Mission to South America,” Western Christian Advocate. May 29, 1835. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
Before setting off, Maury made it clear to Herndon that this journey was to create “the first link in that chain which is to end in the establishment of the Amazonian Republic.” Repeating a favorite phrase of his, Maury entreated his brother-in-law to do the preliminary work required to establish the dominion of “a race that has energy and enterprise.”

Figure 2.3. “William Lewis Herndon,” illustration from his book *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon*.

Upon their return to the United States, Herndon and Gibbon, each wrote their own accounts of their time on the Amazon. Herndon’s mission was described primarily as a scientific and commercial one, but he did not limit himself to observations of that nature, and neither did his second-in-command Lieutenant Lardner Gibbon in his separate account. Herndon’s book would become a national bestseller. In the final section of his report, Herndon concluded that there was a “bond” between Brazil and the US given they were both slaveholding nations. While acknowledging that the US had to respect Brazil’s wishes, Herndon invokes

165 Horne, *The Deepest South*, 113-114.
166 Ibid., 113
167 Hecht, *The Scramble for the Amazon*, 150.
this “bond” to harshly criticize the country for refusing the US her “just rights” in limiting access to the Amazon.\textsuperscript{169} He then re-produces an address Maury had made to Congress in which he concluded that Brazil, in keeping the Amazon off-limits to foreign use, was acting in defiance of “divine law.”\textsuperscript{170} According to Maury and the jurisconsult he was citing, “Providence” had ordained that commerce between different nations was “essential to the moral well-being of the whole human race.”\textsuperscript{171}

For Herndon, if divine law mandated a US influence on the Amazon region, so too, did the inherent deficiencies of the people who inhabited it. While in Pará on the Amazon, Herndon commented on the idleness of the population there, writing that “men, in these countries, are not ambitious. They are not annoyed, as the more masculine people of colder climates are, to see their neighbors going ahead of them.”\textsuperscript{172} Brazilians in general, he said, were “perfectly contented” with the basic necessities of life due to the climate, the relaxing effect of which makes labor impossible. The solution to this problem, according to Herndon, was to make labor compulsory. The restitution of the slave trade was out of the question, since public opinion was against it, and so was coercive indigenous labor, given that indigenous people would “sooner die than do more than is necessary for the support of their being.”\textsuperscript{173} Given these restrictions, Herndon foresaw US settlement as the best option. The Brazilian government, as Maury so desperately hoped, would first have to modify its long-standing limitations on who could enter the Amazon, requiring them to “throw off a causeless jealousy, and a fear of our people.”\textsuperscript{174} Then, Southern planters who feared the coming disappearance of slavery at home in the US would

\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{170} Ibid., 417.  
\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 336.  
\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., 337.  
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
“remove their slaves to that country, cultivate its lands, draw out its resources, and prodigiously augment the power and wealth of Brazil.”175

The opening of the Amazon, for Herndon, was about more than US access to greater commercial opportunities. By encouraging emigration as well, Brazil would gain access to the wealth the Amazon Valley, with its “unrivalled fertility,” had the potential to produce as long as it was cultivated by US citizens.176 Brazil, he entreated, should “stretch out her hands to the world at large, and say, ‘Come and help us to subdue the wilderness; here are homes, and broad lands, and protection for all those who choose to come.’”177 The result of such a revolution in policy would be the transformation of Rio de Janeiro, the then-capital of Brazil, into a mere village, compared to Pará, and of Santarém, the site of the future ex-Confederate colony, into the new St. Louis, Missouri.178 The US impact on the Amazon would be so great,

175 Ibid.
176 Ibid., 363.
177 Ibid., 366.
178 Ibid., 367.
he believed, that its fundamental character would shift from its primitive, inferior state into a center of modern civilization. “No longer would the forests that line its banks afford but a shelter for the serpent, the tiger, and the Indian; but furrowed by a thousand keels, and bearing upon its waters the mighty wealth that civilization and science would call from the depths of those dark forests, the Amazon would ‘rejoice as a strong man to run a race’” he wrote.\textsuperscript{179} The specific advancements Brazil would point to were “the blossoming wilderness, the well-cultivated farm, the busy city, the glancing steamboat.”\textsuperscript{180} Listening “to the hum of the voices of thousands of active and prosperous men,” Brazil could say, “thus much have we done for the advancement of civilization and the happiness of the human race.”\textsuperscript{181}

**Conclusion**

When Herndon published this report, entreating the US government to advocate for a change in Brazilian policy toward the Amazon, the kind of “Amazonian Republic” that Maury envisioned was still a dream. He did not know that his work would help fuel the establishment of a colony of US citizens motivated by similar impulses. Hastings would use Herndon and Maury’s language and information for his own propagandistic purposes. While Herndon’s report painted a vibrant picture of what a US presence in the Amazon could look like, this picture existed mostly in his imagination. What had been a fantasy for Herndon and Maury would turn into an imagined necessity for their ideological heir, Hastings. While Herndon’s book had entreated the US government for its support of the US government, by the time Hastings set his mind on the Amazon, he no longer required it. The Brazilian Empire’s interest in facilitating immigration would sync

\textsuperscript{179} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., 368.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid.
with the wishes of the US southerners who could not tolerate the consequences of the Civil War. With the backing of the Brazilian Emperor Dom Pedro II himself, Hastings would position himself to his southern US compatriots as the man who would prove that US citizens did indeed possess the “energy and enterprise” to alter the Amazon, and thus contribute to the grand civilizing project Herndon so eloquently described.
Chapter Two

Paving the Path for Migration: The Planning of an Amazonian Colony

Matthew Maury was not alone in imagining himself as a modern-day conqueror in Columbus’ mold. While Maury long-dreamed of some iteration of US colonization in the Amazon, he would never personally make it there. The ideas and information about it that he propagated did arrive in Brazil by way of Hastings. Hastings was Maury’s heir, as exhibited by his book dedicated to advocating for colonization in the Amazon. In it, he firmly established his commitment to turning Maury’s dreams of empire into a reality. Filled with poetic language and vivid imagery, his appeal is more than mere propaganda. Instead, it is a work deeply grounded in the science of the time, which Hastings employs to make a convincing argument that immigration to the Amazon was a viable alternative to life in the US where slavery had been outlawed. Slavery was the institution that had enabled the nation to be a global economic power, and upon which the southern US economy had been built. The economic dimension, as Hastings articulates it in The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil is also inextricably linked to other aspects of ex-Confederate identity. As it becomes clear in the writing of Hastings and many others of a similar mind, the impulse to emigrate derived its force from a belief that the 1865 surrender of General Robert E. Lee to the Union Army made life in the US untenable.

While staying in Santarém, Hastings was struck by what he described as the city and its surroundings’ spectacular natural attributes. One night, after a delicious dinner, Hastings describes how while some of those in attendance at the dinner retired to their hammocks, he and his fellow US citizens and ex-Confederates, unused to this remarkable beauty, assembled to “witness the magnificent scenery,
wonders, and glories of the world-renowned Amazon.” Hastings depicts he and his men as being “fanned by the refreshing trade winds, gazing upon the starry heavens until the rising moon pours forth her mellow light, in cloudless majesty, unveiling a night scene, peculiar alone to tropical climes.” The Amazon, Hastings makes clear, was uniquely beautiful because of its tropicality. It was in the tropics that he and his ex-Confederate compatriots could transform themselves from deluded and angered victims of a lost war into proud explorers of a land yet unconquered. There, in the Amazon, the resentment caused by the outcome of the Civil War could become a thing of the past. Hastings goes on to describe the scene as the “American emigrants gaze with ecstasies of delight, forgetting the past, in contemplating the beauties of the present, and in anticipation of the peaceful, glorious future of the New World.” In settling in the Amazon, it is clear, the ex-Confederates would not only find wealth through involvement in the same agricultural practices in which they had engaged in the US; they would also become pioneers, just like those white US citizens who traveled westward, removing indigenous people from their land and enabling the perpetuation of slavery. There were, after all, no more “New Worlds” on the North American continent that ex-Confederates could take advantage of.

Like so many before him, Hastings exalted Amazonia as a modern-day Garden of Eden where he and his destitute compatriots, abandoned by their homeland, could live in total freedom, a freedom contingent upon accruing wealth without having to work hard for it. For, according to Hastings, Amazonia was so abundant in lucrative crops that, “even from the natural production alone, which he may gather at will, without capital and with very little actual labor, he can at once secure a competency; but it is much preferable for our countrymen to rely chiefly, if

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182 Hastings, *The Emigrants' Guide to Brazil*, 29
183 Ibid., 29.
not entirely, on the cultivation of the soil.” This truth drove Hastings to assert that “the industrious and judicious farmer will realize much more from the same quantity of land, then he could possibly expect as the result of the most arduous and incessant toil, however judiciously bestowed, in any part of the United States.” Emigration, then, was not only a desperate response to post-war discontent, but an action that would allow his compatriots to fare better than they ever could in the US.

This chapter begins with a close reading and analysis of the arguments Hastings makes for emigration in *The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil*. This precedes a discussion of the debates about the broader Brazilian emigration movement as it played out in US media. I use newspaper articles, primarily those from former Confederate states, as a springboard from which to demonstrate the prevalence and significance of this topic. I also put Hastings’ book into conversation with other books written by similarly motivated ex-Confederates looking to found their colonies in other regions of Brazil. This chapter unpacks the dominant themes present in the ways that these key colonial leaders envisioned settlement. In this intellectual context, the ideas expressed in the conclusion of his book emerge as more than mere propagandistic rhetoric. Instead, they prove to be, for the actors involved, viable alternatives to life in the postbellum southern US.

By drawing attention to these sources, I hope to show how US nationals, and southerners in particular, engaged with the question of emigration as a response to the Union’s victory in the Civil War, as well as with Brazil as a potential home for those who refused to accept the consequences of this victory. I then conclude by putting these ideas into conversation with the discourse regarding foreign immigration, and in particular US immigration, in Brazilian newspapers. I show how

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184 Ibid., 201.
185 Ibid.
racist ideas influenced both US and Brazilian thinking about emigration. While in the US, the possibility of black equality motivated many to consider emigration, in Brazil, newspapers were labeling white Anglo-Saxons as the best, or only, people prepared to trigger economic development there.

**Hastings and the *Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil***

As the Civil War came to an end, US citizens influenced by the thinking that animated Maury and Herndon, seized the chance to act on the dream of altering Amazonian history. Hastings would become one out of many men to contribute their own ideas to this tradition and to endeavor to turn them into realities. The opening of the Amazon that Maury and Herndon so desired did take place. By the time Brazilian parliament approved of it, however, the tides had turned in the US. Herndon died in 1857. His brother-in-law would not live to witness one of the impacts his obsession with Brazil and the Amazon would have upon fellow southerners.

Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, Maury abandoned his post as a US Navy Commander, and assumed a position in the Confederate Navy. Following the war’s end, Maury, like other ex-Confederates considered ex-patriation from the nation they had devoted themselves to defeating. This time, Maury turned his gaze away from Brazil and towards Mexico, temporarily establishing himself there, and working with emperor Maximilian to establish a colony for southern emigrants – New Virginia – which he promised would provide colonists with all the benefits they had experienced in the South’s “palmy days,” save enslaved labor. 186 Maury was one of several ex-Confederates, many of them generals and other prominent figures, who

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186 Corbin, *A Life of Matthew Fontaine Maury*, 231.
looked to Mexico as a place to settle and start anew. These men saw emperor Maximilian, whose rule began in 1864 and ended in 1867 with the fall of the monarchy, as an ally in realizing their objectives for colonization. The emperor, however, was not recognized by the US government as the rightful ruler of Mexico, as he had been invited to rule by the French, under Napoleon. The US considered French reign in Mexico as a threat to its sphere of influence, and tensions between the two nations complicated southern migration. Maximilian was supportive, though, of the prospect of colonization. In 1865, he issued an imperial decree announcing the granting of land titles to immigrants, and, among other privileges, permitted immigrants to bring laborers of any race with them to cultivate the land upon which they would settle. After Brazil, Mexico became the country which received the most ex-Confederate migrants.

While Maury used his contacts in the Mexican government to facilitate southern emigration, others turned towards Brazil, among other locations south of the US, as a locus for southerners who preferred settlement abroad to life in the postbellum South. It is in this context that Lansford Hastings’ appeal for US colonization of the Amazon in *The Emigrant’s Guide to Brazil* appeared. The book was published in 1867 after Hastings’ travels through the Amazon. He had settled upon the city of Santarém as the ideal place for a future colony. The work offers a wide variety of observations about Brazil, the Amazon, and Santarém. Like most of the European and US commentators on the Amazon in the nineteenth century, Hastings aimed to articulate a vision of the region that was total in its scope; that is, he made no distinction between the scientific, religious, political, or the economic. The aggregation of perspectives in his writing had the effect of producing a work that

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purported to have the answers to any and all questions about the subject at hand. Additionally, he combined authoritative claims with flowery, elegant language and quoted poetry to create what was meant to be a simultaneously objective work of non-fiction and a convincing appeal to join a man on his quest to start a new life in an unknown land.

Like Maury and Herndon, Hastings’ various types of observations and his certainty in their veracity, combined to lead him to very specific conclusions about the rightness of the US colonist’s mission in the Amazon. His scientific descriptions of the region echoed those of Maury and Herndon but led him to a more limited conclusion than that of his predecessors. No longer acting in the name of the US government, Hastings did not articulate colonization as being part of a greater project to incorporate Amazonian territory into the US empire. Despite this deviation in goals, the information Herndon had gathered on his expedition was invaluable for Hastings in pursuing settlement, as evidence by his direct reference to it as producing authoritative scientific information.\footnote{Hastings, \textit{The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil}, 188.} Given the consequences of the Civil War, the expansive slave empire based in US territory, was no longer possible. However, though Maury and Herndon’s objectives were not identical to Hastings’, they shared the same imperial impulse. If the establishment and perpetuation of what Walter Johnson calls a “global whitemanism” appeared dead on US shores with the vanquishing of the Confederacy, the believers in this dream would have to go elsewhere.\footnote{Johnson, \textit{River of Dark Dreams}, 418.}

In the preface to \textit{The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil}, Hastings outlined the stakes present in the emigration movement. The former residents of the Confederacy, he believed, had only two options, given the results of the Civil War: “the acceptance of
the situation, without mental reservation, or voluntary expatriation.”\textsuperscript{190} Southerners, however, were “noble patriots” and a “high-toned, conquered people” who would struggle to accept their defeat. The only aim he wished to achieve in the writing of the book and the various steps he had taken to make settlement in Brazil possible, was to “secure peaceful and happy homes for himself and his distressed countrymen.”\textsuperscript{191} The Amazon was the ideal place for their new homes given the incomparability of its “abundant, varied, and valuable” natural productions that promised emigrants economic success.\textsuperscript{192}

Whereas Herndon and Maury had depicted the Amazon region in general as a wilderness that lacked the commerce and industry necessary to make it suitable to the expectations of US citizens, Hastings had a differing viewpoint. On his journey, he wrote that the river was “teeming with commerce” and that the towns and plantations presented “so many evidences of activity and prosperity, that I can really see no resemblance between the great Amazon now and that vast region of desolation and solitude so uniformly described by former tourists.”\textsuperscript{193} Observers of the Amazon had long articulated contrasting visions of the region as both bountiful and poor. Here, in an effort to write successful propaganda, Hastings evokes the abundance of the Amazon without relying on the stereotype of its poverty.

Out of the entire region, he observed, the city of Santarém was the most advanced in terms of commerce.\textsuperscript{194} Rather than present it as a region with eminent potential to be a fount of wealth if incorporated into a larger economic system, the Amazon, in Hastings’ conception of it, was already producing wealth and US citizens could capitalize on this situation without doing so in the name of a greater US

\textsuperscript{190} Hastings, \textit{The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil}, 3.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid., 35.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid., 21.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., 28.
empire. Hastings’ mission to settle in Santarém was much more than a rhetorical product of Maury and Herndon’s work. He acknowledges it without mentioning the names of either man when he concluded that “those of our countrymen who contemplate locating on the Amazon, or its tributaries, will be grateful to know that the great Amazon is, by imperial decree, thrown open to the commerce of the world.” Hastings was referring to the decree of 1866, permitting for the first time international navigation of the Amazon river. This change in policy that Maury and Herndon had worked so hard to achieve meant that Hastings could convincingly defend settlement on the Amazon. There were no longer any limits to the profit to be had.

Like Maury and Herndon, Hastings envisioned that US emigrants would indelibly transform the Amazon region. In his view, after US had turned the region into a commercial world capital, “then will all patriotic citizens, both natives and adopted, exaltingly point to the triumphant success of the American emigration.” This success, however would not only come about thanks to the emigrants themselves. Hastings continues to write that Brazilians would also have “the wise and liberal policy of the government” to praise “as the grand sources, the chief causes, of the high clergy and rising property of the Brazilian Empire.” US ingenuity, coupled with Brazilian governmental policy that enabled it, then, would be the sources of all the great changes that were to come.

The US emigrants would work in tandem with a Brazilian government supportive of them to convert the Amazon into the economic paradise he, like Maury and Herndon before him, imagined. Implicit in this statement is a belief that the Brazilian government would provide the colonists whatever they needed to make

195 Ibid., 235.
196 Ibid., 235.
197 Ibid., 235.
their new lives in the Amazon the incredibly profitable venture Hastings envisaged. In exchange for full institutional support, Hastings seems to say, the colonists would become “patriotic citizens” of Brazil.\(^{198}\) As long as the Brazilian monarchy facilitated the realization of his and his fellow colonists’ dreams, the emigrants would be willing citizens of Brazil. This suggests that national identity for Hastings was based on the complete freedom to determine by what means they would accrue wealth. In the US, the identities of many of those who would follow Hastings to Santarém revolved around access to land and the cultivation of lucrative crops through use of enslaved or cheap labor. They saw the victory of the Union in the Civil War as signifying the end of this lifestyle, thus placing into doubt their identification with the nation. For Hastings, the defeat of the Confederacy should prompt southerners who prided themselves on their particular use of land and labor to look elsewhere for a nation they could identify as their home. Hastings’ idea for emigration was consistent with Maury’s antebellum ideas about how to bring about what Johnson calls a “pro-slavery time and space.”\(^{199}\) Johnson writes that, “in Maury’s vision, space was not defined by politics, and it was neither national nor regional; the economy produced space, rather than being bounded by it.”\(^{200}\) After the Civil War, the US and Brazil were no longer linked by joint participation in a borderless slavery-based economy, but the changed circumstances did not prevent individuals like Hastings from acting upon Maury’s vision. The economic freedom Hastings was determined to gain for those who would follow him to Brazil superseded any attachment they had to the conception of the US as limited by its geopolitical borders.

In emigrating to Brazil, the ex-Confederates would not necessarily be abandoning the values they held dear at home in the US. To the contrary, they would

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\(^{198}\) Ibid.

\(^{199}\) Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams*, 17.

\(^{200}\) Ibid., 299.
be returning to their antebellum state of affairs. Having fought for their right to what
they viewed as their economic freedom during the Civil War, they would avail
themselves of an opportunity to immigrate to a place where the laws that governed it
would better empower them to accrue wealth as they wished. More than anything
else, it was the expectation of great commercial success that made Brazil enticing as a
future home: “Within one year we may at one view, from our homes on those table
lands, behold steamers, bearing the flags of all commercial nations, coursing up and
down those vast rivers, supplying Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela with
merchandise from the European marts, and bringing down in return, the rich, natural
products of that immense and wonderful country.”
201 The glory that was to come
under the aegis of the Brazilian government would make possible a proud embrace
of Brazilian citizenship.

The changed circumstances brought about by the Civil War also led Hastings
to specifically refute the claims of his predecessors. He cites one Brazilian
government official’s concerns that allowing US citizens to settle in the Amazon
would cause the region to become overrun with them, and that as a consequence, the
entire area would fall into the hands of the US as California once had. 202 Hastings
responds by deeming this worry “simply absurd.” 203 While Maury and Herndon had
spoken if not in the name of the US government, than in the hopes of drawing it to
their side, in 1867, Hastings was a lone agent. No longer pledging allegiance to any
government, he turned to praising Brazil’s. Of the many benefits of immigrating to
Brazil, the political aspect was one of them. Hastings did not shy away from
hyperbole, writing that “there is no country where life, liberty, person and property

202 Ibid., 62.
203 Ibid., 63.
are more secure." He contrasted the sense of security he felt in Brazil to that which prevailed in the US, and in New York City specifically. Hastings then takes the opportunity to disparage his soon-to-be former home. He sarcastically cites the constant reminders in New York to guard one’s personal belongings against thieves as “conclusive evidence of the triumphs of our boasted civilization.” While he had previously used US and Confederate government channels in his efforts to achieve his ends, he now acted without the backing or the hope of backing from any governmental institution. Rather than contribute to the founding of a vast and growing empire, Hastings’ venture would primarily benefit himself and whichever fellow ex-Confederates would find it worth their while to pick up their lives and re-start in the far-off Santarém.

Hastings traveled to Santarém with six other Confederates. While there, Hastings and his companions surveyed the location of the future settlement at the “table lands” in the vicinity of Santarém. In Hastings’ description of the surveyed lands, he makes it clear to readers his strong belief in the superior nature of them. While scoping out this area, Hastings sent an advance party ahead to report back. In The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil, he reproduces writings by the two Confederate companions who recounted the results of their explorations. In these sections, three of Hastings’ companions each state that the land they had seen was the very best, not only as far as options went in the area, but also in comparison with other lands in both Brazil and the US. One of the travelers who had traveled throughout São Paulo claimed that the land was better than any other land he had seen in Brazil. Hastings named “coffee, cacao, sugar, rice, cotton, tobacco, india-rubber, indigo, and medicinal plants” as the main agricultural products of the region, based on what he

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204 Ibid., 100.
205 Ibid., 101.
206 Ibid., 185.
had observed at an exhibition of Pará’s products in Belém. He also recounts seeing “gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, and coal” on display. Ultimately, Hastings determined that these “table lands” were especially “suited to the wants of our people” because the soil and climate there would be best adaptable to the cultivation of cotton, which the settlers would prefer out of all the possible economic endeavors.

The focus in this report is the richness of the soil in the given lands and the abundance of timber. Hastings’ men tested the timber and determined that it was suitable for “house and ship building.” They go on to list other “valuable articles of commerce,” such as rubber, various nuts, and various medicinal plants. In response to the report he received, Hastings concluded on the exact location of the future colony, a portion of land measuring sixty square leagues in the table lands “above and below the town of Santarem, between and bordering upon the Amazon, Tapajos, and Curua rivers.” He justified his selection by describing the region as possessing a perfect nature. According to him, there, “the sugar cane grows most luxuriously; the coffee thrives admirably; the chocolate tree is indigenous; the tobacco is superior; the corn yields several crops a year.” Besides these profitable crops, “fruits and vegetables are abundant; game exists in great variety; the rivers fairly swarm with fishes” and “domestic animals are plentiful and cheap.” The final recommendable qualities were the “delightful” climate and the “kind and hospitable” local residents who were “very desirous” that the southerners make their homes there.

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207 Ibid., 54.
208 Ibid.
209 Ibid., 187.
210 Ibid., 186.
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid., 187.
213 Ibid.
214 Ibid.
215 Ibid.
Hastings shows a great preoccupation with the issue of the climate in the future colony, preempting arguments that others might make against the location he had chosen. Citing the lines of latitude and longitude between which it was located, Hastings acknowledged that many would use the land’s proximity to the equator as fodder for its condemnation. Ideas about the regions of the world near and south of the equator had been present in the European imagination long before European exploration and conquest of Africa and the Americas. Nicolás Wey Gómez argues that the centrality of the concept of latitude was reinforced by Christopher Columbus’ voyages to the Caribbean. Latitude, Gómez writes, was an “integral and explicit organizing principal” in his expeditions, and Columbus was deeply engaged in determining connections between “latitude, temperature, and the nature of places on the globe.”

Columbus strengthened ideas about the zones north of the equator as “civilized,” in opposition to the “uncivilized” tropics to the south of the equator at the same time as he complicated how Europeans viewed the globe. Columbus, in fact introduced what Gómez labels relative temperateness, the notion that the Indies exhibited some elements of the temperate zones, and were therefore not as unbearably hot and uninhabitable as the science of the time would have predicted.

Gómez points out that while Columbus re-framed how the southern zones of the globe were viewed in a way that was revolutionary at the time, in his role as “colonizer,” he did not challenge the natural destiny of the inhabitants of the traditional temperate zones to rule over these lands, and enslave their peoples.

Ideas about the tropics as uninhabitable, however, kept their hold, and Hastings took it upon himself to refute objections people might make to Amazonian.

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Ibid., 50.

Ibid., 398-9.

Ibid., 401.
settlement on this basis. Hastings recommends any readers who continued to have doubts about the suitability of the land he had chosen to settle to consult “the reports of the scientific explorers sent out by this government, or any or all of the works of travellers [sic] who have visited that country for scientific purposes.”

Defensively, Hastings states that all his US compatriots who had accompanied him to Santarém had “no objections” to the climate and that he was “delighted” with both the “country and climate.” Though it was always either “spring, or summer,” the heat was not uncomfortable, and the nights “always cool and pleasant.” Hastings even goes so far as to assert that in all parts of Brazil, excepting the extreme south, the “equability of temperature” “is such as to guard the inhabitants against all the onerous expenses and distress incident to the cold and cheerless north.” It was in this climate that Hastings planned to “gather around” him everything that was “near and dear” to him, and enjoy, along with the other colonists “the home-felt quiet of that sacred refuge of life.”

At the same time as Hastings rejected climatic determinism in his defense of the Amazon as an optimal location for US settlement, he upheld other types of racism. Like Columbus, Hastings depicted the Amazon as simultaneously perfectly habitable and destined to be dominated by whites. Like many of his contemporaries, as well as those that came before him, his conclusions about the region rested on racist beliefs. These beliefs often echoed those of Maury as one of the pioneers in advocating for the US colonization of Brazil. Men like Maury, Hastings, and those who engaged with their ideas, looked to Brazil and its existence as a slave society with an ever-present mixture of awe and fear. They deeply admired and respected the role

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221 Ibid., 188.
222 Ibid.
223 Ibid.,
224 Ibid., 189.
slavery played in Brazilian society at the same time as they viewed the overwhelming presence of Brazilians of African descent as a threat to their notions of the racially pure society they wished could exist in conjunction with slave societies. Hastings, well-aware of the conceptions his fellow ex-Confederates had already been exposed to about Brazilian racial dynamics, acknowledged that they were indeed grounded in unfortunate realities – large non-white populations, as well as mixed-race ones. The US Consul in Belém, James Bond, confirmed ideas about Brazil as a racially mixed society that would negatively impact his US compatriots if they chose to settle there, writing that “they who fly from contact with the black man at home will if they settle in this country... at no distant day, behold the detested color shading the cheeks of their own descendants.”

Hastings begins his chapter by describing the population and government of Brazil by establishing the racial demographics of the country. This was a strategy that he had already used in The Emigrants’ Guide to Oregon and California. He states that the empire consisted of “three distinct classes” – “the European, Indian, and negro.”

There was a significant “slave element” to the population, which worried southerners who desired an escape from the people of African descent they so hated. At the same time, Hastings assured his readers that this element only represented one-sixth of the population, a much smaller portion than in the pre-abolition United States. In total, according to Hastings, in 1860, one-third of the US population consisted of “an African element,” double that of the black portion of the Brazilian population. Though the populations of both Brazil and the US were significantly formed and transformed by the slave trade, very different trends took place over the course of

225 Simmons, “Racist Americans in a Multi-Racial Society,” 36.
227 Ibid.
228 Ibid.
229 Ibid.
their respective histories. Before the official abolition of the slave trade to the US in 1808, the country had imported approximately 360,000 slaves. Brazil, on the other hand, imported about four million slaves before the abolition of the trade in the 1850s. Despite the wide gap in numbers of imported slaves, the US had a population of about four million enslaved people in 1860 while Brazil had 1.5 million enslaved people in 1872. This number was in part due to the fact that manumission was a more common practice in Brazil that grew over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Hastings described Brazil’s slave population was “faithful and obedient,” alongside a population of “domestic Indians” who could be used for labor. Though slaves were scarce, according to Hastings, they were “very cheap” and “excellent able-bodied men and women” could be bought at prices ranging from three hundred to six hundred dollars. Hastings obtained this information from personally observing slave auctions in Pará and Santarém, and from information conveyed to him by various Brazilians during his travels. Hastings acknowledged that abolition was imminent in Brazil, but that it would happen entirely dissimilarly from how it had in the US. The central difference between the two countries was that every Brazilian province was a slaveholding one and that each one would have to approve of abolition before it could become law. As opposed to the US, Hastings stated that in Brazil there were no “conflicting interests” and no “wild, fanatical parties in hostile array against that institution.” In addition, he was sure that if, and when, the government enacted abolition, slave owners would be compensated for their loss.

231 Ibid.
232 Ibid., 213.
233 Ibid., 214.
The essential difference Hastings hoped would comfort his audience was that in Brazil, black people remained slaves, while in the US they were free. In fact, the absence of slaves in the new version of the US is the “chief cause of complaint” and “present distress” of “our people.” Hastings shows no awareness, or simply chooses not to discuss the large population of freed slaves, known as *libertos*, in Brazil. Absent from the information he presents is the fact that, according to the 1872 Brazilian census, Brazil was home to 4.25 million free blacks, forming the largest class of free blacks in any country in the Americas. In the province of Para, according to this census, there were 11,211 whites and a total of 8,592 free people of color (this includes people classified as *pardos* – a general term used to label people of multiracial descent and *pretos* – black people). By mentioning “negro equality,” Hastings indirectly acknowledges this population of free blacks. He identifies the degree of “negro equality” and the various shades of skin color in Brazil valid objections, but in the end, Hastings argued, “negro equality” was greater in the US “than it ever will be in Brazil.”

Though Hastings did not fear the end of slavery in his lifetime, he warned readers not to depend on slave labor or any other kind of labor, writing that it was lacking across the Empire. Despite the possibility of purchasing slaves and hiring indigenous people, Hastings recommended that colonists make arrangements prior to leaving for Brazil. He maintains that a “life of ease, comfort and prosperity” were not “inevitable” if settlers could not “command either capital or labor.” One suggestion Hastings has for future emigrants is to hire “able-bodied, industrious and

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234 Ibid.
236 Ibid., 181.
238 Ibid., 215.
intelligent” southern young men, without means, to move with them to Brazil and replace the male relatives so many families had lost in the war.  

Hastings’ understanding of available labor seems to originate in his personal experiences while in Brazil. Throughout his book, he consistently refers to “Indians” that accompanied his party as they travel from location to location, serving as guides and interpreters. While in Santarém and surrounding areas, Hastings employed indigenous labor to assist in the surveying of the land that would become the location of the US colony. He, and his fellow travelers, hired indigenous residents to guide them in their explorations of the lands that Hastings ultimately decided would serve as the locus of the colony.

When Hastings’ party arrived at the “table lands” of the city, they were housed by a “half-civilized Indian” named Peter. Peter then became the leader of Hastings’ surveying expedition. Hastings and the other US citizens seemed to be entirely dependent on Peter’s expertise as they traversed the Amazonian forest. The party also consumed meat from animals killed by their indigenous companions. One of Hastings’ preparations while at the future settlement site was the examination of the soil and determination of potential water sources. For this endeavor, he had indigenous people make blacksmith’s tools and employed five indigenous people in the work of digging a well. He writes that those employed in this work were “excellent and faithful laborers,” though they considered well-digging a “useless” activity. When he discusses the tracts of land that he and the other Confederates had chosen as their own, he claims that three of the men were already occupied in

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239 Ibid.
240 Ibid., 178.
241 Ibid.
building their homes and were living on their lands “with their Indian servants around them.”

While in Santarém, a man by the name of Miguel Antônio Pinto Guimarães (1808-1882) hosted and guided Hastings. Pinto, known as the Baron of Santarém, was from one of the region’s wealthiest and most prominent families. Pinto was a colonel in the National Guard who also served various political roles, including president of Pará for multiple terms in the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s. Pinto owned many properties in Pará, including a large number of enslaved people. His mother-in-law, Maria Margarida Pereira Macambira, was also the matriarch of one of the most prominent slave-owning families in Santarém. Her plantations were also located in the across-the-river towns of Alenquer and Monte Alegre.

The night before Hastings left Santarém to begin his journey home, he attended a dinner hosted by Colonel Pinto. According to his description of the feast, Pinto and the other Brazilian guests all expressed “a most sincere desire for the

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242 Ibid., 193.
success of the American emigration” and pledged always to receive the emigrants “with open arms and open hearts.”

As he does in his discussion of the land and its natural qualities, Hastings again resorts to hyperbole in his description of the Santarém residents: “a more kind and hospitable people the world never produced, among whom the increasing desire to encourage and facilitate American emigration is clearly a matter of permanent consideration.” In the entry he wrote on the day he left Santarém, he quotes Pinto’s wife as expressing “heartfelt sympathy” for the US citizens “constrained to abandon the homes of their fathers.” This comment serves to help Hastings formulate a narrative about the motivations for colonization that established the project as a noble and worthy cause. Ex-Confederates had no choice, not only according to Hastings himself, but to his Brazilian hosts as well.

Hastings made it clear that because of the ideal location of the colony, the excitement of their Brazilian hosts in welcoming the immigrants, and the circumstances of the southerners in the US, it was the colonists’ duty to form the best possible group of settlers. Hastings recommends members of two professions as being necessary elements of the future colony: clergy and doctors. As he put it, "clergymen are indispensable in every community; honest and faithful clergymen are the pillars of society," and for that reason, he argued that any given ship that left for Santarém should have members of the clergy on board. Outside of these two professions, Hastings acknowledged that other careers practiced by emigrants would not necessarily be useful in their new lives in the Amazon. “The lawyer,” for example, “as his profession will not be lucrative, should take with him a few of the very best hoes and axes, with which to test the solidity of the woods and the fertility

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243 Ibid., 194.
244 Ibid.
245 Ibid.
246 Ibid., 219.
of the Brazilian soil.” He concludes the section about what to transport to Brazil with a comment about wives. He directs all emigrants who are without wives to “get one at the earliest possible and convenient moment, so that you may increase, multiply, and replenish the earth, and thus fulfil the destiny of man.” The southern emigrant, then, would not relocate to Brazil for selfish reasons, but for a greater good. The colonists would continue to pursue their natural, predetermined destiny as white US citizens, even in Brazil.

This would be made possible by life in a place free from what Hastings viewed as the horrible changes brought about by the fall of the Confederacy. The fact that the government’s chief sources of revenue were export and import taxes, implied to Hastings that emigrants would have no need to “dread the importunities of the rapacious tax gatherers.” Hastings intended the discussion of taxation in Brazil as a depiction of a stark contrast with life in the US, and as a condemnation of the state of affairs in the postbellum south. The US citizen in Brazil would not suffer from “that peculiar class of itinerant agents, whose visits so frequently annoy and distress the denizens of our once happy and prosperous land.” Hastings later clarifies that though he is discussing “American” emigrants, these emigrants were exclusively Southerners. Northerners, he spitefully insisted, believed their government was the “‘the best in the world’” and had no reason to leave given that they were in “full enjoyment of the fruits of their triumphs, in the height of their glory.” If the US no longer presented the best governing system to southerners, Brazil did. According to Hastings, there were “few countries, if any, as well governed

247 Ibid., 223.
248 Ibid., 224.
249 Ibid., 201.
250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
as Brazil.” Hastings attributes what he saw as the “quiet and orderly” nature of the Brazilian people primarily to the “rigid enforcement of the law.” The effectiveness of the Brazilian government served as a counterpoint to the deterioration that Hastings believed had taken place as a consequence of the Civil War.

Besides being replete with expressions of Hastings’ hopes and dreams for his future colony, *The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil* also contains an English translation of the contract signed on November 7, 1867 by Hastings and the president of the province, ensuring the establishment of the colony. In it, the government set aside land “on the south side of the Amazon and Tapajos rivers, and between said rivers and the Curua.” This tract measured ten leagues from east to west and six from north to south, equaling a total area of sixty square leagues. The government promised to subsidize the measurement and surveying of this land, and bestowed the title for it upon Hastings. The government also was bound to provide provisional housing for the emigrants upon their arrival. In addition, the government was bound to pay for the passage of a ship carrying one hundred or more colonists. One of the final articles of the contract stipulated that all agricultural implements and machinery bought by the emigrants would be exempt from import taxes. Hastings claimed that the price of land for emigrants had been set at the lowered price of twenty-two cents per acre and that they would be allowed to finish paying after five to six years. Each emigrant with a family was to receive one square mile, and family-less emigrants half a square mile. According to Hastings, the government was already at work building houses and roads for the emigrants, and promised to build schools. For Hastings, this contract was the proof he needed to show potential colonists that Brazil, and Santarém in particular, were not just products of the emigrant

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252 Ibid., 100
253 Ibid.
254 Ibid., 202.
imagination. Instead, immigration to Brazil was as real a possibility as the government’s paper promises.

**Debating the Colony: The Dream of the Amazon Empire in the US**

**Newspapers**

Though many shared Hastings’ views of Brazil, others disagreed. Both sides of the debate were represented in numerous newspaper articles written at the time. For US southerners after the Civil War, newspapers were one of the chief sources of information about Brazil and the opportunity of settling there. US citizens from all areas of the country were accustomed to receiving information about Brazil and the Amazon by this mechanism long before the Civil War. The ideas about Brazil and the Amazon expressed by politicians like Maury were widespread and easily accessible in the newspapers that every-day US citizens regularly read. Both the pro and anti-emigration pieces that appeared in newspapers following the Civil War assumed a certain knowledge base regarding Brazil on the part of their readers. The writers of these articles trusted that certain ideas and information about the country had already found their place in the popular US imagination.

After the war, newspaper articles, often in the forms of letters or reports written by people who had either traveled to Brazil or received information from someone who had, provided readers with sketches of Brazilian economy, politics, and culture. These articles hoped to encourage colonization. Often, they were written by people who had been commissioned to explore colonization options in Brazil by recently formed colonization societies or groups of families and individuals who were interested in emigration. Though sponsored by different groups, many of the colony hunters were in contact with each other. Some met while in Brazil and scouted out neighboring territories. Several of them wrote books after their expeditions, outlining
the available opportunities and encouraging southerners to take advantage of them.255

In these books, they mentioned the other US citizens they had met in Brazil, sometimes quoting others with whom they interacted there and who had undertaken similar expeditions. Newspapers often published reports from these journeys and excerpts from their books. The sources served as the primary means of communicating information about Brazil and the possibility of emigration to a broader audience.

In 1865, a South Carolina newspaper published an article that ultimately disagreed with the Brazilian colonization movement and with Hastings’ justifications for it. “In one respect Brazil affords at least one feature congenial to the views of the Southern people – that is slavery,” it states, going on to argue that the reader must “examine the basis upon which the hopes of those who wish to expatriate themselves is founded. The Government of Brazil is a monarchical and despotic one. The laws that support the institution of slavery being the will of the ruler, may any day be changed, and slavery disappear from Brazil as it has from the other South American nations.”256 The monarchical structure of the Brazilian government was to be feared and avoided for the post-Civil War southerner not because of a fundamental flaw in its make-up, but because of the potential for it to wield its power for anti-slavery purposes. The fact that slavery persisted in Brazil was not sufficient for the purposes of the racist southerner, for “the negroes in Brazil are not like the negroes in the United States. If he is free he has just as many rights as the European; indeed, one of the ministers of the Imperial Government, at the present time, is a negro, if we are

255 See for instance James McFadden Gaston’s Hunting a Home in Brazil: The Agricultural Resources and Other Characteristics of the Country. Also, the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants, (Philadelphia: King & Baird Printers, 1867), Ballard S. Dunn’s Brazil: The Home for Southerners or, A practical account of what the author, and others, who visited that country, for the same objects, saw and ..., (New York, 1866), and an excerpt from William Wallace Wood’s Ho! For Brazil, in “What about Brazil?” The Livingston Journal, July 21, 1866, Newspapers.com.

rightly informed.”

This article suggests that while the US government had eliminated slavery from its borders, the country had not yet reached a point at which the presence of a black person in government could be viewed as normal, the opposite was true in Brazil.

Hastings argued the opposite in *The Emigrants’ Guide*, writing that in Brazil “free Negroes must possess certain property qualifications to entitle them to the elective franchise,” while in the US “the only qualification necessary, is to be black, which entitles them to fill the highest offices within the gift of the people.”

This did not mean that the racial dynamics in Brazil were to be celebrated, however. Instead, Hastings proposed that he and the future colonists did not have to “associate and mingle with the objectionable masses.” If, according to Hastings, it was true that southerners had less to fear in Brazil given the greater degree of racial inequality there, they still would have to guard against the threat represented by Brazilian intermixing. He claimed that though marriage between the “pure-blooded and the mixed races” was rare, “concubinage exists to an unpardonable degree.”

“This sin, or indiscretion,” he lamented, extended to foreigners, including US citizens who lived there.

Hastings considered intermixing such a threat that it would impact how the Santarém settlement would organize itself; he proposed that it isolate itself from society at large. “This evil may be easily remedied by our people,” he wrote, “for which purpose we should settle together, form our own society, and discountenance every impropriety of that nature.”

By living together, he believed, the colonists could have control over their lives on the Amazon. Their success, then, would

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258 Ibid.
259 Ibid.
260 Ibid., 157
261 Ibid.
depend upon the “material” they would bring with them from the US and their efforts to permanently establish the colony “upon the firm and enduring basis of Christian virtue.”\footnote{Ibid.} The language barrier that he cites as one of the primary reasons that “social intercourse with the Brazilian people” would be limited to “business men and the better classes” constituted an asset to the community.\footnote{Ibid.} For this reason, Hastings argues that it would be necessary for the colonists to form a community apart from the rest of society in the initial stages of colonization. The colonists, he writes, would eventually have to learn Portuguese, however, if they were ever to feel “satisfied.”\footnote{Ibid.}

In order for “all the blessings of a new home in that land of promise” to be attained, then, Hastings believed it was important for “relatives, friends, and former neighbors” to continue as neighbors in their Brazilian homes.\footnote{Ibid.} Like the Mexicans he had depicted in his previous book twenty-two years prior, most Brazilians were tainted by their possession of nonwhite blood. This made it so that US settlers had few options of individuals they could interact with in their future home. More than anything else, the land and the opportunity to cultivate it through whatever means they desired was what made the Amazon the place for southerners to be. Arriving in Brazil with their own materials, their own protestant Christian values, and a determination to live amongst their own kind, Hastings proposed that he and his compatriots would pick and choose what aspects of Brazilianness and Americanness they wanted to adopt and which to avoid altogether.

Hastings relied on the reader’s knowledge of his past work promoting westward expansion to instill faith in his claims. In the conclusion of his book,
Hastings writes: “At an earlier period I organized and conducted the first colony that ever crossed the continent to Oregon and California.” 266 The members of this colony had had traversed 2,000 miles of terrain that had “previously been thought impassable for wagons, and which abounded everywhere with hostile Indian tribes.” 267 Like the Amazonian territory in question, this land had been a wilderness, according to Hastings’ portrayal. Both regions were unaccustomed to what Hastings viewed as the civilizing influence of the wagon, a white man’s tool in his endeavor to conquer land illegitimately occupied by indigenous people. Hastings acknowledges that many who had taken his route to California and Oregon had failed to successfully reach their desired locations. He references the Donner Party’s catastrophic journey, but then goes on make clear that his route had subsequently been redeemed by the fact that families had continued to travel it ever since then. By specifically referencing previous emigrants’ journeys westward, he also establishes himself as an authority on emigration and colonization, and someone well-versed in the challenges it entails.

The discussion of Brazil in newspapers as an optimal target for southern US settlement revolved around complimentary descriptions of the country’s land and climate and the crops that could be easily grown and profited from. While the focus was certainly economic, such reports also relied upon basic information about the Brazilian political system. The goal of each author was to show that the southerner would have no problems adjusting and becoming a citizen of a new political realm. The writers of these articles often articulated the economic and political dimensions of Brazilian society in comparison or opposition to the post-war circumstances of the southern states. They presented these dimensions as motives for colonization; that is,

266 Ibid., 234.
267 Ibid.
they argued that Brazilian emigration offered southerners the possibility of escaping
to a place with political and economic conditions that harkened back to those of the
antebellum South.

Already a few months after the conclusion of the Civil War following the
Surrender at Appomattox in April, 1865, newspapers were describing efforts ex-
Confederates were undergoing to raise interest in immigration to Brazil. The Daily
Phoenix of Columbia, South Carolina entered into the conversation about
immigration to Brazil in August 1865, stating that “vague reports” untraceable to
authoritative sources “represent the Emperor of Brazil as offering bounties in land,
in slaves, and even in money” to southern immigrants. Brazil was “a most suitable
and desirable country for Southern raised people,” its government would promise to
secure “the rights of persons and property” that would be “speedily vindicated”
when threatened. “There are large tracts of unimproved lands, much of which is
vastly rich,” the article claimed, without yet being able to point to any specific plans
for colonization.268

![Image of a newspaper article](image_url)

Figure 3.2 Image of an article from the Yorkville Enquirer, August 9, 1866,
Newspapers.com.

This lack of specificity soon changed. In August 1866, a future colony leader and former Confederate surgeon originally from Columbia, South Carolina, James McFadden Gaston (1824-1903), published a report in the *Yorkville Enquirer*, a newspaper local to York, South Carolina. His piece aimed to convince readers to join him in settling a particular territory in Brazil that he had personally surveyed and determined upon.\(^{269}\) Gaston traveled from New York City to Rio de Janeiro, where he made contact with US citizens already living there, as well as with the official Brazilian colonization agent Dom J.C. Galvão, appointed by the Emperor Don Pedro II to encourage emigration, who directed him to various potential locations of interest in Southern Brazil where land was available for purchase. Gaston would publish his own book *Hunting a Home in Brazil* in 1867 about his time surveying Brazil, encouraging southern immigration to Brazil the same year Hastings did. The report published in the *Yorkville Enquirer* is a much shorter version of the book he would publish the next year. In it, Gaston presents Brazil as an ideal location for southern colonization. He provides economic reasons to support this. He also lists the many gains to be had from Brazilian land as superior to those possible in South Carolina and Georgia.

In the region Gaston chose as the location for his future colony, he writes in his report that the colonists could “have space for indefinite expansion of our population, with lands adapted to all variety of products, and withal the cheapest and most convenient transportation of products to market by water.”\(^{270}\) After describing the cotton and corn yields from this land, Gaston claims that these impressive amounts exist despite “the deficient culture of those people, who know nothing of the use of the plow, and make very sparing use of the hoe.”\(^{271}\) The potential for

\(^{269}\) “Brazilian Emigration,” *Yorkville Enquirer*, August 9, 1866, Newspapers.com.

\(^{270}\) Ibid.

\(^{271}\) Ibid.
incredible wealth, then, was only possible if the land in question was cultivated by US citizens, as they possessed superior knowledge and skills.

Gaston goes on to draw an explicit connection between the benefits of Brazilian colonization and the continued presence of slavery in the country. In comparing the riches to be had through planting in São Paulo as opposed to at home in the US, he alludes to the existence of slavery in Brazil in contrast to its absence in the US. “I feel no hesitation in saying positively that any person who has means to engage in agricultural operations in Brazil, may go to the Province of São Paulo with the prospect of making double the amount of clear cash annually to what can be realized by planting here, even under a better system of labor than at present prevails in the South,” he pronounces.272 Here, Gaston implies that the wealth that could be accumulated through agricultural endeavors in Brazil was greater than the profit to be had in the US, regardless of the labor system the new South would undertake. Later, he describes “Negro slavery’s” role in the Brazilian economy, labelling it “the chief reliance for labor.”273 He names the average prices for which “gangs of negroes” that include “entire families” are sold, based on his personal experience being offered a gang of “120 men and boys, 90 women and girls, and 30 children” for hire. This kind of detailed account is not meant merely to spark interest, but rather to provide potential colonists with suggestions as to how they might manage their economic affairs upon settling in Brazil. He goes on to state that “a number of small farmers might combine and hire such a lot, working them together or dividing them as might suit their interests.”274

Free labor, too, would be an option for colonists, but it was not as “reliable for constant service” as enslaved people were. The various possibilities for labor

272 Ibid.
273 Ibid.
274 Ibid.
acquisition made it so that “all classes of our people may improve their pecuniary condition, as well as their political and social condition by the change of residence.” He would later write in *Hunting a Home in Brazil* that slave labor was “likely to afford results that cannot be secured by hire in the Southern States,” arguing that once Brazilian slaves were trained to cultivate cotton like slaves in the US previously had, “we may anticipate yields of this staple exceeding any that have ever been realized in the United States.” The way in which Gaston articulates the potential elements of Brazilian colonization were not particular to him; instead, his writing and that of others involved in encouraging emigration presented similar themes revolving around questions of labor and agriculture. These writers could not imagine a world in which other kinds of labor regimes were possible. The primary impetus for self-inflicted exile, then, was the absence of slave labor in the US. That Brazil remained a slave society made resolving this problem possible through relocation there.

While Gaston focuses his appeals on the positive potential elements of the Brazilian land and economy, former Confederate General William Wallace Wood encouraged emigration primarily via a lament of post-war circumstances. He articulated this view in his six-part series of newspaper articles entitled “What about Brazil?” Originally from Mississippi and by that point a long-time resident of New Orleans, Wood was a lawyer, editor, and public speaker. In the summer of 1866, a group of 600 southern planters sent Wood to Brazil with four other southerners to survey options for settlement. Like Gaston, Wood and his companions arrived first in Rio de Janeiro where the imperial government offered Wood’s party access to any

275 Ibid.
resources they required for exploration of potential settlement sites. They then embarked on their journey accompanied by a government-sponsored guide, engineer, and interpreter, as well as letters of introduction to provincial officials.

On his journey through Brazil, Wood’s party encountered Gaston in the interior of São Paulo. They made itineraries together and shared information. Wood’s series was published in multiple southern newspapers upon his return to the US. Wood articulates the need for emigration to Brazil in stark terms. He states “the mind of the Southerner traveling in Brazil…naturally contemplates two pictures” – one of the realities of post-Civil War life in the US, and the other of Brazil. He provides vivid descriptions of the desperate state of the south, which found itself under the domination of an all-powerful, oppressive government that had turned the southern states into “provinces under a goading and exacting military rule.” For Wood, the end of the war had brought about the eradication of the former laws the south used to govern itself, the enactment of vicious taxation schemes, and the impoverishment of the rich, among many other grievous consequences. Brazil, then, with its rich economic opportunities suited to the southern planter’s background, was the natural destination for the ruined southerner. Different Brazilian provinces, however, provided varying opportunities for how the southern settler could go about creating a new economic life. In the province of Bahia, for example, Wood claimed, the climate was too hot for the “white man” himself to labor, so he recommended the emigrant rely upon slave labor, listing specific prices for which enslaved people were sold, based on information he obtained during his travels. In São Paulo and Santa Catarina, however, the climate was colder, and the white man could work his

279 Ibid.
280 Ibid., 123.
own fields. For that reason, Wood recommended that the colonist that lacked the capital sufficient to pay for labor settle in these regions where cultivating his lands personally would be a viable option.

Before Wood and Gaston returned to the US, they met two other US southerners scouting for land: Robert Meriwether and H.A. Shaw. Meriwether and Shaw were sponsored by the Edgefield Colonization Society of Edgefield, South Carolina. The Society’s efforts were chronicled and advertised for in the local newspaper, the *Edgefield Advertiser*. The newspaper’s owner was Joseph Abney, who was also one of the Society’s founders. The newspaper announced formation of the Society in 1865, and it promised to make the necessary arrangements for emigration to “prevent hasty proceedings and ultimate disappointment.” The group was responsible for organizing many residents of Edgefield and surrounding areas for Brazilian colonization. The principal founders and agents of the society traveled to Brazil and published their reports on their expeditions in the *Edgefield Advertiser* in 1866 and 1867. Before travelers began to make their way to Brazil, an August 1865 edition of the newspaper re-published an article from the *New York Herald* written in response to the author’s observation about the presence of southerners in New York City destined for Brazil. Before direct lines opened from southern ports to Brazil, southerners had no choice but to journey to north before making their way to their desired destinations. In the article, the author writes about his realization that these southerners were part of “the advance guard of the exodus that is commencing” from the South to Brazil. The article proceeds to cite the opening of a line of steamships between New York City and Rio de Janeiro as reason to hope for, among other benefits, greater commercial cooperation between the US and Brazil, stating

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282 Ibid.
that “American invention and enterprise will meet with fresh fields of conquest.” It also positively portrays emigration for southerners reeling from the outcomes of the Civil War. It affirms: “Planters whose homes have been broken up by the war, and have saved yet a few thousand from the wreck – men of capital who desire new fields for speculation and investment – can nowhere do as well as in Brazil.”

Involving themselves in agricultural pursuits, according to the author, would not only provide southerners with easy means of procuring wealth, but it would also benefit Brazil. He claims that “it will be a source of gratification and encouragement to this government when its soil shall be dotted here and there with plantations of cane, cotton, and tobacco &c., cultivated with the energy and skill that mark the North American wherever he may be or in whatever occupation engaged.”

The next year, The Edgefield Advertiser published a report written by Meriwether and Shaw, the colonization agents the Edgefield Colonization Society had elected to send to investigate options in Brazil. In a letter to the editor that precedes the report, Joseph Abney states the reasons for the founding of the society. He claims that thousands of “our people” were unsure of “their future destiny and that “the prospects before them were so discouraging, that many indeed resolved to abandon their homes, though hallowed by all the cherished recollections of their youth, and consecrated by the blood of their manhood, and to seek an asylum among strangers, in a far distant land.” The southern political situation forced the “eye of reason” to “turn towards a brighter heaven for relief from the doubt and obscurity that hear envelop its vision,” and this better place was to be found in Brazil.

According to Meriwether and Shaw, Brazil was such a place because there, “there is nothing that man needs or can fancy, which he many not raise or procure

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284 “Brazil – Emigration from the South,” The Edgefield Advertiser, August 30, 1865, Newspapers.com.
285 Ibid.
286 “Brazil,” The Edgefield Advertiser, August 8, 1866, Newspapers.com.
here, with the least imaginable toil. Her water power is sufficient to drive all the
machinery in the world, and her natural and material resources are equal to the
support of the population of China.” Another colonization agent, Ballard Dunn, in
his book, Brazil: The Home for Southerners, published in 1866, printed the full version of
Meriwether and Shaw’s report. Dunn was a reverend and a rector of a New Orleans
curch that had gone to Brazil at the same time as Meriwether and Shaw on his own
volition, seeking new homes for him and his Christian friends. Dunn writes in the
preface that his pro-expatriation message was directed towards those who rejected
the “conquering North” for “higher, nobler, and more painful” motives than simply
fleeing the “federal tax-gatherer.” Dunn claimed that “these four years of
disastrous war have left most of them who have been true to themselves and their
ancestors penniless, homeless, despoiled, and bereaved,” and that the future, too,
promised nothing more than “poverty and humiliation.”

In their report, Meriwether and Shaw claim that “the vast domain of Brazil,
contains the most fertile soil in the Universe, and more cheap lands to allure the
emigrant more than any other nation under the sun. For the supply of the millions
that will be flocking to her shores, she abounds in the precious metals and costly
gems, and in the most valuable products known to commerce.” For them, this
sketch of the prospect of Brazilian colonization should make clear for the southern
reader the contrast between the dark cloud of oppression that hung over their heads
of following the end of the Civil War, and the bright future to be had under the
Brazilian political system. Speaking of the Brazilian emperor, they write that “he and
his ministry, indeed his entire people, appear to be animated and actuated by the

287 Ballard S. Dunn, Brazil, the home for southerners, or, A practical account of what the author, and others, who
visited that country, for the same objects, saw and ..., (New York, 1866), iii, ii.
288 Ibid., 4.
289 Ibid., 240.
same enlarged and generous views of the future greatness and the destiny of his wide and magnificent realm.” Not only was the Brazilian government interested in the same visions of empire that southerners were, but in Brazil, “the foreigner on entering his dominions finds no prejudices to combat, no antipathies to avoid.” In Meriwether and Shaw’s conception, then, Brazil, represented freedom from the suffering experienced by southerners under the new political and social system being imposed upon them by the US government.

In the views of these promoters, the Brazilian government and the population in general were fully prepared to welcome and protect the southern immigrant. Brazil had designs on imperial glory and the US southerner had a role to play in bringing it about. “There is a spontaneous movement of the whole Empire,” announced Meriwether and Shaw, “to open wide its arms for the men of enterprise and labor of all nations who have a mind to seek the grandest theatre for the exercise of their energies and the display of their genius ever presented on the face of the green earth.” According to them, by settling in Brazil, the immigrant would be applying his enterprising spirit not only for his own benefit, but also to that of a greater project that superseded the individual one. There is no indication that Meriwether and Shaw desired to assist in the advancement of the Brazilian empire; rather, it seems they appreciated the language of empire and appropriated it as a technique of persuasion. Southerners were accustomed to hearing a similar type of discourse about US empire and though prospective emigrants might not have been interested in serving Brazil, the notion of living and working in a place where they could accumulate profit through the same agricultural activities they had always

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290 Ibid.
participated in, and where the expansion and progress of an empire was underway, would probably have been appealing to many.

Coverage of the question of Brazilian emigration, however, was not one-sided. While many newspapers were publishing its praises, they were also disseminating contradictory opinions. Some newspapers based in northern states countered predominant southern narratives about emigration. In an article entitled “Southern Schemes of Expatriation” and published in the New York Times in December 1867, the author labels such schemes as ventures that had already entered history as “disastrous, speedy, unqualified failure.”291 In his denunciation of colonization, the author claims that the sources of such failure can be traced to the specific motivations of the emigrants. The decision to emigrate was impulsive and “in the mortification and rage of the hour, anything seemed better than to live in a country they had failed to conquer, and obey a Government they had sought to cast down.”292 The reasons for the anger and shame at having lost the war, however, were rooted in the Confederate defense of slavery. The decision to go “southward” to Brazil, in turn continued to reflect this for “many hope still to enjoy the blessings of the ‘peculiar institution’ which the war had destroyed.”293 According to this author, love of slavery was so strong it had clouded the emigrants’ minds and made them unable to properly weigh the costs and benefits of emigration.

Anti-emigration, as well as pro-emigration sentiments, were debated in the press, both southern and northern. Those who opposed emigration or thought it important to draw attention to possible downsides of it, also participated in the production and reproduction of similar racial discourses to those who supported it. They used similar views about race, labor, and the tropics to argue opposing points

292 Ibid.
293 Ibid.
to the emigration promoters. The *Planters' Banner* of Franklin, Louisiana published a rebuke to this movement in December of 1867 premised on the notion that southerners were needed at home in the South more than ever because the South required salvation “from the twin curses of African barbarism and oriental despotism which a cruel partisan policy has prepared for her failure.”

A December 1865 article in Meriden, Mississippi’s *Daily Clarion* urged southern citizens to remain in the US for similar reasons. “The war is at an end, yet we are treated as if still in rebellion,” it declares. If southerners abandoned their lands, “Yankees and foreigners” would invade, a fate that had to be avoided at all costs. Re-stating something that had been published in the *New York News* that pronounced that it was “most gratifying” that Brazil “offered a harbor” for US “fugitives of honor” who “were wedded to a cause which was, to all engaged in it, most sacred and sublime.” US citizens were called, however, to summon their patriotism and remain in the US in the hopes of achieving the same generous treatment at home that they would in Brazil.

“Brazil Not So Good” declared North Carolinian newspaper *Charlotte Democrat* in December 1865. Attempting to counter the dominant discourse on Brazilian emigration, the paper writes: “It appears from late statements concerning the government of Brazil that it would not be so good a place for southerners to emigrate to as many of our people supposed.” The only reasons the article provides for the disadvantages of Brazilian colonization are racial. According to this article, the Brazilian Emperor’s cabinet consisted mostly of black people, as well as did many judges throughout the country. These facts, the author guesses, were probably largely unknown by those who were considering settling in Brazil. This was

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294 Untitled article, *The Planter's Banner*, December 28, 1867, Newspapers.com;
due to “their attachment to the institution of slavery,” which the article presumes clouds the potential emigrant’s judgement of Brazil; that is, the slaveholding southerner assumed that Brazil would be an ideal location given the continued existence of slavery, without being aware of the other racial dynamics at play. In addition to this, the end of slavery in Brazil was near, according to the article, and once the potential emigrants in question realized this, southern colonization schemes would also come to an end. In a return to the thinking of the antebellum and Civil War era, the writer then ends the article by proposing “a strong tide of negro emigration” instead. Echoing the thinking of men like Maury, he cites the climate as a chief motive, and ends by suggesting that the degrees of political and social equality present in Brazil would provide US blacks with an opportunity to “show their capacity for self government” without entering into any further discussion of how a black colony would function.

An article published two months earlier, however, had discussed this possibility for black colonization and rejected it on practical grounds. Montgomery, Alabama’s Montgomery Advertiser published a report on a recently-held Cotton Growers Convention which had proposed the colonization of four to five million freedmen from formerly slaveholding states in a Central or South American country.297 “Brazil would accept the whole of our four millions of free blacks, and furnish them with land enough for the thousandth generation,” it had proposed. In Brazil, “the African race may live, if they please, with as little of the sweat of the brow as Adam and Eve had in Paradise.” The primary reason given in the article for black colonization is that cotton growers did not want to rely on free black labor, fearing “indolence and insubordination.” Instead cotton growers had shown interest

in promoting “the emigration of whites as cultivators of the soil.” According to this article, however US blacks, would be unwilling to participate in a colonization plan, given that they considered the US their native home. Colonization was “hopeless,” and the only feasible plan was to for freedmen to “remain where they are” and be employed in cotton and corn cultivation.298

In his book about his observations traveling around the post-war South, *After the War: A Southern Tour. May 1, 1865, to May 1, 1866*, northern journalist and politician Whitelaw Reid commented on the public debate about emigration and placed it in the context of other issues southerners were struggling with in the aftermath of the Civil War. Writing of Mobile, Alabama, the city from which Lansford Hastings and many of his colonists would later depart for the Amazon, Reid stated: “Alabamians had as yet scarcely recovered from the shock of the surrender, and few in the country adjacent to Mobile had formed any definite plans for the future. Some thought of going to Brazil; some wanted to plunge into Mexican broils; a few wanted to get away from the ‘sassy free niggers’ by going forth.”299 He also echoes that which had been written about the Cotton Growers’ Convention, writing that many southerners did not believe that free blacks would agree to continue farming their land, thus making land cultivation in general impossible. Reid quotes “a young Georgia planter” who states his belief “that in five years the South will be a howling wilderness. The great mass of our lands are fit for nothing else, and you've destroyed the only labor with which we can cultivate them in cotton.”300 The end of slavery, for this southerner, meant the regression of the South into the state Matthew Maury had ascribed to the Amazon – “a howling wilderness.” For him,

298 Ibid.
299 Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour. May 1, 1865 to May 1, 1866* (Cincinnati; Moore, Wilstach, & Baldwin, 1866), 211.
300 Ibid., 347.
progress and abolition were diametrically opposed. Enslaved black labor made the cultivation of land possible, and without it, civilization did not exist.

Dreaming of Immigration in the Brazilian Press

Brazilians were also engaging in a debate about immigration in an effort to devise solutions to the coming abolition of slavery. This debate was ever-present in Brazilian newspapers. By the 1860s abolitionist discourse in Brazil was beginning to gain new strength, making the end of slavery imminent. As I discussed in Chapter One, foreign immigration from European countries came to be seriously considered during this time as a mechanism of securing alternative sources of labor. Newspapers often played the role of advocate for government policies that would greater facilitate immigration before, during, and following the waves of US immigration to Brazil. In a report published in April 1867, the president of Pará declared that “as long as a current of emigration that brings us active, intelligent, moralized, and capable workers, is being directed to the province, the great future of the province of Pará will be sown.”301 The *Jornal do Pará* echoed this sentiment in December of that year, declaring that “immigration is without any doubt the most effective means that we have for the industrial development of Brazil”302 “To the intelligent and hard-working foreigner,” it stated, “we offer the marvels of a new, fertile, and opulent country, which seems to have been chosen by Providence to one day figure as the first empire of the World.”303

301 “Desde que se tiver encaminhado para a província uma corrente de emigração que nos traga trabalhadores ativos, inteligentes e moralizados, e capitães, estará plantado o grande futuro da província do Pará,” Costa de Oliveira, *O destino (não) manifesto*, 115.
302 “Para o desenvolvimento industrial do Brasil, é sem dúvida alguma a imigração o meio mais eficaz que temos..” *Jornal do Pará*, December 5, 1867, Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil.
303 “ao estrangeiro intelligente e laborioso,” “lhe oferecemos as maravilhas de um paiz novo, fértil e opulento, que parece ter sido escolhido pela Providencia para um dia figurar como o primeiro imperio do Mundo,” Ibid.
If immigrants from the US were welcome in Brazil because of the potential for US immigration to revolutionize Brazilian development, Brazilian law and public opinion made it clear that not all US citizens could take part in this process. In April 1867, the front page of the Jornal do Pará reported on the arrival in Rio de Janeiro of one US immigrant in particular. I.A. Cole, the paper announced had disembarked in Rio “bringing black woman, accompanied by children.”304 According to the article, Cole had originally traveled to São Paulo to buy land, before returning to the US. He knew that the 1831 law regarding slavery in the empire prohibited the introduction of slaves into the empire, but believed that it permitted the entry of free blacks. He consulted with a lawyer, who agreed with his understanding that he could bring with him a black woman who had long worked for him, and her two daughters. He then went to New York City to solicit passports for the woman and her daughters, but the Brazilian consul denied them. Despite this, all four managed to be permitted aboard the “Guiding Star,” making it to Rio without a problem. Cole claimed many in the US who were considering immigration to Brazil were under the same impression as he was. Courts decided that 1831 law clearly banned non-Brazilian free blacks from setting foot on Brazilian shores. The rationale for the law, as explained by the newspaper, was to “impede the growth and preponderance of the African race” and “smoothen out European colonization,” as well as to “prevent…the fraud of introducing slaves under the pretext of being freed slaves.”305 The article argues that the empire’s courts must consider the problem instigated by Cole as a “danger to the public order.”306 This was the case because the arrival of “recently emancipated

305 “obstar o crescimento e preponderância da raça africana,” “aplainar a colonização européia,” “prevenir…a fraude da introdução de escravos sob o contexto de libertos,” Ibid.
306 “perigo de ordem publico,” Ibid.
people” coming from the Civil War “still with the enthusiasm of victory, cannot help
cannot help but be a great conflagration” in a nation where slavery still reigned.  

The *Brazilian Reflector*, an English-language newspaper, published an article in 1869, re-printed in the *Diário de Belém*, promoting an immigration-friendly policy in the particular hope of attracting more US citizens for the job of converting Brazil into such a global power. The article states that so far, the US colonists had brought great amounts of capital to the country, which they were investing in land and slaves.

According to the article, the *confederados* were already contributing to the development of Brazil’s agricultural resources more than any other immigrant group, as well as more than native Brazilian planters themselves. The article draws parallels between Brazil and the US, claiming that the soil, climate, and products of Brazil were identical to those of the southern US. It discusses the US south before the Civil War, declaring that it occupied “a position of wealth, prosperity, and power like no other modern people.” This people, according to the article, in the aftermath of the Civil War, were forced to serve a “despotic and tyrannical dictatorship.” Brazil, the article’s author believed, provided a place for these hard-working, “eminently capable,” farmers to put their skills to use in a country that did not oppress them.

An article entitled “What Good People” in the *Diário do Gram-Pará* from 1867 reported sarcastically on the arrival of the US steamboat *Guiding Star* in Rio de Janeiro with three hundred-some US emigrants aboard. The article states that the “learned” call the emigrants “profitable descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race,” which

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307 “gente recentemente emancipada, e quem vem da guerra ainda com o entusiasmo da vitória, não pode deixar de ser uma grande conflagração,” Ibid.
309 “uma posição de riqueza, prosperidade e de poder tal como nenhum outro povo moderno,” Ibid.
310 “uma ditadura despótica e tyrannica,” Ibid.
311 “eminentemente habilitado,” Ibid.
312 “Que boa gente!” *Diário do Gram-Pará*, January 13, 1867, Biblioteca Arthur Viana.
was of a “laborious” and “mild and pacific” nature.\footnote{Hastings, \textit{The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil}, 205.} According to the “learned,” Anglo-Saxons were the “most convenient to populate our big deserts and cultivate our fertile soil, snatching us from the dark in which we live with their lights.”\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} The behavior of these emigrants while still aboard the \textit{Guiding Star}, put these claims into question, the article seems to suggest, as it goes on to describe how a group of the colonists had tried to assassinate the ship’s commander in the hopes of taking control over the ship. If the US continued to send its “\textit{optimal} Anglo-Saxons,” Brazilians would see if the progress they dreamed of would become reality.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

\section*{Conclusion}

In the postbellum US South, many southerners had reached a consensus that the new circumstances brought about by the Civil War were untenable. As Hastings put it, “they have lost their property, their cause, their all; the ties that bound them to their native land are effectually severed; accumulating political disasters have completely obliterated the last glimmering ray of their lingering hope; why should they, how can they remain?”\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} If, for some, life in the transformed South was so unbearable, it was logical that they would look elsewhere for solutions. Southerners, like US citizens in general, were not unused to considering themselves as members of a larger world outside of the United States. Before the war, slavery had connected them to other nations in the world that participated in this system. Brazil had been one of those places, and while the Civil War had brought about slavery’s downfall in the US, Brazil’s reliance on it continued. If this drew many to consider immigrating
there, the Amazonian region of the country – represented as largely empty and rich in yet undiscovered and uncultivated natural products – had yet other pulls. Hastings believed he held the answer for a people certain they possessed a racial superiority that endowed them with the right and duty to dominate land and people. Along the Amazon River, those who had determined to leave the US, seeking “that security of person and property, justice and equality, which are denied them in the land of their nativity,” could build happy lives.\textsuperscript{317} It would remain to be seen how the colonists would go about making this dream a reality.

\textsuperscript{317} Ibid., 204.
Chapter Three

Portraying the Empire of the South: The Confederado Colony in Santarém, 1867-1888

Hastings had high hopes for what the US southerner could do with the land in the Amazon. He believed that the land, at the time of Confederado settlement, had great potential of which only the US citizen would be able to take advantage. The Amazon, as it had for song been depicted, had yet to experience proper cultivation. According to Hastings, “the agriculture of Brazil is, as yet, in its incipient stages; this vast Empire, although now nearly forty-five years old, is still in its agricultural infancy.” The Brazilian Empire, then, was extensive geographically, but not technologically advanced. It was “a giant in natural wealth, but a pigmy in agricultural appliances; herculean in resources, but dwarfish in their development.” The cause for this discrepancy, in Hastings’ mind, was the very nature of the environment, for “the fertility of the soil and vigor of organic life, so multiply the means of subsistence as to greatly retard all agricultural pursuits.” The perfect Amazonian climate, then, was a double-edged sword; it made life there ideal, at the same time that it “greatly diminished” “the usual incentives to labor, energy, and enterprise,” the qualities that Maury and Herndon had so lauded. “In the midst of abundance,” Hastings writes, with little or no effort, every want is supplied.” In the face of such bounty, then only the “industrious” US colonists “who retain their energy,” would be victorious and “in a very few years, amass wealth and accumulate fortunes, which in less favorable climes, would require a whole lifetime of incessant toil.”

318 Guilhon de Azevedo, Os confederados em Santarém, 79.
319 Ibid.
320 Ibid.
321 Ibid.
322 Ibid.
After settling in the Amazon, the *confederados*’ capacity to transform their environment remained a central concern for the *confederados* themselves and those who visited them. The metric of the colony’s success would consistently be the degree to which the *confederados* achieved the diffusion of US attitudes towards labor, as well as US modes of production and technology. The writings of three US visitors to the colony all share a focus on the ways in which the *confederados* distinguished themselves from local Brazilians. In this chapter, I demonstrate the power of certain conceptions of race, labor, and economic progress in shaping how the story of the Santarém colony was narrated from its first days in existence, both by its members and those who visited from the US, regardless of whether they were residents of the southern or northern US.

**Settling in Santarém: Reports of Successes and Failures**

After about eight months of travel, in November 1866, Hastings returned to Mobile, Alabama from Santarém. By July 1867, Hastings had gathered a group of southerners, mostly from Tennessee and Alabama, who were ready to immigrate to the Amazon. On July 13, 1867, the *Mobile Advertiser and Register* published the passenger list for the *Red Gauntlet*, the ship headed to Belém with Hastings and his colonists aboard.³²³ The journey did not go smoothly, however, as the ship was apprehended by the US governor of Saint Thomas due to unpaid debts. Hastings managed to acquire a Brazilian ship upon which he and the other US passengers finished their voyage. At some point on this next leg of the journey, Hastings became sick and died, never again to set foot upon Brazilian territory. The rest of the group continued to Belém before boarding the steamboat *Inca* to Santarém.

When these Southern emigrants embarked on the shores of Santarém on September 17, 1867, they were welcomed by Colonel Pinto, Hastings’ primary contact in Santarém. In Norma Guilhon de Azevedo’s Os confederados em Santarém, she describes the Confederate arrival. She writes that the city’s residents would have been accustomed to seeing foreigners somewhat frequently, given the volume of travelers and scientists who had visited over the past several decades. The group of immigrants, in Guilhon de Azevedo’s view, would have appeared extremely heterogenous, a mix of planter families and foresters and adventurers who had decided to join Hastings, “attracted by the taste of an adventure in the tropics.”

According to Guilhon de Azevedo, the latter types of people had joined the group not because of their moral convictions, and some were fugitives of the law who took advantage of the opportunity to cheaply escape from the country. Already in Santarém was a small group of emigrants who had arrived there earlier that year without Hastings’ direction, instead having been sent by the Brazilian Minister of Agriculture from Rio de Janeiro. Altogether, the US colonists numbered about 196 at this point.

At the time of the Confederate settlement of Santarém, there was no local newspapers to report on the emigrants’ arrival. US newspapers, however, published information about the emigrants. Like the letters re-printed in newspapers before the first waves of immigration, the letters speaking to life on Santarem’s shores told conflicting stories. The North Carolina Argus published extracts of letters from Hastings’ father-in-law J.B. Mendenhall, who, according to the 1860 census had been the owner of twenty-three slaves, about his journey to Brazil and his first days

324 Guilhon de Azevedo, Os confederados em Santarém, 20.
325 Ibid., 21.
326 Ibid., 22.
in the country in 1867. In the introduction to the extracts, the paper makes clear its anti-emigration stance, predicting that though Mendenhall “seems to be content so far,” “he will become weary of his self-imposed exile and he will ere long return home to battle for his ‘birth right’ under the Constitution.” Mendenhall’s first impressions of Brazil are generally very positive, however, though they also include harsh critiques. He reports that he and his fellow colonists were very well-received upon their ship’s arrival in Belém, which was in a state of “jubilee,” as Brazilians were celebrating Brazilian independence as well as the opening of the Amazon to international navigation and commerce.

On this very first day of his time in Belém, Mendenhall had also begun to comment on the backward state of Brazilian life, writing that “the people here are a whole age behind in everything except trade in merchandise, which is conducted by the more shrewd of the population.” This impacted the difficulties he and other colonists had in arranging effective transportation to the lands where they would settle, but Mendenhall emphasized the unmatched natural qualities of the region as a counterpoint to these downsides. He wrote that “the climate is the most perfect” that a southerner could hope for and “no one could, with the power granted, make any improvement.” He describes the land where he had settled as “like the best of the hammock lands in Alabama.” Mendenhall ends his letter this way: “I advise you to come and grow up with the country, though at present it is in a rude, underdeveloped condition, even behind the pack mule age.” The superior nature of the land and climate, he believed, was inducement enough for further settlement, despite the lack

329 Ibid.
330 Ibid.
331 Ibid.
332 Ibid.
333 Ibid.
of development. US colonists, provided they imported certain supplies, such as hoes, shotguns, axes, shoes, and certain seeds for planting, as he recommended his family bring, could make a positive, lasting impact on a backwards Brazil.\textsuperscript{334}

Figure 4.1 “Dr. Josiah H. Pitts, 1866;” illustration from Os confederados em Santarém.

Another member of the Hastings colony, Josiah Pitts, affirmed that life in Santarém was going well. He wrote a letter home to a friend, William Rear, which was published on May 24, 1868 in the Nashville Union and American. The newspaper first published a note by Rear in which he presents Pitts’ letter and states some of his own observations about Belém and Santarém, having traveled there himself. In the Pitts letter, Pitts states that he and his family are “well and fat” and that “I have made enough to live well on and am better placed than ever.”\textsuperscript{335} He concludes his letter on a positive note, encouraging others to join the colony: “The colony is in fine condition and doing well. There is no truth in the reports that the enterprise is a

\textsuperscript{334} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{335} Ibid.
failure; it was manufactured by that Mobile crowd. Col. Pinto has recently paid us a visit and seemed highly pleased at our advancement and improvements. So bundle up and come out.”\textsuperscript{336} Pitts considered those emigrants who had been residents of Mobile, who he viewed as lazy good-for-nothings, for spreading untrue rumors about the colony. He describes one Mobilite who had attempted to rob and murder a woman in Belém, resulting in a twenty-year prison sentence. Despite incidents like this one, the general picture Pitts painted was one of positive forward motion for the colonists. “We will soon have a good neighborhood,” he stated. His conclusion then was that his family members and friends “had better pick up bag and baggage and come out and so get rid of Brownlow, negroes, Yankees, and taxation.”\textsuperscript{337}

William Brownlow, to whom Pitts refers, was the governor of Tennessee, elected to office in 1865 after former Confederates had essentially been banned from voting. Brownlow aligned himself with the Radical Republicans and used his governorship to temporarily disenfranchise ex-Confederates, enfranchise black men, and allow them to qualify for public office. Under his leadership, Tennessee became the first ex-Confederate state to be readmitted to the Union. Pitts’ reference to “Brownlow, negroes, Yankees, and taxation” signified a clear rejection of the social and political changes being brought about by Reconstruction. By moving to Santarém, Pitts was not ridding himself of “negroes,” as he mentions another emigrant who was “farming with negroes” on the Amazon. Instead, he was fleeing from a place where black people were being treated as citizens for the first time.

Though Reconstruction may have provided the impetus for Pitts’ relocation of his family to Santarém, he would have been familiar with Brazil well before Reconstruction and the Civil War due to his father Fountain Pitts’ missionary travels

\textsuperscript{336} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{337} Ibid.
there. Fountain served first as the chaplain of the Eleventh Tennessee Regiment, before going on to raise his own regiment – the Sixty-First – and become a colonel.\textsuperscript{338} His obituary states that in one of his wartime speeches to his soldiers, he declared that “he knew no State lines,” being “at heart a Southerner.”\textsuperscript{339} Josiah, a doctor, also served in the Confederate army. The Pitts’ connection to Christian missionary work did not come to an end upon settlement in Brazil. H.C. Tucker, a Protestant minister traveling through Latin America in 1889 found hospitality in Josiah Pitts’ home while stopping through Santarém. Tucker wrote that Pitts “kindly opened his house for preaching,” and that he conducted six services there to large audiences.\textsuperscript{340} Before Tucker left, Pitts’ son promised him to pass out bibles to those who so desired.

Another prominent colonist, described by some as the informal leader of the colony, religiously and otherwise, following Hastings’ death, was Methodist reverend Richard Thomas Hennington. He was the son of Henry Hennington, a Methodist pastor at a church in Mississippi. Richard joined the Mississippi Volunteers as a Confederate Chaplain in 1861. Hennington traveled to Brazil and surveyed available lands in the vicinity of Santarém before deciding to move there permanently with his family. His observations were published in \textit{The Copiahian}, Copiah County, Mississippi’s local newspaper on March 14, 1867. In a letter he wrote, he explains the motives of his fellow emigrants. He writes: “they feel that a peace like this is even more intolerable than the war itself.”\textsuperscript{341} Hennington would end up immigrating to Santarém separately from the Hastings group, arriving there in August of 1868 with his wife and three children.\textsuperscript{342}

\textsuperscript{338} “Death of Rev. Fountain E. Pitts,” May 28, 1874, \textit{The Pulaski Citizen}, Newspapers.com
\textsuperscript{339} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{341} Guilhon de Azevedo, \textit{Os confederados em Santarém}, 35.
\textsuperscript{342} Neelman, \textit{A migração confederado ao Brasil}, 217.
In a book written about the Hennington family in 1973 by his grandson Bertie Altman, Altman explains Richard’s decision to consider emigration. They claim similar causes to Josiah Pitts, writing that when Hennington returned home at the war’s end, “the South was under military rule, the economy and the legislature were in control of the carpetbaggers.”\(^{343}\) In addition to the change in regime, Hennington’s economic potential had shifted, as “the Confederate dollar was worthless and no one had a Yankee dime. Certain trade goods were obtainable by the flirtatious maiden who could roll her eyes in proper orbit and thus the synonym for kiss became ‘Yankee dime.’”\(^{344}\) Obtaining money, this implied, was contingent upon being willing to debase oneself for the conquering regime. In light of such a situation, Hennington, like Hastings, took it upon himself to depict emigration to Brazil as an undeniably better option than remaining in the US. Also like Hastings, he portrayed Brazil in a more positive light than previous US writers had, claiming that it was “a country superior to ours under the most favorable circumstances. Brazil is not the wild or barbaric country that many people think it is…then, why remain here when that country promises so much and this one so little?”\(^{345}\) One of Brazil’s promises, in his mind, was the continuation of a life dependent on slave labor. Writing from Rio de Janeiro in August 1867, Hennington marveled that “what most attracts one’s attentions are the black slaves, just like in our country before the war. Everything that exists there can also be encountered here.”\(^{346}\)

Richard soon met with success in Santarém. In a letter to his brother in the US written on August 23, 1869, he wrote: “I have now 125 coffee trees, nearly 100 orange trees, 400 pineapples, 150 bananas, 100 casus, 50 jacas, 20 mangoes, 20

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\(^{344}\) Ibid.
\(^{345}\) Ibid., 32-3.
\(^{346}\) Ibid., 35.
copoassue, mamma apples and other seed planted All -but 10 acres was woods one year ago.”347 Richard’s wife gave birth to two children in Santarém, in addition to the two that had been born in the US before the Civil War. In Altman’s book about his grandfather, he wrote that “there was never an expression of homesickness for the United States but Grandfather saw to it that Tom, then Eddie, then Eliza had an opportunity to go there and have a look for themselves. That all returned to Santarem to settle down must have been rewarding. Mamma was just entering her twenties when Grandfather became a naturalized Brazilian.”348

This type of positive report was not the only one that circulated; instead, other letters reproduced in newspapers expressed opposing perspectives. For reasons relating largely to the climate and existence of racial intermixing, these writers depicted embarking on living in Santarém as worthless venture. Less than two months after the publication of Pitts letter, a letter from a visitor to the Hastings colony was published in the Nashville Union and Dispatch and then re-printed in the Montgomery Advertiser, declaring the inverse of what Pitts had stated. It begins: “We found there was not a word of truth in the reports we heard in Nashville, in regard to the Hastings colony at Santarem.”349 It goes on to state: “when we arrived in Para we found several of the families from that colony there and in the most destitute circumstances, trying to support their families by what little work they could get to do and with small pay, barely receiving enough to keep from starving on the coarsest kind of miserable food.”350 The letter-writer then references the Pitts family, mentioning that while they remain they “are not doing much.”351 His conclusion is that Brazil “is no country for the American people” because it is inhabited mainly by

347 Guilhon de Azevedo, Os confederados em Santarém, 115.
348 Ibid.
350 Ibid.
351 Ibid.
“a miserable set of uncivilized beings, who right to the title of human is half questionable, being a mixture of a number of uncivilized races.”\textsuperscript{352} These races are named as the Indian, the negro, and the “native Brazilian, which in many instances are, but from their degeneration” is “vastly inferior to either of the former, and lastly, the Portuguese, much inferior to the Brazilians.”\textsuperscript{353} In essence, white US citizens were unfit to and undeserving of living side by side with inferior races. By concluding that US citizens could not live in a country inhabited by lesser peoples, the article lays the blame for any challenges experienced by the settlers on race, and eliminates any responsibility on the part of the settlers themselves. In this formulation, it becomes the settlers’, superior to native Brazilians, natural destiny to fail in their efforts.

In addition to the racial aspects that made life in Brazil unlivable, the author of the letter describes agricultural production as a nearly impossible task, detailing the various insects and animals that made crop cultivation difficult. The letter cites “gentlemen from Santarem” who had told the writer that they had been forced to given up farming because of the “prevalence of innumerable reptiles.”\textsuperscript{354} The letter concludes by stating that the writers of the letter had no need to spend much time in Brazil to know that the whole project of immigration to such an “abominable country” was a “swindle.”\textsuperscript{355} After all, according to him, “the sun is so hot, so excessively hot, that none save Indians and negroes can work under it.”\textsuperscript{356} In the letter writer’s opinion, the one endeavor that had financial potential for the colonists was rubber collection, but he returns to a racist discourse to pronounce it impossible,
claiming that the work involved in collecting rubber would “kill any white man in a very short time.”

A letter to the editor written by someone identified simply as “a traveler through the [Brazilian] Empire” in the New York Times weighed in as well on the issue of the suitability of US citizens for life in the Amazon in an article published in January 1868. The writer claims that “the Government stands in the way of success,” referring to heavy import and export duties. According to this writer, another key drawback was the lack of easy access to labor, contrary to what emigration propaganda had claimed. He claimed that Santarém lost many of its laborers to the war in Paraguay, who were sent away, very few to return. He asked: “want of laborers is the great cry throughout Brazil, and if Brazilians cannot obtain them, what can the emigrant expect?” He then articulates the labor issue as a racial one, invoking the stereotype of the lazy Indian, writing that “Indians do not care to work.”

An article entitled “A Mobilian’s Experience in Brazil” published in the Mobile Weekly Tribune on December 26, 1868 was similarly negative about the Santarém colony and also framed this discussion in racial terms. The article recounts the story of a young resident of Mobile, James Selby, who had traveled with the Hastings group. From the beginning of his journey to Brazil, Selby had encountered difficulty, and perhaps more significantly, undesirable people with whom he could not stand to share space. On the ship from Rio de Janeiro to Belém, the article claims, Selby was among a group of 150 passengers that were “negroes, Indians, and half-breeds—the very scum of creation—lousy and filthy.” The article later names Colonel Pinto as responsible for providing the Hastings colonists with supplies. Pinto is described as

357 Ibid.
359 Ibid.
360 Ibid.
the Vice President of Pará and also as the “proprietor of a harem which turns him out annually a fair crop of half breed Indian and negro offspring.” He then claims that Pinto opened a store filled with the cheapest groceries that he sold at the highest prices. “Delicate women from Alabama” then had to “trudge under a tropical sun” with groceries on their backs from the settlement to Pinto’s store and back.

The article then goes on to describe the inferior quality of the land where the Hastings colony was located, describing the pests – insect and animals – that make life there unbearable. The concluding paragraph of the article claims that “the result of this Brazil ‘fever…’ “will stand as a warning to the Southern people against the hasty abandonment of their native land.” As some who had written before the establishment of US colonies in the country, this writer argues that “even the greatest curse that can fall upon us from the foul womb of Radical hate – the curse of mongrelism, cannot be avoided by going to Brazil or any South American country” where the “nasty fruit has ripened and pollutes earth and air with its sickening odors.” For this author, Brazil, and all of South America were inhospitable locations for US settlers because of the inferior condition not just of the land, but more importantly, of the people. Whatever benefits might be had were outweighed by the irreversible degeneracy of the “mongrel” nature of the human populations. The article affirms that one of the principle reasons an US citizens would choose to emigrate was the threat of racial mixing under a Republican government that sought to bring about change in the racial, socio-political order of the US. In South America, though, “mongrelism” was already a full-blown reality, as evidenced by the example of Colonel Pinto’s mixed-race “harem.”

362 Ibid.
363 Ibid.
364 Ibid.
365 Ibid.
366 Ibid.
On June 19, 1868, Jackson, Mississippi’s *Clarion-Ledger* published extracts from a letter received the previous month by Jacksonian A.M. Wood from his son, a member of the Hastings colony. In the letter, the son states that following Hastings’ death the government had abandoned the stipulations of the contract it had signed with Hastings. As a result, the colony was no longer receiving government rations, and many had been forced to relocate to the city of Santarém to earn money, despite having already begun to grow crops on their farms. According to Wood, they had been unsuccessful in the city, and being unable to support their families, had decided to move to Belém, where, upon the writing of the letter, he and twenty-six others had been living in a shed for six days.\textsuperscript{367}

Wood recounts the numerous hardships of life in Brazil. These included concerns about burial, which he articulates as a racialized issue. He writes that “when a white man dies here it is a hard matter to get him buried” and describes how some of the colonists had died and been buried in a blanket.\textsuperscript{368} Wood’s next complaint is that, although “the country is rich and abounds in fruits, fine timber, and good water,” it rained six months of the year every day, and did not rain at all the rest of the year.\textsuperscript{369} This fact, in addition to the bugs, worms, and ants that destroy crops, made it very difficult for farming there to be worthwhile. The upshot, Wood, writes, is that he and the others who had left Santarém for Belém would be returning to the US on the next boat. Wood concludes by demanding that his father “tell everybody that speaks of emigrating to Brazil to stay at home. A man can do well in Brazil if he has money enough to live without working; but he can do the same in any other place; so if they have plenty of money they can live at home as well as in Brazil.”\textsuperscript{370}

\textsuperscript{367} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{368} “Letter from Brazil,” *Clarion-Ledger*, June 19, 1868, Newspapers.com.
\textsuperscript{369} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{370} Ibid.
Life in Brazil, then, would not be as easy as emigration propaganda had perhaps suggested. The emigrant was required to work and would have no access to instant wealth by simply adopting a new homeland.

One colonist used a Brazilian newspaper to attempt to counteract any negative narratives regarding the colony. The Diário de Belém published a report written by colonist Jos. L. McGee on January 6, 1869, in which the writer declared that the colonists were thriving in the face of the many challenges they had encountered. It states: “we ourselves had to work since none of us had money to hire people,” a difficult task for those who were unaccustomed to physical labor.371 Despite this, according to the article, some of the colonists were living as comfortably as they had in the US before the Civil War. The article then goes on to cite the Pitts, Rhome, Weatherly, Vaughan, and Riker families as particularly prosperous. Another colonist, the Reverend Harvey, was operating a school that taught English to thirty to forty boys. McGee avows that his mother and sister were “very satisfied and nothing would be able to induce them to return to their motherland.”372 McGee emphasizes that the colony was not “fallen,” and encouraged “our brothers in misfortune to visit our beaches.”373 According to him many new southerners planned to embark for Santarém, a piece of information meant to prove the colony’s success, though it does not seem that the colony received any new colonists in significant number.

Outsiders’ Accounts of the Santarém Colony

371 “Carta de um imigrante americano,” Jan. 6, 1869, Diário de Belém, Biblioteca Nacional Digital do Brasil.
372 Ibid.
373 Ibid.
After the formation of the US settlement in Santarém, US, European, and Brazilian scientists and travelers continued to make their way down the Amazon and publish writing about their experiences in Santarém. Many of these men commented on the community of *confederados*, as Brazilians called them, and the impact they were having on the region. Some *confederados* hosted travelers, giving them the opportunity to learn in detail about the new lives they were leading. These accounts of the colony provide interesting insight into the textures of *confederado* life in Santarém, as well as into the ways in which outsiders narrated the colony’s impact and significance from its earliest days.

![Image of Joseph Beal Steere](image)

Figure 4.2 “Joseph Beal Steere,” 1906, Burke Aaron Hisndale, *History of the University of Michigan*.

One of the first foreign visitors to the colony was the US ornithologist Joseph Beal Steere (1842-1940). Steere, a Michigan native, was a professor at the University of Michigan who spent time traveling through the Amazon and documenting his observations. From 1870 through 1875, Steere was sent by the University of Michigan on a trip around the world to collect various materials for its zoology and botany departments. Steere went first to the Amazon, where he spent
about eighteen months. He wrote letters home that were also published in
newspapers. While in the Santarém area, Steere encountered a friendly host at
Taperinha, the estate of *confederado* Romulus J. Rhome, where he stayed for over a
month. At Taperinha, Steere first saw the plow in Brazil, and spoke glowingly of its
use. Before arriving in Santarém, Steere had already written about the differences
between Brazilian and US agricultural practices. While in Belém, he marveled that he
had yet to see a plow in Brazil. He believed that “proper cultivation,” meaning US
practices could change the poor results he observed there.374

In this way, he became one of the first people to contribute to the narrative
of agricultural progress brought about by *confederado* settlement. He was not the first
US citizen to fixate on the absence of the plow in Brazil, however. When the future
leader of an ex-Confederate colony, Ballard Dunn first toured the country, Dunn
commented several times on the plow and the methods of agriculture he observed
there. He remarked on the first time he noticed a plow.375 At another point, he
observes the use of a second plow, this one “after the pattern of use in Europe two
centuries ago.”376 Merriwether and Shaw confirmed Dunn’s observations about the
plow, determining that no plows “have been seen by us that are suitable for the
ordinary cultivation of the products of this country.”377 Several years later, Steere
agreed with these men that the agricultural techniques and tools already present in
the country were insufficient.

Despite his negative outlook, at Taperinha, Steere saw evidence that styles of
agriculture imported from the US were indeed effective. He wrote: “sugar cane and

374 Nelson Papavero, William L. Overal, Dante M. Teixeira, and Janet Hinshaw, “The Travels of
Joseph Beal Steere in Brazil, Peru and Ecuador (1870-1873)” (Zoology Museum of the University of São
Paulo, vol 39, 2, 2008),112.
375 Dunn, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, 128.
376 Ibid., 137.
377 Ibid., 240.
tobacco grow with the greatest luxuriance and I saw some cane, that was so thick and tall that it was perfectly impossible to go through it. This was where Mr. Rhome had used the plow, an instrument the native know [sic] nothing of, though they cannot but wonder at its effects.”

It was not just the plow that Steere found worthy of praise. While observing the “Indians and slaves” at work in Rhome’s service, engaged in “cleaning off the logs and brush from new land and planting tobacco,” Steere remarks that “the thorough way in which they did their work showed that their master was trained in a more thorough school of farming than is found in this country.”

He took this argument a step beyond agriculture to include all aspects of life in Brazil, arguing that if the Brazilian people were “ever reformed politically, religiously, and physically it must be through us [US citizens].” Unfortunately, he believed that Brazilians were “likely to be left as they are for a while,” because, for those without capital, the country was the worst possible place to attempt making one’s way.

The proper way to develop Amazonia had long been a question for European observers. Few had been willing to acknowledge the usefulness of indigenous methods of working the land and the possibility that the environment was incompatible of European methods. In two of his seminal works on Brazilian history, celebrated Brazilian historian Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1902-1982) commented on these aspects of the debate surrounding agriculture in Brazilian history. In Roots of Brazil, published in 1936, Buarque calls the effort to transplant European modes of agriculture to Brazil “the dominant fact in the origins of Brazilian society and the one

378 Ibid., 139.
379 Ibid.
381 Ibid.
that has yielded the most valuable consequences.\textsuperscript{382} These consequences, according to Buarque, were both positive and negative, for “all the fruits of both our work and our sloth seem to belong to an evolutionary system from another climate and another landscape.”\textsuperscript{383} Buarque discusses the use of the plow in Brazilian agricultural history, complicating the narrative of US settlement as representing the successful introduction of the plow to Brazilian agriculture. Buarque explains how Europeans had long attempted to employ the plow in Brazil. He also discusses the role of nature itself in preventing Europeans from employing whichever methods they saw fit, namely the plow. He claims that in some cases, the Portuguese in Brazil adopted agricultural techniques that were “actually retrogressions and were even considered ancient forms of cultivation.” Nature’s obstacles in the Americas, very distinct from those in Europe, contributed just as much to the settlers’ slow progress as did their inertia and passivity.\textsuperscript{384}

In Buarque’s formulation, then, attempts to use the plow, actually represented a sort of regression. He cites a remark by a captain-general in 1766 that declared that the plow was, in fact, unusable.\textsuperscript{385} Buarque lists various colonizers’ attempts at agricultural production, briefly mentioning the US settlers. He writes that many historians tended to point out and exaggerate similarities between agricultural practices in Brazil and the southern United States. According to Buarque, however, Confederate farmers in Brazil disagreed. He argues that, whether true or not, “the use of plows, cultivators, rakes, and graders on São Paulo rural properties” had been attributed to the ex-Confederates.\textsuperscript{386} The settlers imported these implements after

\textsuperscript{382} Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, \textit{Roots of Brazil} (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press), 2012, 1.
\textsuperscript{383} Ibid., 1-2.
\textsuperscript{384} Ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{385} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{386} Ibid.
having been “shocked by the alarmingly primitive nature of the local agricultural processes.” According to one statement by a Confederate that Buarque cites, Brazilian slaves were planting cotton exactly as North American Indians planted corn. Many Brazilians, then, saw the US settlers as bearers of progress, and lauded them as such from their earliest days on Brazilian shores. Despite their failures to alter the Amazon, the confederados became the subjects of a myth of technological success particular to them as white US citizens.

Those colonists who did not participate in what was seen as positive technological transformation, were excluded from this narrative on the basis of their lack of dedication to the values by which the successful confederados lived. The ingenuity of a planter like Rhome, for example, was counterbalanced by the negative reputation of the confederado community in Santarém in general, according to Steere. Before arriving in Santarém, he claimed that his Americanness had been his “passport and security for good treatment.” In Santarém, on the other hand, it was “not much an honor to be an American,” given “the shiftless class of adventurers” among the colony, despite the fact that some had “won the respect of this people by their honesty and steady industry.” The existence of both lazy vagabonds and hardworking, respectable people would become a trope in narratives of the colony formulated by both outsiders and Santarém locals.

The way in which Steere describes the lives of the colonists, however, shows that they were dependent on the labor of others, in addition to their own. Two of the most industrious settlers whose lands Steere visits, were Riker and Vaughn, who had neighboring territories and shared the same road to reach their properties. According

387 Ibid.
388 Ibid., 22-23.
390 Ibid.
to Steere, Riker had already constructed a significant amount of machinery “with his own hands.” The thirty acres of land he was using to cultivate sugar cane and turn into cachaca, however, were worked by indigenous laborers. The same was true for Vaughan, who employed laborers in the cultivation of sixteen or eighteen acres of sugar cane. Another colonist that Steere encountered was a Mrs. White. The sole woman Steere devotes any attention to, White was a widow whose husband had died since arriving in Brazil. She lived alone, two or three miles from her neighbors “except the Tapuios or Indians, who, she said treated her with great kindness.”

Steere describes White as dependent on the generosity of these indigenous neighbors for sustenance, as they provided her with most of her food.

Steere proceeds to comment on the issue of labor procurement in the Amazon, arguing that it is “a much more perplexing one here than it is in the United States.” The reason for this complexity was that “slaves are running down in value, and usefulness, as the question of liberating them is consistently before the country and every one understands that the system cannot exist much longer.” The other available option was indigenous labor, according to Steere, but the central issue with employing indigenous people was their laziness. Steere was one more scientist out of many who had long promoted the idea that indigenous people were inherently lazy and lacked the strong work ethic of white people. Here, he draws a connection between the indigenous people of Brazil and the US, writing that the indigenous people of the region had “little more ambition than our own Indians in the United States.”

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391 Ibid., 155
392 Ibid.
393 Ibid.
394 Ibid.
395 Ibid.
396 Ibid.
people were generally employed, equating it to slavery. These laborers, he writes, were forced into a system in which they would inevitably be indebted to their employers, forcing them and their children to continue working for them “as if they were literally slaves.” 397 This statement echoes English biologist Alfred Russell Wallace’s observations twenty years earlier recorded in his book *Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro*. At one point, he described how a “trader” coerced an indigenous man to accompany Wallace on one of his expeditions. This man, according to Wallace, expressed that he had no desire to join the group, and as a result, was “was driven to the canoe by severe lashes, and at the point of the bayonet.” 398 Afterwards, according to Wallace, “he was very furious and sullen…vowing that he would not go with me, and would take vengeance on those who had forced him on board. He complained bitterly of being treated like a slave.” 399

Steere wonders about the legality of such a system, but expresses his confidence that, whatever the legality, it was “upheld by the officers of the government, who in all cases send such men to their patrons, when they attempt to get away.” 400 According to Steere, some of the US colonists had relieved indigenous laborers of their debts, paying them off in order to receive the “patronage” of the laborers. 401 Significantly, Steere observed the support for this system on the part of many Brazilians, some of which he had spoken to personally and who defended coerced indigenous labor as necessary, as well as desired “even severer laws in this respect.” 402 Steere acknowledges that he does not know the percentage of indigenous

397 Ibid.  
399 Ibid.  
401 Ibid., 157.  
402 Ibid., 156-7
people who were a part of this system of labor, but speculated that many were “christianized.”

Ultimately, Steere, like some of the newspaper commentators, saw Brazilian and white US society as fundamentally at odds with each other. Though Brazil had the potential to progress, it remained backwards in most ways. For this reason, he claimed that “for those who cling to their Protestant faith and the civilization of this nineteenth century, there is no hope but to go back home.”

The only means by which life in Brazil for such US citizens would become viable would be if many more of them could be convinced to emigrate. This was not likely, thought, because, according to Steere, the abundance of “good land at the West to be had for the making, where there is sure to be good society, schools, and everything else that we are accustomed to consider among the necesities [sic] of life, within a very few years after the settler has scared away the wolves with the first blow of his axe.”

In these territories, US emigrants would be in larger numbers and could mold the social environment to their standards, as they would be building a new society from scratch. In the Amazon, on the other hand, emigrants found themselves in an already well-established society that would not be easily changed by the presence of a small number of US citizens. Like Maury and Hastings before him, Steere saw both the US West and the Amazon as wilderness territories in need of civilization. The axe, again, became a symbol of US dominance over nature. This conquest also implied the displacement of impediments to such progress, whether they were wolves or indigenous people.

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403 Ibid., 157.
404 Ibid.
405 Ibid.
The most extensive published piece of writing regarding the confederado colony in Santarém is found in the book *Brazil: The Amazons and the Coast*. The US scientist Herbert Smith (1851-1919) published the work in 1879. Originally from New York, he eventually moved to Alabama, and spent a significant amount of time in Brazil. Smith’s book recounts his time spent in the vicinity of Santarém during the years between 1874 and 1875, “collecting and studying Amazonian animals.” Smith was just one of many US citizens who continued to show great interest in the Amazon, motivated, as outsiders had long been, by purposes that ranged beyond well beyond the collection of scientific specimens.

The chapter entitled “American Farmers on the Amazons” is dedicated to describing the ex-Confederate colonists’ lives in the Santarém area. Smith’s chapter strives to explain why the colony’s numbers diminished so quickly after its foundation. In addition, Smith also addresses the long-discussed issue of the Amazon, its potential as a region, and possible projects to occupy it. This was a question that had preoccupied various US writers long before ex-Confederate colonization. Similar to the early detractors of the colony, the circumstances of the

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US colonists whose lives he witnessed during some time, proved to him that the Amazon remained a region not well-suited to US whites. However, Smith’s chapter does tell a story of success against all odds on the part of some immigrants. It also cautions about an inhospitable territory and a portion of immigrants who were unsuited to inhabit and cultivate it.

At the time of his stay in Santarém, Smith claims there were about fifty US residents who had emigrated because “people who lost everything were willing enough to begin again on new soil.” 407 Smith attempts to lay the blame for what he views as the failure of the colony and the reduction of its population on the qualities of the US immigrants. He writes that none of the ex-confederate colonies in Brazil were “very successful” but that Santarém’s was “badly made up in the outset; with a few good families there came a rabble of lazy vagabonds, offscourings of the army and vagrants from Mobile, who looked upon the affair as a grand adventure.” 408 Smith saw the pursuit of new lives outside the US as noble and worthwhile, but believed that it had been sabotaged by such people as the immigrants to Santarém that he describes above. The presence of those who were not dedicated to working hard to achieve success in the colony tainted the colony’s overall value.

As Smith saw it, Santarém’s local Brazilian population had originally been willing and enthusiastic hosts, but lost respect for the immigrant community because of its negative elements. According to him, “after a little the good people became disgusted with their guests, who quarreled incessantly and filled the town with drunken uproar. Government aid for the colony was withdrawn; gradually the scum floated away, leaving the memory of their worthlessness to injure the others.” 409 It was left to the “the few families that remained” to “outlive public opinion,” a

407 Ibid., 136.
408 Ibid.
409 Ibid.
difficult task, writes Smith, given the “poverty on one side and ill-will on the other.”\textsuperscript{410} In doing so, he presented a brief history of a failed colony that had failed to live up to the expectations of Brazilians desirous of hard-workers who would alter the Amazonian landscape.

It took time, according to him, for locals to realize that those who remained “were not vagabonds” and to respect “their industry and perseverance,” but these colonists were ultimately successful in changing how they were perceived of by locals.\textsuperscript{411} The result was that at the time of the writing of his book, Smith claims that “all through the Amazons, you will hear nothing but good words of the Santarem colony.”\textsuperscript{412} Those who remained, according to Smith, were hard-working, resourceful people who had managed to make do in difficult circumstances.

Smith offers vivid descriptions of various US colonists’ lives based on his time in the colony. Though he changes the colonists’ names, his accounts of the colonists provide interesting insight into the colonists’ lives at the time of his travels there in the mid-1870s, under ten years before the first settlement. The first colonist he discusses is “Mr. Platt” who takes Smith to his home outside of the city of Santarem via wagon. Smith’s description of his time with Platt allows him to weigh in on one of the tropes of the ex-Confederate settlement in Brazil in general: the introduction of new technology by \emph{confederados} to the Brazilian landscape. Smith writes that Platt’s wagon was a novelty there. When Smith sets forth in Platt’s wagon, he writes that “bare-legged boys come out to stare” at the “wonder” and “noteworthy spectacle.”\textsuperscript{413}

\textsuperscript{410} Ibid., 136, 137.
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid., 137.
\textsuperscript{412} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{413} Ibid.
It had been a struggle to get the wagon to Santarém in the first place. Platt had ordered the wagon from his former state of Tennessee. Brazilian authorities ignored the law that allowed tax exemptions for agricultural tools and Platt had had to pay just as much in taxes as he had paid for the wagon itself. Smith labels this “extortion” to which Platt had no means of legal redress given his lack of sufficient wealth to pay legal expenses.414 Platt complains about the injustice of the Brazilian state’s careless disregard for the law.

According to Smith, the struggles that Platt faced transformed him into a farmer who was “careworn, and a little discouraged.”415 Smith describes the land where Platt’s home was located as beautiful, but as unsuitable to his needs, a situation that was worsened by the difficulty of gaining access to the tools necessary to cultivate the land. Platt aimed to own a large-scale sugarcane plantation, which was impossible due to the small size of the stream that ran through his land. Platt had initially used a “rough wooden mill” to grind cane before he could afford to purchase an iron one from the US at double the price of what they would cost in the US.416 In addition, Platt claims that he is taken advantage of by traders in Santarém who paid him below the market price for the produce he sells. According to Platt, all the colonists had taken it upon themselves to cultivate sugarcane, which was converted into rum and sold in Santarem. Smith describes the rum-making business as undesirable for the confederados. He describes the negative impact alcohol consumption has on Indians and claims that it is even worse on black people.417 Ultimately, then, though many colonists had found a means of making profit, it

414 Ibid.
415 Ibid., 140.
416 Ibid., 141.
417 Ibid., 147.
involved participating in a less than desirable activity that contributed to what Smith saw as the social ills of the area.

The choice of sugarcane had developed out of the need for the colonists to cultivate a fast-growing crop due to the limited funds with which they arrived in Brazil. According to Platt, while the colonists were still being housed by the government and were being fed by government rations, they struggled with “utter poverty.” When Platt could afford to, he bought a small piece of land with a dozen fruit trees, located six miles from the city, and housed his family under a rough shed before building the thatched house. Due to his poverty, Platt had been slow to acquire “horses, oxen, carts, casks” and even to be able to pay a single Indian laborer to work for him.

Smith compares the difficulties that Platt underwent to that of an immigrant to the US. He writes that in the US an immigrant can usually find some kind of employment, as well as acquire the tools and machinery he needs close to his home and at a low price. The *confederados* in Santarém, on the other hand, “were brought face to face with the matted forest,” which had many implications. Smith articulates several consequences of this fact. One was that if the colonists wanted to find employment in the service of others, they would have no choice but to receive the low wages paid to Indians. Another was that the market for goods the southerners produced was unreliable. If the colonists needed machinery, the only useful machinery that they could access was that which they themselves had brought from the US, and if they lacked the funds to buy tools and provisions, they were

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418 Ibid., 140.
419 Ibid., 141.
420 Ibid.
forced to mortgage their crops in advance. Platt, according to Smith, had been “his own carpenter, mason machinist, everything.”

Seven years of “hard struggle” had yielded poor results, and Platt’s situation was representative of the general difficulty of being an immigrant in Brazil. The challenges were not to be blamed on the land; instead, Smith argued that it was something akin to a cultural issue. Smith made a distinction between Brazil and “the [US and European] West” where men worked with other men and there was a “division of labor.”

On the Amazon, on the other hand, “a poor man has only himself to depend upon; he is in a stagnant pool, a standstill country.”

Before Smith, US writers had worried that white people were unfit for life and work in the Amazon. This concern figured centrally in Smith’s mind, as he too saw the US colonist as fundamentally disadvantaged in the region: “your immigrant cannot live as the Indians do, because he has not the woodcraft, the training from childhood to a wild life, of the brown workman.”

The kind of life that was the norm in the Amazon was “wild” and not civilized as the life of the white man at home in the US was.

In addition to economic disadvantages, Smith argued that immigrants were “deprived of all social advantages” like a proper education, a complaint “Mrs. Platt” voiced to Smith.

Another social disadvantage was the absence of Protestant institutions that made it almost impossible for the colonists to attend a Protestant church service. US citizens struggled to live according to their values and needs given that, at least in one direction, the “American plantations are the farthest limits of

421 Ibid.
422 Ibid., 142.
423 Ibid.
424 Ibid., 143.
425 Ibid.
civilization” in the area. Beyond these limits, were “wild Indians” who Smith claimed no one had ever seen” in contrast to “the tame Indians” who were “harmless enough—good, simple people who stand very much in awe of the whites” and “never aspire to better their condition.”

Smith mentions the figure of the Indian again when discussing his time spent at another US farm owned by “Mr. Ray,” located in an US settlement Diamantina, two or three miles away from Platt. Though he claims Ray’s farm is faring better than most of the other colonists’ businesses, he writes that “the drunken Indian at the still” proves that Ray is not living the “romantic dream” one might be inclined to believe he is based on the beauty of his home. Smith uses the figure of the drunken Indian to evoke a sense of failure; Ray, though successful in his economic pursuits, had not totally succeeded in overcoming his circumstances – a region populated by inferior peoples prone to drunkenness. The “romantic dream” is a reference to material that circulated in the US before the Confederate emigration movement. Here, Smith explicitly mentions Wallace’s book. In it, he writes, among other observations, that in Santarém there are “many persons who live an idle life, entirely supported by the labours of a few slaves which they have inherited.”

The US lives that Smith witnessed, on the other hand, were full of challenges, especially in the realm of labor. Besides for Rhome, perhaps, their lives were not idle, as Wallace’s description promised.

The absence of institutions such as schools and churches to which Southerners were accustomed made life in the Amazon too challenging to endure. Smith visits another US farmer – “Mr. Brown” – who complains about this. As

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426 Ibid., 145.
427 Ibid.
428 Ibid., 146.
429 Ibid., 148.
430 Wallace, Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro, 96.
Smith sums it up, Brown suffered from “increasing hard work for a bare subsistence, and no schools or society, or hope for the future” and wished “with all his heart” that he were back home in Tennessee.\footnote{Smith, \textit{Brazil, The Amazons, and the Coast}, 146.}

An article entitled published in 1887 in the \textit{Pitsburgh Post-Gazette} entitled “A Lazy People” echoed this complaint. The article’s author David Fulton focuses on depicting Brazilians’ inability to develop the Amazon. The article is advertised as a “description of life along the Amazon River,” using Santarém as an example of a “typical city.”\footnote{“A Lazy People,” \textit{Pittsburgh Post-Gazette}, Sept. 3, 1887, Newspapers.com.} In a section entitled “the only drawback,” Fulton states that the US citizens who had arrived in 1867 were doing “pretty well, but complain of lack of society and a church.”\footnote{Ibid.} This, according to Fulton, was a “serious drawback to residence in this part of the world.”\footnote{Ibid.} The \textit{confederados} also complained about the “neglect” of the Protestant Church in the US. The article argues that due to the presence of fifty \textit{confederados} in Santarém as well as a Brazilian population that does not often attend church, some of whom, however, “take Protestant papers” would be a “great field for missionary work.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Fulton then turns to the crux of his argument: that Brazil is made up of essentially lazy people and requires US industry in order to progress. He writes that the Brazilians “are all very slow” and that the “the great need of Brazil is a little capital, with Americans to push it along.”\footnote{Ibid.} The interactions between US citizens and Brazilians in Santarém proved to Fulton that Brazilians had become dependent on the \textit{confederados}. As he saw it, “these people eat American bread ravenously, but won’t make it for themselves. An American is supposed to be able to do anything here. If
there are any sewing machines or clocks out of repair he is immediately called in to fix them.”

In addition to bread and machine repair, milk production was another area in which Fulton noted a lack of work ethic. According to him, milk was “unknown” in Santarém “simply because the people won’t milk the cows.”

In Smith’s work, too, labor figured as a central concern. The acquisition of labor was proving to be more complicated for the colonists than they had been led to believe by emigration propaganda. The colonists were largely dependent on indigenous labor, which Smith portrays as often unreliable. He writes that “the Indian laborers are almost the only help that the colonists can get; they are willing enough, but very unreliable; restraint is irksome to them” and are prone to go off hunting or fishing without their employer’s permission after receiving payment.

There was a plus side, however, as, according to Smith, the Indian laborers’ mentalities towards work had changed for the better since the confederados’ arrival; “the forest people” were finally learning to “see the value of constant employment.”

Before the arrival of the US influence, then, indigenous laborers did not value labor as they should, according to Smith. The presence of the confederados had made possible a change for the better in the Amazonian approach to labor.

The next stop on Smith’s tour of the US colony is the “May” household, five miles away from Platt’s. Smith describes May as a “Methodist clergyman” from Mississippi who “had a ready capability for all kinds of work” and was “the very best man that could be chosen for a pioneer.” Smith writes that after some time establishing his farm, May returned to the US to procure machinery and tools. Smith

437 Ibid.
438 Ibid.
439 Smith, Brazil, The Amazons, and the Coast, 146.
440 Ibid.
441 Ibid., 149.
442 Ibid., 150.
considers May and Ray the colony’s most successful members, but credits their success, in part, with the fact that they arrived separately from Hastings’ group. For Smith, these men had achieved success because they would have succeeded anywhere, though he maintains that “in nine cases out of ten” “an American will be happier in his own country than he will in any other.”

Smith goes on to finish his account of the US colonists with detailed descriptions of Rhome, one of the most prominent of the colonists. Of Rhome’s home he writes that “at the end of twelve years” it had “become the finest on the Amazons.” Smith describes the bustle of house servants when he arrives, including “three or four negroes” who carry his luggage. He mentions that Rhome’s plantation is jointly owned by the Baron of Santarem, and claims that the plantation was not doing well before Rhome’s arrival. According to Smith, beforehand, labor was wasted and a very small portion of the land was being cultivated. Rhome’s takeover, instead, meant that better machinery was being used, including, again, the “wonderful novelty” that was the plow. Rhome’s success, though rare and a “luxury,” proved to Smith “what intelligent labor can do here.” It is significant that Smith depicts the plantation as having been a failure before Rhome’s arrival. Central to the improvements brought by Rhome is the use of slave and non-white labor. In the plantation’s mill-house, Smith wrote that there were “half a dozen stalwart negroes” at work, while another 15 to 20 people were employed in tobacco production. Smith does not limit himself to describing the kind of labor that

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443 Ibid., 151.
444 Ibid., 152.
445 Ibid.
446 Ibid., 153.
447 Ibid.
448 Ibid.
Rhome employs in his endeavors; instead, he also comments on the characteristics of the black slaves he observes.

Smith ascribes negative qualities onto the slaves that simultaneously express how their suitability for work in the Amazon. He describes one scene that he witnesses of black women preparing tobacco in the following way: “I see here only a number of decidedly ugly faces, and brown or black arms, with not over-clean sacks and skirts.” In addition to possessing “ugly faces,” to Smith, they also possess the true level of strength necessary for successful labor in the region. At another point, Smith writes: “look at that great negro, recalling the Discobolus with his brawny arms, as he twists the tobacco-roll; but the Discobolus is only still, white marble; this man is living flesh and blood, with a dash of equatorial glow thrown into his dark skin.” Smith also attended a dance hosted by Rhome at his home that he describes as traditionally Amazonian and that “could only originate in the fertile brain of a negro.” His time spent at Rhome’s plantation, then, is confirmation for Smith of what previous US writings had declared about the region and the types of people that were and were not meant to live there and cultivate its land. By invoking the “equatorial glow” of black men’s skin, he implies the “natural” suitability of black labor in contrast to that of white labor, thus supporting the necessity of the dependence of the US colonists on black labor.

Smith concludes his chapter on the “American farmer” by asking if the Amazon “is an inviting field for American enterprise” and, in particular, whether it “is fitted for profitable farming.” His answer is mixed. On the one hand, like the US writers before him, Smith claimed that the Amazon was one of the world’s most

449 Ibid., 158-9.
450 Ibid., 159.
451 Ibid., 160.
452 Ibid., 172.
fertile agricultural regions. Brazil’s northern regions had more agricultural potential than its southern ones, he argued, and any previous or current failure to live up to this potential was the result of a lack of labor and high export duties. Smith remained hopeful that northern Brazil would gain the proper prominence, especially due to its closer proximity to US and European markets.

Standing in the way of Smith’s dream for a prosperous Amazon region cultivated by US citizens was a battle between man and nature. For him, it was remarkable that he could even designate the Amazon worthy of being the target of US business ambition, given the “barbarous laws that govern settlers.” As Smith saw it, it was obvious that the region was naturally meant to be home to an “agricultural community” but Brazilian law prohibited it from realizing its true destiny. He writes that “man steps in with his stupid laws and blocks the garden gate.” The obstacles were many, ranging from bureaucratic impediments to full land ownership, the high cost of shipping, and the normalized, albeit illegal, taxation of imported machinery and equipment.

Rhome, the colony’s most successful businessman, then, was Smith’s primary reference point for what was achievable in the face of so many obstacles. According to Smith, Rhome had resigned himself to “improving on Brazilian methods of work rather than attempting to introduce novelties.” Rhome’s experience, however, could not be universalized, in Smith’s mind; that is, reproduction of his methods was not guaranteed or even likely to result in success. Rhome’s success could be explained in a straightforward manner in Smith’s view. Rhome was simply “the man

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453 Ibid.
454 Ibid.
455 Ibid., 173.
456 Ibid.
457 Ibid., 174.
to succeed.” He had also found a business partner who owned “thirty or forty
slaves to do his work.” Rhome’s example was “exceptional, almost unique,” and
therefore evidence that, in most cases, it was better for US citizens to avoid making a
go of life in Brazil. Ultimately, only if one had sufficient wealth, did not mind the
absence of Protestant churches, had no children or could afford a tutor from the US,
and did not mind “strange customs and little refined society,” could one settle in the
Amazon with “a clear conscience.”

Published less than fifteen years after Hastings’ conglomeration of settlers
arrived in the Amazon, Smith’s book arrived at opposite conclusions about the
prospect of US influence and settlement in the region. These judgments, however,
rested on a similar worldview of those of his predecessors. At the end of “American
Farmers on the Amazon,” Smith concludes: “I do not think the Americans will be
the ones to build up Brazil.” Like in the discourses that preceded and encouraged
the emigration of former Confederates, Smith represents Brazil and the Amazon as
stuck in a rudimentary developmental state. The country and the region’s state could
only be ameliorated according to specific US ideals. Brazil had to follow the US
model of conquest and progress. Though, like Steere, Smith was not hopeful that this
would take place in the near future, he did see it as inevitable. For him, it was
impossible to imagine a world in which US notions of development did not dominate
the natural world. When Smith claimed that “some time Brazil will give up her
senseless colonization schemes, and open this rich land to the world,” he articulated
a vision of the world in which land possession was only legitimate if it consisted of

458 Ibid.
459 Ibid.
460 Ibid.
461 Ibid., 175.
462 Ibid.
certain behaviors.⁴⁶³ There was a single path Brazil could take to prosperity and a key element of this improvement was racial. Abandonment of such “senseless colonization schemes” meant adoption of the US path to prosperity; “then the country will fill up, as ours has done, with European emigrants, from which a stronger and better race will spring. That is Brazil’s hope for the future.”⁴⁶⁴

Smith’s perspective on the colony was reflected in other writings about it published in US newspapers. As time passed, though they ceased publishing letters from the emigrants themselves, they continued to report back on the state of the Hastings colony. The New York Times published an extensive report about the Amazon in 1874 that mentions the Hastings colony, closely mimicking Smith’s views on it. As Smith would later write, the article’s author claimed that “the greater part of the number were ‘roughs’ from Mobile, who, after remaining six months, attempting to ‘clean out the town’ and badly scaring the inhabitants, left the country, greatly to the joy of the of the natives and those of the emigrants who remained.”⁴⁶⁵ Like Smith did, the article claimed that those who remained “were compelled to atone for the faults of their companions, and years of suffering elapsed before they were enabled to convince the people that they had come there with the intention of living an upright and industrial life.”⁴⁶⁶ In the end, the “upright” and “industrial” colonists did meet their objective, the report argues, and as a result, the “praises” of the colony were being “sounded throughout the Valley of the Amazon.”⁴⁶⁷ The article then shifts from a description of the colony to a description of the “universal cry for emigration” in Brazil, stating that “the Government and every intelligent person is well aware that the welfare and power of the country depend almost solely on its

⁴⁶³ Ibid.
⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.
⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.
⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.
agricultural advantages." The author then expresses bewilderment at the fact that the Brazilian government recognizes this fact at the same time as it pursues a “course that is certain to crush all enterprise and render futile any attempt of the agriculturist.” The article places the bulk of the blame on the export tax which caused the lowering of the price of labor to the point that only “very unreliable” “Indian labor” could be used. Import duties are cited as another factor that also caused the colonists, to remain “very bitter in their denunciation of the Brazilian Government for its treatment of them.” Government laws, according to this report, were getting in the way of the land’s natural destiny, for “if it were not for the export and import tax there is scarcely a product that could be raised in the valley in which Brazil could not undersell any other country in the world. The earth is unsurpassed in its fertility.” All of this did not mean that Amazonian emigration was a net negative, however, for the climate was “delightful” and “every one seems to agree that nowhere in the world can a man exist with so little exertion.”

Though Smith never mentions it, halfway through his time in the Santarém area, US naval ships were sent to Belém with the purpose of transporting US emigrants who wished to return to the US. An article published in Memphis, Tennessee’s Public Ledger in January 1876 entitled “The Exiled Southerners” reports on the docking of the USS Swatara in Belém on December 2, 1875. The USS Swatara was one of several ships sent to Belém to return exiles home to the US. According to the article, after the departure of the Swatara for the US, only four US citizens remained within a fifty-mile radius of Belém. According to this article, fifty

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468 Ibid.
469 Ibid.
470 Ibid.
471 Ibid.
472 Ibid.
473 Ibid.
474 Ibid.
“refugees” had already returned to the US aboard the USS Guerriere, in addition to another thirty-seven aboard the USS Quinnebaug in 1869. These ships had been sent to Belém by the US consul there as a solution to the government of Pará’s inability to hold up its end of the bargain according to the terms of the contract signed with Hastings. Despite this exodus, the article portrays ex-Confederate colonization as an overall success, pointing to ways in which US settlers had in fact overcome difficulties and taken advantage of the opportunities with which the Amazon provided them. The article begins by praising “the sending of a government vessel to a point distant some 4000 miles for the purpose of bringing back to their own land voluntary exiles” as a sure sign that the US had entered an era of “reconciliation” in “recognition of a common nationality, which has outlived the asperities of civil war.” It describes the exiled southerners as victims of “‘our late unpleasantness,’” who had been “unwilling to submit to the results of the struggle.” This telling of the story of the US colonists is one of the few to make explicit the connection between the decision to emigrate and slavery. It reads: “how dazzling was the prospect to those emigrants. Before them lay a hand, vast in extent, rich in precious stones, possessing a fertile soil, tilled by the same slave labor to which they had been accustomed.”

Rather than fixate on the return home of US citizens, the article focuses on portraying the Santarém colony as the “largest and most successful” out of all the Brazilian colonies. Though many of the original settlers had soon lost interest in Brazil, the article states that it was clear that many had not lacked in “industry” and

475 Ibid.
476 Neelman, A migração confederado ao Brasil, 225.
478 Ibid.
479 Ibid.
480 Ibid.
“perseverance.” They had succeeded in making butter and growing sugar cane, for “on their tables was spread the first butter ever made in the province of Para, it having been always previously believed that the milk was of too poor a quality for its production.” Another practice that had changed since the arrival of the *confederados* was the cultivation of sugar cane in Santarém itself, rather than the buying of sugar cane from the city of Belém. The “southern gentlemen” had demonstrated that “cane can be grown just as well in Brazil as in Louisiana.” This marked the successful transplantation of US practices to a Brazilian context, which this article writer, like so many others, viewed as a positive transformation that proved the colonists right in their mission to settle the Amazon.

Another US scientist who visited the *confederados* in Santarém while traveling through the Amazon echoed the celebrations of the colonists as bearers of progress. In 1870, Presbyterian pastor and naturalist from New York James Orton (1830-1877) published his observations in a book entitled *The Andes and the Amazon*, in which he repeated the notion that the Confederate settlers did not represent the best of the US, the majority being “roughs” from Mobile, Alabama. He did, however, believe that Amazonia would be “indebted” to the *confederados* “for some valuable ideas.” Citing British naturalist Henry Bates who had also written about his travels through the Amazon and claimed that butter production seemed impossible, Orton wrote that “these Anglo-Saxon immigrants have no difficulty in making butter.” Orton also saw a comparison with Louisiana helpful in proving the success of the colonists: “Santarem sends to Para for sugar; but the cavaliers of Alabama are proving that the

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481 Ibid.
482 Ibid.
483 Ibid.
485 Ibid.
486 Ibid.
sugar-cane grows better than in Louisiana." The introduction of a supposedly previously nonexistent practice – butter production – and the successful adaptation of US sugar cane-growing methods represented the superior capabilities of US Anglo-Saxons to alter the Amazonian landscape.

For a number of reasons, however, as Orton saw it, successful agricultural production was still yet to take place on a large scale in the Amazon. While Smith emphasized Brazilian laws as a major impediment, Orton laid the bulk of the blame on what he considered to be Brazilian laziness. According to him, “Brazilians will not work; European immigrants are traders; nothing can be done with Indians; and negroes are few in number, the slave-trade being abolished, emancipation begun, and the Paraguayan war not ended.” The upshot was that Brazilians were not “not ambitious, but content to live and enjoy what nature spontaneously offers.” The fact that “the most” a Brazilian desired was “farina and coffee, a hammock and cigar,” made it inevitable that “a laboring class will ever be a desideratum in this tropical country.” Orton did not share Smith’s contempt for the Brazilian government, claiming that “Providence” had not only bestowed Brazil with natural “bounties of every description, but also an emperor with “a wise and understanding heart” who was the head of government that was a “happy blending of imperial dignity and republican freedom.” Like others, Orton denounced what he saw as the laziness of indigenous people and articulated it as a major contributing factor to an overall ethos of Brazilian laziness.

At the same time, though he viewed Brazilian laziness as a hindrance to progress, Orton, as many writers previously had, maintained that the Amazon

487 Ibid., 252.
488 Ibid., 323.
489 Ibid.
490 Ibid., 323, 243-4.
491 Ibid., 324.
naturally did not require labor. Ballard Dunn, in fact, concluded that “vicious Europeans” were “not improved morally, intellectually, nor industrially by emigration” to Brazil.\textsuperscript{492} Instead, emigrants “easily fall into the indolent habits of the more virtuous and ingenuous natives of the lower classes.”\textsuperscript{493} Whereas in their native lands, labor was “compulsory,” in Brazil they could “subsist almost without exertion.”\textsuperscript{494} According to Orton, it was “the paradise of the lazy” where “life may be maintained with as little labor as in the Garden of Eden,” making it a perfect location for an extension of US empire.\textsuperscript{495} Harkening back to Maury’s ambitions to incorporate the Amazon into a vast empire beyond the Brazilian one, Orton ended this section of his book with this declaration: “God bless the Empire of the South!”\textsuperscript{496}

**Conclusion**

The observations of both colony insiders and outsiders speak to a conflict between preconceived notions about the Amazon and the on-the-ground realities for US colonists in Santarém. Where the colonists had failed, these writers called their character into question. The often-referred-to “roughs” were unsuited to life in the Amazon because they lacked the commitment to the hard work necessary for successful cultivation of crops. This belief existed in contradiction with the notion so frequently repeated before emigration took place, that the Amazon was so bountiful that it required little work in order to reap the benefits. Where the colonists had succeeded, the colonists and those who visited them extolled the unique ingenuity of white US citizens as the cause of such success. In the face of actual settlement, the

\textsuperscript{492} Dunn, *Brazil, the Home for Southerners*, 132.
\textsuperscript{493} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{494} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{495} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{496} Orton, *The Amazon and the Andes*, 324.
*confederados* and their visitors were confronted with new information and realities. In spite of this, they continued to describe the Amazon and the colony with the same racist and imperial terms that had been used to incite westward expansion in the US and immigration to Brazil. The ways in which the colony were portrayed would have powerful connections to the ways in which the *confederados* conducted themselves in their daily lives.
Chapter Four

Following the Beckoning of the Rainbow: Slavery, Race, and Labor in the Confederados’ Santarém

In a way, Hastings presented *The Emigrants’ Guide to Brazil* as a referendum on the belief in racism and the right to depend on the enslavement of other humans as guiding principles. Whether he consciously meant to or not, Hastings implied that all that he and his fellow Confederates had fought and killed for during the Civil War was potentially not the ultimate truth. Perhaps the shadow of a doubt Hastings felt regarding the justice of slavery emanated from his origins in Ohio, a state in which slavery had never been legal. As opposed to most of the colonists he assembled, Hastings spent his formative years in a place where slavery was not a fundamental aspect of life. Having never owned slaves himself, it is possible Hastings felt a weaker attachment to the institution. He refused to delve deeply into the question of slavery in his book, however, as many southern US intellectuals had done in the antebellum period. While discussing slavery in Brazil, Hastings states: “whether slavery as a system of labor, is beneficial or not, whether there is a certain menial class of men designed by nature as ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water,’ in my opinion admit of no discussion, and if it did, could not properly be discussed in a work of this character.” This sentence should not obscure the fact that Hastings had no doubts about the inferiority of blacks, and the necessity of segregation, as he makes clear in his injunctions to future colonists to avoid racial intermixing.

Though Hastings was unwilling to issue a verdict on the ultimate goodness of slavery, he did not hesitate to provide US southerners with the opportunity to continue its practice. Some of his colonists would go on to own slaves in Brazil, despite the empire’s preparations for slavery’s abolition. Owning slaves required

sufficient capital, however, which many *confederados* would have lacked after the financial losses of US southerners in the Civil War. Hiring indigenous laborers, instead, would provide *confederados* with the means by which to perpetuate a social order similar to the one that had been the foundation of the Confederacy. If Hastings was unsure if there existed a “certain menial class” designed for labor in the service of others, his colonists would affirm that there was. The reliance on indigenous labor served to reinforce a belief in the destiny of whites to rule over others and profit from their subjugation.

Hastings concludes his short digression regarding slavery and the relative “equality” of blacks and whites in Brazil by quoting a verse from William Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*: “leaving this dark subject, among the many mysteries of the impenetrable future, I will not pretend to advise, but will merely say, to those of my friends, who go, as well as those who stay: “black spirits and white, red spirits and gray; mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.”498 Though Hastings claims not to be interested in advising the future colonist what to do, his racist stance is clear. The verse from Shakespeare is meant to invoke racial intermixing as posing a clear threat to those for whom sharp racial distinctions had been the basis of their society and self-conception. Hastings’ colonists would go on to “mingle,” in the sense that they developed close relationships with Brazilians, including non-white ones, and married into Brazilian families. This happened, however, without the reversal of the social order to which they were so attached. Living in Santarém would not require them to drastically alter the terms by which they understood the world; rather, it would allow them to form identities that adapted to local realities while remaining loyal to the system that governed their antebellum US lives.

498 Ibid., 99.
In this chapter, I describe some of the slaveholding practices of the
*confederados* and place them in the greater historical context of Brazilian and US
conceptions of slavery and racism. I then show how *confederados* lived out their mini
“empire of the South” through embodying identities that fused their US-ness with
their newfound Brazilianness. I raise examples of Brazilian thought about race and
the Amazon and show how the *confederados* fit into these narratives. I argue that the
ways in which they lived demonstrates their determination to maintain their
conceptions of themselves as superior whites in opposition to the non-white
conceptual other.

**Confederados, Slavery, and Freedom**

US scientists were not the only visitors to the *confederado* colony. In 1875,
famous Brazilian botanist João Barbosa Rodrigues (1842-1909) published the book
*Exploration and Study of the Amazon Valley*, the result of a study that had been
commissioned by the Brazilian government. In it, he offers a description of the
Taperinha plantation. He writes that the plantation was managed by “the intelligent
American Rhome,” and credits Rhome for the recent positive transformations at
Taperinha.499 According to Rodrigues, “farming and industry” were absent from
Santarém, and the southern immigrants were the “only workers who demonstrate
what the municipality of Santarém could be when it recognizes the need to work and
for emigration to flow there.”500

Herbert Smith’s and Rodrigues’ discussion of Rhome’s great success in the
Amazon revolves around the settlers’ adaptation to white Brazilian modes of

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500 “Lavoura e indústria,” “os únicos lavradores que mostram o que poderá ser o município de
Santarém quando reconhecerem a necessidade de trabalhar e a emigração para ahi afluir,” Ibid., 20.

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behavior. Smith continues to participate in a discourse similar to that of the antebellum era about the necessity of specifically white US skills in order for success in the Amazon to be possible. Yet his emphasis on Rhome’s use of Brazilian slaves as essential to his success begs the question of how different white Brazilians and US whites conducted themselves in slave societies. Rhome was one of the confederado colony’s most financially successful members. The kind of economic life in which he participated in Brazil was not new to him, however. His business acumen and familiarity with plantation and slave labor gained from life in the US South suited him perfectly to take advantage of many of the economic opportunities Hastings had pronounced available.

Like Hastings, Rhome was born in a northern state, and eventually became a southern resident and supporter of the Confederacy. Born in New York in 1835, his family moved to Texas twenty years later. He married a southern woman, Missouri Robertson, in 1857, and in 1861, he enlisted in the First Texas Infantry in the cause of the Confederacy. He fought in the first Battle of Bull Run in Virginia, and soon after, left the forces due to his failing health. In Texas, Rhome had been a successful planter whose wealth and standing was tied to his ownership of slaves. Census records show that, in 1860, he owned five slaves in Texas, the value of which was placed at $1,000.  

It is no accident, then, that Rhome was able to become a slave owner in Brazil. Records from 1872 show that Rhome was the owner of twenty-seven slaves. According to available records of slave purchases, between 1870 and 1878, the confederados bought a total of thirty-three slaves. Many confederados who owned slaves in the US did not buy any in Brazil. Previous to the abolition of slavery in the

502 Ibid.
503 Ibid., 279.
US, Josiah Pitts owned one slave, Vaughn forty-eight, Mendenhall twenty-three, and Hennington thirty-four. None of them would go on to own slaves in Brazil. Others, on the other hand, owned no slaves in the US, and went on to purchase slaves in Brazil. John Dunkin Emmet bought one slave, accompanied by her free-born daughter, in 1878.\textsuperscript{504}

One of David Riker’s slaves, Vicente asked Riker for his liberty, which Riker agreed to grant him after four more years of enslaved service. Riker publicized his intention to do so in \textit{Baixo-Amazonas} in 1881, writing that his freedom was the result of his love for and dedication to work, and stating that in recompense, Riker had given Vicente a permanent job on his plantation.\textsuperscript{505} Riker lauded himself for his generosity in the announcement he published, contributing to long-standing efforts seen across slave societies, including the US and Brazil, to portray slaveholders as paternal benefactors. Though Riker freed Vicente, he still could not imagine a world in which Vicente attained the same social status as he did. For him, granting liberty to a “loyal” slave, who, in his mind, had never resisted his position, did not mean that he considered Vicente to be an equal, and thus, human. In the same way that Hastings questioned that slavery was the best and most just system, without believing in any sense of racial equality, Riker accepted Vicente’s right to receive payment for his labor, without imagining a world in which Vicente could live entirely independently of his owner turned employer. In freeing Vicente, Riker, in a certain way, continued to be the benevolent, generous, and paternal master that was used to justify slavery as a societal good, not only for whites, but also for blacks. It was Riker, not Vicente, that decided whether or not Vicente deserved freedom – and this

\textsuperscript{504} Ibid., 283.
\textsuperscript{505} Guilhon de Azevedo, \textit{Os confederados em Santarém}, 152.
freedom would also be restricted by Riker, who would continue to profit from his labor.

As the debate over slavery intensified in the US, slavery’s biggest defenders were deeply invested in portraying slavery as a benign institution. Southern planters and their allies used racist beliefs grounded in interpretations of Christianity and in the science of the time to maintain that black people were biological inferiority. Rather than a cruel evil, they argued, slavery was an ultimate positive good, which provided a class of people born to labor with permanent housing and basic sustenance. US slaveholder John Henry Hammond articulated this idea very explicitly in his speech to the US Senate in 1858. Unlike Hastings, in his comment about the ultimate usefulness of slavery, Hammond had no doubts about slavery’s purpose. In his speech, he argues that “in all social systems there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. That is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. Its requisites are vigor, docility, fidelity.”\textsuperscript{506} Whiteness, Hammond makes clear, could not exist without blackness, for “such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement.”\textsuperscript{507} This distinction between the two “classes” or races “constitutes the very mud-sill of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build either the one or the other, except on this mud-sill.”\textsuperscript{508} Slavery and the divide it produced, then, were necessary, and mandated by a destiny outside of human control, as the South, “fortunately” had “found a race adapted to that purpose to her hand. A race inferior to her own, but eminently qualified in temper, in vigor, in docility, in capacity to stand the climate, to answer all

\textsuperscript{506} John Henry Hammond, “Cotton is King,” March 4, 1858, Teachingamericanhistory.org.
\textsuperscript{507} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{508} Ibid.
her purposes. We use them for our purpose, and call them slaves.”

The slaveowner, in this formulation, became a generous benefactor, or a kind father, who provided for enslaved people’s needs. This system was simple, for Hammond, as “slaves are black, of another and inferior race. The status in which we have placed them is an elevation. They are elevated from the condition in which God first created them, by being made our slaves.” Pro-slavery Brazilians made similar arguments, and so did foreign visitors who observed slavery’s practice there. After all, slavery was a hemispheric phenomenon and US southerners saw the defense of slavery as a hemispheric issue.

While visiting an estate at the junction of the Guamá and Capim rivers on his trip through the Amazon, Alfred Wallace commented on the slavery he saw practiced there. The result of what he viewed as the benevolent attitude of the plantation owner towards the fifty people he enslaved was that they were “perhaps as happy as children: they have no care and no wants, they are provided for in sickness and old age, their children are never separated from them, nor are husbands separated from their wives.” At this particular plantation, then, he concluded, “slavery is perhaps seen under its most favourable aspect, and, in a mere physical point of view, the slave may be said to be better off than many a freeman.” Wallace, in fact, went on to articulate that this type of practice of slavery did “an injury to the cause of freedom, by rendering people generally unable to perceive the false principles inherent in the system.” US diplomat and writer John Esaias Warren (1827-1896) also remarked on what he witnessed to be the benevolent nature of Brazilian slavery in his

509 Ibid.
510 Ibid.
511 For more on this topic, see Stanley Stein’s *Vassouras, A Brazilian Coffee County, 1850-1900, the Roles of a Planter and Slave in a Planation Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985).
512 Wallace, *Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro*, 84.
513 Ibid.
514 Ibid.
travelogue, Pará; or, Scenes and Adventures on the Banks of the Amazon. In it, Warren writes approvingly of slavery in Pará: “the Brazilians are noted for the kindness which they exercise towards their slaves, and this is particularly the case at Para. They are here treated with extraordinary clemency by their masters, and but little labor comparatively is required of them.”

This was far from the case on Rhome’s plantation, where Rhome profited from the grueling, daily labor he imposed upon his slaves. Hastings had mostly been correct in predicting that colonists would have to be prepared to devote their own physical labor in order to make it in the Amazon. Rhome, however, is one of the exceptions to this rule. Rather than change course from the pre-Civil War life of comfort he had lived on a plantation in Texas, Rhome took full advantage of the Brazilian racial categories that would enable him to make money off of enslaved black labor and cheap indigenous labor. Through his participation in slave-reliant businesses at Taperinha, Rhome gained access to the highest echelons of Santarém society.

Mentions of Rhome and Taperinha in Santarém’s local newspaper, Baixo-Amazonas, provide a glimpse into the new life he led. In the very first edition of the newspaper, the front-page article declaring the opening of the newspaper stated one of the purposes of the paper as a propaganda tool to encourage immigration. By advertising the advantages of life in the Lower Amazon, the paper hoped to “establish a current of emigration, the only element necessary for the Lower Amazon to become the most important and richest province of the Empire.” The “political colors” of the newspaper, according to the article, were clearly defined – above all, it

515 John Esaias Warren, Para; or, Scenes and adventures on the banks of the Amazon (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1851), 65.
516 “estabelecer uma corrente de emigração, único elemento necessário para que o Baixo-Amazonas venha a ser por si só a mais importante e rica província do Império,” Untitled article, Baixo-Amazonas, Jul. 1, 1872, Biblioteca Nacional Digital do Brasil.
desired the rule of law and progressive development.\textsuperscript{517} In the second edition of the newspaper, published on July 6, 1872, the front-page article pronounced that Santarém had the potential to become the center of great commerce, as long as colonization was facilitated. The article claims that the US settlers already in the city could attest to the fertility of the soil. What was needed, then, was a large increase in immigrants: “we need bodies, and intelligent men, who will take advantage of the rich natural treasures, cultivating our fertile lands and the immense forests of this vast territory, which if populated and cultivated like England or France, would make up a state whose alliance would be sought out by other nations.”\textsuperscript{518} Immigration would serve to compensate for the coming end of slave labor, thus enabling Brazil to maintain its status as an economic world power.

\textit{Baixo-Amazonas} was also a voice-piece for the Conservative Party, which represented the interests of Brazil’s plantation-owners, thus serving an important function for people like Pinto, the newspaper’s founder, and the Macambiras, a branch of his family. The Conservative Party had reigned in the Brazilian Empire since 1838, and it would continue to until the empire’s collapse. From its inception, it had represented the interests of the country’s slaveholding elite, and as such, the maintenance of their power was necessarily linked to slavery. For the Conservatives, as Ricardo Salles writes, slavery was “a fact of life,” and thus, “something inevitable in Brazilian historical and geographical conditions, something that could not be irresponsibly attacked without compromising the who social and political order.”\textsuperscript{519} This meant, that they “understood that the expansion, maintenance, and when the

\textsuperscript{517} “cores políticos,” Ibid.
\textsuperscript{518} “Necessitamos de braços, e de homens inteligentes, que se aproveitem dos ricos thesouros naturaes, cultivando as terras ferteis, e as immensas florestas d’este vastissimo territorio, que se fosse povoado, e cultivado como a Inglaterra e a França, formaria um estado, cuja alliança seria desejada por outras nações,” Ibid.
\textsuperscript{519} Dale W. Tomich, \textit{The Politics of the Second Slavery}, 163.
time came, gradual end of slavery was the quintessence and the social source of their political power.”

While the Conservative Party came to accept slavery’s eventual demise, the material published in *Baixo-Amazonas* demonstrates that, up until the very end, slavery’s continuation remained a principal concern for the elites of the Lower Amazon. Besides using the paper to make announcements about products locals were selling and political goings-on, it frequently published news regarding the escape of their human property. An announcement in the July 6, 1872 edition of the paper declares that Taperinha had become the joint property of “Pinto & Rhone” on April 6 of that year. Bordering another *confederado*, E. S. Wallace’s property, the plantation included a sawmill, a plot of cacao trees, cattle, and fields for the cultivation of various other goods like the ones of which Hastings hoped *confederados* would make the most. In addition to its principal endeavor – the production of sugar – Taperinha also produced wines, tobacco, mandioca, cashew, corn, rice, and beans. Rhone introduced a new technology to Taperinha – a water-powered mill that was not only a novelty in the region, but also the most powerful. Guilhon de Azevedo writes that under Rhone’s “dynamic and efficient administration,” Taperinha “knew its most prosperous days,” and its success surpassed all the other existing properties in the township. Like most *confederado* plantations in Santarém, Taperinha produced sugar that was then distilled into rum. The increased power and efficiency of Rhone and Pinto’s mills did not lead to a diminished use of enslaved labor, however, as black slaves cut the sugar cane and fed it into the mill, among other tasks.

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520 Ibid., 161.
523 Ibid.
524 Ibid.
Like Macambira, Pinto and many of her other descendants were subject to the continued loss of people they claimed as slaves, which heightened during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Instead of continuing to serve these Lower Amazonian elites and endure their brutal treatment, slaves fled to quilombos or mocambos deep within the Amazon where they hoped they would be out of the reach of their former owners and the society that insisted on their un-freedom. Quilombos were aspects of the larger phenomenon of marronage – the process of escaping from slavery – present throughout Brazil and other slaveholding societies since the earliest days of slavery’s development as an institution in the Americas. They were autonomous or semi-autonomous communities formed by maroons, or fugitive slaves, as well as other types of fugitives and marginal members of society. Because of their ubiquity and the threat they represented to the slave order, Brazilian quilombos were under constant attack by local governments who sought to destroy them.

Black slaves were first brought to the Lower Amazon in the second half of the eighteenth century, and were used in various economic pursuits, primarily cacao cultivation, livestock breeding, and subsistence farming. As slavery became an established fact of life in the Lower Amazon, so did quilombos. Steere seems to be the first US observer to comment on the presence of quilombos in the Lower Amazon. Steere defines these as “settlements” that “exist in the vicinity of nearly all the large towns in Brazil, at least the northern part of it,” and are “cut off entirely from law and religion and civilization, except through the rare visit of the Portuguese traders.” These men mostly traded cachaça for “tobacco and balsam copaiva.” Steere also mentions that “poor Italian Priests” imbued with a “missionary spirit”

527 Ibid.
journeyed to the settlements for the purpose of offering their residents baptism.\(^{528}\)

For Steere, the existence of these communities of “outcasts” proved outside observers wrong about slavery in Brazil.\(^{529}\) If so many enslaved people had felt the need to escape slavery and preferred to live in far-off, destitute communities, than it was impossible that slavery was the benevolent institution many claimed it to be.

Steere references Herndon’s report about his explorations of the Amazon, writing that he gives a “very pleasing picture of slavery in Brazil, representing them as always fat and happy.”\(^{530}\) Steere’s perception of this issue is altered by his awareness of mocambos, which for Steere, proved “that even in Brazil where the work in light and the pleasures many, the negroes prefer a life of freedom with all its privations to one of slavery.”\(^{531}\) Some of the people to resist slavery through escape and possible settlement in a mocambo were the very people owned by Rhome, who Steere so highly praised.

While Pinto and Rhome were making their success known in *Bai xo-Amazonas*, they were also announcing the escapes of the people upon which such success was dependent. The refusal on the part of the people they enslaved to submit to the subjugation Pinto and Rhome attempted to impose, represents the conflicting understandings of freedom of Rhome and the people whose freedom he attempted to curb. Rhome saw his settlement in the Amazon as a quest for freedom, but his freedom was the very opposite for others.

Eleven days later after the paper announced the inception of “Pinto & Rhome,” its announcement section notified readers that tobacco of a “superior

\(^{528}\) Ibid.

\(^{529}\) Ibid.

\(^{530}\) Ibid.

\(^{531}\) Ibid., 143-4
quality” was being sold from Taperinha at a “reasonable price.” In October, more news from Taperinha reached the public. This time, two enslaved people, Generaldo and Luiz, had escaped and “Pinto & Rhome” were promising a generous reward to whoever captured and returned them. Generaldo was described as a mulatto (of mixed white and black descent) cook between the ages of sixteen and eighteen. Luiz is described as a twenty to twenty-two year-old fieldworker who was both a carafuz (a person of mixed black and indigenous descent) and a curiboculo (a Tupi word for a person of mixed indigenous and white descent) as the son of a Tapuia (a vague term applied to indigenous people that did not speak Tupi). Luiz and Generaldo, who were natives of Santarém, according to Pinto, fled the plantation with the help of the twenty-two-year-old tapuio José Miguel, from the town of Melgaço, close to Bom Jardim, where many of the Macambira family’s slaves lived as quilombolas.

Below this announcement is another of the same nature posted by another Macambira – Maria Thereza Pereira – who was also demanding the return of two fugitive slaves. These were the “raven black” twenty or twenty-one-year-old Francisco, and Thomé a twenty-one or twenty-two year-old carafuz man from Alenquer on the opposite side of the Amazon River. “It is suspected,” writes Macambira, “that they left for the capital on the steamboat Madeira” where they had recently been sighted. Placed below this advertisement is yet another one that promises not to punish the fugitive slave Angelo if he voluntarily returned to his owner. This slave-owner’s hesitance to implement routine punishment, exposes the power, no matter how limited, the near impossibility of access to and control of quilombos could have over slave society.

534 “Suspeita-se que seguirão para a capital no vapor Madeira,” Ibid.
The Creation of a Confederado Identity

A report from the president of Pará in 1868 pronounced that the arrival of the confederados in Santarém was “the dawn of a new era of prosperity and progress.”\(^{535}\) Rhome’s forming of a society with Pinto, however, represents an upholding of the status quo more than anything else. While Rhome and other confederados infiltrated the natural environment and economic life of the area with the introduction of new technology like the water mill, more significantly, they immediately began participating in the same practices that facilitated the wealth and status of the local elite. The confederados, however, were not the only ones to impact the local economy. According to an 1876 Baixo-Amazonas article, traders had “abandoned the commerce of the towns in order to burrow themselves in the jungle where they established business-places only for traffic with the slaves.”\(^{536}\) Eurípedes Funes, in his study of some of the some of the quilombos of the Lower Amazon, writes that it is important to recognize that the confederados settled in “spaces where quilombola lands were found, establishing with Afro-Amazonians a relationship beyond being solely neighbors, as there existed an ‘ethnic mixture’ that marked the origin of some quilombola families.”\(^{537}\)

Though having lived in close proximity to large communities of maroons, and the possibility of having children with members of these communities, represents a singularity of the confederado experience in the Amazon, many of the ways in which the confederados conducted themselves in their new lives shows a marked interest in preserving their identity. They were able to express and enact fundamental elements of their identity outside of the US. Though they adapted to aspects of life in Brazil that were previously unknown to them in the US, they managed to maintain

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\(^{535}\) Guilhon de Azevedo, *Confederados em Santarém*, 92.

\(^{536}\) Funes, “Bom Jardim, Murumurutuba, Murumuru...,” 14.

\(^{537}\) Ibid., 6.
many of the same customs, like slavery for some, that governed their pre-emigration lives.

In his explanation for the phenomenon of Confederate emigration, Eugene Harter writes that in the Southern US, during Reconstruction, “the haughty planter was to be taught a lesson in humility. He would have to ask for a pardon before his citizenship would be restored.” If slaveholders could not bear the prospect of repenting for spending four years at war in the name of the right to own human property, then emigration presented an opportunity to evade this humiliation.

After having immigrated to Santarém and established themselves in the community there, the confederados had the opportunity to officially take on Brazilian citizenship. Records show, however, that several colonists refused this privilege, instead formally declaring that they wished to remain citizens of their birthplace. The following colonists, all prominent and successful ones, went to the Municipal Chamber in Santarém in 1890 and 1891 to personally declare this desire: Josiah Pitts, Fountain Pitts, H. Vaughan, Eduardo J. Henninger, David Bowman Riker, Rómulo João Rhome, Josiah H. Pitts, Jr., James J. Thomas Riker, and Ethelender Vaughan. Though the spelling of many of their names had been adapted to mimic Portuguese orthography, marking a certain degree of acceptance of the local language, these men chose to reinforce their US Americanness, over twenty years after permanently abandoning the US. What this indicates is continued capacity for attachment to the US, now that the daily lives of these colonists was detached from the reality of the defeat of slavery that had prompted their self-selected exile.

538 Harter, *The Last Colony of the Confederates*, ix.
539 “Declarações de estrangeiros que não aceitaram a naturalização brasileira,” 1891, Arquivo Público do Estado do Pará.
While these *confederados* rejected Brazilian naturalization, in 1891, Richard Hennington, accepted it, along with E.S. Wallace.\(^{540}\) In his old age, Richard Hennington expressed his contentedness with his decision to emigrate, claiming that in Santarém “we enjoy a perfect peace; no political abstractions or military oppression. We remain in the shade of our vineyard and our fig tree, and nobody bothers or perturbs us so as to make us fearful, serving God according to the dictates of our conscience.”\(^{541}\) Having only lived in the postbellum US for a short time, Hennington was still convinced that in the US, he and his fellow southerners would not have been able to enjoy peace and freedom. For Hennington, the Civil War and Reconstruction had created a permanent association of oppression with life in the US. Hennington’s life had depended on the oppression of others – the thirty-four people he enslaved in the US – yet, for him, oppression had taken root only when slavery came under threat. This was his myth, though he did not see it as such.

Robert Riker’s obituary, published in 1883 in *Baixo-Amazonas*, speaks to the concurrent phenomenon of the heavy degree of integration into the local community experienced by some of the *confederados*. It states that “he had to immigrate to Brazil, fatigued by the political struggles and the Civil War in his country, adopting this motherland, having to tolerate with stoic resignation many hardships that chance prepared for him.”\(^{542}\) The obituary claimed that Riker had been heard to say: “I adopted this land as my motherland; in her I have spent my capital; in her I intend to be buried.”\(^{543}\) Though David Riker would later reject the opportunity to become a

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\(^{540}\) Guilhon de Azevedo, *Os confederados em Santarém*, 169.

\(^{541}\) “Aqui dispomos de uma paz perfeita; nem abstrações políticas nem opressão militar. Permanecemos a sombra de nosso vinhedo e nossa figueira e ninguém nos incomoda ou perturba a fim de nos fazer receiosos, servindo a Deus de acordo com os ditames de nossa consciência,” Ibid., 170.

\(^{542}\) “Teve ao emigrar para o Brasil, fatigado das lutas políticas e da guerra civil em seu paiz, adoptando esta pátria, de suportar com resignação stoica muitos reveses que a sorte lhe preparava,” Ibid., 153.

\(^{543}\) “Adoptei esta terra como minha pátria; nela tenho empregado meus capitães; nela pretendo sepultar-me.” Ibid.
naturalized Brazilian, he accepted a symbolic designation of his belonging to the community of Santarém. The Municipal Chamber of Santarém conferred upon him the title of “citizen of Santarém” and thanked him for “the meritorious and inestimable services that he realized as cultivator of the land and consequent collaborator with the native man for the civilization and progress of Santarém.” In 1900, the President of Brazil bestowed upon another son of Robert Riker’s, Herbert/o the title of “Major of the National Guard,” and was from then on was known as “Major Riker.” Herbert/o served as Santarém city councilman several times, as well as president of the City Council.

In 1895, another prominent confederado, William Jennings, who went by the Brazilianized version of his name – Guilherme – received a tribute as a part of a celebration of the confederado colony during an event commemorating the Proclamation of the Brazilian Republic. In response, Jennings praised “the liberty that reigned in his new homeland and another that he knew in his birth place, of violence and persecution that hurt his soul to remember, since, in reality, he had been one of its victims.” Jennings, would go on to return to the US, while his widow returned to Santarém after her husband’s death. Hastings predicted his colonists would become “patriotic citizens” of Brazil. The story of the two Rikers and Jennings shows that it was possible to be patriots of both Brazil and the US. The decision not to become a naturalized Brazilian was no more a rejection of integration into the Santarém community than the acceptance of the title of “citizen of Santarém” was a refusal to claim attachment to the US as a homeland.

544 “cidadão santareno,” “meritorios e inestimáveis serviços que realizou como desbravador da terra e consequente colaborado do homem nativo pela civilização e progresso de Santarém,” Ibid., 155.
545 Ibid., 157.
546 Ibid.
547 “a liberdade que reinava em sua nova pátria e uma outra que ele conhecerá em sua terra natal, de violências e perseguições que lhe doíam na alma recordar, pois, em verdade, fora ele uma de suas vítimas,” Ibid., 177.
The inventories and wills of Santarém’s *confederados* illuminate some of the ways in which they maintained transnational identities. In many cases, the *confederados’* names are altered to match Portuguese spelling. For example, Robert Riker’s name is changed to “Roberto” in his 1883 will. In an 1889 inventory of Thomas Hennington’s possessions, his middle name is changed from “Henry” to “Henrique” and his last name from “Hennington” to “Henington.” His father Richard’s name is spelled as “Ricardo.” Some of the inventories and wills – Thomas Hennington’s, for example – state that they are translated versions of documents originally written in English.

These colonists did not maintain their connection through solely symbolic means. There is evidence of frequent movement between Brazil and the US, which was documented in both US and Brazilian newspapers. An article in the published in the *Fort Worth Daily Gazette* on June 21, 1884, announced the arrival of R.J. Rhome in Texas to visit his brother Bryan. According to the article, he brought with him several Amazonian fauna specimens, including a monkey and various types of parrots. It is evident that the writer of the article did not see Rhome’s emigration as representing a permanent break with the US. The article states that “Rhome has been away from Texas quite awhile, though he claims to be a Texan native to the heath.” Sixteen years had gone by since the two Rhome brothers had seen each other, but they were on good terms. “The menagerie of curiosities” Romulus had brought with him to the US, in the article writer’s words, was so intriguing that “we longed to be an Amazonian ourselves, if the sun does stand on his head in that tropical clime.” The climate continued to serve as a counterpoint to the upsides of life in the region.

549 Ibid.
That same year, *Baixo-Amazonas* published an announcement that Alberto Riker had returned from his trip to the US. It names Riker as a “hardworking friend, one of the most honest and industrious cultivators of our soil.” In 1872, David Riker’s wife took their two children David and Virginia to the US where they studied for eighteen months before returning to Santarém, having begged their mother to allow them to return home to their estate. In 1882, another Riker family member returned home to the US. This time it was David, who went to represent his family at his sister’s wedding. In 1887, it was the Brazilian Rikers’ turn to receive a visit of their own when a cousin, Clarence Bayley Riker, and his wife visited on their honeymoon. In 1888, David traveled to the US and brought back various goods with which he opened a store with Rhome in Santarém proper. Robert Riker died in 1883, leaving everything in his possession in the United States and in Brazil to his five children, David, Herbert, Sarah, Martin, and Leila. His two sons and his son-in-law, Charles Vaughan, another *confederado*, served as the witnesses to his will. Herbert, however, is noted as having asked for exoneration from serving as the first witness, because he desired to return to the US. Lilla and Charles also returned to the US, choosing to relocate to Tennessee where the Vaughan family lived.

The story of the Hennington family also speaks to this phenomenon of mobility between the US and Brazil. In 1986, *Dallas Life Magazine* published an article written by Richard Hennington’s great-grandson, Gary Maclin. The article narrates the Hennington saga in Brazil based on diaries written by Richard between 1874 and 1894 that were passed down through the generations. Maclin describes how one of

551 Guilhon de Azevedo, *Os confederados em Santarém*, 150.
553 Ibid., 151.
Hennington’s sons Thomas returned to the US in 1878, supposedly in order to study odontology. In the US, he worked in various cities in Tennessee and Mississippi, and returned to Santarém in 1881 when he began to practice dentistry, attending to patients in various neighboring towns.

According to his father’s diaries, Thomas married his Brazilian patient’s daughter Margarida Villa Lobo in 1883. Margarida, referred to as Maggie by her husband, became ill with tuberculosis after the birth of the couple’s third daughter, and Thomas decided it would be best to travel to the US for adequate treatment. The couple left Santarém in April 1888, along with one of their daughters and Thomas’ younger sister Eliza, travelling to the US to study odontology as her brother previously had. They sailed to New York, before taking a train to Jackson, Mississippi. Margarida died in Tennessee before the train reached Thomas’ home state. Before returning to Santarém, the rest of the family continued to their home town of Crystal Springs where they buried Margarida in the Hennington family cemetery. Thomas died of the same illness the next year. In 1890, it was Richard Hennington who returned to the US, this time to retrieve his daughter Eliza. When Richard fell ill in 1892, he decided to return once again to Mississippi with his family, but died before he could realize this plan. Following his death, his wife Mary returned home to Mississippi, while Eliza stayed in Santarém. Richard and Mary’s son Edwin relocated his family to Crystal Springs until Mary’s death in 1895, when he returned to Brazil where he died in 1901.

At home in the US, Robert and David Riker owned a successful wagon and road construction materials business, of which Robert was the president. When the

555 Ibid., 219.
556 Ibid., 219-220
557 Ibid., 221.
first shots of the Civil War were fired in Fort Sumter, South Carolina, Robert was working as a mechanical engineer there.\textsuperscript{558} He then went on to serve in the Confederate Army and would bring with him to Santarém two swords he used during his service. After being received by Pinto in Santarém, Robert and his wife Lilian, and six children, moved to a property he had bought, located about eleven kilometers from the city.\textsuperscript{559} According to Guilhon de Azevedo, before the Riker house was built, his family stayed in a makeshift tent in the jungle where they “greatly feared the Indians,” even though those who lived in this region had long been “pacified.”\textsuperscript{560} Riker was the only\textit{ confederado} to buy lands directly from the government rather than to accept the land grants that had Hastings had chosen.\textsuperscript{561} Whether or not indigenous people did inhabit the lands neighboring the property that Riker purchased, the fear of “wild” and “uncivilized” indigenous people, proved to be a powerful myth, just as it had been on the US frontier.

The last of Robert and Lilian’s children was born in Santarém in 1868, and was named Marlin Amazonas, his middle name an homage to the family’s new home.\textsuperscript{562} Marlin’s Amazonian identity did not keep him from traveling to the US, however. Marlin, according to Guilhon de Azevedo was born with “deficiencies,” which caused his parents to take him twice to the US for treatment.\textsuperscript{563} Marlin’s illness was spoken of superstitiously in the community, and as legend went, when Lilian was in her third month of pregnancy with Marlin, some\textit{ caboclos} (people of mixed European and indigenous descent) brought a “giant sloth” to the Riker plantation, a shocking sight that caused problems for the pregnant Riker.\textsuperscript{564} This story illuminates

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{558} Ibid., 145.
\item \textsuperscript{559} Ibid., 146.
\item \textsuperscript{560} “Tinham muito medo dos índios,” “pacificados.” Ibid., 147.
\item \textsuperscript{561} Ibid., 132.
\item \textsuperscript{562} Ibid., 149.
\item \textsuperscript{563} “deficiências,” Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{564} “uma preguiça gigante,” Ibid., 150.
\end{itemize}
how *confederados* depicted their interactions with non-white Brazilians on specific terms. The arrival of *caboclos* at the Rikers’ door signified an interruption, and the telling of the story of the sloth is a further effort of the *confederados* to reinforce their social distance from *caboclos*. They may have lived in close proximity to *caboclos*, employed their labor, and interacted with them on a daily basis, but the ways in which they interacted with the world, this story affirms, were fundamentally separate. In fact, interaction with *caboclos*, in this case, had produced a negative impact on a yet-unborn *confederado*’s life.

Marriage was another institution that *confederados* used to consolidate their community and mark its separateness from what it saw as negative aspects of Brazilian society. Hastings, like many other US writers, had warned emigrants about the threat posed by mixed-race marriages. It was clear that the immigrants considered it essential to maintain their whiteness in Brazil. When a member of the colony married someone not considered white, however, this did not signify the dissolution of the colony. After David Riker’s first wife, a Brazilian woman named Maria Theodolina Lopes Riker died, he re-married in 1901, this time to a “pretty *cabocla*” named Raimunda Ferreira da Silva.565

Like the US southerners who formed their own nation due to their inability to accept a world in which slavery was not deemed right and natural by law, the members of the Conservative Party could not imagine a Brazilian Empire without slavery. Adherence to such an ideology was not contingent on one’s personal dependence on slavery. As in the antebellum southern US, the majority of Brazilians were not slaveholders, and neither were the majority of white Brazilians. The province of Pará was much less dependent on slavery than other Brazilian provinces,

565 “*cabocla bonita*,” Ibid., 154.
especially the coffee-producing ones of the south. A minority of Pará’s population 
owned slaves, yet abolitionism never took a prominent place in paraense politics, and 
it remained an important slaveholding region until full emancipation took place.566 
Throughout the 1860s, 70s, and 80s, while plans to support immigration to the 
province were being developed and while Colonel Pinto frequently governed, it was 
the Conservative Party that dominated provincial politics in Pará. 

The information contained in the inventories and wills of confederados speaks 
to some of the ways in which they were enmeshed in Santarém’s elite society. Some 
of the confederados had interpreters present at the readings of their inventories and 
will. A Brazilian resident of Santarém and relative of Colonel Pinto’s, José Melloz 
Pereira, served as the officially designated interpreter at the reading of Thomas 
Hennington’s inventory at his father, Richard’s house.567 Also in attendance were 
several other prominent members of elite Santarém society, several of which were 
extended members of Pinto’s family. The documents of other confederados that register 
their debts speak to their level of economic engagement with Santarém’s elites. 
Written all over these documents are the names of Santarém’s biggest slaveholding 
families, who also dominated local politics. One such document is a “confession of 
debt” upon the death of Maria Theolinda Riker, one of David’s wives, in 
1898.568 In it, her heirs waive their right to various of her possessions in order to pay 
a wide range of people, including other members of the Riker family and those of 
several other confederado families, as well as members of Pinto’s extended family, 
which included a Corrêa– one of the most prominent names in Santarém politics. 

567 “Inventariado: Thomas Henrique Henington,” Auto de inventário de bens, Juízo de Orfão, Forum civil, 1889, Centro de Documentação Histórica do Baixo Amazonas. 
568 “Autos cíveis de confissão de dívidas e desistência de domínio e posse de bens que foram os herdeiros da falecida D. Maria Theolinda Riker,” Juízo de Direito, 1898, Centro de Documentação Histórica do Baixo Amazonas.
These long-time Brazilian residents of Santarém owned land in areas neighboring *confederado* properties. These properties also bordered *quilombos*, where members of the Corrêa and Pinto family conducted military campaigns in an effort to obliterate these communities. In this document, Maria Theolinda’s heirs relinquished their rights to land close to Rhome and Pinto’s Taperinha. This included “small plot of land” where cacao was grown in Ituqui, as well as a title to land in Tiningú, both areas that were home to *quilombos* that were constantly assaulted by the local government and armed forces due to their proximity to Santarém proper.569

Whether or not they owned slaves, the decision to immigrate to Santarém speaks to the *confederados*’ abiding attachment to slavery. Slavery, for them, was much more than an economic institution, and their attachment was also psychic and intellectual. Slavery provided them with the terms with which they understood themselves as members of society. Fundamental to their conception of being human was their whiteness, which was made possible by the rigid association of blackness with slavery, and thus with inferiority. If slavery was the natural destiny of blacks, then the natural destiny of whites was to rule over blacks. All whites formed a part of this ruling class, regardless of whether or not they owned slaves, or whether they had sufficient capital to do so. The abolition of slavery, then, signified for the *confederados* the end of their membership ruling class as they knew it. The US without slavery was less recognizable for these southerners than Brazil, despite the obvious and varied differences between the two nations. The language in which they were articulated might have been different, but the terms of the Brazilian order were easily understandable; that is, the *confederados* understood them to be similar, if not identical, to those under which they and their families had long based their humanness and

citizenship. For them, being a US citizen was not rooted in abstract principles. Rather, it depended on the nation’s perpetuation of slavery and the conception of whiteness it enabled.

Remaining in the postbellum US, they thought, would require them to reconceptualize who they were as humans and US citizens. Long-held ideas about the Brazilian Empire propagated throughout the US during the Second Slavery, dovetailed with Brazilian desires to welcome white immigrants who might replace enslaved labor as slavery came to an end. Brazil provided some Confederates with a means by which they might escape having to accept a world in which blacks could be free, voting citizens, a transformation that they saw as being forced upon them by the Yankee conqueror. Emigration presented them with an opportunity to perpetuate a system that 620,000 Confederate soldiers had died seeking to uphold. The US had been founded on the principle that white people were citizens and black people were not. The threat of the abolition of slavery also threatened to subvert the long-accepted order in which black people were prohibited access to citizenship and its symbolic, as well as material benefits. These threats were enough to make maintaining US citizenship unimaginable for US southerners, whether slaveholders or not. When the Confederate project failed, some Confederates found in Brazil a place where citizenship was still contingent upon whiteness. As in the antebellum US, the Brazilian parliamentary system allowed lower-income, non-slaveholding people to vote. Also as in the US, this system, as Salles argues, did not compromise the social hierarchy, and instead was “fundamental to it.”

Rafael Marquese and Tâmis Parron write that “the Confederate States of America went to war alone, but when they sank, they took with them the Brazilian

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Empire and the Spanish rule over Cuba—as well as their dearest dreams of perpetuating black slavery.”  

Emigration to Brazil, then, represented a desperate attempt to deny the fall of the slave order. Though restrictions had been put in place and would continue to be before its full abolition in 1888, enslaved people were still being bought and sold in Brazil, and as long as they had sufficient capital, US southerners could participate in the buying and selling of enslaved labor if they chose to do so. In this way, southerners could go from being Confederates to *confederados*, thus maintaining their identity as members of a slave society. Emigration would mean delaying the moment when they would have to accept living in a society where blacks, too, were citizens.

In a way, Brazilian emigration echoed Thomas Jefferson’s vision of an “empire for liberty.”  

As Walter Johnson argues, this concept had “embedded within it a theory of space.”  

In this vision, white families would migrate West and settle on land there, where they would occupy and farm their own plots of the land. The land would enable them to become self-subsistent farmers who would not depend on receiving wages for their daily needs. They would be, according to Johnson, “self-sufficient, equal, and independent – masters of their own destiny. Necessity would be more than the mother of invention: it would give birth to independence, maturity, freedom.”  

The continual “racial conquest” that took place over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century allowed for the realization, in a sense, of the “empire for liberty.” For the US, the perpetuation of slavery had necessitated territorial expansion, and when there was no further land to conquer to

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571 Ibid., 52
572 Thomas Jefferson, “Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 27 April 1809,” National Archives Founders Online. Note: This just one example of Jefferson’s use of this phrase. He also used the phrase “empire of liberty” in other instances.
574 Ibid.
the west, many US citizens, especially southern ones, had begun thinking beyond the continental US to the nation’s south for mechanisms through which slavery could be protected. As Johnson describes, the lands upon which Jefferson’s “empire for liberty” could be established, became the domains of the slavocracy, where a small elite of slaveholders controlled most of the wealth and reaped most of the benefits from the land. Both slavery and liberty, then, were dependent on expansion. This was not contradictory, as liberty was synonymous with white liberty and necessarily exclusive of the black and indigenous people whose expulsion and oppression made such freedom possible.

Costa de Oliveira believes this was no accident on Hastings’ part. According to her, “for Hastings, such a territorial expansion brought explicitly with it the old idea of acquiring an alternative area for the enslaved black element on the eve of its emancipation. The old theory that it would be possible to reconstitute the slavery regime animated those that advocated for the success of the enterprise.” Costa de Oliveira puts southern emigration in conversation with the pioneer tradition in US history that first brought European immigrants to the continent, and that animated their journeys westward. The myths surrounding what it meant to be southern emerged out of the myths created to justify settlement by the early waves of European immigrants. Costa de Oliveira writes that in defining the ideal US way of life, US citizens shaped the past into what they wanted it to be.

The building blocks of these myths began to come tumbling down after the Civil War, and it was in this way that US southerners saw “their objectives thwarted

575 Ibid., 5.
576 “Para Hastings, tal expansão territorial trazia ainda implícita a antiga idéia de adquirir uma área alternativa para o elemento negro escravo às vésperas de sua emancipação. A velha tese de que seria possível reconstituir o regime escravocrata animava aqueles que propunham o sucesso do empreendimento,” Costa de Oliveira, O destino (não) manifesto, 112.
577 Ibid., 47.
in a long-entrenched system,” causing them to hunt for “their ideal in other territories, thus forcing the retreat from the border.”\textsuperscript{578} For Costa de Oliveira, “deception and frustration combined into one single sentiment, and foreign lands no longer seemed so distant. For them, the curiosity of the past became the hope of the future.”\textsuperscript{579} Thus, “in the mental baggage of the colonists went their values, morals, and their visions of the worlds as essential elements of life.”\textsuperscript{580} Upon immigrating to Brazil and continuing their lives there, Costa de Oliveira argues that the maintenance of the myths that had impelled them to leave the US in the first place continued to be crucial. In fact, it led to the creation of new myths. As Costa de Oliveira writes, the “myth of the eternal return” embedded itself in the “collective psyche” of the immigrants, providing them with “an idyllic image of the distant motherland.”\textsuperscript{581} As confederados, physically distant from the US they could maintain a psychic attachment to their former country, while also maintaining the identity that had caused them to establish a new country – the Confederacy – and war against the US.

The future confederados imagined that in Brazil they would be able to live in a community of their own making, in which they would determine how they conducted their lives and accumulated wealth. Just as the reality in the Mississippi Valley was far different from that which Jefferson had envisioned, there was a dissonance between the Amazon of Hastings’ propaganda, and the Amazon with which the confederados contended in their daily lives. Hastings and others had articulated the principal draw of settlement in Santarém as the easy accessibility to fertile land upon which southerners could rely on the same skills they had employed in the US to obtain profit. Contrary to in the US, the government would not interfere

\textsuperscript{578} Ibid., 51.
\textsuperscript{579} Ibid., 57.
\textsuperscript{580} Ibid., 48.
\textsuperscript{581} “No psiquismo coletivo dos imigrados se instalava o mito do eterno retorno,” “imagem idílica de pátria-mãe distante,” Ibid., 109.
in their financial pursuits in Brazil, meaning that they would be provided with the “liberty” that the US government denied them in the aftermath of the Civil War. Whatever “liberty” the confederados did encounter in the Amazon proves to have often been contingent on the labor of others, whether in the case of the prominent slaveholder Rhome, who does not seem to have profited off the fruits of his own labors, or the widow Mrs. White who depended on indigenous neighbors for her daily sustenance. Though Hastings and others imagined that the colony would consist of southerners united by circumstances and ideology, this did not signify that the colony would constitute the type of “yeoman’s republic” that Jefferson hoped to bring about. Instead, the confederados’ success was dependent on their socioeconomic status previous to emigrating. Those who had been members of the elite at home in the US joined the Santarém elite, thus perpetuating previously existing social hierarchies.

**Brazilian Theories about Race and the Amazon**

While US and European thinkers developed racist views of the former Spanish and Portuguese colonies in general and devised racial categories in which to place their inhabitants, Brazilian thinkers were doing similar work. One prominent writer who fused ideas about race and the Amazon to create his own theories was Brazilian Euclides da Cunha, who Susanna Hecht maintains was “deeply engaged in the political, ideological, and geographical construction of the young Brazilian republic.” He is best known as the writer of one of the most celebrated books in Brazilian history *Rebellion in the Backlands* (*Os sertões* in Portuguese). Published in 1902, it is Da Cunha’s chronicle of the War of Canudos fought between the Brazilian state

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582 Hecht, *The Scramble for the Amazon*, 4.
and a group that had declared its own state in the northeastern state of Bahía. Da Cunha changes his mind throughout the book and ends up expressing a certain degree of admiration for the inhabitants of the Brazilian backlands. He reproduces traditional narratives about the superiority of the white race, and of its destiny to wipe out inferior races. He also creates his own narrative of race in the Amazon that, in some ways countered views of the Amazon as “a tabula rasa waiting for the industrious enterprises, colonists, and civilizing missions of the imperial North and whiter races.”

Race was central to how Da Cunha viewed human life. He believed that “every man is, above everything else, and integration of racial forces, and his brain is a heritage.” The Amazonian man, he believed, had a particular racial heritage that stood out from the inhabitants of all other regions of Brazil. While Most US and European thinkers viewed racial intermixing in Brazil with disgust and considered it to be an impediment in the progress of the Amazon as a whole, Da Cunha articulated a different perspective. He did, however, express the same racial prejudice that so many espoused, and reproduced narratives about racial intermixing as a negative process. Carried out to an extreme, racial mixing, for him signified “retrogression,” which, “in addition to obliterating the pre-eminent qualities of the higher race, serves to stimulate the revival of the primitive attributes of the lower.” The mestizo, then was “degenerate” type “lacking the physical energy of his savage ancestors and without the intellectual elevation of his ancestors on the other side.” Despite these negative attributions, Da Cunha argued that mixed-race people of the North were the only people capable of successfully altering Amazonia. For there, “the inferior race,

583 Ibid., 11.
584 Da Cunha, Rebellion in the Backlands (Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), 86.
585 Ibid., 85.
586 Ibid.
the crude savage dominates over him [the white man]; in league with the
environment, he conquers him, crushes him, annihilates him."587 What was unique
about the inhabitants of the Amazon was that the products of such unions between
white and indigenous people had neither adapted to a “superior social state,” nor
slipped “backward.”588

Rather than lament the fact that racial mixing had not succeed in imposing
“civilization” upon the inhabitants of northern Brazil, he regarded this fact as
necessary for survival in the northern regions.589 Of the northern Brazilian, he writes
that “the vicissitudes of history, by freeing him, in the most delicate period of his
formation, from the disproportionate exigencies of a borrowed culture, have fitted
him for the conquest of that culture some day.”590 Despite possessing a “backward”
“psychic evolution,” “this crossed race” had the “guaranty of a strong, well-
constituted physique,” that gives it an “autonomous” and “original” appearance,
making it so that “unfettered at last of a savage existence, it may attain to civilized life
as a result of the very causes which prevent it from doing so at once.”591

Prominent twentieth century Brazilian writer Clodomir Vianna Moog was a
descendant of confederados who, in his 1936 book O ciclo do ouro negro: impressões da
Amazonia, commented on the way in which race manifested itself in the Amazon.
Vianna Moog describes the Amazon as eliciting a reaction of “cosmic terror.”592 He
agreed with the nineteenth century writers about the incompatibility of white people
with the region, writing that “the white man has not yet thought to identify himself
with the brutal nature of Amazonian tropics.”593 According to him, white settlement

587 Ibid., 61.
588 Ibid.
589 Ibid., 88.
590 Ibid.
591 Ibid.
592 Ibid.
593 Clodomir Vianna Moog, O ciclo do ouro negro: Impressões da Amazônia (Belém; Conselho Estadual de
Cultura, 1936), 32.
in the Amazon, almost without exception, was “provisory.” Only the nomadism of the indigenous peoples was suited to Amazonian lands.

Vianna Moog explains his reasoning in a way similar to how many nineteenth century writers had, labelling the Amazon as distinctly challenged because of its tropicality. He invokes specific facets of the Amazon as a tropical environment that make it unsustainable for others, writing that “he who comes from cold or temperate climes will never conform to the bite of the mosquito, the bite of the piúm, or the horrible burn of the potó.” In order for humans to make any impact on the region, immigration from outside Brazil would not take place on an a very large scale. At the same time, Vianna Moog articulated a perspective similar to Da Cunha’s regarding the role of the caboclo in the Amazon. According to Moog, only he who possessed a mixture of white and indigenous blood was truly suited to life in the Amazon. Vianna Moog’s conclusion ultimately contradicted his claim about large-scale immigration, as he maintained that “the others flee. Only the caboclo stays. His lack of ambition, his conformity adapted him to the land. It is, in the end, the caboclo…who ensures us the possession of the wilderness.”

In his 1954 book Bandeirantes and Pioneers, dedicated to comparing the US and Brazil, Vianna Moog expands on his previously-articulated ideas about the settlement of the Amazon. Moog’s interest in exploring the points of connection between US and Brazilian history, and the racial theories used to explain both, leads him to comment on the confederados. The results of his inquiry resist traditional interpretations of this particular story, and of settlement of the Amazon and Brazil in general. He discusses a US journalist James Edmonds’ attempt to investigate the

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594 Ibid., 33.
595 Ibid., 33. Note: The piúm is a black fly and the potó a beetle.
596 “Os outros fogem. Só o caboclo fica. A sua desambição, a sua conformidade fez dele um adaptado à terra. É afinal o caboclo...quem nos assegura a posse do deserto,” Ibid., 76. Italicization is mine.
confederados of Santarém in 1941 as futile, believing that the nature of the Amazon would have made it impossible for the confederados to have left any traces of their settlement there.

In Santarém, Edmonds did find one of the original confederados still living there, David Riker, who affirmed that he was happy to have stayed in the Amazon, lacking nothing that he needed. Vianna Moog describes this explanation as “profoundly American,” while the general attitude was “profoundly caboclo.” That is, the generally optimistic mentality was distinctly reminiscent of a US outlook towards life, while the refusal to “curse” the many difficulties encountered was an unmistakable feature of caboclo attitudes. For Vianna Moog, then, what had allowed this confederado to triumph was not the purity of his whiteness, but his adaptability to aspects of caboclo life. The available evidence inclined Moog to reject the assertion that “Amazonia had to bend to the omnipotent will of the Teuton” or the “pure Aryan.” Vianna Moog explains the failure of the confederados as rooted in more than a simple incompatibility between white people and the Amazon. Instead, he agrees with Brazilian sociologist José Arthur Ríos that the fundamental cause of confederado failure was the conflict between the original dream of settlement in a slavocracy where cheap labor could be easily obtained and the Cotton Kingdom re-created, and the lived reality of a nation in which slavery was on its way out and “skin color was not the dominant criterion for social classification.” In the end, for Vianna Moog, the confederado phenomenon was just one example that demonstrated just how Amazonia could serve to “contradict racial theories.”

598 “praguejar,” Ibid.
599 “A Amzonía havia de curvar-se à vontade onipotente do teutônio,” “ariano puro,” Ibid., 61, 60.
600 “o critério da cór não era o dominante para a classificação social,” Ibid., 61.
601 “contradizer as teses raciais,” Ibid., 61.
Challenging *Confederado* Historiography

For the most part, however, those who have sought to interpret the meaning of *confederado* settlement in Santarém, and its implications for US and Brazilian history, have left traditional, racist perspectives unchallenged. In an article published in the *Detroit News* in 1929, journalist A.M. Smith sought to narrate the story of Confederate immigration to the Amazon. Smith interviewed George Clement Jennings who, sixty-one years after immigrating at the age of sixteen, argued that “it was not so much that we saw no future for Southerners in the United States. We trusted the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, better appreciated by us after his martyrdom. But our fortunes were broken.”602 A better future was too far away, he thought, and they lacked the resources with which to recover from the economic losses of the war.603 The decision to emigrate, then, in Jennings’ mind, was an economic one, borne out of necessity. Staying at home and working to recover the economic status they had lost after the war was too daunting a task. Yet, Jennings believed that his stepfather’s decision to emigrate with his family was “the most foolish thing a man ever did.”604

The primary reason for this lay in the fact that, in Brazil they had discovered that they would have to work, and hard, if they wanted to be able to move back to the US in the future. It is evident from this claim that the Jennings had a least been somewhat convinced that they could accumulate wealth in the Amazon without working particularly hard for it. Instead, “he found only hard work in a climate that is hard on a white man if he works, and he did not last long.”605 Jennings refers to a declaration made by General Archibald Dobbins, the most prominent Confederate to

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603 Ibid.
604 Ibid.
605 Ibid.
settle in the Amazon, of whose experience there little is known. According to Jennings’ father, Dobbins had advocated on settlement in the Amazon based on his belief that “there was such an abundance of fruit, and all kinds of tropical products, that a man didn’t have to work if he didn’t care to. He could pick his meals off the trees, and spend the rest of his time scraping off a little top soil and scooping up gold.”

Jennings had not found gold. Guilhon de Azevedo cites an expedition organized in 1889 by Richard Hennington and Josiah Pitts to dig for gold that they undertook with several other *confederados*. According to her, they had found gold but “could do nothing.”

The Amazon, then, was not the utopia Hastings’ and Dobbins’ propaganda had promised. Instead, it was the tropical hell, uninhabitable for whites, as they had found “only hard work in a climate that is hard on a white man if he works, and he did not last long.”

Contrary to Jennings’ claim that it was near impossible for whites to work there, he describes how he had a built his own tow boat, with which he started a rubber and Brazil nut-towing business. Though he complained of the inability to return to the US, he profited from a continued connection to it, which enabled him to import an engine for his boat from New York. His survival, still, had been achieved against all odds, for though he had “managed” to live for sixty-one years in the Amazon, he reaffirmed that there was “no such thing as successful pioneering here for any white man unless he has plenty of capital to back him.”

For a short time – the couple years between the end of the Civil War and the arrival of Hastings’ followers on the shores of the Amazon – a group of US southerners had allowed themselves to be convinced that the Amazon were

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606 Ibid.
608 Ibid.
609 Ibid.
something other than the uninhabitable, uncultivatable region they most certainly had read about. Though they disproved such theories by raising families and having successful careers there, they relied on these same theories to explain the challenges they faced, blaming the inherent nature of the environment in which they found themselves. Smith concludes his article by portraying the *confederados* as having “followed the beckoning of the rainbow, arching down to the virgin lands, the mighty rivers and the close-woven greenery of the jungles of Santarem.”

610 Instead, Smith writes, “they found at journey’s end, that the pot of gold whose color shone in the glowing arch was, after all only the promise of the fairies who beckon onward until the light of the skies faded forever from searching eyes.”

611 Smith’s language is similarly flowery and metaphoric to Hastings’ in his assessment of how the southern colonist’s life would be transformed through immigration to the Amazon. Here, however, Smith portrays life there for *confederados* in the reverse light. The dream Hastings had expressed was nothing more than a figment of his imagination, and race, as Jennings made clear, had everything to do with it.

Another common theme in *confederado* historiography is the employment of the myth of Brazil as a racial utopia that lacked (and lacks) the deeply ingrained, virulent racism of the US, as a tool with which to interpret the colonies. The *confederados* are often treated as people whose racist views had been radically and irreversibly transformed by the experience of life in Brazil. Many historians have reproduced popular US myths about racial dynamics in order to present a version of Brazilian history in which racism was not a defining element of Brazilian society. These historians use the existence of multiple racial categories, behind the black-white binary that was dominant in US history, to depict Brazil as a country practically

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610 Ibid.
611 Ibid.
devoid of racism. In the most definitive history of the confederados published in English, *The Lost Colony of the Confederacy*, Eugene Harter, himself a descendant of confederados, claims that, “almost uniquely in the world, Brazil has a long-standing harmonious relationship among its races.” Harter articulates this harmoniousness as existing in contrast to the entrenched racism of the antebellum US South that would have been defining attributes of the confederado immigrants. In Harter’s view, however, settlement in Brazil forced the confederados to eventually change their attitudes in a process he calls “Brazilianization.”

“In Brazil,” Harter writes, “the fabric of life had a polka-dot pattern and it was not possible to choose the dark- or light-shade areas to live in.” Harter’s argument entirely ignores the larger structures and systems of meaning in which the confederados operated in Brazil. That skin color did not determine one’s status and opportunity for mobility in Brazilian society in exactly the same way that it did in the US, did not signify that racism was not central to Brazilian life. Discussion of the absence of a racial binary identical to that of the US serves to distract from the ways in which race operated as a constitutive element of both US and Brazilian societies. That slavery was abolished in Brazil twenty-one years after the confederados first arrived does not change this. Neither does the fact that most of the Santarém confederados did not own slaves, and that some freed their slaves before 1888. Neither does the fact that confederados in Santarém married and had children with people of mixed racial heritage.

That US southerners arrived in the Amazon full of racial prejudices that life in Brazil caused to disappear is a myth. It dovetails with and buttresses the myth of the Lost Cause by implying that racism was not central to the US southerner’s self-

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613 Ibid., 115.
conception. It tells a story of a people divorced from the system of meaning their social order created, which conceptually separated whites from non-whites. For them, it was not a matter of intolerance of individual relationships with people of color, but rather an unflinching belief in the inherent superiority of whites. The colonists chose Brazil because it was “southern,” that is, slaveholding. Hastings chose the Amazon because he saw it, in part, as a frontier. Despite the differences Hastings acknowledged between the southern US and the Amazon, in Santarém, he believed that the colonists could continue to dominate over land and people, as God had ordained. Those who Hastings represented considered their identities to be dependent on the right to do so.

As in the US, the racism that pervaded the core of Brazilian society was not eradicated in 1888, contrary to what journalist Joe Jackson suggests. Writing about David Bowman Riker, Jackson asserts that “in 1888, Brazil decreed unconditional emancipation, ending slavery – the reason Riker’s father had settled there. But David was of a different generation and considered himself Brazilian. The old conflicts and prejudices meant nothing to him.”\textsuperscript{614} In Jackson’s telling, “when his father had railed about the mixing of races, David had listened respectfully, but he didn’t really care. He’d married a mixed-blood Brazilian woman from the wastelands of Ceará and eventually had fourteen children with her.”\textsuperscript{615} Riker’s marriage to a \textit{cabocla} woman does indeed speak to his adaptation to the Brazilian social order, but it does not signify abandonment of racism as a structuring element of his life. Viotti Da Costa explains how when foreigners settled in Brazil, Brazilian society had already clearly delineated its racial structures. Brazilians, she writes had not been “passive recipients of ideas produced outside, mere victims of a colonial mentality trying to view their

\textsuperscript{615} Ibid.
reality through ideas coming from abroad.” Instead, “the Brazilian white elite already had in their own society the elements they needed to forge their racial ideology. They had learned since the colonial period to see blacks as inferiors.” Within this system, “they had also learned to make exceptions for some individual blacks or mulattos.” Given the racism fundamental to Brazilian society, “any European or American who postulated white superiority would be welcome. He would bring the authority and prestige of a superior culture to ideas Brazilians already had.” Riker’s interracial family, then, was an exception to the rule that proved and reinforced the rule. It did not fundamentally challenge the social order of the US south in which he had been born, no that of his adopted home.

Two anecdotes, one from Alfred Wallace’s *Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro*, and another from John Warren’s *Pará; or, Scenes and Adventures on the Banks of the Amazon*, illuminate some of the ways in which this order was constructed and preserved. While traveling through Amazonia, Wallace met a formerly enslaved black man named Luiz he hired to shoot birds for him. In the short biographical description of Luiz that Wallace provides, he writes that after having been freed by his former master, an Austrian naturalist who had spent seventeen years in Brazil, Luiz “had now a little land, and had saved enough to purchase a couple of slaves himself, — a degree of providence that the less careful Indian seldom attains to.” Luiz was a black man from the Congo, as Wallace claims, and therefore subject to the treatment of black people prescribed by Brazilian society. This did not prevent him from participating in the same oppressive system that enabled his own enslavement. It is clear from Wallace’s statement that the mark of privileged status and upward mobility was the possession of slaves. According to Ricardo Salles, in

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616 Ibid., 239.
Brazil, “everyone wanted to own slaves, but very few could, and even fewer would. Even former slaves manumitted by their own efforts or by their master’s benevolence could buy slaves of their own. The possibility of slave ownership, or at least the possibility of inserting oneself into the slavocrat order, was the soundest warranty of freedom.” Though the opportunity to do so was available to white Brazilians, it was not exclusive to them, and by participating in the slave system, Luiz symbolically elevated himself above indigenous people who did not. Luiz’s purchase of slaves did not cause his blackness to disappear; rather, it signified his attempt to strive to live up to the optimal status criterion of Brazilian society.

Traveling through the province of Pará in 1851, John Warren, also commented on the life trajectory of a formerly enslaved black man. He tells the story of a man named Godolphus who was offered a loan in order to purchase his freedom, by which “a new course of life opened before him.” Procuring liberty had enabled him to, “by dint of industry and perseverance” to become “the leader of a large company of ganhadores,” free blacks who loaded and unloaded shipping vessels. According to Warren, he earned money in this way and less than two years later, was able to pay off the loan. As a result, Godolphus “became known and respected by everybody! His heart bounded with joy! — for he was released from servile bondage for ever — he was a slave no more!” Godolphus could only be respected provided that he was a free person. Before achieving his freedom and paying off the debt he owed for having become free, Godolphus was basically non-human in the eyes of Brazilian law and society. Like in the antebellum US, slavery was the most degraded position one could occupy. This degraded position was more

619 Warren, *Para; or, Scenes and Adventure…*, 65.  
620 Ibid.  
621 Ibid., 66.
than a matter of economic status. By becoming legally free, Godolphus not only ceased to be the property of another while gaining the opportunity to earn his own livelihood, but he also could be seen for the first time as a human worthy of even the slightest respect. As Viotti Da Costa writes, “socially mobile blacks had to pay a price for their mobility: they had to adopt the whites’ perception of the racial problem and of themselves. They had to pretend they were whites.”\textsuperscript{622} In other words, in order to be free, Godolphus had to enslave.

Writing about the myth of racial democracy in Brazil, Viotti da Costa states that “social myths…are constantly being created and destroyed. They are an integral part of social reality and should not be seen merely as epiphenomena. In daily life, myth and reality are inextricably interrelated.”\textsuperscript{623} The myth in question in this thesis is so strong a belief in white racial superiority that made life in a non-slave society unthinkable for the subjects in question. Rollin Osterweis, author of \textit{Santarem} and scholar of the Confederacy, writes that the power of a myth “depends upon the effectiveness with which it displays in symbolic form the value aspirations of a people. Generally in heroic framework, its characters act out a drama of deep cultural significance. And this drama may define the beliefs about nature, religion, and the cultural identity of a society.”\textsuperscript{624}

Emigration from one slave society to another, then, represents the enactment of such a drama. The power of myths is so strong, according to Osterweis, that it can provoke “a people to act with great force along specific paths.”\textsuperscript{625} For the \textit{confederados} of Santarém, each day of their postbellum lives, they continued along the paths they had chosen for themselves when they decided to emigrate. The realities of their daily

\textsuperscript{622} Viotti Da Costa, \textit{The Brazilian Empire}, 240.
\textsuperscript{623} Ibid., 235.
\textsuperscript{624} Osterweis, \textit{The Myth of the Lost Cause}, x.
\textsuperscript{625} Ibid.
lives were borne out of the myths they continued to perpetuate. Though they may have become “Brazilian,” by living in Brazil, their connections to the southerners who had remained in the US did not cease to exist. Osterweis writes that the emigrants were an exception, and as such, “serve mainly to display the desperate, bewildered mood of those who remained to carry on among the ashes and somehow to rebuild a way of life there.” Santarém’s confederados, then, were participants in a larger process that US southerners were forced to undertake. In the face of the defeat of slavery, they had the choice in how they would respond. The confederados of Santarém chose denial.

Conclusion

Abolition and the prevalence of indigenous labor in Amazonia were areas outside of the US settlers’ control. In the areas over which they could exercise control, however, they acted as they had been accustomed to, choosing to behave in ways that perpetuated the rigid racial hierarchy that produced their whiteness, and the power and privilege that came with it. Though the colonists seemed to have been unaware of many aspects of race and slavery in Brazil previous to emigration, they were correctly confident in the opportunity to benefit from the privileges available to whites, and particularly to whites of financial means, facilitated by life in a slave society.

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Epilogue

Confederados in Fordlandia

The story of the confederados of Santarém, and the junctions between their US and Brazilian identities, continues into the twentieth century when the Amazon saw the arrival of another group of US citizens. In 1928, Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, arrived in the Amazon with the intention of founding a city of his own. In 1928, Ford began constructing a city he would call Fordlandia, located one hundred and ninety miles to Santarém’s south. There, Ford planned to secure a source of rubber for his company. He failed in his mission, however, and Fordlandia was abandoned by 1934. While it lasted, one of Ford’s thousands of employees was both a US citizen and a Brazilian. His name was David Bowman Riker.

Riker found work with Ford, along with his sons, three of whom went to the US to take specialization courses at the Ford factory in Detroit, Michigan. Riker admired Ford’s venture and described his arrival in the Amazon as a “blood transfusion” that brought life to the local economy. Riker took several positions in Fordlandia, including that of interpreter, and at one point, served as a labor recruiter, travelling throughout the region in the hopes of finding potential Ford employees. He struggled with this task, however, as it was difficult to find long-term workers given that many were satisfied after receiving sufficient wages and did not want to continue working regularly throughout the year. Riker also complained about the challenge of changing Brazilians’ mentalities towards work so that they would fit into Ford’s expectations, claiming that it was hard to “make 365-day machines out of these people.”

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627 Guilhon de Azevedo, Os confederados em Santarém, 156.
629 Ibid., 222.
Over fifty years after emigration, the question of labor continued to occupy the _confederados_. Riker himself had not been raised in the US. His parents brought him to Brazil when he was six, yet he exhibited a strong attachment to the conceptions about labor he inherited from his father and the other emigrants. Brazilians, according to him, were lazy, and their work ethic was inferior to that which he shared with Ford and the other US participants in the Fordlandia project.

Ford, though not a southerner, embodied the kind of deep racism Eugene Harter asserts originally animated the _confederados_. His racism went beyond his explicit expressions of prejudice to undergird the very thinking behind Fordlandia. What the story of Fordlandia shows is that the end of slavery, both in Brazil and the US had nothing to do with the eradication of racism in either country, though the _confederados_ feared the Union victory was synonymous with this transformation. Riker was born in South Carolina to a slaveholding family that would go on to own slaves in Brazil. Ford was born six months after the Emancipation Proclamation in Michigan and never lived in a slave society. Though the _confederados_ had already made their attempt, Ford sought again, to transform Amazonia through imposing US norms of production upon it. Riker could not stomach the postbellum US, but his ideology aligned with Ford’s. Both Riker and Ford were animated by racist and imperial impulses that were greater than the nations to which they belonged.

When James Edmonds asked Riker where his three sons who had gone to Detroit to work for Ford were, he responded that they had “returned home.” When Edmonds visited Riker’s house in 1941 to research for the article he would entitle “They’ve Gone Back Home, The Last of a Confederate Colony,” he noticed that on the front of Riker’s house was not the Confederate flag or some other symbol of the

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short-lived nation for which Riker had fought. Instead, Edmonds writes, “painted in red, white, and blue, I saw, at the top of the wall, an eagle with open wings, bearing in its claws the shield of the United States of America.”

The US was home, then, no matter how long Riker had been living elsewhere. In 1949, at the age of eighty-eight, however, Riker asserted in another interview with a US newspaper that the last time he returned to the US in 1900, he was frightened and upset by what he saw. “People carried themselves as if they were crazy,” he complained, and “Yankee families had invaded the South. It was a waste.”

In this telling, it was Brazil that was home: “I only calmed down when I returned to the peace of my home.” Home, then, could be two places at once.

Figure 5.1 Photograph of David Bowman Riker and his family outside their home in Santarém, from the Riker Family Archive

Home, for Riker, meant somewhere where he and his ilk could dominate both land and people. Brazilian emigration had provided his father and his fellow colonists with a last-ditch attempt at perpetuating the social order that had allowed

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631 “Pintado em vermelho, branco e azul via-se, no alto da parede, uma águia de asas abertas, sustentando, nas garras, o escudo dos Estados Unidos da América,” Ibid.

632 Guilhon de Azevedo, Os confederados em Santarém, 156.

633 “As pessoas se portavam como se estivessem malucas. Famílias ianques tinham invadido o sul. Foi um estrago,” Ibid.

634 “Só sosseguei quando voltei para a paz de meu lar,” Ibid.
them to obtain great wealth and privilege. In the prologue to the novel *Santarem*, Guicharnaud and Osterweis portray one fictional *confederado* – Gibbs – who “had made the first blow of the axe and took possession of the land that he had come to buy.” Gibbs, “for whom the Civil War had no other cause than the defense of King Cotton, which had been insolently attacked by the Yankees,” attempted in Santarém to “restart history.” In his mind, “with work, patience, and God’s help, history would repeat itself, and King Cotton would recover its throne under new climates.” Cotton never became “king” in Brazil, as it had been in the US, yet the real-life versions of Gibbs and Locke had found a place where they could convince themselves they were victors whose social order had never come into question.

635 “avait donné le premier coup de hache et pris possession du terrain qu’ils venaient d’acheter,” Guicharnaud and Osterweis, Santarem, 15.
636 “la Guerre civil n’avait eu d’autre cause que la défense du roi Coton insoulicment attaqué par les Yankees,” “recomencer l’Histoire,” Ibid.
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