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Review of *Trails to Texas: Southern Roots of Western Cattle Ranching* By Terry G. Jordan

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Trails to Texas: Southern Roots of Western Cattle Ranching. By Terry G. Jordan. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. xv + 220 pp. \$15.95.

Historians and social scientists have long been fascinated by the open-range cattle industry, its origins, spread, practices, economic significance, and eventual demise. Cultural geographer Terry Jordan's volume is a significant addition to the growing body of literature on this subject.

Jordan begins with a cogent summary and critique of the major theories regarding the origins and diffusion of the "precursor of present-day livestock ranching" (p. 1) and then develops his own hypothesis of a southern Anglo origin. Jordan posits a "Carolina Hearth" or source for "large-scale Anglo-American cattle herding" (p. 38) and a diffusion via two routes—one along the coastal corridor through the lower South into southeastern Texas and a

second through the upper South and Midwest to northeastern Texas. Jordan believes that along the lower route a distinctly "creolized coastal southern cattle culture" (p. 58) developed, shaped by Anglo, black, Hispano, and French influences, while the northern prong of the diffusion remained relatively free of outside influences and "preserved a much purer British-American tradition" (p. 57).

Jordan next discusses the implantation and development of southern ranching practices in the coastal prairies, northeast prairies, and Piney Woods of East Texas; reviews the environmental setting, settlement patterns, introduction and numbers and types of cattle, ranching practices, markets, crop-livestock combinations, and ethnic and regional backgrounds of the ranchers; and identifies the Hispanic influences in each region. In his final section, Jordan traces the westward and northward spread of the range cattle industry into the Coastal Bend and Cross Timbers-Heart of Texas regions and then onto the Great Plains. He concludes that there was a "spatial and temporal continuity" between colonial South Carolina and western Texas and that Great Plains ranching "contained an important Anglo-American component . . . derived ultimately from seventeenth-century South Carolina" (pp. 155-56).

Jordan has shown conclusively, I believe, that the first contacts between and intermingling of Anglo and Hispanic ranching practices took place much earlier than was suggested by Walter Prescott Webb and in areas far to the east of Webb's Nueces diamond. Some of Jordan's other arguments are not so convincing. For example, he seems to imply (although his own evidence refutes this) that use of black cowboys was a predominantly Anglo trait and that, except for the Piney Woods area, there were no Hispanic antecedents for the ranching industry in eastern Texas. Additionally, Jordan suggests that, because open-range ranching continued in some parts of northeastern Texas into the present century, it was something more than "merely a transitory frontier phase" (p. 102). In his enthusiasm

to prove southern Anglo origins, Jordan, like the Hispanic theorists he criticizes, sometimes overstates his evidence and occasionally raises more questions than he answers. Nonetheless, this is a valuable study and one that demands the careful attention of scholars.

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