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Jared Ross Hardesty, *Mutiny on the Rising Sun: A Tragic Tale of Slavery, Smuggling, and Chocolate*. New York: New York University Press, 2021. xii + 267 pp. (Cloth US\$ 24.49)

On June 1, 1743, somewhere along the coast of Suriname, a mutiny on a Boston-based schooner, the *Rising Sun*, cost the lives of four men. The victims were the ship's captain, the chief merchant, and two other crew members. The mutineers were three sailors, experienced men hired in Barbados. They had hoped to make a fortune by selling the cargo of the ship and perhaps the ship itself. That did not happen. They were tricked by the surviving crew members into thinking that they had successfully reached the Orinoco in Venezuela, while in reality, they had anchored in the Corantine River in Suriname. There they were arrested. The colonial authorities in Paramaribo made sure that they were horribly tortured before being executed, all of this for everyone to see. Exemplary violence was part and parcel of colonial rule in this Dutch colony where enslaved Africans accounted for some 95 percent of the population. Such violence would mainly be meted out to rebellious captive Africans, but others undermining the colonial order could also anticipate unthinkable brutality ordered by the colonial authorities.

News of the revolt echoed in many places beyond Paramaribo. The schooner had been on a commercial voyage from Boston to Paramaribo via Barbados. Serious investments were made in ventures such as this one, so merchants, investors, and insurance brokers were worrying about their money. On the basis of the resulting archival sources and press publications, Jared Ross Hardesty reconstructs the story of the bloody mutiny itself and the people directly affected by it. He then links this account to the wider history of trade that connected the North American colonies through the British West Indies to the Dutch colony of Suriname.

The result is a book that reads as a page-turner because of the way Hardesty manages to make the best of his archival sources, elegantly building the bits and pieces of information on the protagonists and the story of the mutiny and its aftermath into the broader Atlantic history. He has produced a highly engaging and instructive analysis of interimperial commercial relations in which illicit trade was a fact of life accepted by everyone, including the colonial authorities. And, of course, also a tragic story in which capitalism, violence, and racism intertwined, in a repulsive context of modernity.

In this relatively short book—170 pages excluding footnotes, appendices, et cetera—Hardesty painstakingly unravels the smuggling circuit in which the captain and a series of merchants were involved. The particular story of the *Rising Sun* is contextualized in an account based on an excellent command

of the scholarly literature in general Atlantic history, particularly British-Dutch connections. Readers learn a lot about the organization of commercial circuits, about the thin line between legal and illegal commerce, and about the ways colonial authorities were often complicit in this. We also learn about provisions and horses being transported from the North American colonies to the Caribbean, about tropical produce—in this case, cacao—fueling new industries in cities such as Boston, about networks of merchants, and about sailors from unexpected corners of the Atlantic world.

We also learn about enslaved Africans as commodities in the trade, as producers and as the main victims of this system. But here, unfortunately, the archival sources do not permit Hardesty to tell a deep-reaching story. At the moment of the mutiny, 15 enslaved Africans, most of them children, were held captive below deck. How many more had been on board prior to the *Rising Sun's* mooring off Paramaribo is not known, nor why these 15 were not sold. What happened to them afterward is unclear as well. And here Hardesty has little to offer but speculation on their agonies and empathic reflections on their fates. As this is probably the part that contemporary readers would have been most interested in, Hardesty does his utmost, but can't get much beyond a lot of "might haves." We can't blame him, but a pity it is.

What Hardesty does make tangible, however, is another aspect of the racism inherent in the whole system. The three mutineers were men of color. This may have made it easier for governor Mauricius in Paramaribo to order the horrendous "exemplary" execution meted out to these men. It also enabled press coverage in which the mutiny and the killing of the otherwise White crew was framed in a racist narrative—while simultaneously denying the racist character of the entire early modern Atlantic system.

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