

The Three Souths

Border South: DE, MD, KY & MO

- 22% of families owned on average 5 slaves; 1% of South's ultra-wealthy & 6% of large (20+ slaves) plantations/tobacco farms found in the region.
- Slaves made up 17% of the population; 21% of African American population free.
- Little cotton cultivation; tobacco, grain & industrial products.
- Unionists prevailed after Lincoln election & throughout Civil War.

Middle South: VA, NC, TN & AR

- Different sections, some resembling Deep South, others Border South.
- 36% of families owned on average 8 slaves; 14% of South's ultra-wealthy & 32% of large (20+ slaves) plantations found primarily in eastern VA & western TN.
- Slaves made up 30% of the population.
- Some industry: Tredegar Iron Works used slave labor.
- Unionists prevailed after Lincoln's election, but Secessionists prevailed after Fort Sumter & early hostilities.

Deep South: SC, FL, GA, AL, MS, LA & TX

- Most slaves concentrated in the "Black Belt," especially along river valleys
- Plantations prevalent; 43% of families owned on average 12 slaves; 85% of the South's ultra-wealthy & 62% of large (20+ slaves) plantations found in Deep South.
- Slaves made up 47% of the population.
- 95% of the South's cotton & almost all of its sugar, rice & indigo grown in Deep South.
- Secessionists prevailed immediately after Lincoln's election.

Historiography of the Peculiar Institution

Main Historical Debates on the Peculiar Institution

1. Was slavery economically viable?
2. Was it an economic system or a social system for racial control?
3. What were the tools of oppression? Centrality of violence?
4. What were the tools of resistance? Revolts & escapes?

Positive Paternalism

- Earliest interpretation, Southern historians
- Multi-racial communities of the South: Slaves & Masters loved & respected each other.
- Slavery served as essential civilizing institution.

Factories in the Fields

- Economic interpretation, minimized racial purpose of institution.
- Marxist interpretation, presented hopeful vision of post-slavery America.
- Slaves were workers & nothing more; defined by lives in the fields.

American Concentration Camps

- Utilized understandings of human nature based on history of the Holocaust.
- Saw absolute nature of slavery & its impact on slaves— infantilization, creation of “Sambo” archetype.
- Presented pessimistic vision of post-slavery America.

Oppressive Cage of Paternalism

- Paternalism existed as a tool of oppression & survival.
- No real love & respect between slaves & masters, except in a few individual, isolated instances.
- Institutional support of system—religion, slave culture, etc.—designed to reinforce these relationships.
- Complex role of social & cultural forms in slave life.