THE TRANSNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Edited by Jörg Nagler, Don H. Doyle,
and Marcus Gräser

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CONTENTS

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Introduction: The Electric Chain of Transnational History

Jörg Nagler, Don H. Doyle, and Marcus Gräser

The American Civil War was not only the culmination point of a hitherto "unfinished nation" and the central crisis in American history but it also had significant international ramifications for the political, social, economic, and military conditions in many parts of the world. What usually is described as an 'age of nationalism' witnessed the rise of the modern constitutional state and globalized interdependent capitalist economies. America's Civil War was central to the transformation of the modern world in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

For a very long time, the Civil War has been the central chapter in America's national history. For generations, the American public as well as historians and readers elsewhere in the world have seemed content with a parochial vision of the Civil War within a strictly national framework. The recent turn toward transnational historical studies is now beginning to have

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an effect on the way historians view the war. How does our understanding of the American Civil War change once we step back and view the conflict in its global context? How does this perspective revise what we previously accepted? This book provides, at least, a provisional answer to these questions. What follows are chapters by several of the pioneers in the new transnational history of the American Civil War.

* * *

How much of transnational history is necessary to fully comprehend the Civil War and all the complexities of its causes and results? Is the transnational perspective simply a way of casting a new light on an episode that we can still understand as a predominantly national story of war and collective memory? The German historian Jürgen Kocka has argued that transnational history is at times incapable of *explaining* historical developments that take place within the nation-state since it is inherently ill-equipped to analyze particular aspects of society and politics that are created within and, hence, confined within the container of the nation-state.[1]

With this cautionary warning about the limits of the explanatory power of transnational history for historians, it is important to keep in mind that contemporaries of the Civil War era immediately understood the vast transnational repercussions of the conflict. Few were more perceptive of this than John Lothrop Motley, author, gentleman historian, and US minister to the Austrian Empire. Motley, addressing the New York Historical Society in 1868 on "Historic Progress and American Democracy," summarized his main point brilliantly: "The law is Progress; the result Democracy." Motley also spoke of an "electric chain" that united America and Europe. "So instantaneous are their action and retroaction," he wrote, "that the American Civil War, at least in Western Europe, became as much an affair of passionate party feeling as if it were raging on that side the Atlantic." In Motley's eyes, the American crisis was something much more than "an affair of party feeling" within one nation, for the "effect of the triumph of freedom in this country on the cause of progress in Europe is plain." Given his intimate knowledge of Austrian politics in the 1860s, it was not surprising that he looked out for the "effects" of the war on Austrian politics. He found that the so-called Ausgleich, the replacement of Austrian centralism by a dualism of two imperial halves, Austria and Hungary, which happened in 1867, emerged from the learning process that was stimulated by the American federal example.[2] This may seem paradoxical insofar as the Austro-Hungarian

Dualism looked like, as John Hawgood wrote, as if "Andrew Jackson had made a deal with the South Carolina Nullifiers, giving them a privileged position in the union that the other states did not share."[3] The Austrian Empire indeed suffered two secessions during the 1860s. The first came when Bismarck attempted to solve the German Question by establishing a German Empire without Austria, which resulted in Prussia's victory at the Battle of Königgrätz in 1866. This "German Gettysburg," as the historian Robert Binkley once famously remarked, "was won by the secessionists."[4] The second "secession," the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian dualism in 1867, may also have been a victory of the secessionists, in this case, the Hungarians, who had staged a revolutionary independence movement in 1848. The Austrians crushed their fight for independence in 1849, but in 1867 Hungarians won a relatively broad autonomy within the imperial framework of the Habsburg monarchy without having to win a "Gettysburg." Motley obviously wanted to understand this major event in the constitutional history of the Habsburg Empire as a reasonable attempt to put the Habsburg monarchy on solid ground by minimizing the risk of a bloody split-up. The idea of "e pluribus unum had failed," wrote Motley, and instead "an e pluribus duo was resolved upon."[5] Given the fact that the Habsburg monarchy was not a union but rather a collection of estates with the Habsburg dynasty as the landlord, this kind of compromise between Austria and Hungary seemed to Motley a mark of genuine progress. His address is illuminating for everyone who thinks of transnational history as a field of "electric chains."

Within the last decade we have seen a remarkable increase of historical works concerned with the transnational dimension of the American Civil War.[6] Although the interest in placing this central national American conflict into an international analytical context has existed for quite some time, it is time that we synthesize comparative history with entangled history more than before, in order to gain a better understanding of the transnational dimension of the American Civil War.[7] These approaches are indeed inherently interconnected with fluid transitions. Just one example: when Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler conceptualized their project on total war in America and Germany in the 1990s, they started with a strictly comparative approach. The basic question concerned the genesis of total warfare that, in the twentieth century, led to the two horrific world wars. How was warfare in the nineteenth-century age of industrial capitalism connected to the rise of nationalism? The comparative approach, however, also became a

transnational one when historians realized that there was a direct transatlantic exchange of people, information, and ideas that mutually influenced each other. For example, the American notion of total war was, ironically, brought to Germany in 1870 by Gen. Philip Sheridan himself. As a military observer, Sheridan watched the German troops and later urged Otto von Bismarck to handle the French guerrillas with the same brutal practice of punishing civilians that he had applied during his Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1864. "The people must be left with nothing but their eyes to weep with after the war," Sheridan told the Germans.[8]

Wars tend to send out stronger signals to the world than is the case with peacetime situations. These transmitted signals—what Motley called the "electric chain" of "action and retroaction"—can have severe consequences in the economic, social, political, military, and cultural spheres in certain regions of the world, depending upon the degree of entanglement with the nation seized by war. Only seldom do historians ask in what systematic ways are wars and globalization interconnected.[9]

Evidently the current forces of globalization have encouraged historians to think internationally, not least because the World Wide Web has now provided access and communication that made this "global turn" possible. The sheer quantity of recent monographs and articles that focus on the transnational and global aspects of the American Civil War era is noteworthy.[10] The central theme in the macro-transnational framework of the American Civil War era was nationalism and nation building connected with the violent forces of centralization and its opposite, secession.[11] Michael Geyer and Charles Bright have rightly labeled this the era of "global violence and nationalizing war."[12] One needs to ask if the impact of the American Civil War was greater in regions where there were similar and concurrent developments in nationalist consciousness. Or, did the American Civil War act as a catalyst capable of spurring nationalism? Other national formations were at work almost simultaneously, as in Italy, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Paraguay, and, less violently, in Canada. The Taiping Rebellion in China had less to do with national unification than these Western conflicts, but it occurred simultaneously with, if disconnected from, the Euro-American wars, and in the scale of its bloodshed (estimated at nearly thirty million casualties) it towered over the others. One central question an international history of this era poses is why did these processes occur almost simultaneously in so many different parts of the world?

When we address the issue of a transnational significance of a historical event such as the American Civil War, we need to ask about the contemporary international awareness of this conflict, a precondition for answering the question of impact. Men like John Lothrop Motley understood immediately that events on both sides of the Atlantic were linked as though by an "electric chain." Undoubtedly, many other contemporaries thought that the American Civil War would permanently change the world. Here it is important to emphasize that the three paradigms of awareness, connections, and impact are also methodically interconnected. For example, in order to have an impact on a certain region, there needs to be personal connections, or some awareness that is rendered through information on the American Civil War. Information about the war and its meaning was transmitted through certain channels of communication, such as diplomatic correspondence, newspapers, letters, and more rarely through personal contact. Communication channels during the mid-nineteenth century, at least for most of the transatlantic world, were already well developed with vast networks of overland telegraphs, railroads, fast oceanic mail service by steamship, and mass audience newspapers and magazines. From Western centers information was distributed to their peripheries, accelerated by the speed of railroad systems and steamship lines.[13] New mass circulation newspapers reported the details of the American War. Less conspicuously, there was a massive exchange of information through diplomatic correspondence and private letters that added immensely to knowledge about the war in nearly all parts of the world. This exchange of information and public opinion on the American War was among the early and most fruitful lines of investigation among historians of the international Civil War.[14]

Key political figures in Europe and elsewhere also interpreted the Civil War in light of their particular view of the world. Intellectuals, journalists, and political leaders acted as multipliers, transmitting their understanding of the information and basic events of the Civil War to their respective publics, often with specific political intentions in mind. They utilized the events of the American Civil War as a screen on which to project their own political and social agendas. William E. Gladstone, for example, compared the mass emancipation of slaves in the United States to the British reform movement to expand voting rights as a way of discrediting the latter. Republicans in France debated *la question amércaine* as a veiled way of engaging in forbidden political debate under Napoleon III's censorious regime.

Another highly pertinent line of inquiry concerns the transnational significance of the impact of the American Civil War on the historical change of war and military organization. The American conflict has often been interpreted as the anticipation of the total wars of the twentieth century.[15] Just how did the reported observations by international observers—civilians or military—of the war cause changes in the way nations organized armies and waged war; how did events in America affect strategy, tactics, and weaponry in the wars that came after 1865? This is an inviting field of study, especially for those prepared to examine the "entangled histories" approach toward a better understanding of transnational networks and the exchange of military knowledge. Parallel investigations might explore how and in what way social (self-)mobilization during the American Civil War influenced other nations faced with the challenge of mobilizing mass citizen armies. One important imprint of the American War was the new codification of the international law of war, as formulated by Francis Lieber, a German political refugee. Lieber's 1863 "Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field, General Order No. 100," known as the Lieber Code, formed the basis of the Hague Convention of 1899.[16]

Historians of the international Civil War will also take into account the significance of the British Empire as a geopolitical rival responding to the rising commercial and military prowess of the United States and to consider how the British Empire recalculated its global strategy as a result of the American conflict. The challenge posed by the reformation of a powerful United States, now with a strong navy and with enormous commercial reach in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Latin America was especially grave for Great Britain. Historians have rarely examined the direct impact of the American Civil War on British imperial strategy in the American hemisphere and elsewhere. Was Britain's neutrality during the American Civil War a conscious defensive strategy that anticipated the future direction of Great Britain as a global superpower?

Historians are often tempted to adopt teleological models of modernization, nationalism, and democratization that have dominated our understanding of the American Civil War for some time. Because the United States later became a hegemonic world power, it is easy to interpret the Civil War as the watershed and genesis for this future development. We must, however, remain aware of the complexity of global networks that had developed by mid of the nineteenth century. They were not only developed in a bi-national or tri-national fashion but rather on a multi-national level.

To do justice to the transnational significance of the American Civil War, we need to break down the methodological divisions between comparative, transnational, and entangled history approaches and connect the various specialized geographic components of history and learn from specialists on Africa and Asia, economists, political scientists, sociologists, and historians who have been active in other areas of transnational history. We should employ the dialectics of "outside-in" and "inside-out" approaches that either situate American developments within larger global trends, or take us from US history to world history, and thereby avoid a US-centric view. Events in the United States were shaping the world at the same time forces outside the nation were shaping it.

* * *

The chapters that follow were selected from papers presented at conferences held at the University of Jena, Germany, and the German Historical Institute in Washington, DC. Each chapter makes its unique contribution to our understanding of the transnational significance of America's Civil War, but we have arranged them according to several unifying themes. Part I, on "Liberalism, Citizenship and International Law," begins with Robert Bonner's novel examination of the ultimate transnational space, the high seas of the Atlantic, and to the highly contested understanding of the laws on piracy and neutrality during the war. A key oceanic achievement of these years was the suppression of trans-Atlantic slaving in the wake of the 1862 breakthrough Anglo-American accord. Paul Quigley turns to another highly salient legal subject, the ways in which the war challenged existing views on migration and citizenship as a voluntary choice. Given the enormous numbers of immigrant soldiers involved in the war, this became an important topic. Quigley argues that the American Civil War and its outcome helped lift longstanding problems of migration, military service, and allegiance, to the top of the international political agenda. Leslie Butler's chapter deals with the related concern among transnational liberals concerned with the expansion of the electorate and the improvement of education and information for the purpose of enlightening voters in the United States and Great Britain. Abraham Lincoln's skills in leadership became an inspiration to British and American reformers in their pursuit of an educated citizenry and an enlightened popular government.

Part II, on "Transnational Political Economy and Finance," examines the ways in which cotton politics at home and cotton diplomacy abroad shaped the emergence of transatlantic markets of commerce and finance. Brian Schoen examines the ways in which cotton politics at home and

cotton diplomacy abroad shaped the emergence of a transatlantic free trade movement, the politics of slavery, and the sectional crisis. By focusing on the ways in which US control of international raw cotton supply was perceived to have shaped British policy toward the United States in the 1840s and 1850s, it demonstrates the confidence that secessionist brought into their disunionist agenda. Conversely, he shows how northern political economists ultimately rejected the King Cotton position using it and early Confederate policies as support for taking a harder stance against Pro-Cotton, Pro-Slavery traitors they perceived as attacking northern interests. Jay Sexton explores two themes that are central to understanding the global dimensions of the US Civil War. First, he considers the financial diplomacy of the Union and Confederacy. Though neither side scored a major foreign loan, the chapter examines the British and European financiers that took the risk of loaning capital to the warring parties. Second, his chapter argues that the Civil War was important in reconfiguring the place of the United States on international money markets. Forced to look to domestic sources for the overwhelming majority of its capital needs, the United States reoriented its financial institutions and structures along new national lines. This national financial system was built upon the transnational banking structures of the early nineteenth century and reconfigured, rather than severed, financial links with the wider world.

Part III, on "Transnational Discourses on Freedom and Radicalism," begins with Mischa Honeck's chapter, which argues against a naive separation of abolitionism and nationalism. Focusing on the period from the European Revolutions of 1848/49 to the end of the American Civil War, his chapter charts the transatlantic space through which varied antislavery activists moved to highlight the complicity of abolitionism in formulating strong ethnic and national identities. In addition to a shared hostility to slavery, many of these actors had comparable experiences of upheaval, uprootedness, and forced migration caused by racial and political strife, which fueled the contentious process of reconstituting civic roles and national allegiances in this second age of Atlantic revolutions. Andrew Zimmerman widens the frame by bringing Africa into his examination of the geopolitics of slavery and freedom in the Atlantic world of the nineteenth century. In this period, as the Atlantic slave trade declined, regions on both sides of the Atlantic split into states committed to slavery and states committed to freedom. Across these boundaries enslaved people engaged not only in a politics of fugitivity but also in the creation of a commons that resisted appropriation by state power and capital.

Part IV features two chapters on "Nation Building and Social Revolutions: The American Civil War and Italy." Tiziano Bonazzi views the tribulations of two liberal nation-states as each struggled with the problem of unifying its disparate parts. Taking 1861 as a common reference point, Bonazzi uses analogous evidence and models to examine how each nation sought loyalty and cohesion. Enrico Dal Lago compares American slaveholders and southern Italian landowners and their vital roles in the creation of the Confederate States of America and the Kingdom of Italy. Between 1861 and 1865, both of these newly formed nations underwent horrific ordeals at the hands of their southern rebels, the American Civil War and of the War of the Brigands. Whereas in 1865 the Confederacy collapsed, together with the southern slaveholding system, the Kingdom of Italy survived the inner civil war at the cost of strengthening the government's authoritarian character and the indiscriminate use of military force against the largest peasant rebellion to date.

Part V turns to "Race and Nationalism in Latin America and the Caribbean during the American Civil War Era." Andre M. Fleche explores the ways in which Confederate diplomats, editors, and intellectuals responded to the French incursion in Mexico. The chapter pays particular attention to the lessons concerning the relationship between race and nationalism that Confederates believed they drew from the Mexican experience. In Mexico, Confederate spokesmen detected a failed multiracial republic, a nation, they believed, in which leadership by mixed-race peoples had resulted in anarchy. As a result, southern spokesmen welcomed the stability that rule by a white European prince would bring to Mexico. Nicholas Guyatt explores the relationship between race, slavery, and imperialism in the Caribbean and the United States during the Civil War era through the frame of Tocqueville's infamous prediction that the pressures on slavery would eventually produce an exclusively white American South and an exclusively black Caribbean. Tocqueville's prophecy haunted American and Caribbean approaches to slavery and emancipation, especially as the sectional crisis in the United States worsened. The chapter summarizes the shifting racial and political geographies of this moment and explains how Tocqueville's segregationist vision survived the Civil War and informed US expansionism in the Caribbean after 1865. Zach Sell shows how race and economic production transformed the adaptation of former slave-owning planters coming from the American South to British Honduras. In the age of black emancipation, these diasporic planters were thought to have knowledge vital to the expansion of the plantation system, even as dreams

of black freedom thwarted their success in the American South. Looking especially at the history of one Louisiana sugar planter in British Honduras, this chapter focuses on hidden aspects in the struggle to reconstruct social dominance after slavery was no longer available as a means of exploitation.

NOTES

1. Jürgen Kocka, "Sozialgeschichte im Zeitalter der Globalisierung," *Merkur* 60 (2006): 305–316.
2. John Lothrop Motley, *Historic Progress and American Democracy: An Address Delivered Before the New York Historical Society, At Their Sixty-Fourth Anniversary, December 16, 1868* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1869), 6, 35f, 39–51.
3. John Hawgood, "The Civil War and Central Europe," in *Heard Round the World. The Impact of the American Civil War Abroad*, ed. Harold Melvin Hyman (New York: A. Knopf, 1969), 175.
4. Robert C. Binkley, *Realism and Nationalism 1852–1871* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935), 269.
5. Motley, *Historic Progress*, 51.
6. See Marcus Gräser, "World History in a Nation-State: The Transnational Disposition in Historical Writing in the United States," *Journal of American History* 95 (2009): 1038–1052; for a good overview of transnational approaches to the history of the American Civil War see W. Caleb McDaniel, and Bethany L. Johnson, "New Approaches to Internationalizing the History of the Civil War Era: An Introduction," *The Journal of the Civil War Era* 2 (2012):145–150; Douglas R. Egerton, "Rethinking Atlantic Historiography in a Postcolonial Era: The Civil War in a Global Perspective," *The Journal of the Civil War Era* 1 (2011): 79–95.
7. On comparative work see, for example, David M. Potter, "Civil War," in *The Comparative Approach to American History*, ed. C. Vann Woodward (New York: Basic, 1968), 135–145; George M. Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Steven Hahn, "Class and State in Postemancipation Societies: Southern Planters in Comparative Perspective," *American Historical Review* 95 (1990): 75–98; Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, "Global Violence and Nationalizing Wars in Eurasia and America: The Geopolitics of War in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,"

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8. See Carl N. Degler, "The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification: The Problem of Comparison," in *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861–1871, eds.* Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 68; Joseph Wheelan, *Terrible Swift Sword: The Life of General Philip H. Sheridan* (New York, NY: Da Capo Press, 2013), 312.

9. An exception is Tarak Barkawi, *Globalization and War* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

10. See, for example, Don Doyle, *The Cause of all Nations: An International History of the American Civil War* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2014); Leslie Butler, *Critical Americans: Victorian Intellectuals and Transatlantic Liberal Reform* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Brian Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Policy, and The Global Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Mischa Honeck, *We Are the Revolutionists: German-Speaking Immigrants and American Abolitionists After 1848* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2011); Enrico Dal Lago, *William Lloyd Garrison, and Giuseppe Mazzini: Abolition, Democracy, and Radical Reform* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2013); Jay Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy: Finance and American Foreign Relations in the Civil War Era 1837–1873* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

11. Robert E. Bonner, *Mastering America: Southern Slaveholders and the Crisis of American Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848–1865* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Andre M. Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861: The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

12. Geyer and Bright, "Global Violence and Nationalizing Wars in Eurasia and America.

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Liberalism, Citizenship, and International Law

Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Seas?: Civil War Statecraft and the Liberal Quest for Oceanic Order

Robert Bonner

In 1902, an aging Charles Francis Adams Jr. pondered how "the verdict of history" would justify "all the blood and treasure so freely poured out by us between Sumter and Appomattox." Unlike most Union veterans, Adams did not linger on America's battlefields or its liberated plantations but trained his sights upon the high seas, where a growing international appetite for maritime reform promised a "rounding out and completing the work of our Civil War." Future generations would appreciate how, thanks to Union victory, "*the last vestiges of piracy* vanished from the ocean, as slavery had before disappeared from the land."[1]

Adams's optimism—and his admittedly odd pairing of shipping interests with the freedom of some four million slaves—proved to be short-lived. The maritime peace of the Anglo-Boer War would be a mere temporary counter-current to the aggressive navalism that peaked during Europe's "Great War." As late as 1912, Adams believed that the possibility of war disrupting the scheduled service of the famed *Lusitania* was "too absurd

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for a moment's consideration." In 1915, a German submarine sent the *Lusitania* to the bottom of the North Atlantic, along with scores of citizens from the supposed neutral power of the United States.[2]

Adams's expectation of a twentieth century marked by oceanic peace and security was no individual quirk. His goal of eliminating "the barbaric right of capture of private property at sea" was broadly shared by his generation of late-Victorian liberals. This largely ignored component of transatlantic reform invites the attention of those seeking global perspectives on the American Civil War, and not simply because it concerns an oceanic realm comprising three-quarters of Earth's surface. Liberals of the late nineteenth century were transfixed by the high seas less because of its extent than because of the globalizing transformations then spreading the forces of "civilization" into a realm where "barbarism" had too long prevailed. They instinctively appreciated that oceanic developments were every bit as bracing—and as susceptible to the age's "humanizing" improvements—as the terrestrial developments explored with such creativity by historians of the nineteenth-century Atlantic world.[3]

Surveying the links between the Civil War and oceanic liberalization brings to the fore a maritime economic order of steam-powered, steel-constructed, and telegraph-coordinated seaborne trade and migration still in its formative stages when the Lincoln administration assumed power. The global stakes were high, and hanging in the balance was a mid-century surge of international capitalist development. The technological impetus to this 1850s boom was aided by self-consciously liberalizing maritime policies: the British reduction of tariffs and its 1850 repeal of the Navigation Acts; the expansion of neutral rights in the 1856 Declaration of Paris; the opening of new Pacific markets; and the launching of "free-trade diplomacy" as a central component of a "Pax Britannica." Unfettered oceanic commerce was the lynchpin of a new Anglo-centric "free seas" regime that produced in a mere twenty years a threefold increase in British exports. The vital exception to the rule of commercial ascendancy was the Royal Navy's ceaseless effort to end the immensely profitable, and unacceptably barbarizing, trade in West African slaves.[4]

Foreign commentators worried how the American Civil War might imperil this updated version of the "free seas," and thus diminish one of the era's grandest achievements. Despite Americans' traditional vindication of the neutral rights, the Union or the Confederate governments employed such coercive naval tactics as privateering, commercial blockades, steam-powered commerce raiding against merchant sailing

vessels, and increasingly intrusive practices of visitation, search, and condemnation in prize courts. To many observers, this renewal of maritime forcefulness heralded a Confederate resumption of the transatlantic slave trade when "barracoons would be refilled in Africa, slave expeditions would be organized on a scale hitherto unknown, and whole squadrons of slave ships (those 'floating hells') would transport their cargoes under the Southern colors, proudly unfurled."[5]

Liberal attempts to contain this anticipated surge of maritime disorder achieved mixed results before mounting American grievances toward England suspended cooperation altogether by late in 1863. Only with the Treaty of Washington in 1871 did it seem possible that the piratical practices of governments could be restrained. A short time before this Anglo-American accord, Francis Lieber marveled at an impending era, writing to Senator Charles Sumner:

> What an advance it would be—though requiring nearly twenty-two centuries—from the time when Thucydides said that private property was not acknowledged at sea as on land, to the middle of the nineteenth century, when private property—even of the enemy—should be declared to be protected, even floating without defence, on the wide sea.[6]

Lieber, who had already codified the conventions of land warfare, voiced a common liberal refrain in celebrating the security of seaborne commerce during war. His vantage helps to frame a central question of considerable importance. Why, we should ask, did this generation's achievement in establishing meaningful rules for ground warfare not find a similarly sweeping counterpart in more "civilized" maritime conventions? In addressing why a widely supported program of oceanic reform fell short, this chapter will revisit a set of incidents, episodes, and actors involved in this transnational initiative between 1850 and 1875. To puzzle through the implications of this story requires keeping two deeper forces also in mind—the intrinsic complexities of oceanic law and the conflicting legacies of how the Union achieved "free soil" and "free men" upon the North American continent.

* * *

Victorian-era maritime liberalizers grappled with the thorny contradictions and implications of a "free seas" regime associated with Hugo Grotius's work of two and a half centuries earlier. Maritime conventions relied upon flags, registries, courts, and legal compendia to establish the status of ships in areas where territorially based sovereigns lacked meaningful jurisdiction. In peacetime, flagged ships were immune from

interference by naval vessels from other countries, though this could be overridden by treaties related to slaving and piracy. Relations between vessels during war involved a separate set of mechanisms and prize courts that relied on prevailing rules regarding belligerent searches and prize-court condemnation of contraband. The objective of such regulations was to channel conflict between warring states to the most narrow grounds possible, so as to prevent the oceanic commons from becoming a zone of indiscriminate plunder. The long-standing association of this maritime regime with "freedom" seems, in retrospect, to be radically misleading. The freedoms protected by international consensus did not involve persons or property, but that of nationally registered vessels, which were under the law of nations guaranteed the right to "meet there as equals, as masters, independent," as Francis Lieber summed up in 1840.[7]

The rhetoric of free seas resonated with nineteenth-century reformers like Lieber, who sought to expand the emancipatory potential of this term, and thus to make the oceans better accord with various interrelated "civilizing" projects then underway. Antislavery activists associated the vacuum of authority on the high seas as a presumption against slavery, which since the landmark *Somerset* decision of 1772 had required enactment by positive law. Charles Sumner thus identified the "principle of manumission" with the ocean's "strong breezes" while Frederick Douglas insisted: "You cannot write the bloody laws of slavery on those restless billows. The ocean, if not the land, is free." Both men were acutely aware that the oceanic vacuum of authority regularly empowered the enslavers and subjugated the victims chained in their holds, however. Despite European powers' joint renunciation of the slave trade in 1815, illicit trade to Brazil boomed in the 1840s, while that to Cuba expanded even more over the 1850s. Abolitionists both within and beyond the UK lauded British attempts to establish an emancipationist legal and diplomatic order in which the Royal Navy would complete what seemed merely a *de jure* end of the slaving.[8]

"Free trade" reformers led by Richard Cobden sought a similarly broad expansion of the "free seas" by setting aside the early modern mercantilist practices in which the Grotian order developed. Such Cobdenites expressed a deep skepticism of government-directed economic measures and envisioned as an alternative the frictionless movement of goods between national jurisdictions and, of crucial importance, over ocean space. The famed abolition of the "Corn Laws" in the 1840s (the initial step toward a series of tariff reductions) was the first step toward an internationalist order bent on replacing warfare with commerce as

the prevalent mode of international interaction. For reformers, private propertied interests (represented by Chambers of Commerce) were harbingers of a liberal era of peace no less than of prosperity.[9]

Liberalizing the oceans in the 1860s required curbing the slaving, mercantilist, and prize-taking vestiges of a more barbarous age so as to eliminate the most extreme forms of maritime coercion. The aim was to establish meaningful freedom for persons (the leading principle for antislavery activists), or for private property (as Cobdenite free traders emphasized). This updated version of "free seas" combined the rhetoric of emancipating with various techniques of ordering, and of establishing new international structures capable of adjudicating violations that had eluded the existing system of national sovereignty. One technique of reform involved applying the early modern category of pirates as *Hostis Humani Generis*, or "Enemies of All Mankind" to the forces barbarizing the modern oceans. The same early nineteenth-century logic that punished African slave-trading as piracy underlay the growing discomfort with privateering, an early modern convention that allowed those privately owned vessels who obtained letters of marque to reap tremendous personal gain by seizing enemy goods. A quarter-century after Secretary of State John Quincy Adams linked this "system of licensed robbery" to "the most atrocious characters of piracy," the European maritime powers repudiated letters of marque warfare in the 1856 Declaration of Paris.[10] Pirate analogies applied to Confederates during the Civil War expanded further still after Union victory. Liberal reformers like Charles Francis Adams Jr. took up the image as a means of excoriating assaults on any unarmed merchant or passenger ship, even if a regular navy took the action during a time of war.

The United States, as a rising maritime power and chief rival of the British, alternated between playing the role of gadfly and innovator in the intricate diplomatic dance over permissible forms of oceanic violence. The commitment of the United States to the "freedom of the seas" made it the most vocal proponent of neutral rights, while its standing as a weak naval power caused it to be wary of eliminating letters of marque altogether. The United States also pioneered the association of slaving with piracy, though an extreme prickliness about British sea power meant that all ships flying US colors eluded detention from the Royal Navy, even if evidence of slaving was clear. Of greatest interest to Cobdenites were a long-standing series of American pronouncements concerning the basic illegitimacy of attacks on private property at sea. This position could be traced through memorable formulations by Benjamin Franklin, John Quincy Adams, and

Henry Wheaton to lesser lights such as William Cass and William Marcy, who deployed this tradition when in 1856 they kept the United States from joining the Declaration of Paris. The proslavery tilt of US statecraft during of the 1850s made American leadership in an international reform unlikely. But a deeper genealogy of liberalizing rhetoric suggested that the right moment of crisis—and the right kind of crusade against a villainous enemy—might just become a catalyst for change.[11]

<center>* * *</center>

The Lincoln administration developed its maritime policies acutely aware of how other countries used its actions at sea to render wider judgments about its capacity for civilizing missions. A cosmopolitan network centered around Charles Sumner alerted Washington officials of foreign acclaim of the Union's 1861 disavowal of privateering and its new vigilance against the illegal slave trade. Members of this same network conveyed foreign liberals' objections about the Union's blockade, which free traders linked to the Republican party's enactment of higher tariffs, and to hostility to free trade more generally. Sumner himself worked with considerable success to gather these disparate Union policies under a single overarching goal—to isolate an upstart Confederate slavocracy and to thus eliminate what he considered the greatest menace of all to the high seas. The Richmond government provided Union message-makers with plenty of ammunition, beginning with Jefferson Davis's inexplicable selection of William Yancey, a key proponent of the slave trade, as his government's chief diplomat in London.

The key element of Union statecraft was to make it the world's responsibility to contain this new barbarizing slavocracy. While US attempts in 1861 to ratify the Declaration of Paris failed, brighter results followed the new tough enforcement of laws against African slavers based in American ports. American consul Charles Francis Adams Sr. well appreciated the capital to be had by redeeming "the reputation of the country from the stigma of any connivance or participation of such odious crime within its borders." Sumner ally John Jay drew attention to an equally important fact—that anti-slaving measures could draw attention to the Confederacy's pro-slaving personnel at the same time that it burnished the Union's reputation. By the spring of 1862, an Anglo-American treaty allowing for mutual search and seizure on the high seas passed the US Senate, representing what Sumner termed his country's "open pledge to Human Rights." A decline in the flow of slaves from Africa caused Sumner later to recall "never in history was there any treaty which did at once so

complete a work… The treaty came and the wicked work ceased." Little more than a decade after its enactment, a close Sumner associate marveled (with considerable exaggeration) how, with this pathbreaking treaty, "the ocean, so often traversed by slave-ships, became like a peaceful metropolis with a well-ordered police."[12]

The Slave Trade Treaty could not overcome the acrimony that prevailed between England and the United States over the maritime rights and duties of neutrals. In early November of 1861, the US Navy's heavy-handed seizure of ministers traveling aboard a British-flagged mail packet sparked the so-called *Trent* Affair, which pushed England and the United States to the brink of war. This episode, which has received extensive treatment from historians, completed a reversal of roles by which the United States established a new position in championing the rights of belligerents while England expressed rare concern for damage done to neutrals. Shifts in older positions spurred reformers to work toward the same liberalization of maritime war that had marked suppression of the slave trade. In a widely publicized address, Sumner pledged that his country would look to the future, so as to "gloriously unite in setting up new pillars, to mark new triumphs, rendering the ocean a highway of peace, instead of a bloody field." Sensing an opening, Richard Cobden privately detailed for Sumner a series of liberal American precedents from the 1850s, insisted that with these already in evidence, the United States was perfectly prepared to lead a "clean sweep of the old maritime law of Vattel, Pufendorf, and Co."[13]

The rhetoric of transatlantic cooperation masked the continuing sharp national differences over which specific aspect of maritime liberalization would take priority. Cobden joined French advocates of neutral rights such as Lawrence-Basil Hautefeuille to complain most loudly about the Union's blockade, which liberals widely understood as a leading example of Washington's selfish disregard of Europe's cotton-dependent economy. Though Sumner also opposed commercial blockading in theory, he refrained from speaking out publicly against what was one of the most important elements in the Union's grand strategy. Even while Cobden continued to understand blockading laws "as rascally an invention as the old Corn Laws," his own increasingly pro-Union tendencies led him to downplay the issue, especially after the public assault on the blockade's legitimacy became associated with pro-Confederate figures. Cobden instead began to elevate the cause of "merchant immunity" in his Parliamentary efforts, thus inspiring one of his closest associates in 1864 to explain at length how this broader principle might cut the Gordian knot of international disputes at sea. Once

the world community embraced the sanctity of ocean-borne property (as they supposedly had already done for all land-based, non-contraband property), the array of controversies over seizures, searches, blockades, and privateering would be relegated to the dustbin of history. In a new dispensation, armed ships might still inflict damage on other warship in the spectacle of "naval duels." But these increasingly fearsome vessels would no longer menace the global economy.[14]

As the prospects for oceanic reform rose, Sumner and Francis Lieber began a lengthy interchange over the best means to secure international consensus and to establish an effective enforcement regime. Lieber realized that what he proposed as a "Code of Regulations for the Government of Navies in War as authorized by the Laws and Usages of War" required a different approach than the rules for ground war he was then codifying for the US War department. A set of intricate rules had already been "fully elaborated in the works on international law," which had not been the case with his ground-war code. Yet he also realized that to change rules would be perhaps more challenging than to introduce them *de novo*, especially if the project was overtaken by navy commanders or Washington officials guided by national interests rather than by broader "civilizing" imperatives. To command the assent of the international community required the collaboration of University-based scholars, whose force of intellect and example would establish their legitimacy beyond the realm of statecraft.[15]

Confederate actions, not cool logic, provided the best opportunities to rally a campaign against a mounting maritime menace. By late 1862, high seas lawlessness found a new embodiment in the *CSS Florida* and the *CSS Alabama*, two Liverpool-built Confederate commerce raiders that, by war's end, would destroy more than 200 ships and millions of dollars of American commerce. Cobden agreed with his American allies that this innovation in steam-powered naval raiding made the Declaration of Paris's ban on privateering "a hollow subterfuge." Late in 1863, he prodded the American consulate in France to frame a protest for use when "the question of belligerent rights comes up again for discussion." Only a short time had passed before that consulate did so with a strongly worded complaint about commissioned naval vessels "whose acknowledged mission is not to fight, but to rob, to burn, and to fly." In grouping such warships with the barbarous letters of marque, these Union diplomats insisted that "whatever flag may float from their masthead, or whatever power may claim to own them, their conduct stamps them as piratical." At this juncture, it seemed that the same spirit that had ended the oceanic slave trade and was

vanquishing the American "slave power" might also advance the cause of humanity and property upon the watery depths of the global oceans.[16]

* * *

Wartime progress toward maritime reform required glossing over issues that divided nations and emphasizing those areas where common ground existed. Beginning late in 1863, Charles Sumner chose a different path, holding up the *CSS Alabama* as proof of British shame no less than that of Confederate barbarism. In one of the most influential American addresses on foreign relations in the nineteenth century, Sumner lambasted the British government's negligence in allowing the *Florida* and the *Alabama* to be constructed and manned in their own most important Atlantic port. The trademark verbal pyrotechnics usually reserved for "slave-mongers" found a new target in erstwhile British allies, whose granting of "ocean belligerence" Sumner would vilify for the better part of the next decade.[17]

In narrowing his lines of analysis, Sumner relinquished reform and instead returned to the pattern of the 1850s, when American interests and honor were largely detached from the international law reform proposed by Cobdenites. This nationalist temper was evident in Sumner's invocation, late in 1864, of hoary British precedents as justification for the Union's seizure of the *CSS Florida* in the neutral waters of a Brazilian port. Cobden lamented what he understood as his friend's lawyerly search for precedent, and his seeming abandonment of progressive improvement. America's "only title to existence as a Republic is that you are supposed to be superior to what we were 60 years ago," Cobden chided.[18] With Union victory in sight, Cobden was troubled by the "very grave questions" that divided England and the United States, though he still clung to the hope that "the whole world may be ready for a thorough revolution in international maritime law."[19]

If Sumner's angry assault on England slowed the move toward liberalizing the oceans, the deaths of Lincoln and Cobden in 1865 proved more damaging still. As Americans grew understandably pre-occupied with how to shape the peace at home, Cobdenite initiatives abroad suffered in the absence of what had been a singularly effective leader. Anglo-American difficulties overshadowed promising developments from other corners of the maritime community. In 1867, the State Department rebuffed the overtures of the Italian government, noting that the "remembrance of the great wrong" committed by hostile neutrals during the Civil War meant that the "convenient time has not yet come" for reviewing American participation in the Declaration of Paris. A year

later, the festering controversy with England again damaged international reform, as Secretary of State Seward reported that a Prussian-sponsored treaty to protect high seas commerce during war was unlikely to "find favor with the Senate… or with the country"[20] Only with the elevation of a new American President and Secretary of State in 1869 would hopes for a new start be rekindled. Sumner urged his fellow Senators that year to understand the global stakes of the so-called *Alabama* claims and to initiate "an international debate, the greatest of our history and, before it is finished in all probability the greatest of all history." A critical ingredient of Sumner's efforts in these years was a renewed optimism in the "remodeling of maritime international law" and in finding a comprehensive solution that would achieve "some enduring safeguard for the future, some landmark of Humanity" that would mark a "gain for all" through the elevation of the "Law of Nations."[21]

In his definitive biography of the Senator, the historian David Donald suggested that Sumner's vigorous campaign for British reparations to the Union "envisioned a memorable and protracted negotiation, comparable perhaps to that leading to the Treaty of Westphalia, in which he might play a shaping role in establishing new rules of international law." Donald went on to imply that Sumner was motivated primarily by visions of personal glory—a sharp evaluation, which, while ringing partly true, obscures the broader support for reform evident in the late 1860s. The moral urgency of these post-war years was evident to an American who called upon his government to build upon the African slave trade suppression so that "the incendiary fires lit by the *Alabama* … may illumine the way to a great and beneficent improvement in the laws of war and nations." In stressing the need for immediate action, this author pointed out the range of figures who were making the world aware that naval capture of enemy property represented "the greatest deformity, the most abnormal and offensive remnant of barbarism, to be found in the law of nations and the rules of war."[22]

A new dispossession for liberalizing oceans was evident in the Union's Caribbean policies of the 1870s no less than its British diplomacy. By remaining aloof from Cuba's "Ten Years' War" (a conflict precipitated in 1868 by those seeking to detach the island from the Spanish Empire), Sumner and other abolitionist veterans made no effort to hasten emancipation in what was the closest remaining bastion of plantation bondage. Sumner did echo his wartime position about the barbarities of certain kinds of maritime warfare, however,

as he associated Cuban insurgents not with antislavery reform (which they intermittently embraced) but with a piratical Confederacy at sea. Insurgent ships prevented by the Spanish navy from taking prizes to a court had no right to launch attacks, he insisted. Any vessel that did so should be rightfully deemed by the international community as "a lawless monster which civilized nations cannot sanction."[23]

Despite high expectations, the 1871 settlement of the *Alabama* damages only modestly extended the 1856 Declaration of Paris and altogether lacked the moral stature of the 1862 Anglo-American slave trade treaty. Sumner's own series of unsuccessful amendments demonstrates the missed opportunities in these proceedings. He attempted, without success, to apply the pirate analogy to "any armed vessel which plunders and burns prizes at sea," thus marking a turn away by his generation from extending the "enemies of all mankind" designation beyond the stateless pirates and the brutal slavers. Perhaps more notable was the failure of Sumner's attempt to return to the Cobdenite program of immunizing private property during war, a suggestion that Congress welcomed with little more enthusiasm than it did his reported plea to end commercial blockades as a new principle of international law.[24]

Sumner conveyed his disappointment to a British confidante by noting "it is hard to think so good an opportunity was lost for doing so much to improve the Law of Nations & especially to limit the sphere & peril of war." He made no mention of his own role in halting the momentum for reform at the crucial juncture of 1863, nor did he seem all that interested that the cause of innovation had already moved beyond statecraft and into new venues for the academic codification of international law.[25]

* * *

Francis Lieber witnessed developments of the early 1870s with greater optimism than his friend Sumner did. His peculiar vantage took shape beyond official power and in consultation with other theorists such as Johann Bluntschli of Switzerland. The difficulties of the Anglo-American dispute did not loom so large in this venture, which sought to combine the emergence of new states and new mechanisms with a new commitment to establishing civilized agreements on the extent of hostile force.[26]

The maritime order's lingering brutality inspired Sumner no less than Lieber to take halting steps to build upon the humanitarian sensibilities of slave-trade suppression, though neither did so with much success. Sumner identified what he termed the "Coolie trade" of indentured workers from Asia as a "mode of enslaving men" that differed from the transatlantic

slave trade "in little else than the employment of fraud instead of force to make its victims captive." But neither he nor any of his fellow Senators suggested a Pacific maritime order to soften hardships associated with new forms of "liquid labor," and the trade in Asian contract workers remained an issue without a powerful advocate when Sumner died in 1874.[27] Lieber, meanwhile, briefly focused on a different set of transoceanic voyagers in the years before his death in 1872. In private correspondence with Bluntschli, Lieber proposed a treaty structure that would embody the principle that "peaceful migration is a characteristic of our epoch." Among the norms he suggested were provisions to ensure passengers' health aboard transit ships (where horrific conditions prevailed for those traveling in "steerage"), for the employment of international officials at chief seaports, and for "good treatment of immigrants." The sole issue Lieber brought to public attention, however, was a proposed ban on government-sanctioned deportation across the ocean of paupers and criminals.[28]

Most post-Civil War American efforts to reform the law of the sea concentrated on property during war rather than persons during peacetime, however. Here the efforts of Cobden, Sumner, Lieber, and others to forge an international consensus around the immunity of shipping from belligerent attacks bore their greatest fruit. By 1875, Professor James Lorimer of the University of Edinburgh could term this proposal as one of "two burning [international law] questions of the day." Few topics were discussed more widely or enthusiastically within the burgeoning literature of international law reform. The leading edge went to those who agreed with American codifier David Dudley Field, who in 1876 insisted, with a nod to Grotius, that "*the sea is the highway of nations,* and may well be dedicated by common consent, to peaceful uses."[29]

Broader trends and tendencies of the late nineteenth century were evident in the positions staked out both by proponents and opponents of shielding seaborne property from the ill fortunes of war. A new generation dismissed what they saw as a utopian impulse of maritime reformers and instead appealed to the language of Darwinian struggle. The effectiveness of Confederate vessels like the *Alabama* provided an important precedent for subsequent innovations in the French *guerre de course* (undertaken by those associated with the so-called Jeune Ecole). In 1887, the French theorist Gabriel Charmes followed his injunction for warships to "fall without pity on the weak" with the impatient warning: "Let not short-sighted philosophers tax us with barbarism." The influential American author Alfred

Thayer Mahan shared this worldview, though he was more politic than to frame the issue with the same blunt attraction to force.[30]

The most vigorous line of argument taken up by advocates of maritime reform concerned the sanctity of property. There was a growing realization that even without destroying property, the increase of risk and the wartime spike in insurance rates inevitably made the scourges of land war spill out and reverberate throughout the maritime order upon which the entire global economy depended. Such a concern for the prerogatives of capital aligned with some of the most important principles of American jurisprudence of the era.[31] The wartime security of property drew strong backing, however, even though more mundane factors delayed any overhaul in a maritime code, which had grown increasingly complex with the passage of time. The asymmetries of increasingly capital-intensive naval fleets made it unlikely that "weak" and "strong" naval powers could find common ground in setting out a new set of regulations (not to mention mechanisms for enforcing them). Despite several high-profile attempts, consensus for naval reform was undermined by the recurring tendency of those involved to keep within recognized national interests.[32]

The strongest impetus for Victorian reform was the sense that the world was improvable, and that the spirit of progress could advance from one civilizing cause to another in the march toward a more humane order. In stepping back from the details of Civil-War-era maritime reform to take in the campaign as a whole, we can see the flaws in this generation's expectation that the "free men" and "free soil" of Union victory would produce the "free seas" improvements so inspiring to many. The most important forces at work in Union victory seemed to be fundamentally at odds with the necessary ingredients of a liberalized ocean order. Nationalism had won out over internationalism in 1865, and as the post-Civil War state system incorporated new nations of Germany, Italy, and Japan, the power of these new sovereigns only increased in importance. Similarly, war's destructiveness was enhanced rather than curbed by the American 1860s, a development that Lieber's code clearly pushed forward. Perhaps most intriguing, the Union's war against the Confederacy had provided a striking example of how the personal rights of human freedom were more aligned with this progressive age than the prerogatives of property upon which maritime reform in its Cobdenite form rested. The turn to emancipation had been the hallmark of the age, showing with great clarity that civilization could mean setting aside modes of ownership, even if these were deeply entrenched in the American order.[33]

Notes

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The American Civil War and the Transatlantic Triumph of Volitional Citizenship

Paul Quigley

Among the most far-reaching of the American Civil War's consequences was the transformation of citizenship. Four years prior to the war, the Dred Scott decision categorically denied African American citizenship, not only in the slaveholding South but in the supposedly free northern states as well. Yet by 1868, slavery had been abolished nationwide, and the fourteenth amendment created the new constitutional category of national citizenship, guaranteeing equal legal protection to all citizens, whether black or white. There were, of course, glaring limitations to these gains. But there is no denying the fact that within eleven years Americans rebuilt the basic structure of citizenship. Moreover, the war itself had already begun to alter the nature of citizenship. In both the Union and the Confederacy, the exigencies of near-total war caused governments to make new demands upon the governed, while also magnifying people's expectations of government. Policies such as taxation and conscription forced men and women on both sides to reexamine their basic conceptions of what it meant to be a citizen.

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The war and its aftermath, in short, led to a fundamental overhaul of the ideas and practices of citizenship in the United States.

This transformation—like the American Civil War in general—has typically been seen in insular terms. Historians have focused on the changing meanings and boundaries of citizenship for those already present in the country. This is not surprising. The Civil War and Reconstruction systematized national citizenship, forged a stronger, more unified national identity, and triggered a huge expansion in central government authority. What narrative could be more suited to a national history framework than that?

But what happens if we set these developments within a broader context? When we widen our scope, it becomes apparent that the transformation of citizenship was not limited to American shores. In Europe too—and, although they are beyond the reach of this essay, other regions of the world—the concept was in flux. In simple terms, the American and French Revolutions initiated a transition, unfolding throughout the long nineteenth century, from traditional "subjecthood" toward modern "citizenship." (This shift also took place to some degree in monarchies like Great Britain, even though they retained the term "subject.") Whereas early modern people had conceived allegiance as being natural and hierarchical, denizens of the modern world began to think of it as being artificially created and horizontal. The revolutions of 1776 and 1789 posited a perfectly equal status between all citizens, regardless of their social position. Each citizen owed a set of clearly defined obligations to the government, and, in return, each citizen could expect certain political, social, and economic rights. Of course, the theory of equal citizenship rarely translated neatly into practice. Even in France and the United States, the pioneers of democratic citizenship, access to the benefits of citizenship were severely curtailed along lines of race, class, and gender. To some degree, these exclusions diminished over time. Yet nowhere was this a straightforward story of inevitable liberal expansion. The post-Civil War admission of African American men, for example, came along with a deepening exclusion of American women. And in Britain, the enfranchisement of the "respectable" working class in 1867 came at the cost of increasingly negative racialized depictions of the Irish "other." The story becomes even more complicated when we consider the different dimensions of this concept—the political, the civic, and the socioeconomic—that scholars of citizenship have explored. The important point is that in the nineteenth century, citizenship was in flux throughout the Atlantic world, and was not always moving consistently in the direction of liberal progress.[1]

Although citizenship followed different paths in different places, it also developed in a more transnational process, with ideas and influences spilling over national borders. It was redefined not only within but between different nation-states.[2] This was especially true because the corollary of citizenship's internal uniformity was a sharpening of the line that separates insiders from outsiders, citizens from aliens. As Rogers Brubaker has explained, "By inventing the national citizen and the legally homogeneous national citizenry, the [French] Revolution simultaneously invented the foreigner."[3] To define its own citizens (or, in the case of European monarchs, its subjects), each modern nation-state had to define the opposing category of "alien." The importance of that line between citizen and alien, however, raised a vital question. What happened when an individual wished to transfer his allegiance (for the category was invariably defined in masculine terms) from one nation-state to another? Thanks to the mass migrations of the nineteenth century, this problem became endemic, raising a host of troubling questions. What determined an individual's national allegiance? Should it be based on place of birth, or parentage, or individual choice? Was expatriation a natural right? What should naturalization require? Nineteenth-century governments answered these basic questions in surprisingly different ways, producing a complicated bureaucracy of citizenship that varied widely across space and time.[4]

The most important divergence was between traditional notions of perpetual or indelible allegiance—the idea that allegiance was ascribed by birth—and the notion of volitional allegiance. The central point of contention was whether or not an individual ought to be able to freely expatriate himself from one country and naturalize as a citizen or subject of another. For much of the nineteenth century, European monarchies like Great Britain and Prussia answered no. They adhered to the traditional model of perpetual allegiance; "once a subject, always a subject," as the maxim went. But in the United States, which had been born in a mass act of expatriation, allegiance was more often seen as being volitional—something one could change at will. This disagreement caused recurrent conflicts in transatlantic relations, particularly between the United States and Great Britain, from the earliest years of America's existence. It would continue to do so until the period 1868–1870 when legislation and treaties in and between countries on both sides of the Atlantic instituted a new regime of consensual expatriation and naturalization.

Why then? Why was it in the late 1860s, in the wake of the American Civil War, that the long rise of volitional citizenship reached fruition? This

essay will place the long-term transatlantic debate over allegiance in the context of the American Civil War—and vice versa—evaluating connections, entanglements, and mutual influences between the two. As we will see, the war did not cause the triumph of volitional citizenship in any direct sense. But the two processes were deeply interrelated, reminding us that the significance of the American Civil War was not confined to American shores, or to the years 1861 through 1865. On the contrary, it was deeply enmeshed in longer-term international processes—including the decades-long transatlantic struggle over the meaning of allegiance.

Even as the United States was coming into being, expatriation and naturalization were already subjects of transatlantic debate. After all, the American Revolution was itself an act of mass expatriation, in defiance of Britain's claims upon the loyalty of American colonists. Thomas Jefferson, among other revolutionary leaders, consistently pressed for the free transfer of allegiance. He even authored a bill (which never passed) for the Virginia state legislature to establish expatriation as a "natural right."[5] In the decades following the Revolution, the two models of allegiance frequently collided, largely due to Britain's insatiable appetite for sailors. Britain asserted the right to impress into naval service any man born a British subject—even if he had subsequently naturalized as a US citizen. From the American perspective, this was an unjust denial of the right to withdraw from one national allegiance and forge another of one's free will. This issue contributed to the deterioration of Anglo-American relations during the Jefferson presidency and helped lead to the War of 1812. As Denver Brunsman has shown, the ongoing disagreement with Britain convinced Americans that volitional citizenship formed a central pillar of their emerging national identity.[6]

Still, in the decades following the Revolution American commitment to the principle was neither uniformly accepted nor fully implemented. Federalists denied the right of expatriation, and even though Thomas Jefferson and many other Republicans championed it, they never successfully wrote that right into law.[7] This hesitancy continued long into the nineteenth century. When naturalized US citizens were forced to fulfill military obligations to their native-born countries, notably Prussia, the United States tended to protest in principle but did not normally intervene in any tangible way—passively acquiescing to the doctrine of perpetual allegiance. In an influential letter of 1840, Henry Wheaton, the US minister to Prussia, asserted that his government would offer protection to naturalized citizens anywhere except their native country—effectively

rendering such citizens liable for military service if they returned home. This continued to be practical policy until after the Civil War.[8]

Even in the 1840s and 1850s, though, there were signs that the US government might be prepared to take a harder line. Writing amidst the political turmoil of 1848 to George Bancroft, American minister in London, Secretary of States James Buchanan relayed President Polk's gratitude for Bancroft's efforts to protect Irish-born naturalized US citizens charged with treason by the British government. "Whenever the occasion may require it," Buchanan wrote, "you will resist the British doctrine of perpetual allegiance, and maintain the American principle, that British native-born subjects, after they have been naturalized under our laws, are, to all intents and purposes, as much American citizens, and entitled to the same degree of protection, as though they had been born in the United States." Here was the crux of the issue: that any individual had the right to transfer his allegiance from one nation-state to another, and that once he did so his status ought to be perfectly equal to a natural-born citizen.[9]

Although in this example the issue was whether or not naturalized citizens could be charged with treason in another country, it was military service that emerged most often as the sticking point; it was military service that did the most to highlight the problems of naturalization policy. Ever since the French Revolution, military service had been widely seen as a defining obligation of the citizen. When they formulated a new constitution in 1848, the Swiss forbade dual nationality in large part because of the danger that one man could be subject to the draft in two countries. And in its new constitution of 1850, Prussia ruled that "The right to emigrate cannot be restricted by the state, except with respect to the duty of military service." The right of expatriation was gathering momentum, but military obligations often impeded it. European governments' claims upon the service of their natural-born subjects continued to bedevil American governments in the 1850s. In 1858, the new American minister in Berlin, Joseph Wright, urged his superiors in Washington that the time had come to take a stronger stand. Both Secretary of State Lewis Cass and James Buchanan—by then president—agreed. Cass reported that Buchanan considered expatriation a natural right and believed that "the doctrine of perpetual allegiance is a relic of barbarism."[10] By the late 1850s, then, the issue looked to be coming to a head. While Prussians and Britons continued to insist that allegiance was perpetual, Americans were more interested than ever in asserting the right of free expatriation and protecting the rights of naturalized citizens.

Then came the American Civil War. The outbreak of war often renders allegiance a more urgent issue than ever. This had been especially true of the national wars, or people's wars, that became more prevalent beginning with the American and French revolutions. If one's nationality determined one's allegiance in wartime, where did migrants fit in? When warring governments instituted conscription, as they did with increasing frequency, what were the obligations of immigrants? In many cases, these questions were moot because immigrants responded with enthusiasm to the call to arms. Countless Irish-Americans, for example, embraced the war as an opportunity to prove their loyalty and full American citizenship.[11] This attitude reflected a broader trend; across the world during the long nineteenth century, from France and Prussia to the United States and Latin America, citizenship was becoming increasingly identified with military service.[12] Not all immigrants welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate their allegiance by fighting in the American Civil War, however. Such men found it easier to stay out of the war in its early months when service was voluntary. Even then, there was a good deal of community pressure— sometimes violent pressure—to join up, even for men of foreign birth. But it was with national conscription, instituted in the Confederacy in April 1862 and the Union in March 1863, that the role of foreign-born men began to raise fundamental questions about the nature of allegiance.

In the Confederacy, the problem was exacerbated by the language of the conscription legislation, which targeted "white men who are residents of the Confederate States." The definition of that term "resident" quickly became an object of controversy. Confederate officials interpreted it broadly, taking it to mean any man who had acquired domicile in the Confederate States, regardless of whether or not he had formally naturalized. ("Domicile" was itself a contested legal term, but was normally used in cases where a man had demonstrated some intention of remaining in a new country by performing certain acts such as voting, owning property, or marrying.) But many British-born men objected, arguing that because they were not Confederate citizens, they were not liable for conscription. These men complained to their consuls, who, in turn, involved the British foreign office. Britain's official position was that only formal naturalization could render a man liable for conscription. According to the tenet of perpetual allegiance, Britain should have gone even further than that; should have denied the Confederacy's right to treat as a citizen any man who had been born a British subject. But such a stance was, thanks to the scale of transatlantic migration, simply untenable by the 1860s. So, British

representatives merely insisted that Britons who had not naturalized as American or Confederate citizens ought to be exempt. At the beginning, Confederate officials were fairly compliant, releasing bona fide British subjects. But as the war went on, and as the Confederacy's need for manpower became ever more desperate, Confederate frustrations mounted, and enrollment officials became less and less willing to release foreign conscripts. Ultimately, efforts to protect British subjects from the draft, in the context of a general deterioration of Anglo-Confederate relations, led to the expulsion of consuls from Confederate territory in 1863.

In the Union, the underlying issues—how to determine the allegiance and, therefore, the military responsibilities of immigrants—were similar. But the outcome was different. This was partly because the language of the Union's conscription legislation was clearer. It avoided the confusion of the Confederacy's "resident" terminology, and instead described those liable for the draft as "all able-bodied male citizens of the United States, and persons of foreign birth who shall have declared on oath their intention to become citizens." There were still disputes about the liability of certain individuals for the draft, but in the Union these disputes were simpler because they did not also involve the meaning of nebulous legal terms like "resident" and "domicile." The other major difference stemmed from the status of the United States as a recognized nation-state that already commanded the respect of the international community. Because foreign consuls enjoyed stable and official relations with Washington, in a way that they decidedly did not with Richmond, the two sides were generally able to reach agreement. The US government never came close to expelling foreign consuls for interfering with the process of conscription.[13]

Still, during the American Civil War, the tables were turned. As the Union and Confederate governments mobilized for all-out war, they needed to enlist as many men as they could, wherever those men happened to have been born. Now it was European countries protecting their subjects and citizens from American service. Even during the war, though, the old problem of naturalized US citizens being forced into European armies persisted. Thus Abraham Lincoln's 1863 message to Congress, as well as addressing Union enlistment of foreign-born men, also dealt with those foreigners who "become citizens of the United States for the sole purpose of evading duties imposed by the laws of their native countries," and who then returned to their home countries under the protection of US citizenship. Secretary of State William Seward, likewise, recognized the irony of ongoing US efforts to protect naturalized citizens from service in Europe

while requiring the service of certain foreign-born men for the Union war effort. The situation descended almost into farce when some foreign-born naturalized citizens fled to their native countries in order to avoid Union service—only to then appeal to the US government to protect them from military duties back home. This was no longer a unidirectional problem.[14]

While the war was going on, of course, America's energies were directed inward. This was not the time to be actively pressuring other countries to adopt the American model of citizenship. In a May 1862 letter conveying his gratitude to Prussia for releasing two US citizens from military service, William Seward expressed the hope that once the war was over, "and Prussia shall have gotten relief from her present anxieties, as I trust will be the case, we shall try to come to some definite and harmonious understanding with her upon this vexed subject of conflict between our naturalization and her military laws." But as he explained in another letter later that year, now was not the time; the Civil War was causing the United States and its citizens to be treated with less respect around the world than before. American merchants, for example, were being mistreated in Latin America. And German-born men who had naturalized as American citizens continued to be drafted when they returned to their native states. "The reason for all this," he explained, "is plain enough. We are divided and at war among ourselves…. All the world knows, even if we do not, that we cannot wage this war, on our part, with effect, and, at the same time, unnecessarily and rashly engage in wars with other nations which may deny us justice."[15] For the moment, the United States simply lacked authority on the world stage.

All signs pointed to a renewed campaign to extend the American principle of volitional citizenship across the Atlantic, once the war was over—and once Prussia, one of the key European players, had resolved its own conflicts. President Andrew Johnson certainly hoped so, raising the issue in his annual messages of 1866 and 1867. In 1866, he stated the problem clearly: "This government has claimed for all persons not convicted, or accused, or suspected of crime, an absolute political right of self-expatriation, and a choice of new national allegiance. Most of the European states have dissented from this principle." In 1867, too, Johnson urged Congress that the apparent stabilization of politics in the German states had "induced me to renew the effort to obtain a just and prompt settlement of the long-vexed question concerning the claims of foreign states for military service from their subjects naturalized in the United States." The United States, in Johnson's opinion, ought to solidify its commitment to volitional citizenship once and for all.[16]

The will to act gained strength from two sources of mounting frustration in the late 1860s: first, Britain's mistreatment of Irish-born Fenians who claimed US citizenship status but were treated as British traitors; and second, German states' ongoing demands for military service. The latter issue prompted the *New York Times* to reflect in 1866 on the evolution of America's power on the world stage. "In those evil days when secession was brewing," the *Times* explained, "the United States did not occupy such a proud position among the nations of the world as they do today. A remonstrance from either one of our Ministers abroad was treated respectfully and answered courteously, but nothing further came of it." But now, thanks to America's post-war strength, the US minister had already secured the concession that any Prussian who moved to the United States as a minor and remained there for at least ten years would not be held liable to service. The *Times* saw this as part of a longer trend. In the War of 1812, "we knocked the bottom out of the old British doctrine of 'once a subject, always a subject,'" and that same principle was still worth fighting for now. Success was coming ever closer, in the *Times*' estimation.[17]

William H. Seward, still Secretary of State, was determined to press the American advantage. Writing to the American minister in Prussia, Joseph A. Wright, in September 1866, Seward asked him to "suggest informally to Count Bismarck the inquiry, whether it would not be deemed consistent now with the dignity and greatness of Prussia to recognize the principle of naturalization as a natural and inherent right of manhood." He found it difficult to believe that Prussia really needed the service of former subjects. Furthermore, he suggested that by championing the right of naturalization, Prussia could join the United States at the forefront of historical progress. As he put it, nothing would "place Prussia on an elevation so high among the modern nations as the adoption of that principle which lies at the basis of the American republic." The following year, after the historian George Bancroft replaced Wright, Seward urged Bancroft to pick up where his predecessor had left off. "The question," Seward explained, "is one which seems to have been ripening for very serious discussion when the breaking out of the civil war in this country obliged us to forego every form of debate which was likely to produce hostility or even irritation abroad." Now that both countries were at peace, Seward urged Bancroft to move forward.[18]

At the same time, the long-standing dispute with Britain was entering a new, more heated phase as the Irish-American Fenian movement challenged British authority in Ireland. The British authorities reacted

vigorously, suspending habeas corpus and charging suspects with trea-
son. Because so many of those arrested were (or, at least, claimed to be)
naturalized American citizens, this became a diplomatic issue between
Britain and the United States, repeating the problems of 1848. American
authorities demanded that naturalized US citizens, regardless of their
birthplace, be treated as foreigners by British courts and allowed the
assistance of US consuls. Britain, however, maintained that US natural-
ization was meaningless and that any man born a British subject remained
so for life. Once again, the right of expatriation was pitted against the
tradition of indelible allegiance.[19]

Although the basic disagreement stretched back decades, the specific
form it took in the late 1860s was influenced by the recent experience of
the American Civil War. Fresh from victory in the Civil War, the United
States brought a new sense of its national power on the world stage to its
dealings with Britain, just as it was doing in its negotiations with Prussia.
Furthermore, because so many naturalized Irish-Americans had fought for
the Union, American officials felt a powerful sense of obligation to repay
their military service. The connection was obvious since the Fenian leader-
ship had grown to maturity in the ranks of the Union army. In a March
1866 letter to Charles Francis Adams, Seward insisted that the American
stance of equal rights for naturalized citizens was even more important
now because so many of those new citizens had demonstrated their alle-
giance to the United States in wartime—those who "who have borne arms
in the defence of the United States in a war with public enemies." Their
loyalty had been proved with their blood, and the US government would
not desert them now. Union service came up often in the discussion of
individual cases, and was invariably deployed as an additional reason for
the US government to protect naturalized citizens abroad.[20]

Concurrent clashes with both Prussia and Britain brought forth a
groundswell of American opinion in support of the rights of naturalized
citizens abroad. In the *North American Review*, John T. Morse captured
the dominant sentiment that this conflict was, at root, a battle between
the New World and the Old, between the future and the past. The right
of expatriation ought to be absolute. Many politicians made the same
case. Commenting on the Fenian cases, for example, Illinois congress-
man Norman Judd asserted that these issues were not specific to Irish-
Americans or any other single group; they represented a fundamental
principle, "a question of nationality." Naturalized citizens deserved pre-
cisely the same protections as native-born citizens, whether at home or

abroad; "there is no conditional citizenship."[21] Congress finally adopted this principle with the Expatriation Act of July 1868. The act began with the unequivocal statement that "the right of expatriation is a natural and inherent right of all people, indispensable to the enjoyment of the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and went on to guarantee naturalized citizens equal status and protection. The 1868 law enshrined the right of expatriation—and therefore the principle of volitional citizenship—in US law.[22]

By this point, American efforts to export the principle across the Atlantic had begun to bear fruit. George Bancroft, American minister in Berlin, persuaded the North German Confederation to sign a treaty affirming the right of naturalization. This was the first in a series of similar agreements, known as the Bancroft Treaties, which the United States signed with other German states (Bavaria, Baden, Wurttemberg, and Hesse, all in 1868); other European countries (Belgium, 1868; Norway and Sweden, 1869); and Latin American nations (Mexico in 1868 and Ecuador in 1872). Underpinned by the 1868 Expatriation Act, these accords signaled not only that Americans were now fully committed to the principle of volitional allegiance but also that they were successfully convincing other members of the Atlantic community to subscribe to it.[23]

The triumph of volitional citizenship would not be complete, however, until it was agreed to by Great Britain, the United States's historic nemesis in matters of allegiance. Throughout the late 1860s, the United States maintained pressure on Britain to reform its naturalization laws.[24] In a parliamentary debate of March 20, 1868, the liberal M.P. William Forster insisted that it was time for Britain to stop defending the untenable doctrine of perpetual allegiance. As he pointed out, British officials had in practice already stopped adhering to the full implications of the doctrine, "and a curious proof of the fact was furnished during the course of the late American civil war. Thousands upon thousands of English and Irish emigrants in America endeavored to claim exemption from the conscription … but we found it impossible to assert their right to exemption, after they had taken any step towards renouncing their allegiance to the English Crown. Consequently we gave up all idea of affording them protection, but we still claimed to regard them as subjects of the Queen." Forster set these events within the longer context of the War of 1812, the diplomatic discussions of the antebellum era, and the more recent Fenian issue. Forster's observation about the impact of the American Civil War was echoed in the same debate by Sir Robert Collier, who agreed that

there simply had to be a legal way for a man to transfer his allegiance in this age of mass migrations. "During the American civil war," he said, "it was found practically impossible to give protection to all persons who claimed to be British subjects, but had for years acted as citizens of their adopted country." Collier was sure that "this principle of action ought to receive due recognition" in the current debate.[25]

The government's response to such calls was to create a Royal Commission, in May 1868, charged with investigating the current system of naturalization. In 1869, the commission issued a 156-page report which reviewed the laws of naturalization in various countries and the controversies the issue had generated. The evidence ranged widely, from the 1792–1815 Anglo-American impressment controversies to US-Prussian conscription disputes in the 1840s and 1850s. One section covered the American Civil War, detailing conscription disputes between foreign governments and both the Union and the Confederacy. Although these Civil War disputes were not as important as the other factors, they clearly formed a significant context for the Commission's deliberations. The report recommended that Britain ought to follow the United States, and now several German states, in accepting the right of expatriation. Previously, British governments had upheld indelible allegiance partly because of the need to impress military labor. But that practice had now died. Furthermore, the principle of indelible allegiance was simply untenable in the 1860s, thanks to the sheer scale of migration, particularly from Europe to the United States. In sum, the Commission presented the only sensible course as the adoption of an American-style right of expatriation from one country and voluntary naturalization in another.[26] Although the discussion on how to implement this recommendation dragged on, in May of 1870 Great Britain finally passed a Naturalization Act and signed a concomitant naturalization treaty with the United States.

The transatlantic triumph of volitional citizenship was essentially complete. This was the culmination of a long story, stretching from the 1770s to the 1870s. It was driven by the mass migrations of the nineteenth century, which forced governments on both sides of the Atlantic to answer difficult questions about migration and allegiance, combined with the ideology of the age of revolutions, which rested on the new concept of volitional citizenship. The issue became particularly controversial during the wars fought by a variety of Atlantic World powers during the long nineteenth century; wars between modern nation-states that demanded the absolute allegiance of their citizens and subjects. Had there been no

Civil War in the United States, it is likely that a roughly similar outcome would have been achieved at roughly the same time.

But the American Civil War did happen, and its occurrence had an important impact on the way the debate over allegiance culminated. The Civil War implicated both the Union and Confederate governments in exactly the same kinds of disputes that had long crystallized the problems of allegiance—only now, instead of complaining about American citizens being held for military service overseas, they were dealing with the protests of foreign governments about American conscription policies. This turning of the tables rendered foreign enlistment a multidirectional problem, giving governments on both sides of the Atlantic more reason to work toward a resolution. Furthermore, in strengthening America's international position, victory in the Civil War emboldened officials such as William Seward to champion volitional citizenship more forcefully in negotiations with Prussia and Great Britain. American determination to protect its naturalized citizens from Britain was boosted even further because so many Irish-Americans had proved their US loyalty as Union soldiers. Within a much broader public debate over the meaning of citizenship that was prompted by Union victory and emancipation, Americans were more likely than ever to be prepared to fight for the principle that citizenship—including the benefits of protection against foreign governments—was an equal, uniform category which applied to all American citizens, without distinction of race or of birthplace. Civil War America's redefinition of citizenship went beyond the Reconstruction amendments to include expatriation and naturalization policies at home and abroad; like so many aspects of Civil War history, it can only be understood as a transnational phenomenon.

NOTES

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6. Denver Brunsman, "Subjects vs. Citizens: Impressment and Identity in the Anglo-American Atlantic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 30 (2010): 557–586.

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Lincoln as the Great Educator: Opinion and Educative Liberalism in the Civil War Era

Leslie Butler

In Edinburgh, Scotland in 1893, a monument honoring Scotsmen who fought for the Union Army was unveiled in the Old Calton Cemetery. At the center of this transatlantic celebration were two bronze figures situated atop a plinth of red granite: on one level, a former slave extends a hand upward toward a large and imposing Abraham Lincoln, who stands looming far above. The familiar pairing of a kneeling slave and a standing president resembled Thomas Ball's Freedman's Memorial in Washington, DC, which had earlier given iconographic representation to the understanding of Lincoln as the "Great Emancipator." Much else about this monument and its unveiling had the ring of the familiarity, from the young American woman depicting Columbia dressed in a flowing white gown to the toasts to "Saxon freedom" during this decade of Anglo-American rapprochement.[1]

Yet one curious element stands out today. The square base of the Lincoln statue bears four words, one inscribed on each of its sides: Union, Emancipation, Suffrage, and Education. The first two of these are entirely predictable, and the third makes sense given Lincoln's strong commitment

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to popular government, even if it was not meant to acknowledge his gradual move toward at least partial black suffrage. The fourth word, however, may give us pause. The sculptor, Union veteran George Bissell, left no explanation of what he intended by it. As is well known, Lincoln grew up in the raw, frontier environment of Kentucky and Indiana and received little more than a year of formal education, though he learned to "read, write, and cipher to the Rule of Three," as he later recalled. Yet, as is also well known, he dedicated himself to overcoming this disadvantage through an intense and continual quest for self-education and self-improvement. Perhaps the sculptor sought to capture this crucial aspect of Lincoln's rise, which seemed to many—both in the United States and abroad—to embody America's democratic promise.[2]

Regardless of what those responsible at the time intended, we might today use the Edinburgh monument as a way to recapture a crucial aspect of Lincoln's leadership—and of the Civil War's larger meaning—that British and American liberals cherished. Considering Lincoln as the Instructor-in-Chief, as well as the Commander-in-Chief helps us to recover the emphasis on educative opinion-molding that shaped how nineteenth-century liberals approached popular government. Such a view of Lincoln makes sense, given his celebrated efforts to attach meaning to the conflict through his remarkable speeches and public letters. The American Consul in Edinburgh, Wallace Bruce, a lawyer and a minor literary man, caught some of this idea in a poem he read at the monument's unveiling. "Inspired to set in simple speech / The words that sway a people's heart, / Prophetic sentences that reach / Beyond the realm and scope of art." But we might go further still and consider how liberals on both sides of the Atlantic perceived the Civil War as an educative moment of sorts, as an opportunity to instruct the American nation about its highest ideals and to broadcast those ideals to a wider world heavily invested in their achievement. It was, in short, as one Union publicist insisted, a "war for liberal ideas and for the establishment of liberal principles."[3]

Using the Edinburgh monument as its point of departure, this chapter will, first, establish the centrality of public opinion to a strand of nineteenth-century liberalism we might call "educative liberalism." This strand was articulated most clearly by a group of British and American writers who, in both aspirational and anxious ways, insisted that an era of expanding electorates must also be an era of expanding access to enlightened political discussion that would aid the formation of public opinion. Second, the chapter will explore how these liberals came to see the Civil

War, and Lincoln's leadership during it, as a propitious opportunity to achieve their vision, both by overcoming the ignorant illiberality of slavery and by clarifying the ideal of educated popular government.

* * *

"Our government rests in public opinion," Lincoln observed to fellow Illinois Republicans in 1856. "Whoever can change public opinion, can change the government." By the time Lincoln made this observation, the interplay between popular government and public opinion was already a well-worn convention. The people could exercise their sovereignty not only in how they voted (which was a more regular activity in their world than it is in ours) but through a boisterous print culture that was open to those outside the electoral sphere as well. As Lincoln and other elected officials knew, leaders would have to defer to the prevailing opinion in everyday acts of governing, and only at their peril would they violate the will of the majority, as expressed in the ordinary back-and-forth of mass-based political debate and deliberation.[4]

The notion of "public opinion" was a product of the eighteenth century, linked to the rise of that autonomous "public sphere" that Jürgen Habermas and others have so influentially charted.[5] The quintessentially American sense in which Lincoln deployed this notion was of more recent vintage, dating from the early nineteenth century, when its increasing power can be linked to key developments. Of particular importance were a series of material factors such as the growing ubiquity of newspapers, which circulated far more rapidly as breathtaking advances in printing, transportation, and, finally, telegraphy proceeded, and an increase in literacy, which in the United States had already reached unprecedentedly high rates. British and European visitors to the United States repeatedly commented on the newspaper-reading habits of the Americans, but these developments were felt at home as well. The mid-nineteenth century witnessed a steady expansion and liberalization of the press in Britain, as legislative measures kept pace with technological change. Efforts to eliminate "taxes on knowledge" began in the 1830s and culminated with the repeal of the remaining stamp tax in 1855 and the abolition of the paper duty in 1861. Liberals pushed for and applauded these Parliamentary moves that at last "set the press free" and augured a peaceful "revolution."[6]

Americans' turn to universal white manhood suffrage and a raucous party system gave the concept, and the process of locating public opinion, more democratic associations than in other countries. John Neal, who wrote for both the British and the American press, termed newspapers,

most of which were attached to one or another of the mass-based parties, "the mightiest engine of our day." This 1843 comment was at once grandiose and utterly conventional. What were "armies and treasuries, navies and forts, and magazines and foundries, or senate-chambers and laws, in comparison with newspapers… the generators of public opinion?" Yet if the concept of government by opinion flourished most fully in the United States, it achieved a central place in nineteenth-century British liberalism as well. As Elaine Hadley has recently argued, liberalism was the first British political movement "to depend more on people than property, and on opinion rather than interest."[7]

Further, public opinion was never a strictly national concern. As was the case with the earlier cosmopolitan notion of a "republic of letters," observers on both sides of the Atlantic grew increasingly sensitive to "world opinion" throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century. What Thomas Jefferson had called a "decent respect to the opinions of mankind" in the opening of the Declaration of Independence became a fixture for nineteenth-century liberals, who closely followed political and intellectual developments in other countries and often invoked them to lend legitimacy to their own efforts. As C.A. Bayly has argued, the nineteenth century simultaneously witnessed the emergence of modern nation-state and the birth of an "international civil society'" that formed a counterpart to the dynamic economic globalization of these years and which "was constituted by a set of networks of information and political advocacy which, though less obvious than the rising national and imperial state, was no less important.'" A transnational, world opinion assumed perhaps its most striking form in the case of abolitionism, though there were certainly other reform movements that took a consciously cosmopolitan stance toward global progress. It was this world opinion that Lincoln had in mind when he referred to "the liberal party throughout the world" in his speech at Peoria.[8]

Yet as scholars have long made clear, "government by opinion" was not an uncomplicated or universally positive concept for nineteenth-century liberals. Thoughtful commentators such as Alexis de Tocqueville, John Stuart Mill, and numerous others (including Lincoln himself) worried about the possible volatility, amorality, and even illiberality of public opinion. As a central fact of democratic life in America, public opinion was a particularly worrisome force there. Most pertinent here was Tocqueville's strongly articulated fear of tyrannical majorities who could exercise their despotism through opinion, and did so more effectively than through overt forms

of coercion. With such anxieties in mind, and like James Madison before them, nineteenth-century liberals sought not simply to enact the voice of the people but to play a role in shaping that voice along liberal lines, thereby hoping to achieve a sort of "educative" democracy in which opinion-shapers like themselves would play a central role. "Mass" desires would, in sum, not be allowed to develop on their own but would be brought in line with "enlightened" principles of government, morality, and economy. Building upon the various modes of antislavery mobilization, British liberals showed the powerful force of public opinion by organizing the mass-based campaigns for Catholic emancipation, and for repeal of the Corn Laws and "taxes on knowledge."[9]

Viewed from the vantage point of American reformers, the campaigns of liberal Britons was worthy of emulation. Here was model of educative outreach that brought about liberal reform with considerable dispatch. Why were similar successes seemingly beyond the capacity of American political culture? American liberals looked upon their own political culture and struggled for an explanation. They found a powerful culprit in the enormous political and economic power of American slavery, which, in their minds, perverted and corrupted all attempts at liberal cognition.

Slavery was an affront to liberals, most obviously as the institution violated the fundamental norm of individual autonomy upon which liberalism rested. What concerns us here, however, is how slavery threatened the liberal vision of educative politics. It did so by denying the possibility of education (even literacy) to the slaves, along with their very humanity. But the institution of slavery also suppressed that free exchange of ideas and information that was central to the work of opinion-shaping and government by opinion. Proslavery attempts to curtail discussion through the Congressional gag rule and censorship of antislavery literature not only stymied the work of antislavery. It showed how a slave power increasingly paranoid about the direction of world opinion might rouse the "worse angels" of American public life more generally. Stoking racist paranoia, atavistic fears of miscegenation, and tapping into a deep tradition of counter-subversion, politicians like Stephen Douglas seemed all-too-effective in overturning reason and marginalizing transnational patterns of progressive development.[10]

Proslavery politicians' seeming hostility to reasoned debate resulted from their besieged position as defenders of slavery during a global age of emancipation. The attacks of radical abolitionists in the free states were in many ways less threatening to slave interests than culturally important British

opinion or the moderate opinion of more conservative white Northerners. Newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, and people transmitting the global emancipationist consensus moved easily back and forth across the Atlantic, as countless scholars have shown. In some ways, it was that very movement that made the emerging antislavery sentiment so threatening. When Charles Dickens included in his 1842 *American Notes* reprintings from Theodore Weld's *Slavery As It Is*, he assured the widest possible awareness of damning material reprinted from southern newspapers originally intended merely for local readership. Attempting to shelter the slave states from global opinion was a Sisyphean task, as the rage over *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the 1850s demonstrated. Unable to insulate American slavery from assault, many proslavery spokesmen seemed willing instead to dilute the capacity of the public to reckon with global norms.[11]

For liberals, the proslavery penchant for violence over discussion was best encapsulated in the 1837 murder of Elijah Lovejoy, who was both an abolitionist and editor. Lovejoy's printing press had been destroyed multiple times in St. Louis, Missouri, so he had moved across the Mississippi River to the free state of Illinois, where he continued to publish his attacks on slavery. Shortly before his death, he gave a speech where he expressed the difficulty, but also the duty, of holding opinions contrary to the mass of his fellow citizens, thereby helping to correct what he perceived as their mistake. Lovejoy's murder was a galvanizing moment for liberals on both sides of the Atlantic, brought home to British audiences by Harriet Martineau in her influential article for the *Westminster Review* titled "The Martyr Age." Lovejoy's murder also drew compelling responses from two men who would become particularly astute students of public opinion in the United States: Wendell Phillips and Abraham Lincoln.[12]

Lincoln's career, especially after his reentry into politics in 1854, embodied just this kind of educative opinion-molding, which might be reasonably understood as the key to his political thought. Richard Carwardine has ably detailed how Lincoln early in his career departed from the idea of elected leaders as mere mouthpieces or reflectors of public opinion to an understanding that opinion was somewhat "plastic" and capable of being molded and, particularly, improved. Political leaders—along with ministers, teachers, lecturers, and writers—had a moral responsibility to work toward the "education and redirection" of popular opinion. Lincoln's emphasis on the role of opinion can be seen in his epic efforts to engage Stephen Douglas and the citizenry in debate throughout the state of Illinois in 1858. In the substance of these speeches, for example

in Ottawa, he explicitly articulated his view of government by opinion. "Public sentiment is everything," he said. "With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed. Consequently he who moulds public sentiment, goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed." As David Zarefsky has argued, Lincoln's belief in the power of opinion is precisely why he found Douglas's complicity with proslavery forces so threatening. Once relax the North's moral abhorrence of slavery, and the efforts of moderate antislavery politicians like himself to prevent its extension would be impossible.[13]

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Thus, Lincoln's election in 1860, and the Civil War to which it ultimately led, represented an auspicious moment, though of course most Anglo-American liberals did not then know what an exemplar of opinion-shaping they had in Lincoln. Yet many in the North and in the UK greeted the commencement of hostilities as a clarifying opportunity nonetheless. In the early months of the war, amidst naïve assumptions that the conflict would be short and decisive, liberals rejoiced at the promise the war offered of "emancipating the public opinion of the North," as the *Atlantic Monthly* put in 1861, by freeing it from the stifling influence of the slave power. For the first time since the founding, slaveholders would be unable to erect barriers to robust discussion, which was the "very life of free institutions, the fruitful mother of all political and moral enlightenment."[14]

Foreign liberals also recognized how the American war might put American public life on sounder footing. Though skeptical about democracy as amoral majoritarianism in general, the French liberal Comte Agénor de Gasparin recognized that America had suffered from an "intellectual despotism," as slavery "pervert[ed] the working of democratic institutions." He believed the American crisis offered a chance to "regenerate the institutions of the United States" by removing the obstacle that slavery had posed to the free play of "intelligence, conscience, and convictions." The British liberal statesman John Bright understood the conflict in similar terms. The war, he informed his fellow Britons, did not center on boundaries, or tariffs, or parties, or questions of supremacy. It was, at heart, a battle over "freedom or slavery, education or ignorance."[15]

After an initial flurry of enthusiasm, it seemed clear that the mass mobilization for war would require the organization of opinion and thought no less than that of economic and material resources. The opinion-shaping undertaken by Union liberals began with established journals

and newspapers of the Republican Party apparatus. But war quickly saw new initiatives arise in what Charles Eliot Norton termed a campaign "to influence and direct public opinion." Well-funded informational activities coordinated by the New York City-based Loyal Publication Society and the Boston-based New England Loyal Publication Society worked to place the wartime struggle in a transnational perspective and to frame the issues at stake in the American conflict in the widest possible terms. The effort entailed commissioning and circulating pamphlets that expounded sound Unionist opinion and sending out broadsides full of articles from metropolitan periodicals to hundreds of small-town papers across the country, especially in Midwestern and border states. By May of 1863, Charles Eliot Norton reported to the British Liberal MP John Bright that the New England society was providing "nearly 1000 newspapers in the Loyal States with three or four [broadsides] weekly."[16]

This sophisticated propaganda effort was done in the name of the Union, and in support of America's role as the "last best hope" of popular government. Yet its aim, as Adam I.P. Smith has established, went beyond Unionism in explicitly supporting (even as it sought to further radicalize) an administration elected on a Republican Party platform. This "anti-party partisanship" sought the largest constituency possible through what we might call niche marketing, in which special appeals were made, as Frank Freidel has summarized, to "Midwesterners, New Englanders, New Yorkers; farmers, merchant, and bankers; Catholics and Protestants; people proud of their American ancestry, and recent German, Irish, and French immigrants," as well as white women and free black men and women. Each of these groups was asked to sustain the government; a recurrent theme was the peril of placing a Democratic opposition of questionable loyalty in any meaningful position of power.[17]

It may seem odd that nineteenth-century liberals considered war, which most modern experience has taught us to consider as inimical to deliberation, as an educative opportunity. But examining liberal responses during the early 1860s reveals that it was not war in general, but this war for a "more perfect Union" in particular, that made liberals sense a propitious occasion for instruction and edification. For most Union activists and liberal foreign observers, the conflict could not have been more pivotal, as John Stuart Mill recalled in his *Autobiography*, published eight years after the war ended. "My strongest feelings were engaged in this struggle," he wrote, "which, I felt from the beginning, was destined to be a turning point, for good or evil, of the course of human affairs for an

indefinite duration." Liberals at home and abroad saw the war as decisive battle between freedom and democracy on the one side and slavery and aristocracy on the other. As the Oxford historian Goldwin Smith put it in a letter to an American friend, the war was "the most momentous perhaps, in the issues it involves, for which the blood of man was ever shed." In this way, the Civil War might be understood as functioning, analogically, for liberal world opinion as a "Good War" following a far more ambiguous war in Crimea.[18]

This irony of viewing war as a hospitable opportunity for cognition and deliberation was not entirely lost on Unionist liberals, who found themselves going to some lengths to explain away the tension between violence and reason. They had gained some experience in this regard as they responded with electrified fascination to John Brown's daring yet doomed raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859. One of the ways around their ambivalence in Brown's case was to condemn his action as lawless and extreme, but to praise his character and "bearing," as he stood trial in Virginia. Liberals tried to follow a similar strategy during the war, though as months turned into years, and the losses piled up, there was no denying the bloodshed and death. Writing in the fall of 1862, in the bloody wake of Antietam, George William Curtis reminded his readers in *Harper's Monthly* 1862 that "however inevitable, however consecrated by its purpose," the war might be, it "is still the remedy of brute force. It is still barbarous and repugnant to every man who would rather owe the amelioration of the race to moral and intellectual rather than to purely physical forces."[19]

But a much larger question or problematic loomed with the pressures war put on opinion-molding. When did molding of opinion, with all the educative and instructive connotations liberals attached to that phrase, lapse into mere propaganda? Was it possible to live up to liberal ideals of "government by opinion" in a moment when government was maintaining its extensive power through far more coercive means? In this broader context, it was the strikingly moderate and reasoned nature of the liberals' pro-Union pamphlet campaign that stands out. Such at least was the judgment of Frank Freidel, who wrote about these efforts during the early months of WWII, and of Philip Paludan, who addressed such efforts at the end of the twentieth century. From our own vantage point in the first decades of the twentieth-first century, this relative restraint seems all the more remarkable.[20]

Norton established the parameters of liberal opinion-making of the 1860s in correspondence with other editors. Like most of his associates,

he strongly desired the reelection of Lincoln, but he refused to disseminate Loyal Publication Society broadsides in support of the president personally, lest his commitment to democracy and the democratic process seem weaker than his party advocacy. "It is of more importance to promote the spread of sound opinion & just feeling concerning the principles involved in our great struggle," he told a new acquaintance and correspondent from Indiana. If, by sticking to principle, he could "strengthen the love of liberty" and "promote the spread of true ideas of democracy, & confidence in the democratic principle," then "indirectly" he would weaken "the power of McClellanism, of Vallandighamism, of Fremontism" and strengthen "the position of Mr. Lincoln as our best representative of these ideas." James Russell Lowell agreed with Norton and, in speaking of Lincoln, he might have been speaking of himself when he remarked that "to be moderate and unimpassioned in revolutionary times … may not be a romantic quality, but it is a rare one, and goes with those massive understandings on which a solid structure of achievement may be reared."[21]

While opinion-shaping efforts sought to instruct soldiers on the front and rally a divided population at home, no less crucial was the transatlantic loop of opinion that sought to burnish the image of the Union abroad and, in turn, legitimate its struggle domestically. Unionist liberals were keen on providing British and French counterparts with evidence of correct and sound northern opinion. But they also desperately sought foreign opinion to republish back home as proof of supportive world opinion. Evidence of the effort to shape opinion abroad abounds in the personal correspondence of American liberals and also in the fact that liberals in New York City subscribed funds to send the first forty-four volumes of the Loyal Publication Society, as well as the *Rebellion Record* edited by Frank Moore, to some fifty statesmen, intellectuals, editors, and libraries across Europe. This group included Mill and Gasparin, as well as John Bright, Richard Cobden, John Stuart Mill, Edouard Laboulaye, and Henri Martin.[22]

British and French liberals were quite aware of the need for educative intervention in their own countries, and the effort to shape understanding of world events was done in an explicitly pedagogical mode. Comte de Gasparin noted that there were "more men in Europe than are imagined" who actually desired the splintering of the United States and "who would not fear, should opportunity offer, to encourage the resistance of the South, and contribute to the prolongation of the civil war." The best way to combat such "menacing" opinion, he insisted, was through just

the sort of educational campaign liberals cherished. Liberal friends of the Union would succeed "by enlightening minds, by treating of questions little understood, by recalling imperfectly known facts. Public opinion is our force; it has sufficed, it will suffice."[23]

John Stuart Mill was an especially important figure not only because of his early and widely reprinted "The Contest in America" but also through the extensive transatlantic correspondence that established him as a central node in an ever-growing network. In dozens of letters to American, British, and French correspondents, Mill broadcast his reading of European opinion, his awareness of reliable liberals (often revealing the authors of anonymously written pro-Union articles in the British press), and his estimation of sound newspapers and journals. John Bright summed up why liberals outside America felt so invested in this struggle. When "slavery is destroyed" and "the Union is cemented afresh," he told his audience in late 1863, "Europe and England may learn that an instructed democracy is the surest foundation of government, and that education and freedom are the only sources of true greatness and true happiness among any people."[24]

* * *

Let us return now to the notion of Lincoln as the Instructor-in-Chief or the "Great Educator." Lincoln, as we know, was acutely sensitive to public opinion and its powerful role in popular government. Lincoln's understanding of this responsibility differed considerably from abolitionists such as Wendell Phillips or William Lloyd Garrison, who sought to provoke and shock public opinion out of its complacent and amoral torpor. Lincoln instead, with few exceptions, relied on a lawyerly articulation of issues and an appeal to the moral sense and judgment of his audience. The Lincoln-Douglas debates in the summer of 1858 exemplified this approach (which Carwardine has termed a "consciousness-raising approach"), as did his speech at Cooper Union and his First Inaugural Address.[25]

But the war, of course, brought with it a new urgency and a new set of political, not to mention military, imperatives that tried Lincoln's conviction that "sober judgment" must prevail over "wild and furious passions" and that "evil cannot stand discussion." The latter of these convictions proved the most difficult to uphold, as he found it necessary to curtail complete freedom of speech over the course of the war.[26] But in the case of the former, Lincoln's rhetoric—as witnessed in his public addresses and letters alike—reads today like the very model of educative opinion-shaping statesmanship. Even Philip Paludan's consideration of Lincoln as a master

propagandist, a word he strives to use neutrally, ends by acknowledging that he was a "good propagandist" whose efforts tended toward the positive and clear elucidation of American ideals. By avoiding appeals to fear or, at the end of the war, to vengeance or hatred, Lincoln demonstrated a faith (clichéd as it might be by now) in the nation's capacity to call upon its "better angels."[27]

While twentieth- and twentieth-first-century scholars generally agree on the educative and even aspirational nature of Lincoln's rhetoric, what is perhaps more interesting is how contemporary liberals viewed it. Many, especially Eastern, liberals and radicals had to overcome enormous doubts about Lincoln before they could recognize his skill as the Instructor-in-Chief. But estimation of Lincoln began to rise once he made emancipation a war aim, and it only continued to rise in the following years as Lincoln used his letters and addresses to explain his administration's policies to the public and to attach meaning to the carnage and sacrifice that surrounded them. Charles Eliot Norton spoke of Lincoln's public letters as "successive victories" that were every bit as important as the military triumphs of the Union armies. They joined that "rarest class of political documents, arguments seriously addressed by one in power to the conscience and reason of the citizens of the commonwealth."

A few months later, the poet and editor of the *North American Review* James Russell Lowell contributed his own remarkable analysis of Lincoln's power of communication. Lowell was struck by the dialectical relationship Lincoln seemed to have with the public's mind: he so "gently" guided it that he almost appeared to follow it. Lincoln, who appreciated the article and wrote the editors of the *NAR* to thank them for it, might have pointed to the weekly open receptions he held at the White House, what he termed his "public-opinion baths," as the source of his closeness to opinion. But Lowell continued to analyze the communicative genius of Lincoln in terms that liberals on both sides of the Atlantic would have approved. The president "put himself on a level with those he addressed, not by going down to them, but only by taking it for granted that they had brains and would come up to a common ground of reason." He was none other than a "true democrat," a leader "who grounded himself on the assumption that a democracy can think."[28]

This view of Lincoln as the Great Educator was subtly on display in the iconography of the Edinburgh monument, which suggests how educative politics was woven into the larger themes of the Lincoln presidency. While the statue of the former slave reaches up to Lincoln with his right arm,

in his left hand he holds a book. From this detail emerges an important lesson about the "Lincolnian" strand of educative statesmanship that the monument conveys. What was at stake was not simply Lincoln's self-willed rise through an immersion in books nor an effort during his presidency to impart wisdom and principled leadership to the nation at large. Lincoln the "Great Educator" stood at the heart of an educative complex, which sought to inculcate a habit of mind that would sustain principled civic participation in a reborn republic.

The central role of freedmen in this educative vision offered a symbol of what liberals during the war saw as a dual democratic promise—the pairing of emancipation and education that was left tragically underachieved by the time this statue was unveiled. The familiar "what if Lincoln lived" counter-factual enigma might dramatize some of the elements of this tragedy. In his book on Lincoln and slavery, Eric Foner posed some of the vital questions as to how Lincoln might have directed Reconstruction differently than Andrew Johnson. Foner imagines how a second-term Lincoln presidency might have maintained unity in the Republican party, might have insisted on protecting basic civil rights (including at least limited suffrage) for the freedmen, and might have (through Republican unity) persuaded former Confederates to act with a resolve and fairness that would have acknowledged those rights.[29] To this list of "what-ifs" we might add an imagining of how this especially gifted "Instructor-in-Chief" would have asked his country to think more deeply about the goals of Reconstruction. Having seen his way through war, Lincoln's challenge would have been to shape an American public opinion, in the light of global developments, about American democracy itself. If successful, he might have spurred Americans to consider how the country's "new birth of freedom" be made both just and enduring.

Notes

1. The *New York Times* reported on the unveiling, even including a drawing of the monument, on August 23, 1893. For a fuller discussion of the origin, financing, and unveiling of the monument, see *The Lincoln Monument, in Memory of Scottish-American Soldiers, Unveiled in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1893).
2. Much recent work has detailed Lincoln's self-education and intellectual development. See, for example, Douglas Wilson, *Lincoln's*

Sword: The Presidency and the Power of Words (New York, NY: Knopf, 2006); Fred Kaplan*, Lincoln: The Biography of a Writer* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2008); Allen C. Guelzo, *Abraham Lincoln as a Man of Ideas* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009).

3. Wallace Bruce's poem, "Columbia's Garland," in *The Lincoln Monument*, 20–23; Charles Eliot Norton, quoted in Leslie Butler, *Critical Americans: Victorian Intellectuals and Transatlantic Liberal Reform* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 4. I recognize that "liberal" is a vague term, especially in the nineteenth-century United States where, according to some definitions, nearly everyone could be considered a liberal. The case is rather clearer in Britain and Europe, where self-defined liberal movements—committed to individual liberty, representative government, freedom of religion, free speech, and free markets—emerged in first half of the nineteenth century. I am using the term in regard to Americans rather loosely in this paper to include those whose belief in liberty led them to become antislavery, even if not necessarily abolitionists.

4. Lincoln, "Portion of Speech at Republican Banquet in Chicago, Illinois," in Roy Basler, ed., *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953–1955) 2: 384.

5. For some crucial modifications to Habermas's model of the "bourgeois public sphere," see James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Other detailed histories of public opinion can be found in J.A.W. Gunn, "Public Opinion," in Terrence Ball, James Farr, and Russell Hanson, eds. *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 247–266; Colleen A. Sheehan, *James Madison and the Spirit of Republican Self-Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Mark Schmeller, "The Political Economy of Opinion: Public Credit and Concepts of Public Opinion in the Age of Federalism," *Journal of the Early Republic* 29 (Spring 2009): 35–61.

6. On transformations in transportation and communication technology, see Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Quotations from ("set the press free")

Richard Cobden to Catherine Cobden, March 15, 1855, in *The Letters of Richard Cobden* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3:111 and ("revolution") William Hargreaves to John Bigelow, June 5, 1861, in John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life: 1817–1863* (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1909), vol. 1, 357. On the "taxes of knowledge" debate, see Mark Hampton, *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850–1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), chapter 2.

7. John Neal, "Newspapers," *The Pioneer* (February, 1843): 61. In Britain, where only one in six men could vote after the Reform Act of 1832, the concept was limited to an educated middle class. See, Dror Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, 1780–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) and Elaine Hadley, *Living Liberalism: Practical Citizenship in Mid-Victorian Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

8. Lincoln, "Speech at Peoria," October 16, 1854, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Roy P. Basler, ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953–1955), 2:276; Christopher Alan Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2004), 118. See also Frederick Cooper, "Networks, Moral Discourse and History," in *Intervention and Transnationalism in Africa: Global-Local Networks of Power*, eds. Thomas Callaghy, Ronald Kassimer, and Robert Latham (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For the self-conscious transnationality of abolitionists, see W. Caleb McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery: Garrisonian Abolitionists and Transatlantic Reform* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013).

9. Sheehan offers a brilliant analysis of Madison's theory of government by opinion in, *James Madison and the Spirit of Republican Self-Government*. On liberal anxieties about democratic opinion, see Alan S. Kahan, *Aristocratic Liberalism: The Social and Political Thought of Burkhardt, Tocqueville, and Mill* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). On abolitionist fears of democratic timidity and conformity, see McDaniel, *Problem of Democracy*, chapter 4.

10. Of course, antislavery forces, including Lincoln, also gravitated at times toward conspiratorial thinking, as seen in David Brion

Davis, *The Slave Power Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1986) and Lincoln's "House Divided" speech.

11. For a brilliant discussion of the transatlantic reprintings in *American Notes*, see Amanda Claybaugh, *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

12. Martineau's "Martyr Age" was first published in the *Westminster* for December, 1838, and then, the following year, as a standalone book. Wendell Phillips's first abolitionist speech was on "The Murder of Lovejoy." As Caleb McDaniel details, Phillips grappled seriously with Tocqueville's critique of tyrannical majorities in a democracy, drawing on wrenching firsthand experience. See McDaniel, *Problem of Democracy*, chapter 4. Lincoln's Lyceum Address, given before the Springfield Young Men's Lyceum just six weeks after Lovejoy's murder, warned of the rising danger of "mob rule." Lincoln would also have considered the efforts of abolitionist provocateurs to stir up an enraged opinion threatening to his ideal of "sober judgment."

13. *The Complete Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858*, ed. Paul M. Angle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 128. David Zarefsky's sharp analysis of Lincoln's political persuasion can be found in, "'Public Sentiment is Everything': Lincoln's View of Political Persuasion," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 15 (1994): 23–40. See also Richard Carwardine, *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power* (New York: Knopf, 2006).

14. "The Pickens-and-Stealins' Rebellion," *Atlantic Monthly* 7 (1861): 763.

15. Count Agénor de Gasparin, *The Uprising of a Great People*, trans. Mary Booth (New York, Charles Scribner, 1862); John Bright, "America and England. Speech at Saint James Hall, March 25, 1863," in Bright, *Speeches on the Public Affairs of the Last Twenty Years* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1869), 169.

16. Charles Eliot Norton to John Bright, May 8, 1863, John Bright Papers, British Library. See also Frank Freidel, "The Loyal Publication Society: A Pro-Union Propaganda Agency," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 29 (1939): 359–376. George Winston Smith, "Broadsides for Freedom: Civil War Propaganda in New England," *New England Quarterly* 21 (1948): 291–312; and

Charles Eliot Norton, James B. Thayer, and William Endicott Jr., *Report of the Executive Committee of the N.E.L.P.S.*

17. Adam I.P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Freidel, "The Loyal Publication Society," 364.

18. Goldwin Smith to Charles Eliot Norton, quoted in Butler, *Critical Americans*, 83.

19. Curtis, "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harpers' New Monthly Magazine* 25 (1862): 709.

20. Frank Freidel, "The Loyal Publication Society"; Paludan, "'The Better Angels of Our Nature': Lincoln, Propaganda, and Public Opinion in the North During the Civil War," in Stig Förster and Jorg Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861–1871* (Cambridge, 2001), 357–377. Freidel states the LPS's output, under the leadership of Francis Lieber, was "noteworthy on the whole for [its] logical approach and careful moderation."

21. Charles Eliot Norton to Jonathan Baxter Harrison, March 20, 1864, in Norton Papers; JRL, "McClellan or Lincoln," in *Writings of JRL* 5: 173.

22. Freidel, "The Loyal Publication Society," 373. One intriguing demonstration of the transatlantic circuit of opinion comes from an LPS pamphlet. William Alexander's *Elements of Discord in Secessia* sought to convince its Union readership of the low morale in the Confederacy. Its proof claimed to depend on evidence gleaned from southern newspapers attained from abroad. William Alexander, *Elements of Discord in Secessia* (New York, NY: W.C. Bryan, 1863).

23. Count Agénor de Gasparin, *America Before Europe: Principles and Interests*, trans. Mary L. Booth (New York: Charles Scribner, 1862).

24. Mill's "The Contest in America" was originally published in *Fraser's* (February, 1862). It was reprinted in *Harper's Monthly* as well as separately as a pamphlet. His correspondence, published in the vast *Collected Works*, reveals his place as an essential node in the larger transnational network of liberal opinion. John Bright, "Conclusion of a Speech at a Meeting at Rochdale, November 24, 1863," in *Speeches of John Bright, M.P., on the American Question* (Boston: Little Brown, 1865), 259.

25. Carwardine, *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power*; Zarefsky, "'Public Sentiment is Everything.'"

26. Lincoln quotations can be found in Carwardine, *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power*. On the topic of Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, see Mark E. Neely Jr., *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). Philip S. Paludan offered a different, less severe, reading of Lincoln's letter to Erastus Corning in his article "'The Better Angels of our Nature.'" Neely responded to Paludan's critique in "The Constitution and Civil Liberties Under Lincoln," in *Our Lincoln: New Perspectives on Lincoln and his World*, ed. Eric Foner (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2008), 37–61.

27. Paludan, "'The Better Angels of our Nature.'" Paludan undercuts his insistence that he uses "propaganda" in a neutral, not negative, sense by beginning the article with a quotation from Walter Lippmann, who learned the craft firsthand during WWI. Further, the article oddly claims that historians have trouble viewing Lincoln as a propagandist because, in part, of Lincoln's "deception on this point." Lincoln's views on the necessity as well as duty of educating, and thereby morally improving, opinion seem not just clear but consistent over his entire political career.

28. Norton and Lowell both quoted in Butler, *Critical Americans*, 60–61, 62. Lincoln wrote the publishers of the *North American Review*, the January 1864 number of which Lowell's article had appeared in, both to thank them for the kind words and to correct a slight misstatement of Lincoln's theory of secession. On the global response to Lincoln, see the essays in Richard Carwardine, and Jay Sexton, eds., *The Global Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

29. Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010).

Transnational Political Economy and Finance

Southern Wealth, Global Profits: Cotton, Economic Culture, and the Coming of the Civil War

Brian Schoen

A growing literature has discussed the transnational effects of the US Civil War on topics ranging from military history to the complicated diplomatic crises that the war created in Europe to its jarring effects on the global economy. We do well also to think about how the transnational landscape framed the way that contemporaries understood the chaotic events leading up to secession and the North's decision to prevent it. Globally, struggles to achieve nationhood through independence or unification and the expansion of individual rights helped define the era around which citizens of the United States led themselves into war. That battle—it appeared at the time—had advanced but remained unstable in the Western Hemisphere and had lost steam in Old Europe with the failure of the 1848 revolutions.[1] Few westerners thought much about what the desires or prospects of nationhood were for African or Asian peoples living under the shadow of European imperialism, though events in those continents did not escape their observation, nor should they ours.

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A second transnational feature of the Civil War era, and one that significantly informed the first, was the rapid acceleration of economic globalization. A worldwide transportation revolution and continued European expansion into the Pacific and Africa had transformed—though not completely—an Atlantic-based system into a truly global one. This global reality forced politicians and, in market-oriented democracies, the public to calculate their personal, localized, and national interests within a broader context. This is not to say that their perceptions of economic interests or global commerce accurately reflected complicated realities. Indeed, the dizzying expansion and quickening of communication, including a vibrant transatlantic print culture, ensured that realities and meanings remained contested, a point too often undervalued by economic historians.[2]

One thing that nearly all western observers (and subsequent economic historians) agreed on, however, was that the cotton trade represented a critical aspect of the mid-nineteenth-century world economy.[3] Within that business the United States stood uniquely poised—possessing the land, labor, political independence, and technology to turn cotton seeds into finished cloth, thus completing the economic cycle from producer to consumer entirely within its own borders. As early as the 1790s, leading patriots believed cotton could help bind the union together, and even on the eve of secession self-described northern "Conservatives" joined some southern Unionists to trumpet the crop's union-saving potential. Yet these efforts failed, and this essay helps explain why. First, it will show how cotton-belt slaveholders' place in global capitalism emboldened their aggressive drive for independence, limited their willingness to compromise at home, and fostered visions of geopolitical alliances with European powers. Second, it will suggest why previously accommodating northern constituencies (struggling to situate themselves within the global economy) concluded by 1860 that the Cotton-ocracy required humbling. Antebellum actors and authors triangulated the well-studied domestic battles over slavery within ever-changing and ambiguous global developments. In that light, secession and the start of war might be seen not merely as a prelude to the oft-studied diplomacy of the war but in itself the culmination of failed diplomacy. King Cotton helped lead Deep South slaveholders out of the union but failed to deliver the peaceable separation and instantaneous recognition abroad that its acolytes had promised.

The idea of a southern alliance with Britain seemed ludicrous in the early 1840s. As Edward Rugemer has shown, British emancipation in the mid-1830s elevated southern slaveholders' fears. By 1842 President

Tyler's special emissary to Britain, Duff Green, had urged Americans to recognize that the United States and Britain were engaged in a high-stakes "commercial war," whereby Britain had restricted credit and kept protective tariffs high to damage American agriculturalists and merchants. Within a year, Green offered evidence of a deadly escalation, accusing Britain of stoking antislavery efforts in Texas in a desperate attempt to level the playing field to allow languishing colonial economies to better compete with highly productive cotton plantations worked by American slaves. As historians have frequently observed, Green, Secretary of State John C. Calhoun, and Tyler translated such fears into a movement that, once appropriated by the Democratic Party, culminated in Texas annexation and ultimately war with Mexico.[4]

These "successes" sowed bitter seeds domestically, but southern slaveholders interpreted them as evidence of cotton's international grandeur. As early as 1842, Green had told Calhoun that "if England be defeated in the present movement she has no alternative but to fall back on free trade" and dependence on American slave-grown cotton.[5] Cynically measuring West Indian emancipation through trade statistics, they declared it a failure, one punctuated with the sanctioned importation of coolie labor in 1844.[6] The closely followed collapse of an expensive British-sponsored effort to import US seeds, technology, and overseers into the Asian subcontinent in 1840, suggested to a once-concerned Mississippi editor that Indian competition was merely "a bug bear got up to frighten the South."[7] Subsequent British acquiescence to both free trade and slavery's expanded presence in the Southwest seemed a tacit recognition of the power of cotton and the necessity of slavery. In March 1845, the previously protectionist Peel government and Parliament rebuffed calls for punitive duties on slave-grown produce after already abolishing a low 5 percent tariff on foreign raw cotton.[8] As southern Democrats rolled back Whig policies and passed Walker's lower tariff in 1846, a Tory-led Parliament sacrificed the golden calf of British protectionism: the Corn Laws that had long discriminated against foreign grain growers.

Though several internal and external factors (including the Irish potato famine) pointed Britain toward freer trade, US cotton interests congratulated themselves and praised the power of their precious commodity to blunt British aggression and global abolitionism. In stark contrast to earlier hawkish rhetoric, South Carolina free trader George McDuffie joyfully wrote to the president of the Anti-Corn Law League predicting that "the banner of free trade shall wave in triumph over the whole world, & beneath

its ample folds 'the nations of the earth may pitch their tents in peace.'"[9] The transatlantic free trade movement—which the Deep South had been at the forefront of since the 1820s—claimed a significant victory.

More aggressive expansionists interpreted these developments as license for even more forceful action because, as Mississippi Democrat Jacob Thompson argued, the United States now controlled "nine-tenths of all the cotton-growing interests throughout the world" and Britain must "keep the peace." That assumption informed Manifest Destiny's proponents deep into the 1850s, including filibusters greedily eyeing Cuba and Nicaragua and a minority of white Southerners who sought to reopen the Atlantic slave trade. These efforts, along with coastal slave states continued jailing of non-white sailors, continued to impinge Anglo-American and Anglo-Southern relations, but on different terms.[10] Supporters of such actions, like South Carolinian Edward Bryan, believed that France and a "Cotton Parliament" in Britain would, after making some fuss, give way— as they had with Texas.[11] Prime Minister Palmerston himself feared that possibility, privately expressing concerns that his government not "frighten the Cotton Lords" at home or abroad.[12] Despite slavery's reemergence as a domestic controversy, individuals who had urged annexation reveled in the diplomatic leverage their cotton monopoly allegedly gave them.

Anglophobia did not disappear, but détente sparked a creative reimagining of a British-American partnership, even in those regions most committed to slavery. By 1849, Lowcountry cotton planter, historian, and aspiring diplomat William Henry Trescot proposed that the cotton trade linking the "whitening fields" of the South, to Liverpool, and Manchester illustrated that "the closest alliance" could exist between nations "sometimes antagonistic in their political theories." The resulting cultural and economic linkages would make it "almost impossible to convince" someone who did so "that these two nations could be other than one people." Trescot urged American politicians to cooperate—rather than compete—with the British in Europe, and especially Asia where, he argued, "the future history of the world must be achieved." With tension over American expansion and slavery momentarily defused, US control of raw cotton secured, and freer trade policies in effect, American merchants and agrarians (previously fearful of British eastern expansion) now stood well positioned to benefit from new markets opened by British military might.[13]

The secession crisis of 1850–1851 and the sectional crisis led individuals, particularly South Carolinians like Trescot, to recalibrate that alliance in sectional terms. His 1850 tract, *The Position and Course of the South,*

proposed that debates over slavery had placed the North as a "foreign power" whose consolidationist tendencies and "jealous rivalry" with Britain threatened both the political union and the South's economic future. While the interests of the North and South had become "diametrically opposed," those of European powers and the South remained mutually reinforcing. In short, Europe, and particularly Britain, was the South's natural ally. Subsequent crises over fugitive slaves and slavery in the territories prompted Deep South politicians to conform policy to that perception. They encouraged direct trade, lowered protective tariffs further, and perhaps most revealingly sought to overturn decades-old Navigation Acts, which they believed had exploited the South by granting northern merchants a monopoly on the domestic coastal trade.[14]

By the late 1850s, Continental Europe's own free trade efforts along with economic and political crises elsewhere furthered the perception of cotton's global power. Polk's diplomats, including future Confederate Commissioner A. Dudley Mann, had successfully negotiated tariff reductions and favorable commercial treaties with Belgium, several German principalities, and Sicily.[15] By the late 1850s, European reports compiled for the Department of the Interior by Natchez resident John Claiborne, indicated tangible evidence that the advancement of textile manufacturing in north-central Europe and Russia had significantly cut into Britain's near monopoly. In 1857, the president of the Bremen Chamber of Commerce gleefully informed Claiborne that the cotton-wool imports traveling through that free port to booming manufacturing areas in the Zollverein and Austria had more than quadrupled between 1852 and 1856.[16] Success there and elsewhere meant that by 1855 Britain's share of total global cotton spindle-age had fallen from its near monopoly of 95 percent in 1800 to a less comfortable dominance of 63.5 percent, with the European continent providing 27 percent and the United States, 11.[17] The 1857 Sepoy Rebellion further increased concern about British India's ability to expand cotton production. Britain and France lengthened the legal terms of coolie contracts and sanctioned the importation of African indentured servants into the Caribbean indicating continued labor shortages there. These developments appeared to put even more pressure on Britain to accommodate the slave power while giving planters alternatives should they not.

This was the context for James Henry Hammond's famous March 1858 "King Cotton" speech. According to Hammond, the Panic of 1857 had wreaked havoc on northern banking and Anglo-American financial flows. "King Cotton" had replaced the "Bank of England" at the helm

of international commerce and held the North at its mercy.[18] Northern opponents blunted the accusation by highlighting proslavery portions of the speech; Hammond's comparison of northern workers to the "mud-sills" of society offered northern Republicans potent campaign material. Yet the subsequent release of Claiborne's widely distributed report and international news unintentionally bolstered elements of Hammond's analysis. In addition to the South's relatively better situation after the Panic, Parliament and British papers continued to debate the economic effects of abolition.[19] In April, papers printed official correspondence from the US Minister to France noting that "judging from the tone of the public press, and reasoning *a priori,* I feel quite confident that in future we will see the fanatical denunciations of American slavery greatly moderated, if not silenced, in France, perhaps in England."[20] In 1860, the powerful *London Times* dismissed David Livingston's discovery of cotton in central Africa as illusory and criticized the "irritating speeches" from the "veterans of the old Anti-Slavery Society" attacking American slavery as pointless and hypocritical. There is, they concluded, no "proximate hope that the free cotton raised in Africa will, within any reasonable time, drive out of culture the slave-grown cotton of America."[21] Almost simultaneously, Louis-Napoleon's previously protectionist state announced a freer trade in cotton goods. His treaty with England ended the prohibition on imported textiles, and the National Assembly reduced duties on raw cotton by 58 percent (from 14.3 to 6.1 percent), tariffs previous aimed at cultivating the crop in North African colonies.[22]

Each development has its own complicated history and meaning; none signaled a reversal of Europeans' moral opposition to slavery which remained sincere and public.[23] To southerners like Bryan, these developments suggested that in Europe "Commerce now rules. *It* is king; cotton is heir-apparent, and slavery is queen dowager."[24] That these developments took place simultaneous to Bleeding Kansas, the continuation of Northern personal liberty laws and passage of a protectionist tariff in 1860 (vetoed by Buchanan) further heightened their political and symbolic significance.

Though not determinative, the Deep South's imagined natural trading partnership and possible political alliance with Britain (and to a growing degree, France) contributed to the secessionist movement. The promised profits and perceived security that cotton offered steeled secessionists' resolve and provided a powerful recruiting tool. With campaigning for 1860 well underway, famed Sea Island planter, Princeton graduate, and leading secessionist pamphleteer John Townsend delivered a highly revisionist,

and subsequently widely reprinted account of British abolition. Having realized the "folly" of emancipation and unable to obtain raw cotton "without depending on others for it," John Bull now agitated "not to abolish slavery, but to break up the Union." This, he concluded, "strips her rival [the North] of all his fortuitous advantages [the ability to legally plunder the Cotton South], and so secures to herself an unbounded ascendency… in commerce and manufacturers."[25] Though wrong-headed, Trescot was not alone in thinking Britain secretly wanted disunion. On January 1, 1861, the Russian Ambassador to London reported home that, "the English Government, at the bottom of its heart, desires the separation of North America into two republics, which will watch each other jealously and counterbalance one the other. Then England, on terms of peace and commerce with both, would have nothing to fear from either; for she would dominate them, restraining them by their rival ambitions."[26] Cotton South secessionists accepted that premise, but believed, if pressed, Britain would side with them.

So did New York editor Thomas Kettell, whose recently published *Southern Wealth and Northern Profits* provided external and unintended support for secessionists' analysis. Kettell—founder of the *United States Economist* and writer for *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*—hoped to convince northerners to defeat Free Soil Republicanism by highlighting the degree to which northern wealth derived from the southern trade. He estimated that the North annually extracted $105 million from the South. Quoting extensively and selectively from *London Times* anti-abolitionist articles and Parliamentary debates, he argued that Britain had accepted dependence on slave-grown cotton and stood ready to reap the benefits should Northern voters fail to prevent secession.[27] The argument resonated throughout northern Democratic circles and among other self-proclaimed Conservatives working to defeat Republicans. To Deep South disunionists, however, his text validated cotton's international power and providing statistical evidence that northerners had turned cotton's wealth toward their own greedy ends.

To be clear, the suspect but broadly held assumption that the North had unfairly profited from the Union did not *cause* secession. The litany of real and perceived grievances trotted out like the navigation act, tariffs, a disproportionate share of internal improvements to the North, and the like were, as Georgia secessionist Thomas R. R. Cobb emphasized, more "*temporary in their nature,*" than the issue of slavery dividing the union.[28] If we must identify a single cause, slavery is it. Fortunately, we don't, and

more interesting is how this deeply ingrained and internationally informed victim mentality offered a lens through which Deep South residents interpreted the rise of antislavery Republicanism. That a party could unite otherwise disparate northerners behind an antislavery platform—despite the benefits slave-grown commodities had provided the North—indicated to southern politicians that future actions would be governed by uncompromising, quasi-religious antislavery "fanaticism" rather than compromising, interest-based politics.[29]

Conversely, exchanges with cautious European officials suggested that supposedly cotton-dependent European powers would let interest rather than morality or antisouthern sentiment dictate policy. Just days before South Carolina's secession, Robert Barnwell Rhett believed he had received those assurances from British Consul to Charleston Robert Bunch. After indicating that the "the wishes and hopes of the Southern States centred in England; that they would prefer an Alliance with Her to one with any other Power," Rhett pointedly asked whether Britain would receive vessels flying the colors of a "confederacy of the Cotton States." Bunch replied, that "there seemed to be no reasons why his ideas should not be carried into practice," especially if the new government would "open their Coasting trade to British ships." Furthermore, "as regarded the question of Domestick Slavery," Bunch "really saw no reason to apprehend an interference with it on their part, as it was a matter with which they had no direct concern" beyond hoping that their own moral example might "Act favourably upon the South." Bunch rejected that the African slave trade would be permitted to be reopened, prompting Rhett to revealingly threaten that "he had no doubt that France and Germany would gladly avoid the question of the revival of the Slave Trade… in which case, England would be left behind."[30] Exchanges with Consul William Mure in New Orleans and Edmund Molyneaux in Savannah (places where secession was not guaranteed) also indicated that Britain would "recognize any '*de facto*' Government, especially with a people, with whom it was her interest to cultivate the most intimate commercial relations."[31] Statements from the highest-ranking officials in the South and other personal exchanges help explain the confidence of Cotton South leaders assembling in Montgomery in early February 1861.

This all appeared rather baffling, and traitorous, to Northerners who believed they had been remarkably accommodating to King Cotton and his Queen dowager. Electioneering and secessionists' march toward disunion led to an extended debate over the scope of cotton's power.

A majority of Northerners eventually determined (especially after the Cotton States seceded) that King Cotton needed dethroning for northern *and* southern nonslaveholders to achieve America's god-sanctioned destiny. Though they had a deepening well of antislavery images to offer the Northern public, defeat in 1856 had taught them the limits of that strategy.[32] At their Chicago convention Republicans worried less about denouncing slaveholders than showing how their political-economic choices had adversely affected Northerners. They constructed a broad-based platform that successfully highlighted the Democracy's "measureless subserviency to the exactions of a sectional interest," and especially to the Cotton South's *laissez-faire* agenda. Without eliminating antislavery positions, Republicans highlighted their support for a new river and harbor bill, a Pacific railroad, and free homesteading in the West. They proposed "duties upon imports" aimed at securing to "the workingmen liberal wages, to agriculture remunerating prices, to mechanics and manufactures an adequate reward for their skill, labor and enterprise, and to the nation commercial prosperity and independence."[33] In some form or other, Southern Democratic leaders or their northern "doughface" president had blocked or prevented the implementation of these policies.

As the campaign entered its final months, northern Democrats like Kettell and former "Cotton Whigs"-turned-Constitutional Unionists like Bostonians Amos Lawrence and Edward Everett used well-worn arguments of cotton's power to sway voters, especially in the critical states of New York and Pennsylvania.[34] Republicans, in turn, mounted increasingly aggressive attacks not only on the slavocracy's abuse of northern whites' rights, but on the supposition that further homage was owed to a cotton-centered world view seen by one observer as the "textbook and creed of the mad movement of the South."[35] Just days before the election, William Seward told a packed house at New York's Palace Garden that their ascendance to the forefront of world commerce had been government-aided but fairly and naturally won. Appealing to Yankee pride, Seward urged the superiority of free labor and derided threats of southern non-importation and secession as unbecoming efforts to force northern voters "to bend and bow" before the cotton interest. Reacting to such "terror and menace," he warned, would suggest that New York was "a province of Virginia or of Carolina" rather than the "metropolis of the Country" destined to be "the metropolis of the Continent."[36] Seward's speech drew thunderous applause from his Republican audience, though likely played less well with the city's Democratic majority.

Elsewhere critiques of continued submission to the cotton-led "Slave Power" found an increasingly favorable hearing, though for different reasons. In New England, the Whig Party's dissolution left once-dominant Cotton Whigs without a clear national political partner, a fact that significantly hindered the appeal of Constitutional Unionists. "Conscience Whigs" enthusiastically joined the Free Soil Republican party with some abolitionists claiming that Boston's Pacific trade could offer cotton produced by free labor that would finally liberate the region's textile manufacturers from the Slave Power. In the developing Midwest, weakening commercial ties to the Deep South made cotton planters appear more like political obstructionists than economic partners. They are more concerned, Minnesota Representative William Windom suggested, with "thrusting the slave question upon us" than passing nationally beneficial policies. Especially by thwarting a free homestead, the slaveholding South had prevented the nation from fulfilling the "early theory of the founders of this Republic… that it should be an asylum for the oppressed of all nations."[37] Wheat farmers had also grown tired of hearing about cotton's alleged superiority.[38]

To a considerable degree, however, the central battle over King Cotton's place in the North transpired in Pennsylvania, an economic, socially, religiously, and politically diverse state critical to Republican victory but reliant on southern cotton and moderate on slavery.[39] Despite the presence of free blacks and antislavery Quaker and German communities, early Republicans inroads into the two largest cities, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, had been based more on carefully crafted perceptions of that party's nativism than a deep commitment to the antislavery cause.[40] The deep effects of the Panic of 1857, however, had highlighted the region's economic vulnerability and resurrected issues such as protectionism. Leading the charge was the well-connected political economist and publicist Henry Carey, whose own assessment of world and national economies informed his approach to the crisis.

While the South's Cotton Barons celebrated international free trade, the Anglophobic Carey perceived it—presently constructed—as a tool for advancing British global hegemony toward immoral ends. Free trade had perpetuated "slavery," not just in the United States but also in the impoverished mill towns of Britain and Scotland, in a deindustrialized India, and in others nations like Portugal and Turkey that had succumbed to British free trade imperialism.[41] The Democrat-led pursuit of global commerce was "a policy leading inevitably to poverty, despair, and death" and ulti-

mately "the downfall of the system established by the men who achieved the Revolution, and who made the Constitution of 1789." Instead, Carey believed the ideal national economy consisted of regional zones whereby "internal commerce" between closely situated agriculturalists and industrialists would enhance regional production and minimize the wasted "expense" of transportation, insurance, and large armies and navies required by reliance on international trade.[42]

Carey's model of what Nicholas and Peter Onuf have called "protective nationalism" drew inspiration from Russia, Denmark, and especially, the Zollverein Union; his writings would eventually become textbooks for Italian and French economic nationalists. Associational life as he saw practiced there and in the Northeastern United States, coupled with state-level trade protection would preserve the nation from a violent Atlantic and resolve the United States's domestic strife. Carey disliked slavery but rejected overtures to assist Hinton Helper and other abolitionists on grounds that the only solution would be a natural one facilitated by tariff-aided southern industrialization. By the late 1850s, he had translated the protectionist sympathies expressed by Upper South Whigs, especially Kentuckian John Crittenden and future Presidential candidate Tennessean John Bell, into false hope that protection would garner broad Southern support and rescue the union from slavery-related debates.[43]

By mid-1860, the unrealistic nature of that hope had become increasingly clear. Cotton South's Democrats felt no compulsion to sacrifice their support for free trade in order to guarantee greater protections for slavery. In 1859 as a contest over the House speakership raged, southern Democrat rejected, what one described as a Pennsylvania Republican compromise whereby Republicans "will not say anything more than they have said on the slavery question if you will give them a protective tariff."[44] In 1860, Republicans successfully joined "Americans"—including some from the Upper South—to pass the first version of the Morrill tariff. To a man delegates from the Deep South opposed the measure and Buchannan's veto killed it.[45] Those developments—and Carey's wild enthusiasm for the Chicago Platform's call for a more balanced economy and higher duties—pushed him and other "Keystone" state residents to reject further slaveholder appeals or to accept overtures from solicitous Constitutional Unionists.[46] Philadelphia precincts may have remained Democratic, but the state as a whole went to Lincoln by a comfortable margin of nearly 60,000 votes, an indicator to astute observers—North and South—that Lincoln would be the next President.

The subsequent secession of Cotton States intensified Northern anti-King Cotton feelings, particularly in greater Philadelphia. In January 1861, a close friend of Carey, protectionist Stephen Colwell, released his *Five Cotton States and New York* challenging the secessionist assumption that the Union had outlived its usefulness and specifically targeting Hammond's two-year-old speech. These King Cotton arguments were "the kind of gas which propels the wheels of revolution in South Carolina." "Perfectly intoxicated with their power and the grandeur of King Cotton," the disunionists, "having vanquished the Bank of England and President Buchanan, [is] now considering what he will do with New York and the North."[47] Though betraying considerable concern, Colwell built a case that New York's local business and industry had proven more critical to regional prosperity and national wealth than cotton. In fact, the complicated cotton trade, he suggested, had been built on ultimately faulty credit flows that secession would cause to collapse. Cotton planters would rue the day that the "treachery of politicians and treason of men in high places" had brought the country to the "eve of that greatest of human calamities, a civil war."[48] Shortly afterward, Samuel Powell's chapter-by-chapter refutation of Kettell's tract similarly highlighted the South's dependence on the North. He told his audience that they should be deeply offended by the "false conclusion" that members of "one of the mightiest nations upon earth," could be "persecuted with the proposition that all their wealth, all their industry, all their power, emanates and has been wrongly forced from them from a department containing twelve millions in all, but in which *four millions of negro slaves alone, have accomplished the gain and wealth.*" Besides, he concluded, flax would be a cheap replacement for cotton.[49]

Ardent Republicans and Unionists, Powell, Seward, and Colwell forwarded a nation-centered political economy that trumpeted the superiority of free labor and industrial and commercial development and the necessity of preserving the Union. Again and again, northern Republicans appealed to their constituents' honor and independence urging them to stand firm in the face of what the *Philadelphia Inquirer* called the "Cotton Conspiracy's" "exclusive and chivalric warfare," which was premised "not on the negro *per se*" but on "the negro, regarded only as a producer of Cotton."[50] Among "the compelling motive dictating secession, on the part of the Cotton States," another paper noted, was "the desire to inaugurate anew the slave trade… the great desideratum of the planting States."[51] Emphasizing that divisive issue (within the South) and distinguishing

between cotton and non-cotton states remained especially useful as politicians feverishly worked to convince the Upper Slave States to rebuff the advances of Confederate commissioners.

Anti-Cotton states appeals, however, consisted of more than exercises in "othering" their slaveholding opponents; they also sought to demonstrate the material effects of allowing secession to transpire. Westerners ominously viewed the fortification of the Mississippi River and Louisiana's purported threat to collect duties on ships navigating it—even after the Montgomery Convention had guaranteed free navigation "in times of peace," a qualification that western papers duly noted. Such violations of westerners' "rights," the *Chicago Daily Tribune* asserted, would not be tolerated and would lead "to the extremity of blotting Louisiana out of the map."[52] Holding out faith in the Upper Slave States and finding it hard to believe that they had not fully complied with reasonable slaveholders' demands, some Northeasterners used the Cotton South's long tradition of threatening non-importation to suggest that secession had been calculated primarily to remake the Atlantic trading system and harm Northern merchants and manufacturers. Papers from all regions decried the seizure of ports, post offices, and forts as "illegal violence" at best and "levying war" and "high treason" at worst.[53]

The Confederate provisional government's policies and Jefferson Davis's mid-February inaugural address reinforced these suspicions. The creation of a "national" army and navy and a pledging of "firm resolve to appeal to arms" if not granted recognition heightened anger. Davis's promises of free trade coupled with the Confederate Constitution's much-heralded rejection of tariff protection seemed a calculated attempt to undercut northern merchants, now burdened with higher tariffs.[54] At the same time, the provisional and final Constitution more easily permitted export duties brought charges of hypocrisy for what one commentator described as a "China duty."[55] The Confederacy's move to begin collecting revenue—and the Union's challenge of doing so—generated greater anxiety. There would be "no money to carry on the government," the New York *Evening Post* fretted, and European powers would, especially after the Morrill Tariff became law, take advantage of freer trade through the Confederacy to undercut Northern merchants and manufacturers even in loyal states.[56] Northern fears elevated with news that Southern states were sending emissaries to Europe seeking direct trade and diplomatic recognition; rumors that France and Britain had already pledged their support further heightened alarm. Even cautious diplomats like Britain's Richard Lyons could have their silence misinterpreted as approbation.[57]

As two US administrations, the Upper South states, and European officials grappled to shape a response to secession, transatlantic dynamics heightened the uncertainty. Northern Republicans' own efforts to make good on their campaign promises further fueled international misunderstanding. In February, freed of Lower South opposition, a Republican-led Congress passed—and in one of his last Presidential acts, Buchanan signed—the Morrill Tariff raising duties on many imported goods, including chief imports from Britain: textiles and pig iron. The policy—passed on the heels of Davis's free trade speech and just before the Confederates' ratification of an explicitly "free trade" constitution—appeared in Europe as both an affront and an indication that the North intended to let the free-trade-loving South peaceably go. Picking up his pen for a larger audience, Union sympathizer Charles Dickens later declared matter-of-factly that the Morrill tariff had "severed the last threads which bound the North and South together."[58] The policy itself, as Marc Palin makes clear, angered British officials and the general public, leading many toward an anti-Union position under the mistaken belief that free trade desires—rather than attachments to slavery—had been the real impetus for secession.[59] For a shrinking number of northern Conservatives, fear added urgency to compromise efforts. They also, however, allowed Northern Unionists to paint Cotton South secessionists as the worst kind of traitors: those willing to literally undo the American Revolution by getting into bed with the nation's long-time rival (Britain) or Continental Europe's newest tyrant, Emperor Napoleon III.

In this context, the continual Republican pounding against the Cotton Confederacies' numerous atrocities against, not just Northerners, but union-loving slaveholders had their intended effect. Outside of New York City—which Democratic Mayor Fernando Wood proposed making a "Free Port"—cotton-based traction for compromise eroded. According to the 600-page unofficial record of a last ditch February peace conference, the word "cotton" only appears three times, none in references to its power to avert war.[60] King Cotton's minions had long held back the North from presumably more advantageous policies—including for Colwell and Carey, protection. Now by seceding they were showing that their ruthless pursuit of slave mastery led them to wreak havoc on a generally profitable trading system. Did such men as this deserve independent nationhood? Northerners compelled to search for historical comparisons for secessionists understandably ignored European independence and nationalist movements that had garnered considerable sympathy. Instead, they compared them to

autocratic Austrians' or drew upon the recent Sepoy rebellion, accusing the "Sepoys of Montgomery" of a ferocity and barbarity only befitting those who have "played tyrants all their lives" but whose revolutionary schemes had been rebuked.[61] Now, state governors and the Davis-led Confederacy had sent agents to Europe to purchase weapons on cotton's credit and appeared ready to harm northern interests directly.

A cynical interpretation of these developments (or a Neo-Confederate one) might conclude that united Northerners forced the South back into the Union out of material greed. Though most northerners had concluded that the national economic sum was greater than their diverse constituent parts, such a conclusion overplays the degree of cohesion within the North and fails to recognize the continued appeal that peaceable separation had for some economic nationalists tired of Deep South obstructionism. As late as January, for example, Carey declared himself "entirely willing" that the Cotton States "should stay out, that I would not move a finger to induce them to return."[62] Even for the hard-headed economist, and even more so for Lincoln who in his first inaugural eschewed the idea that interest alone could preserve the union—action was predicated on a more romanticized appeal to "bonds of affection" and the "mystic chords of memory."[63] Critically, as both men and countless others saw the nation they loved devolving into legal, political, and economic chaos, the early claim that secession's *telos* was anarchy became ever more real. Fears of a domino effect heightened anxiety that the North American continent would again be vulnerable to European power.

A fuller interpretation of why Northerners resisted secession remains to be written, but part of that story must capture the sense of frustration, anger, and to some extent, embarrassment, that northerners believed the slavery-loving Cotton Lords had brought upon the United States.[64] Equally critical to Carey and Lincoln, however, was the fate of non-slaveholding whites living in closer proximity to King Cotton's tyranny. Sometime in the late spring, a British correspondent challenged Carey to prove that Lincoln's determined policy of forced union through "conquest," had not been sought merely "to be enabled to continue to hold up to Europe the appearance of 'a great and powerful State.'" Carey retorted that war must be pursued not just to preserve the Union but to liberate the most immediate victims of the "aristocratic tyranny" of the cotton belt: "freedom-loving" whites who resided in a "great free soil wedge" that extended from the mountains in Alabama through Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland, and western Virginia. Neither the United States nor Europe, he

contended, should abandon those residing in this "great backbone of the Union" to the "tender mercies of those under whose tyranny they have already so much suffered—those who now denounce every loyal southern man as a traitor and an abolitionist."[65] Carey's British correspondent admitted that he had perhaps taken too simplistic a view, but continued to reject the proposition that coercion remained humane or feasible, an opinion many Europeans continued to hold.[66]

Carey, however, believed it deeply enough to overcome his general pacifism and demand military action after the Confederacy's attack on Fort Sumter. On Monday, April 15, the day that Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 troops, he calmly affixed his name to a document that urged the federal government to "sustain the government in its effort to maintain the honor, the integrity, and the existence of our National Union and the perpetuity of its popular government."[67] Outside, a more excited pro-Unionist crowd ransacked a small mercantile newspaper flying a palmetto flag and impulsively offered a display noteworthy in its symbolism. Happening upon an unlucky merchant carting bales of cotton, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported, "hundreds of men picked the fabric from its covering, and amid groans and cheers, filled the air with the light material."[68] Such was King Cotton's diplomatic fate in the United States, and eventually, abroad.

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International Finance in the Civil War Era

Jay Sexton

As this volume makes clear, the Civil War extended beyond the United States. One of the most important overseas battlegrounds took place on British and European money markets, where the cash-strapped Union and Confederate governments sought foreign capital. Statesmen in Washington and Richmond also hoped that a successful foreign loan would lend credibility to their respective causes by establishing abroad a politically influential group of bondholders. "I think every bond sold on this side of the water becomes a bond of sympathy," Union financial agent to Britain William Aspinwall declared in 1863.[1] The international financial dimension of the Civil War thus merged with its political and diplomatic ones.

The story of transnational finance during the Civil War era is also important for what it reveals about long-term development and change in the international financial system. The American conflict disrupted and altered the financial relationships, institutions, and flows of capital that had developed around the burgeoning Atlantic economy. When British capitalists shied away from investing in the bonds of the belligerents, they prompted upstart American financiers to court investors in France, Holland, and Germany. The modest amounts of funds raised in these places, however, accounted for only a fraction of the war costs. Forced to look to domestic

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sources for the overwhelming majority of its capital needs, the United States reoriented its financial institutions and structures along new national lines. This national financial system was built upon the transnational banking structures of the early nineteenth century and reconfigured, rather than severed, financial links with the wider world.

* * *

The post-1815 era was a period of great financial innovation and integration in Europe and its Atlantic subsidiaries. A sophisticated, international bond market centered in the City of London emerged to fund national debts and underwrite infrastructure development. The gatekeepers to this capital system were a series of multinational banking houses, led by the Rothschilds and Baring Brothers. Nineteenth-century bond markets became inextricably entwined with politics, diplomacy, and imperial policy. Jittery bond markets led reluctant leaders to engage in political reforms; conversely, successful bond issues empowered and stabilized what otherwise might have been rickety regimes. The bond market, one historian has suggested, thus can serve as "a kind of daily opinion poll, an expression of confidence in a given regime."[2]

The bonds of finance connected the early American republic to the capital system of the Old World. Long-term foreign investment in the United States increased from $18 million in 1789 to $110 million in 1838 to $444 million by the eve of the Civil War.[3] An estimated ninety percent of this foreign investment in 1861 was British.[4] Foreign capital helped fuel the dramatic economic take-off of the United States: it kept interest rates lower than they otherwise would have been, underwrote important aspects of the "transportation revolution," and financed the debts of municipalities, states, and the federal government. By 1853, nearly half of the US national debt was held abroad, chiefly in Britain. Powerful multinational banks based in London, led by Baring Brothers and George Peabody and Co., with the Rothschilds playing a secondary role, facilitated this westward flow of capital. Though they did not enjoy the political leverage in America that they did in Europe, these leading banks were by no means excluded from the new republic's corridors of power. American agents of the top British firms, such as Barings' consultants in Massachusetts, Thomas Wren Ward and Daniel Webster, and the Rothschilds' New York representative August Belmont, were also important lobbyists and politicians. American expatriate bankers in London, such as Joshua Bates of Baring Brothers and George Peabody and his partner J.S. Morgan, similarly fostered political relationships on both sides of the Atlantic.

Many nineteenth-century Americans were alarmed by their indebtedness to their former colonial master. The era's Anglophobic tracts, particularly those coming from Jacksonian quarters, contended that British financial power compromised American independence. Yet historians have stopped short of classifying the United States as part of Britain's informal empire. If the aggregate figure of British investment in America was high, Britain's proportional slice of the overall economic pie was less than what it enjoyed in her settler dominions or areas of informal influence such as Argentina.[5] The United States was able to exercise some control over its public debt that was held in Britain. Unlike the obligations of Latin American states that were denominated in pounds sterling, the national debt of the United States was forever transferred to dollars in 1795. The absence of British "gunboat diplomacy" in the United States also differentiated the Anglo-American financial relationship from that of Britain's informal empire.

Indeed, one might turn the tables and emphasize the benefits the United States enjoyed within Britain's international financial system. Compared to the economic difficulties faced by the new states in Latin America, who were unable to attract a consistent flow of capital at the affordable rates their northern neighbor enjoyed, foreign investment in the United States does not appear in a pejorative light. The privileged position afforded to American debtors on the London money market owed much to the shared culture, racial thought, and networks that grew out of old colonial ties. It is difficult, for example, to view Baring Brothers as an agent of recrudescent British imperialism: the bank's London partnership included US citizens; it acted on the advice of its American correspondents; it helped finance the Louisiana Purchase and the 1848 indemnity payment to Mexico; and the head of the firm in the early nineteenth century, Alexander Baring, doubled as an MP and diplomat who labored to preserve Anglo-American peace.

Where the United States might have resembled British dependencies lay in its vulnerability to transnational financial crises. The panics of 1819 and 1837, which were rooted not only in land bubbles in the American West but also in sharp collapses in transatlantic security and commodity prices, crippled the US economy. When eight state governments and one territory defaulted on debt obligations in the early 1840s, many Americans relished the opportunity, as one Mississippian put it, "to slap John Bull in the face."[6] Transatlantic financiers were appalled. Plummeting American securities soon became known as "American insecurities" among traders on the London Stock Exchange.[7] Leading transatlantic banks responded

by orchestrating a campaign to restore American credit. But rather than push for British gunboat diplomacy or intervene themselves in American politics (as they might have done had the defaulters been Latin American), financial interests used moral suasion and appeals to America's long-term self-interest in a "restoration campaign" of public addresses, journal articles, and sermons. This approach eventually paid dividends, with six of the offending states resuming, or at least restructuring, debt obligations in the mid-1840s, mostly because they needed to attract further investment from abroad. Yet three states repudiated their debts outright on the questionable grounds that the debts had been illegitimately accrued. Significantly, all were from the South: Mississippi, Arkansas, and Florida. British and European capitalists would not forget the actions of these Southern debtors when the Confederacy sought loans during the Civil War.

Despite the state defaults and repudiations of the 1840s, the United States soon reassumed its favored position on the international money markets. This was in part the result of cultural and racial factors. British financiers remained inclined to trust fellow "Anglo-Saxons" in business dealings even if they at times proved to be unreliable debtors. The allure of US securities was perhaps more the result of the international financial context. The British banking crisis of 1847 and the European turmoil of 1848 made the United States, particularly after the Compromise of 1850, appear a safer destination for capital. August Belmont informed the London Rothschilds that US bonds "now may be considered the safest of any government."[8] British and European investors soaked up a portion of the 1848 US Treasury bond issue that covered costs of the Mexican War. By 1851 US Treasury bonds sold at 113 on the London Stock Exchange, their peak price in the mid-nineteenth century. American railway securities similarly boomed.

The sectional and political controversies of the 1850s punctured this bull market. Inveterately fearful of instability, foreign capital became wary of the United States as the slavery controversy intensified. "I don't like the looks of things ahead," J.S. Morgan wrote from London in 1860, "nobody has confidence in the Political future."[9] If transatlantic financiers tended to point the finger at politicians on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line, they reserved special blame for those in the South. This might be surprising given the importance that the cotton trade played in the Atlantic economy. Yet, in contrast to the merchants, shippers, and bankers of Liverpool, the cotton trade was of marginal importance to the portfolios of the major London-based financiers who dealt mostly in government and railroad securities.[10]

Bank records and the financial press suggest that British capitalists discriminated against the South because of its embrace of slavery. Creditors feared that those whose moral compass endorsed holding men in bondage would be unscrupulous in financial dealings. The Southern state debt repudiations of the 1840s gave further purchase to this narrative. This is not to contend that slavery prevented capitalists from investing in the South, but rather that slavery cost the South on British capital markets. Yields on Southern state bonds, for example, typically were higher than those on Northern bonds.[11] "The existence of even a minute fraction of the population in bondage," asserted the *Westminster Review*, "places the government of that state at a serious disadvantage in the money market."[12] Some in Britain went so far as to engage in an early form of "ethical investment" by favoring the state and railroad bonds from the North over those of the slaveholding South. By the late 1850s, British financiers blamed America's increasingly aggressive foreign policy in the Caribbean on the "slave power" that sought to expand the peculiar institution. Fears of pro-slavery expansionism in the Caribbean led the British free-trade advocate *The Economist* to endorse John C. Frémont in 1856, a remarkable position considering the protectionism of the Republican Party.[13]

The new Confederacy was thus disadvantaged when it sought to enter the London bond market in 1861. One should be careful, however, not to take this argument too far. If few British capitalists liked the idea of a slaveholding Confederacy, most did not see slavery as the cause of the American struggle. The prospect of a costly and destructive Northern military campaign to restore the Union did not appeal to capitalists who feared that such a conflict would disrupt the business of the Atlantic economy. Nor did the Republican Party's tariff policy attract many friends in the City. In contrast, the Confederacy's policy of a low revenue-raising tariff fell in financiers' sweet spot: a government required some duties to meet foreign debt obligations, but not a protectionist tariff that constricted trade.

The attitudes of transatlantic financiers to the outbreak of conflict in America mirrored the "divided hearts" that characterized British attitudes more generally.[14] The two American partners of Baring Brothers bank divided upon the outbreak of war: Joshua Bates resolutely sided with the North, whereas Russell Sturgis sympathized with the South. Similar divisions emerged within the multinational Rothschild partnership. Other foreign capitalists—probably the majority—spurned both sides and simply hoped for an end to the political disruption so that business as usual could return. "I doubt whether we are not as deeply interested in the

matter as the parties themselves," remarked Lord Overstone, one of the largest British holders of American securities.[15] Transatlantic financiers' chief political response was to encourage statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic to find a way to avert catastrophe. In financial terms, they unloaded investments in North and South alike, repatriating an estimated half of the American securities held abroad between 1860 and 1863.[16] "The anticipation of a bloody conflict between the North and the South," Peabody observed in March 1861, "has already destroyed the confidence in the U.S. Government and State securities."[17]

Despite the slump in American securities abroad, both sides sought throughout the conflict to acquire a foreign loan.[18] There were obvious financial incentives for doing this. An influx of foreign capital would bolster reserves and prop up domestic bond markets. Historically reliant upon the great European banks for large governmental loans, American statesmen could be forgiven for wondering if their decentralized financial system could realize the funds that the conflict required. Such concerns were particularly acute in the Confederacy, whose underdeveloped banking system accounted for only a quarter of the domestic loans issued in 1860.[19]

But it was the perceived political benefits that most led Union and Confederate leaders to approach foreign banks and investors. It is here where Civil War financial diplomacy must be contextualized within the politics of the nineteenth-century bond market. It was in the City and the Frankfurt bourse, not just in the halls of government in Westminster and Berlin, where governments obtained international recognition and credibility. A bullish market on a bond issue extended security and leverage to the government in question; conversely, a bear market revealed a lack of confidence in a given regime, perhaps even initiating, rather than just reflecting, a downward spiral in its fortunes. Given the importance of recognition and legitimacy in Civil War diplomacy, it is not surprising that both sides viewed the international bond market as a key battlefield. Winning the support of leading financiers both would inject capital into the war effort and engender political support by creating a class of sympathetic bondholders. Once such a class of partisan bondholders was established, it was presumed, diplomatic favors would be forthcoming. "English sympathy is very apt to follow English Capital," Union agent William Aspinwall declared in 1863, "this is one good political reason for placing bonds in Europe."[20] Confederate agents deemed the political benefits of a successful loan to be of such importance in 1863 that they chose

to partner with the French Erlangers rather than smaller British banks, despite the fact that the terms Erlanger offered were harsher. As Judah Benjamin put it, only after the "political advantages likely to be derived from the loan" had been considered did the Confederate cabinet accept Erlanger's proposal.[21]

With the perceived stakes so high, both sides hyped their bonds in a bid to secure the backing of the international money markets. Union agent August Belmont used every argument at his disposal to convince the London Rothschilds to invest in the Union. "Stocks of our federal Government at par ought to prove, even in the present distracted state of our country, a very desirable investment to your capitalists," he wrote to his London superiors in 1861.[22] Pro-Union publications abroad, such as George Francis Train's *London American*, curried favor in Britain by comparing Chase's financial policies to those of William Pitt and Robert Peel.[23] The self-imposed "King Cotton" embargo placed Confederate agents in a difficult position: capitalists viewed the policy as a form of blackmail that deprived the South of its most important form of collateral. But this did not stop Confederate agents from seeking to find speculators to buy their bonds, which were difficult to dump even at half of face value in the early years of the conflict.

Another dimension of this financial diplomacy was the denigration of the opposition's reputation. Confederate agents highlighted Union measures such as protectionism and the suspension of specie payments that were anathema to European financiers, as well as spreading rumors on the money markets aimed at destroying the Union's credit worthiness. Perhaps the most effective financial emissary during the war was Union agent Robert J. Walker, whose 1863 mission to London was primarily spent demolishing the Confederacy's financial reputation. Walker published a pamphlet that reminded British capitalists of the Southern state repudiations of the 1840s. He went to great lengths to connect repudiation to Jefferson Davis, who had been a US senator from Mississippi when the state repudiated its debt. "Slavery takes the philanthropic, the sentimental and the religious classes and the people," Walker informed Chase, "but repudiation touches the pocket nerve and sweeps away the lenders of money."[24] Such charges stuck. The London *Bankers' Magazine* believed that "President Davis is in some degree personally responsible for the repudiation of the obligations of the State of Mississippi."[25]

Neither side managed to score the major foreign loan which they sought. The explanation for this is straightforward: capitalists saw too

much risk in extending credit to governments embroiled in a destructive and protracted civil war. As *The Economist* put it, "federations at a crisis of revolutionary disunion cannot hope to have credit abroad."[26] The Rothschilds responded to Belmont's overtures on behalf of the Union by expressing their concern that the war "can only be carried on at a monumental expense, and loan would have to follow loan in order to provide the means."[27] Barings made a similar point when it declined a Union loan offer in 1863.[28] There were further reasons for skepticism particular to the respective sides. Financiers calculated that the blockaded and inflation plagued Confederacy had little means of servicing its spiraling debt. On the Union side, financial policies such as the suspension of specie payments, the printing of paper "greenbacks," and hikes in taxes and tariffs did little to reassure jittery money markets abroad. "Why cannot a country that can raise millions within itself raise a sixpence beyond itself?" *The Economist* asked, "The reason is the terror excited in Europe by Mr Chase's policy."[29] Fears of Anglo-American conflict, particularly during the *Trent* crisis, further depressed Union bonds on in London. Though there were concerns specific to the finances of each side, British investors tended to classify Union and Confederate bonds together in the junk category. "Prudent Englishmen," the *Bankers' Magazine* declared in 1862, "will have as little as possible to do either with the money matters of the North or South."[30]

Given the mood of the international money markets, it is perhaps surprising that both sides managed to secure what they did in their financial diplomacy. The Confederacy's greatest success, if it can be called that, came in March 1863 with a modest £3 million loan from the French bank Erlanger and Co. The deal was made possible because Confederate statesmen shelved their cotton embargo and made their new bonds redeemable in cotton at an attractive fixed price of six pence per pound. The loan got off to a promising start when auctioned in Paris, London, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, and Liverpool. A triumphant John Slidell, the Confederate emissary in Paris, declared it a "financial recognition of our independence."[31] But Confederate agents soon had to enter the London money market to prop up their plummeting cotton bonds. The provision in the loan that the bonds were redeemable for cotton only within the blockaded Confederacy deterred investors, as did the Union military victories in the summer 1863. The Erlanger loan was not an unmitigated disaster—one study estimates that the Confederacy realized more than half of the loan[32]—but it did little to alter the South's financial position

abroad. With the plummeting bonds frightening off major banks from brokering a follow-on loan, the Confederacy had to rely ever more on the support of its steadfast ally in Liverpool Fraser, Trenholm, and Co., a modest and overstretched bank that was linked to the Charleston house of John Fraser and Co.

The shortcomings of the Erlanger loan are perhaps most evident in its failure to yield political benefits. There is little evidence to suggest that Erlanger, who bought Union bonds in Frankfurt even as he dealt with the Confederacy,[33] was primarily motivated by a political desire to contribute to the Southern cause. "This man Erlanger is a dangerous one," a Confederate agent in Liverpool asserted, "I judge him to be ambitious, selfish, daring and unscrupulous."[34] The loan's bondholders similarly did little to promote the Confederate cause. The cotton bondholders were notoriously secretive of their identity, no doubt because of the connection between the cotton bonds and slavery.[35] The London Rothschilds "did not hear of any respectable people having anything to do with it… We ourselves have been quite neutral and have had nothing to do with it."[36] Indeed, it is difficult to establish a reliable list of the holders of the Confederacy's cotton bonds. Even if important British statesmen bought into the loan, as Union agents alleged at the time, the bondholders did not form themselves into the pro-Confederate lobby that leaders in Richmond anticipated.[37] Rather than demonstrating European capitalists' faith in the Confederate government, the depreciating bonds soon became a barometer that measured declining confidence in the Confederacy. "We may at length conclude," Henry Adams wrote in December 1863 when the price of the bonds fell to 40 in London, "that the opinion among capitalists is fairly become that the chances are against the independence of the rebels."[38]

The Union's greatest achievement in foreign finance during the war resembled the Confederacy's in that it produced only modest financial gains. But unlike the Confederates during the Erlanger episode, the Union never brokered a deal with a major foreign bank. Demand for Union bonds abroad was instead met through private American banks that expatriated debt on their own account. Perhaps surprisingly given the leading role played by British financiers in antebellum America, the greatest purchases of Union debt came on the exchanges of Amsterdam and Frankfurt, not London. Upstart American banks such as J & W Seligman and Co. and Knauth, Nachod, and Kuhne exported Union bonds to Europe. By war's end an estimated $320 million of Union debt—ten percent of the North's

overall war-debt—was held abroad, primarily in Holland and Germany.[39] "Shrewd as the British capitalist proverbially is, his judgment in regard to American investments had been singularly fallible," remarked Charles Francis Adams, "When our national bonds went a begging at a discount of sixty per cent, he transmitted them to Germany and refused to touch them himself."[40]

European capital helped soak up surplus Union debt, particularly during the bleak summer of 1864 when bond prices plummeted on Wall Street. The financial benefits of this US debt expatriation, however, should not be overstated: Union bonds sold at deep discounts in Amsterdam and Frankfurt and fluctuations in conversion rates disadvantaged the United States. Reports from US consuls in Amsterdam and Frankfurt make clear that many of the buyers were bargain-hunting speculators who sought to turn a quick profit. Nonetheless, it appears that at least some of the interest in Union bonds can be attributed to political and ideological factors. Dutch and German migration to the Northern states, which translated into enlistment in Union armies, established bonds of sympathy for the Union cause in the old countries. Shared anti-slavery sentiments also played a role. A liberal government in the Netherlands abolished slavery within Dutch colonies just as Lincoln moved more assertively against Southern slavery in 1862–1863. When news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached Frankfurt, the US consul reported a rise in Union bonds "evidently to be ascribed to the energetic anti-slavery proclamation of the President which has been welcomed here with universal approbation."[41]

Much like the diplomatic history of the Civil War, the most important story of international finance during the conflict was that which never happened. The bond markets never unequivocally recognized the viability of the Confederate experiment. Leading banks, with the exception of the Erlangers in Paris, never had enough confidence in the Confederacy to sponsor a publicly subscribed bond issue, even on very favorable terms. If anything, the major transatlantic firms tilted toward the Union. Though they shied away from sponsoring a major bond issue, the Barings underwrote the activities of Union agents and purchasers abroad. "The Union is to be preserved whatever the cost and all are traitors who talk of secession," declared Joshua Bates, who successfully countered the pro-Confederate position of partner Russell Sturgis.[42] Thomas Baring used his seat in Parliament to oppose the recognition of the Confederacy and to diffuse wartime crises in Anglo-American relations. Expatriate banker in London George Peabody extended similar symbolic support to the Union. If many

financial journals and some banks such as the London Rothschilds at times flirted with the idea of foreign mediation as a means of ending the bloody and costly conflict, the financial classes shied away from advocating such measures once they understood that it likely would mean conflict with the Union. As *The Economist* put it, "a war with either of the belligerents would be a terrible calamity, but a war between England and the <u>Northern</u> states of American would be the most affecting misfortune which could happen to civilization."[43]

Foreign investment in the United States slowly picked up in the years after 1865. In the immediate post-war years, the centers of action remained in Frankfurt and Amsterdam, which absorbed the majority of the estimated $700 million of US debt abroad by 1868.[44] British financiers continued to fear that the United States might remain off the gold standard. The conservative Grant administration dispelled these concerns when it made returning to gold a priority. The Grant administration sought a foreign loan both to bolster gold supplies in order to retire "greenbacks" and to refinance the Civil War debt at a lower rate of interest. But plans for a major foreign loan were thwarted by the unresolved *Alabama* claims dispute with Britain. When diplomats finally resolved the *Alabama* affair in 1871, the United States found its reward not only in the $15 million British indemnity payment but also on the London Stock Exchange, which absorbed the majority of a $200 million low-interest US bond issue in 1871.[45]

The resolution to the *Alabama* claims and the commitment of the United States to return to the gold standard ignited unprecedented interest in American securities abroad. Though profoundly disrupted by the great Panic of 1873, the United States would become the world's most popular destination for foreign capital. Its foreign debt would swell from $1.39 billion in 1869 to $3.15 billion in 1899 to more than $7 billion in 1914. Britain remained the nation's chief creditor, though, reflecting some of the investment patterns from continental Europe established during the war, the proportion of foreign investment in the US that was British declined from ninety to sixty percent between 1861 and 1914.[46]

The foreign investment of the late nineteenth century was not simply a return to the patterns and structures of the antebellum period. In the mid-nineteenth century, federal debt was the chief destination for foreign capital, accounting for eighty percent of the $1.39 billion of foreign investment in the United States in 1869. This changed rapidly, particularly after the return to the gold standard in the late 1870s relieved the federal government from having to bolster gold supplies. By 1899 a mere $10

million in federal debt was held abroad.[47] This shift is partly explained by the higher returns on offer elsewhere in America, particularly in railroad securities and direct investment opportunities such as mining. It also can be explained by how the Civil War gave birth to new domestic financial structures and, indeed, a new spirit of financial nationalism. Northerners viewed British rejections of Union loan offers as an insult to national honor that increased their determination to finance the war without European help.[48] Such views tapped into historic antagonism to foreign financial interests. "We are free from foreign debt now. I count it one of the many blessings to offset the miseries of this war," American financier Jay Cooke proclaimed at the war's end.[49] An important symbolic act occurred in 1871 when the US government appointed Jay Cooke and Co. to replace the Barings as its official overseas financial agency (this appointment would prove ephemeral when Cook's house collapsed during the Panic of 1873, at which point the US government appointed another American bank, Morton, Rose, and Co., as its overseas agents).

The transfer of overseas agencies to American banks was a small part of a much broader reorganization of American finance during the Civil War era. The drying up of foreign investment during the war accelerated the development of a national financial infrastructure that the United States previously had lacked. Unable to rely on the London bond market for support, the United States established a national banking structure, created a national currency, and turned toward an emerging group of American capitalists like Jay Cooke for assistance in marketing national loans. The average daily exchange of the New York Clearing House totaled $19,269,520 in 1861; ten years later it amounted to $105,964,277.[50] The increased volume of transactions on Wall Street necessitated the construction of a new building on Wall Street in 1863, the New York Stock Exchange, which served as a symbol of the nation's growing financial independence.[51] The demands of wartime mobilization similarly transformed American business, which developed into webs of public-private partnerships that armed, equipped, transported, and fed the massive Union army.[52] These developments portended the emergence of Gilded Age big business.

The significance of the Civil War to the development of American finance lies in how it created a set of conditions which facilitated the realization of the nation's latent financial power. The drying up of foreign investment, the imperative of finding domestic markets for hundreds of millions of dollars of bonds, the suspension of the gold standard, the need to standardize and federate the nation's inchoate financial structures and institutions—all of these circumstances constituted a shock therapy that

prompted American politicians and bankers to construct a financial system capable of funding more than ninety percent of its massive $2.8 billion debt at home. This restructuring of the financial system was not always a smooth process in which bankers and politicians marched in lockstep, but it yielded a more nationally integrated system presided over by a new master financial class based in New York.[53]

The developments in American finance during the 1860s did not create new practices and institutions out of thin air, but rather reoriented and refashioned along national lines ones that previously had been structured on local or transnational levels. Government contracts, federal legislation, and domestic business relationships and practices played an indisputably important role in the development of American finance. But so too did transnational structures and processes that can be traced back to the early nineteenth-century Atlantic economy. American banks and capital markets were able to meet the challenges of the 1860s because they had long taken root in the hospitable conditions of the expanding British financial system. For example, the early nineteenth-century practice of British-based banks establishing business links with American houses, rather than sending their own agents across the Atlantic (as many British banks did in Latin America) had long-term and unanticipated consequences. Many of the leading financial houses in post-war America had their roots in the transatlantic banks of the antebellum period. August Belmont and Co. of New York, of course, began life as a small western outpost of the Rothschilds during the bleak days of the Panic of 1837. J.P. Morgan started his banking career in the 1850s as an apprentice to George Peabody's London bank, where his father J.S. was a senior partner. Far from exclusively turning inward during the 1860s and 1870s, the upstart banks of the Civil War years expanded overseas, establishing profitable relationships with partners in Britain (as was the case, for example, with Morton, Bliss, and Co.) or in Germany (as was the case with as J & W Seligman and Co. and Lehman Brothers). In some cases American banks remained too reliant on foreign capital markets: the 1873 collapse of Jay Cooke and Co. was precipitated by the bank's gamble that it could find takers in London for bonds of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

The national financial system created during the Civil War thus did not isolate the United States the capital markets of the Old World. After all, America's heyday as "the world's greatest debtor nation" lay in the coming decades. What the financial innovations of the war years did was change the position of the United States on the international capital markets. New national structures of finance and political economy forged a more unified

national market to match the national idea that emerged triumphant in 1865. In time this national financial system would prove capable not only of servicing the needs of the US government and much of the nation's industrial growth but also of projecting its power beyond its borders. Morgan and Co. (formerly George Peabody and Co.) became the first American bank to broker a loan for a European government when it did so for France in 1870. The new titans of American finance more often looked for investment opportunities in Mexico and the Caribbean, which fast became economic satellites of the United States much as the early republic had been to Britain at the beginning of the century. As with so much else in the Civil War, the story of international finance reveals not only the emergence of new national structures in the United States but also the intertwined processes of its liberation from the structures of the Old World and the creation of its own expanding sphere of influence outside of its borders.

Notes

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Transnational Discourses on Freedom and Radicalism

Uprooted Emancipators: Transatlantic Abolitionism and the Politics of Belonging

Mischa Honeck

The scene unfolding before a group of American sailors who had intercepted a Portuguese slave ship in the South Atlantic could not have been more ghastly. African men and women, wrenched from their native shores, languished handcuffed on deck, covered in filth and tranquilized with rum. Attempts to speak with the terrified blacks bore no fruit until Philip Nolan, a decommissioned naval officer and participant in the rescue operation, managed to explain to the captives in broken Spanish that they need not fear their liberators. Nolan had all possible reason to pride himself on bringing this dramatic intervention to a happy conclusion. Yet his abolitionist heroism did little to soothe his troubled mind. While the Africans would be returned safely to their families, Nolan, who had forsaken his nation in a fit of anger, remained doomed to spending the rest of his life on the high seas, without permission to ever set foot on his native soil again. Stripped of his homeland, the exiled mariner found no comfort in an abstract humanity. His fate was to live and die as the notorious "Man without a Country."[1]

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109

Philip Nolan is the main character of a short story written by the clergyman and abolitionist Edward Everett Hale at the height of the American Civil War. The publication of Hale's story in 1863, the year when Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, was no coincidence. Commonly cited as a patriotic allegory in a time of national crisis, "The Man Without a Country" can also be read as a profound reflection on the entangled histories of nineteenth-century abolitionism and nationalism. Positing a close correlation between both movements may appear counterintuitive to traditional historiography. For historians, abolitionism marks the nineteenth century's quintessential humanitarian moment, the triumph of moral politics in an age rife with capitalist exploitation, imperial conquest, and racist thinking. The politics of nationhood, by contrast, although propagated with the same liberatory fervor, seems ethically less glamorous and distant from the drama of emancipation given that the rise of modern nation-states was accompanied by large-scale territorial conflict and warfare.

This chapter argues against this morally naïve and historically misleading separation of nationalism and abolitionism. By the 1860s, the inability to disentangle the battle against slavery from questions of belonging, as embodied by the fictional character Philip Nolan, had become not merely an American phenomenon but a global one. The politics of belonging acquired a particular urgency in the modern Western world when demographic growth, economic expansion, and the increasing number of people in transit coincided with the evolution of new "legal fortresses" in the shape of the nation-state.[2] Focusing on the period from the European Revolutions of 1848/49 to the end of the American Civil War, this chapter revisits the transatlantic space through which various antislavery radicals moved to highlight the complicity of abolitionism in formulating strong ethnic and national identities. This "second age of Atlantic Revolutions" inherited from the late eighteenth-century revolutionary period what historian R.R. Palmer summed up as "a discomfort with older forms of social stratification" but owed its unique identity to at least four interrelated developments.[3] First, it was an age of industrialization that saw rapid economic growth along with heightened class conflict. Second, it was an age of emancipation during which countries as far apart as France, Russia, Denmark, and the United States followed Great Britain's example and outlawed slavery and serfdom. Third, it was an age of mass migration characterized by a rising tide of European settlers, mostly from Ireland and the German states, who crossed the Atlantic in search of a better

life. Fourth, it was an age of nationalist strife rocked by revolutions and counterrevolutions in Europe and the Americas over the future political fabric of these continents. Looking at the interplay of the last three historical processes—abolition, migration, and nation-building—this essay links the transnational struggle to end slavery to a mounting desire to avoid expulsion from nationhood in an Atlantic world set in motion by unprecedented migration and revolutionary turmoil.

In keeping with the book's general tenor, this chapter deprovincializes the story of American abolitionism, which culminated in the Civil War, by emphasizing how it both influenced, and was influenced by, transnational developments.[4] Such a broadened perspective brings into play a culturally diverse but highly mobile group of actors: northern antislavery agitators, southern dissenters, free blacks, runaway slaves, European revolutionaries, and US-born expatriates. Many members of this Abolitionist International had comparable experiences of upheaval, uprootedness, and migration caused by racial or political strife. Drawn into proximity by converging public spheres and an increased geographical mobility, they engaged in a vibrant dialogue about the meaning of liberty, equality, and nationality in a more integrated age of cross-border interactions. At the same time, though, individual and collective efforts to make sense of these experiences fueled the contentious process of redefining civic roles and national allegiances in the second age of Atlantic Revolutions. The question of who was "in" or "out" of the nation was very much in flux, and the persistence of an institution such as slavery and the realities of abduction, diaspora, and homelessness associated with it were grim reminders that degradation and despair awaited the outcast.[5] This chapter addresses a central paradox in the history of transatlantic abolitionism. Though dedicated to the eradication of slavery, it ultimately contributed to the formation of communal structures often conceived along rigid ethnic, racial, and national lines, allowing for new forms of othering and exclusion. Revealing their dual role as selfless humanitarians and self-interested nation-builders, the abolitionists' life stories demonstrate the ways in which the struggle for emancipation and the search for belonging were inextricably interwoven.

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Simultaneous political developments in Europe and North America, coupled with advancements in transportation and communication, propelled the twin issues of freedom and belonging onto a larger international stage. In the 1830s and 1840s, reform conventions in London, Paris, and other European capitals devoted to temperance, pacifism, and antislavery

attracted prominent abolitionists from the United States. William Lloyd Garrison and Elihu Burritt were two in a cordon of white philanthropists who nurtured friendships at these international venues, hoping that their example would encourage others to join in the task of building bridges across races and nations. Imprisoned in Baltimore and harassed in Boston for his radical politics, Garrison traveled abroad in part to escape the confines of a narrow and narcissistic nationalism.[6] Garrison, who had emblazoned the masthead of the newspaper he edited, the *Liberator*, with the inscription "Our Country is the World, Our Countrymen are Mankind," acted on his cosmopolitan sensibilities and befriended a handful of foreign-born progressive nationalists, including the German radical Karl "Charles" Follen and the Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini.

African Americans who sailed across the Atlantic in that period were particularly thrilled by the absence of a strict color line in liberal European circles, which they idealized as an antipode to race relations at home. William Wells Brown rejoiced that his "colored face and curly hair did not prevent [him] getting an invitation" to a reception at the residence of the French foreign minister.[7] Likewise, Henry Highland Garnet, speaking at the 1850 World Peace Congress in Frankfurt, promised to never "forget the kindness" of his German hosts.[8] Black clergyman and fugitive slave James W.C. Pennington, who accompanied Garnet to Frankfurt, had been awarded an honorary doctorate by Heidelberg University's faculty of theology one year earlier for his commitment to the antislavery and peace causes.[9] These ambassadors of black America were surely elated to learn about antislavery legislation passed in central European monarchies such as the 1826 Austrian act against the slave trade or a Prussian statute from 1857 that promised freedom to every slave who wound up on Prussian territory.[10] Amiable encounters like these boosted African American self-reliance and raised expectations that civic inclusion should also be possible in a republic whose egalitarian ideals were stained by the prolonged existence of racial slavery.

The transfer of abolitionist ideas and activists across the Atlantic, though, went in both directions. After the revolutionary uprisings of 1848/49 in Europe had faltered, many participants fled to North America to avoid persecution and incarceration. The refugee democrats were anything but a uniform cohort—most came from the German-speaking regions, but there were also smaller cells of Polish, Italian, French, and Hungarian revolutionaries. Many bickered over the best way to create a secular paradise, and disagreements between liberal democrats, socialists, and utopian radicals

flared up repeatedly in the emigration.[11] Yet what piqued the curiosity of native-born abolitionists most was that almost all of these exiled "Forty-Eighters" publicly assailed chattel slavery, an institution that evoked horrid memories of Europe's reactionary nobility. As early as 1851, a group of recent arrivals declared opposition to "Slavery…in whatever shape it may be seen."[12] Three years later, a convention of German-speaking immigrant radicals drafted the Louisville Platform, which termed bondage "a political and moral cancer" and demanded universal suffrage for blacks and whites alike because "skin color cannot justify a difference in legal status."[13] This same sentiment also prevailed at the 1855 meeting of the national Turner confederation, the leading Forty-Eighter association in the United States. Again the delegates took an open stand against slavery, denouncing the institution as "unworthy of a republic and directly opposed to the principles of freedom."[14] Such proclamations warmed the heart of Frederick Douglass. Likely under the influence of the Jewish-German journalist Ottilie Assing, with whom Douglass entertained a romantic liaison, the black intellectual hailed "the many noble and high-minded men, most of whom, swept over by the tide of the revolution in 1849, have become our active allies in the struggle against oppression and prejudice."[15] Native-born abolitionists were confident that they had found fellow liberators, fearless coworkers in the cause of human freedom.

Personal relationships and ideological affinities generated a sense of interdependency and common cause. A personality cult that stretched across oceans and continents developed around revolutionary leaders such as Giuseppe Garibaldi or Friedrich Hecker. When the Italian radical Felice Orsini was beheaded in 1858 for his failed assassination attempt on Louis Napoleon, American abolitionists joined immigrant democrats in commemorating Orsini's political martyrdom.[16] This border-crossing camaraderie was in full display again in the days following John Brown's execution in December 1859. The French novelist Victor Hugo declared that the Brown's fate "attracted the eyes of the whole of Europe," while the Polish poet Cyprian Norwid paid tribute to an imagined transatlantic alliance of republicans with his poem "Do oywatela Johna Brown" (To the Citizen John Brown).[17]

Just as American enemies of slavery pointed to European criticisms of the "peculiar institution" to shame their countrymen into supporting emancipation, European liberals drew inspiration from the fact that their coups for national independence were being cheered at abolitionist meetings on the other side of the ocean. Claims that slaveholder tyranny and

aristocratic oppression were one and the same the world over abounded in this transnational public sphere. Believing with her friends at the outset of 1848 that humankind was entering "a world *era*" of progress, Philadelphia reformer Lucretia Mott understood "the struggle for liberty in the old world, the anti-slavery movement in France, the Chartist movement in England, and the repeal movement of Ireland" as interconnected events that could energize the abolitionist movement in her country.[18] On the eve of the Civil War, émigré Republican Carl Schurz placed the sectional conflict in the same world-historical context. Linking the plantation South to an international coalition of despotism, Schurz mocked the slaveholders as being out of lockstep with the forces of civilization: "You hear of emancipation in Russia, and wish it fail. You hear of Italy rising, and fear the spirit of liberty may become contagious." But this was "the world of the nineteenth century," Schurz trumpeted, and the days when slaveholders could defend their barbaric customs at the bar of history were numbered.[19] Such sweeping comparisons were popular in abolitionist circles because they made their arguments less local, more global, and hence more compelling.

However, shared hostility to slavery did not automatically fan the flames of cross-cultural and cross-racial solidarity. Aside from obvious language barriers, alliances between American and European radicals were complicated by differing outlooks and conflicting agendas. Except for their common hatred of slavery, little connected the paragons of North American reform to the Europeans who had mounted the barricades in 1848. Differences of class, religion, and ethnicity left both sides frustrated. In particular, the anti-temperance, socialist, and anticlerical attitudes popular among immigrant revolutionaries stood in striking contrast to the evangelical Protestant beliefs held by most native-born American reformers. That much is illustrated by the remarks of Henry Ward Beecher, the popular abolitionist preacher. "We thank Europe for a great deal—for literature, ancient and modern," Beecher conceded. "But when the Socialists of Germany, and the Communists of France…come to America teach us how to make commonwealths we think they are out of place, decidedly."[20] Meanwhile, the Old World revolutionaries did not stand idly by. When attacked, they struck back, usually with a vigor and pretentiousness tantamount to that of their critics. In private as well as public statements, they lashed out at Sabbatarianism, prohibition, immigration control, and other issues dear to religiously inspired Anglo-American reformers, sometimes with stunning militancy. Shortly after arriving in the United States, Ottilie Assing wrote home, "I would feel more comfortable here if there were

more paintings, better drama, and less religion!…This disgusting garlic smell and the stench of religion permeate all of life."[21] And the refugee journalist Karl Heinzen commented on the cultural rift separating both camps in early 1859, "They take each other's hands in Uncle Tom's humble cabin but are at each other's throats in the church of the Lord." No stranger to peppering his remarks with a sarcastic phrase or two, Heinzen exclaimed, "What a happy coincidence that this country is blessed with slavery; else there would be no common ground for the American and German freemen to stand on. Our mediator, our only one, is Sambo. Long live Sambo!"[22]

Antislavery Americans who spent substantial time abroad also became more conscious of their nationality. There was a growing sense that US citizenship had global implications, and the interlocked political upheavals in Europe and North America convinced many American reformers that their country had to be vindicated on a planetary scale. Faced with allegations that the cruelties of the "peculiar institution" made the wrongs of despotic regimes elsewhere seem trifling, poet and writer Mary Booth, who lived in Switzerland during the Civil War years, implored her countrymen, "Abolish slavery, then swing the old stars and stripes in the face of Europe and of the whole world. Conquer yourselves, and you will have placed your Nation at the head of all the nations upon earth…To tell you the truth, Europe is jealous of you; deprive her of the right to throw the slavery question in your face, and she must, and will acknowledge your governmental superiority; it will not be agreeable to her at first, but she will do it by-and-by."[23] Despite slavery, Booth clung to the belief that it was America's divine mission to serve as a beacon to other nations—a belief that grew more intense overseas. Similarly, touring through England, France, and Germany in 1862, New England abolitionist Gilbert Haven proudly weighed his nation's republican institutions against the vestiges of European feudalism. Determined to see in a Union victory an affirmation of his country's manifest destiny and divine mission to redeem humankind, Haven proclaimed, "America's regeneration, if it goes forward, will ensure Germany's, Europe's, and the world's."[24] Humanitarian idealism and exceptionalist national rhetoric combined in many such accounts, with profound ramifications for how these culturally diverse abolitionists viewed themselves, each other, and their place in the world.

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Like most revolutionary movements of the time, abolitionism was propelled by an unshakable faith in the certainty of progress. The nineteenth

century was a Hegelian century, an era shaped by grand ideas and epic struggles between seemingly antithetical forces. This dualistic worldview framed the agendas of secular and religious reformers alike. Seeing the signs of progress everywhere—from toppled governments and growing industries to the expansion of railroads and the invention of the telegraph—abolitionists of various stripes read these political and material transformations as evidence that humanity was capable of evolving morally as well, that a better future was attainable in their lifetime. Yet by working to extend individual rights to the enslaved and oppressed, abolitionists had to grapple with the question of how to best protect these rights once they had been achieved.

As the twin forces of economic and political modernization chipped away at hereditary systems of privilege and power, the nation became the main container for peoples' desires for freedom and equality. Revolutionaries from Germany to France, from Great Britain to the United States, advanced the tenets promulgated by the key documents of 1776 and 1789 that human rights, civic equality, and national sovereignty were mutually reinforcing. The proponents of liberal nationalism and abolitionism were located on the left politically, finding common ground in their view of the nation-state as the guarantor of individual equal rights and the natural enemy of hereditary privilege and entrenched local elites (with the exception of a few Garrisonians, who believed that states were essentially corrupt). Freedom, they felt, was universal in theory but needed strong and clearly defined political bodies to blossom. At the height of the American Civil War, the German American scholar Francis Lieber echoed this conviction saying that, "Liberty, true liberty, requires a country."[25] And Giuseppe Mazzini spoke for many when he famously asked, "What is [a] country…if it not be the spot wherein our individual rights are most secure."[26]

The inclination to discern in the forging of new nations a manifestation of human progress was not limited to abolitionists, but their radicalism posed a challenge to those who wanted "the circle of we" to be small rather than wide.[27] Radical abolitionists from different backgrounds closed ranks to overthrow slavery but also grappled with a kind of *herrenvolk* nationalism that derived the promise of political equality for whites from the exclusion of darker races.[28] They frequently lectured their conservative compatriots that (male) citizenship had to be universal and inviolable. During the Civil War, as historian Alison Efford pointed out, liberal European immigrants contented that the processes of naturalizing newcomers and African American emancipation were part of the same rights

revolution.[29] American abolitionists agreed. National greatness, they argued, was not about material wealth or territorial expansion. Frederick Douglass developed this idea most eloquently in his 1869 speech "Our Composite Nationality." The enduring meaning of Union victory in the Civil War, the black abolitionist cautioned, should not be reduced to a simple affirmation of national unity. The seminal question was whether a country like the United States was better off "for being composed of different races of men." Douglass answered with a resounding yes. He explained that much of the nation's industry and enterprise had been due to the head, heart, and muscle of various "races," from the "Indian and Celt; negro and Saxon" to the "Latin and Teuton; Mongolian and Caucasian." But what made America truly exceptional was that it stood out as a perfect illustration of the idea that national importance and the willingness to accommodate "people of all countries, nationalities, and color" were closely intertwined. Nations, Douglass believed, were indispensable to the extent that they valued what we have learned to look upon as multicultural societies. Extolling America's "Composite Nationality," Douglass promoted the vision of a politically expansive and racially inclusive American nation, one that conceived difference as a source of strength, not discord.[30] Because the civic demands voiced by Douglass and likeminded abolitionists eclipsed boundaries of race, class, national origin, and sometimes even of sex, Forty-Eighters, Garrisonians, and other transatlantic radicals have been labeled civic or cosmopolitan nationalists.[31] According to this interpretation, they learned to see the nation as a community circumscribed by political principles, not blood and ancestry, and it was this belief that made them champion the enfranchisement of African slaves and other underprivileged groups.

While cosmopolitan inclusiveness was certainly pronounced in abolitionist thinking about nations, it is important to understand these ideas not as an upshot of local circumstance but as part of a broader effort to preclude marginalization. Wary of the dangers of ostracism, uprooted radicals sought to reinscribe themselves into stable political communities offering protection and purpose. In an expanding transatlantic vortex of migration, displacement appeared in many guises: fugitive blacks escaping from slavery, white reformers run out of town for their allegedly incendiary beliefs, political refugees scrambling to distant shores, all of them eager to leave behind spaces of unfreedom and seek out perceived spaces of freedom. These various efforts to transcend victimhood and achieve reintegration intersected. They ran parallel to the multiple flows of goods,

people, and ideas that bound together both continents and raised urgent questions about assimilation, diversity, and social cohesion, challenging concepts of community that defined national belonging as hereditary and impermeable. "Mobility, the source of [many] problems," to borrow a phrase from the historian Robert Wiebe, "had to be turned into solutions as well."[32]

There is little doubt that transnational mixing could give rise to more tolerant and pluralist nationalist ideologies such as the one expressed by Douglass. Then again, this narrative stands in an uneasy relationship with the invidious remarks of ethnic difference made by sojourning emancipators like Mary Booth and Karl Heinzen. Racist sentiments, too, were anything but absent from transatlantic abolitionism. Paternalist attitudes made it difficult for even the most unprejudiced white activist to see in blacks little more than members of a disadvantaged race in need of uplift. Even as some abolitionists identified new sources of kinship in their inter-ethnic partnerships, many others drew less benign conclusions from their dealings with strangers. Transnationalism, in short, could just as easily breed mutual disaffection and alienation, planting the seeds for more exclusive conceptions of nationality and citizenship that came into full bloom later in the century.

Intellectuals striving to place themselves and their respective ethnicities in the forward ranks of a transnational coalition for human liberation were usually also responsible for injecting nationalist emotions into the movement for black emancipation. If moral and cultural superiority of one's own approach to combating slavery could be demonstrated, then this would also elevate national prestige. Forty-Eighter writings about human rights were often fraught with ethnocentrism. "A German who becomes a slaveholder betrays his heritage, history, and destination," one German-born journalist from Pittsburgh noted. "An American who keeps slaves stains a principle, but a German who keeps slaves stains his character…A German must not keep slaves because doing so violates the creed of his countrymen and dishonors the great movement of black emancipation which is predominantly supported and represented by the German element."[33] The immigrant socialist August Willich hardly sprang into notice as a flag-waving patriot, but he too felt no need to conceal his ethnic colors when speaking about slavery. Associating Germanness with the historic mission to abolish slavery, Willich wrote, "We are only Germans and act as such if we implement the spirit of humanity…The sympathy, the trust of the oppressed nationalities and races…we must not run from

it like cowards, if we do not want to betray our own people, our own race."[34] Although Willich's socialist abolitionism called for solidarity with the exploited factory worker *and* the enslaved field hand, he had strong misgivings whether African Americans would ever be able to elevate themselves without the assistance of benign whites. More importantly, by fusing the legacy of 1848 with the quest for black emancipation, immigrant radicals like Willich could shake off the stigma of defeat, reclaim meaningful citizenship, and link his nationality to the universal advancement of liberty.

American abolitionists, by contrast, alarmed by the United States's declining reputation abroad, believed that it was *their* responsibility to vindicate freedom over slavery, and that their country was the chosen place for this millennial endeavor. Charles Loring Brace, a proud Episcopalian reformer and abolitionist, made the painful discovery that the "peculiar institution" harmed America's reputation overseas and made it a target of ridicule in the eyes of the civilized world. On a trip through Germany, Austria, and Hungary, which included a brief term in prison for alleged connections to revolutionary circles, Brace was repeatedly confronted with the charge that Americans were not practicing what they preached. "The blood tingled to my cheeks with shame," Brace confessed after listening to a Prussian diplomat scold the United States for tolerating under its jurisdiction a system as repugnant as chattel slavery. "There is a system *now* with you, worse than anything we know, of tyranny—your *Slavery*… We have nothing in Hungary or Russia which is so degrading, and we have nothing which so crushes the mind," the diplomat confronted Brace. "We here in Europe have many excuses in ancient evils and deep-laid prejudices, but *you* the young, free people, in this age, to be passing again, afresh, such measures of unmitigated wrong and oppression!"[35] As long as slave families could be torn apart on auction blocks or black men and women whipped until unconscious, Brace realized, his country lacked the moral authority to castigate oppression in other parts of the world. In all these examples, ethnicity worked in tandem with a cosmopolitan concern for human rights to advance nationalist discourses that presented themselves as redemptive, exceptional, and claimed leadership in the global pursuit of civilization.

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Molded in the violent mid-century convulsions of revolution, migration, and nation-making, the ethnic patriotism of people like Willich and Brace gained even greater traction in the post-Civil War era, much to the detriment of the newly enfranchised blacks and other minorities. A close reader of their texts will find that their fight for democracy was a cultural obligation

that grew out of their idealism and national pride, if not ethnic chauvinism. To buttress his argument for a leading German role in democratic nation-building, even a man as radical as Karl Heinzen would dabble in contemporary racial theory. Bodies became more than just a metaphor for the new nation. Offering his (rather bizarre) spin on the popular subject of phrenology, the Boston editor characterized the Anglo-Saxon skull structure as "solid" and "valiant-looking" but lacking in capacity for cultural growth. If the Americans wanted to prosper commercially as well as intellectually, they needed to accommodate the German element and its "organic disposition for ideality" that was allegedly located in the rear segment of the Germanic skull.[36] Heinzen's definition of cosmopolitan nationalism was racialist and pluralist, not assimilationist. A multiethnic nation should grant every citizen equal rights, regardless of rank, origin, and skin color. But formal equality was also supposed to retain unique ethnic traits and guarantee the flowering of German culture in distant settler communities.

Competing ethnocultural agendas may not have gotten in the way of a functioning transnational alliance against slavery, but their vindication through war and shared sacrifice made them constitutive to concepts of freedom, progress, civilization, and belonging. As with most history, these ethno-nationalist attempts to make discursive sense of the unsettling and transformative experiences of revolution, war, and emancipation produced winners and losers. Gender and race were decisive fault lines. Old partnerships soured over patriarchal conceptions of citizenship that thrived in the aftermath of the American Civil War. By 1868, the controversy had become so bitter that the feminist Susan B. Anthony threw in Frederick Douglass' face the statement that she would "sooner cut off [her] right hand than ask the ballot for the black man and not for women."[37] Next to the repudiation of women's rights, white male hegemony also meant the devaluation of other forms of masculinity that were considered subordinate on grounds of race, class, ideology, or sexual orientation. White abolitionists and revolutionaries from both sides of the Atlantic had pledged themselves to African American freedom; yet their successors had no qualms about subjugating black people in subsequent imperial ventures. Civil War soldiers drew comfort from the home-front support of their wives; yet in peace, women were not allowed to be anything but supporting actors. The participation of European immigrants in North American settler colonialism gives another reason to pause. While immigrant men claimed to have fought for the highest ideals between 1861 and 1865, the growing number of European-born settlers streaming westward

in search for land and opportunity inevitably contributed to the decimation of Native Americans.

Friedrich Kapp's odyssey perhaps exemplifies this narrowing of democratic trajectories in favor of stable national and imperial identities. A German American revolutionary fighting the ancient régime on both continents, Kapp escaped to the United States after the botched events of 1848–1849. His hatred of aristocracy animated him to sharp attacks against the southern planter class and their system of unfree labor. He joined the Republican Party, wrote two acclaimed books on the history of American slavery, and mobilized German American support for Lincoln in the Civil War. Although his activities earned him the esteem of influential native-born men, Kapp never felt at home on American soil. A shrewd critic of Yankee culture and the "cosmopolitan fuzziness" of some of his fellow refugees, the German exile opted for repatriation. When learning that the German armies had been victorious in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, Kapp beamed with joy.[38] At least, dreams of a strong fatherland capable of projecting power and civilization had come true. The second Reich offered him the kind of security and sense of belonging he had always wanted, feelings that ultimately triumphed over his teenage visions of human brotherhood. His reception back home was exuberant. Celebrated for his promotion of German *Kultur* abroad, Kapp was voted into the Reichstag on the ticket of the National Liberal Party. The revolutionary of the 1850s, it seemed, had become completely reconciled with Bismarck's Germany. Kapp, unlike Philip Nolan, had found his country.

Friedrich Kapp was only one in a cohort of transnational revolutionaries who ended up putting their weight behind the construction of sovereign nation-states such as Italy in 1861, the United States in 1865, and Germany in 1871.[39] Protecting the rights of ethnic and racial minorities mattered little in this transition from local networks of patronage to strong centralized governments. To white radicals from both sides of the Atlantic, overthrowing black bondage was never primarily about fighting for racial justice; it was about sustaining a campaign for liberal nationhood born in the upheavals of the post-Napoleonic era. American reformers like the historian John Lothrop Motley or the writer Oliver Wendell Holmes felt no sense of urgency about building an interracial democracy once slavery had been outlawed. Instead, they preferred to talk about having defended the principle of national unity against southern secessionists. No longer haunted by the corrosive politics of slavery, they assertively bound their country's fate to the global spread of republican institutions. As Motley

announced in 1868, "the hope of the world lies in the Americanization of the world."[40] Kapp likewise brushed African American interests under the carpet when he wrote, echoing William Seward, "The slavery issue is not a negro issue. It is the eternal conflict between the privileged few and the non-privileged many, between aristocracy and democracy."[41] Because citizenship was intricately tied to white narratives of civilization, true interracial equality was rarely accomplished and never emerged as a major concern.

This is not to say that there were not also individuals who continued to portray the black freedom struggle in the difficult period of Reconstruction and beyond as the extended arm of the struggle to obliterate slavery. On a larger scale, though, attempts to braid the achievement of emancipation to an active recognition of universal humanity received little applause in an age witnessing the boisterous rise of competitive ethnic nationalisms and colonial rivalries. Having demonstrated their special aptitude for advancing civilization and progress, white Europeans and North Americans felt entitled to spread their institutions to less fortunate people across the globe. Although formal enslavement became acceptable to fewer societies, the domination of non-white population groups by whites was regarded essential to the fulfillment of civilization, slowly drowning out voices wondering whether democracy and empire were at all compatible.[42] Historians of abolitionism have long been reluctant to integrate their champions into these larger histories. But the multiple and contradictory responses to the transnational reality of social mixing warrant further examination, even at the risk of shattering popular assumptions about the abolitionists' deep-seated altruism. Their attempts at rationalizing difference while striving for equality in a more integrated transatlantic world did not necessarily counteract the construction of nations as culturally and racially homogenous units. In many ways, they helped produce them.

Notes

1. Edward Everett Hale, *"The Man Without a Country," Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1863, 665–680.
2. The term "legal fortresses" is taken from Sallie Westwood and Annie Phizacklea, *Trans-Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1. On the cultural foundations of modern nationalism, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

3. Robert R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 4. On the revolutionary currents of nineteenth-century Atlantic history, see Donna Gabbacia, "A Long Atlantic in A Wider World," *Atlantic Studies* 1 (2004): 1–24. I disagree with historian Jürgen Osterhammel, who denies the persistence of a revolutionary Atlantic in this period. See Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt: Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2008), 777.

4. On the transnational dimensions of reform and revolution in the Civil War era, see Timothy Mason Roberts, *Distant Revolutions: 1848 and the Challenge to American Exceptionalism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009); Andre M. Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861: The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); and W. Caleb McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery: Garrisonian Abolitionists and Transatlantic Reform* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013).

5. Black diaspora studies as a mode of countercultural analysis and re-reading white history has been promoted by Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso 1993).

6. See McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy*, 45–89.

7. William Wells Brown, *Three Years in Europe: or, Places I have Seen and People I have Met* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1852), 50.

8. Report of the General Proceedings of the Third General Peace Congress, Held in Frankfort, on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th August, 1850 (London: Charles Gilpin, 1850), 66.

9. See Herman E. Thomas, *James W.C. Pennington: African American Churchman and Abolitionist* (New York: Garland, 1995), 180–186, and Mischa Honeck, "Liberating Sojourns: African American Travelers in Mid-Nineteenth Century Germany," in *Germany and the Black Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250–1914*, ed. Mischa Honeck et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 153–168.

10. See Hartmut Schmidt, "'Kein Deutscher darf einen Sclaven halten'—Jacob Grimm und Friedrich Wilhelm Carové," in *Bedeutungen und Ideen in Sprachen und Texten*, ed. Werner Neumann and Bärbel Techtmeier (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1987), 183–192; and Friedrich Harrer and Patrick Warto, "Das

ABGB und die Sklaverei," in *200 Jahre ABGB—Ausstrahlungen. Die Bedeutung für andere Staaten und andere Rechtskulturen*, ed. Michael Geistlinger et al. (Wien: Manz, 2011), 283–290.

11. Recent works on the Forty-Eighters in America are Alison Clark Efford, German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Daniel Nagel, *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern: Ein Beitrag zum Identitätswandel der deutschen Achtundvierziger in den Vereinigten Staaten, 1850–1861* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2012); and Mischa Honeck, *We Are the Revolutionists: German-Speaking Immigrants and American Abolitionists after 1848* (Athens, GA; University of Georgia Press, 2011).

12. *New York Daily Tribune*, August 29 and September 9, 1851.

13. "The Louisville Platform," in *The German-American Forty-Eighters, 1848–1998*, ed. Don Heinrich Tolzmann (Indianapolis: Indiana German Heritage Society, 1998), 98–105.

14. "Verhandlungen der Turner-Tagsatzung zu Buffalo, vom 24. bis 27. September 1855," *Sozialistischer Turnerbund Papers*, New York Public Library.

15. *Douglass' Monthly*, August 1859.

16. See Mischa Honeck, "'Freemen of all Nations, Bestir Yourselves,' Felice Orsini's Transnational Afterlife and the Radicalization of America," *Journal of the Early Republic* 30 (2010): 587–615.

17. Hugo is quoted in Seymour Drescher, "Servile Insurrection and John Brown's Body in Europe," *Journal of American History* 80 (1993): 499. Kamila Janisczewska brought Norwid's poem to my attention.

18. Mott quoted in McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy*, 187.

19. Carl Schurz, "The Doom of Slavery," in *Speeches, Correspondence, and Political Papers of Carl Schurz*, ed. Frederic Bancroft, vol. 1 (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1913), 157.

20. Henry Ward Beecher, "The Reign of the Common People," in *Lectures and Orations By Henry Ward Beecher*, ed. Newell Dwight Hillis (New York: AMS Press, 1970), 102–103.

21. Ottilie Assing quoted in Maria Diedrich, *Love Across Color Lines: Ottilie Assing and Frederick Douglass* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1999), 104.

22. *Der Pionier*, January 29, 1859.

23. *Daily Life*, November 14, 1861. On Mary Booth's stay in Switzerland and her friendship with the German-born female revolutionary Mathilde Franziska Anneke, see Honeck, *We Are the Revolutionists*, 104–136.

24. Gilbert Haven, *The Pilgrim's Wallet: or, Scraps of Travel Gathered in England, France, and Germany* (New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1869), 394.

25. Lieber is quoted in Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: Norton, 1996), 96.

26. Giuseppe Mazzini, *The Duties of Man* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1862), 11.

27. The phrase was coined by David Hollinger. See Hollinger, "How Wide the Circle of the 'We'? American Intellectuals and the Problem of the Ethnos since World War II," in *Scientific Authority and Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Ronald G. Walters (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 13–31.

28. On the related concept of *herrenvolk* democracy, see Pierre L. van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective* (New York: Wiley, 1967), 18.

29. Efford, *German Immigrants*, 5.

30. Frederick Douglass, "Our Cosmopolite Nationality: An Address Delivered in Boston, Massachusetts, December 7, 1869," in *Frederick Douglass Papers: Speeches, Debates and Interviews, vol. 4*, ed. John W. Blassingame (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979–1992), 241–254.

31. See McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy*, and Honeck, *We Are the Revolutionists*, 7–8.

32. Wiebe, "Framing U.S. History," 242.

33. *Pittsburger Courier*, January 25, 1858.

34. *Cincinnati Republikaner*, December 27, 1859.

35. Charles Loring Brace, *Home-Life in Germany* (New York: C. Scribner, 1853), 271–272.

36. Karl Heinzen, *Die Teutschen und die Amerikaner* (Boston: Der Pionier, 1860), 35–36.

37. Susan B. Antony quoted in William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass* (New York: Norton, 1991), 266.

38. The "cosmopolitan fuzziness [kosmopolitische Verschwommenheit]" phrase appears in Kapp, Kapp, *Leben des amerikanischen*

Generals Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben (Berlin: Dunker & Humblot, 1858), iii. On Kapp's return to Germany and his infatuation with the German Reich, see also Wolfgang Hinners, *Exil und Rückkehr: Friedrich Kapp in Amerika und Deutschland, 1824–1884* (Stuttgart: Heinz, 1987), 235–255.

39. A more elaborate version of this argument can be found in Bender, *A Nation Among Nations*, 116–181. See also Ian Tyrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); and Carl Guarneri, *America in the World: United States History in Global Context* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007).

40. Motley quoted in Frank Ninkovich, *Global Dawn: The Cultural Foundations of American Internationalism, 1865–1890* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 80.

41. Friedrich Kapp, *Die Geschichte der Sklaverei in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika* (New York: Hauser, 1860), 517.

42. Slavery and the slave trade in parts of Africa and southern Asia persisted well into the twentieth century, despite efforts of reformers to ban this form of unfree labor. See Daniel Laqua, "The Tensions of Internationalism: Transnational Anti-Slavery in the 1880s and 1890s," *The International History Review* 33 (2011), 705–726.

Africa and the American Civil War: The Geopolitics of Freedom and the Production of Commons

Andrew Zimmerman

Scholars have long recognized that the histories of West Africa and North America are so fundamentally intertwined that it makes more sense to speak of the two regions as parts of a common Atlantic World than to describe discrete interactions between two autonomous geopolitical entities. This common Atlantic history is especially obvious in the period of the Atlantic slave trade, when enslaved Africans formed one of the largest, though involuntary, migrant groups to North America. The decline of the trade may have reduced the direct contacts between Africa and the Americas; however, these contacts continued and, more to the point, common political and intellectual traditions continued to inform histories around the Black Atlantic.[1] Two of the most basic features of the American Civil War, the division of identifiably slave and free states and the creation of self-managing free agricultural enterprises, are, in fact, by no means unique to the United States but are rather key elements of the struggle over slavery in the African diaspora.[2] While the flight of slaves

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and their subsequent, short-lived establishment of self-managed, economically autonomous agriculture might appear to be spontaneous, natural reactions to slavery, we should resist the temptation of regarding them as such. Rather, as E.P. Thompson taught with his study of the food riot, we should understand these actions as based in traditions of political and moral thought.[3] If the reactions seem natural to us, it is because we have learned from, and perhaps even participate in, these traditions.

This chapter is part of a larger project on the ways European, African, and American revolutionary movements and traditions shaped the American Civil War and how that conflict, in turn, shaped these revolutionary movements and traditions. There are three basic mechanisms that structure the narrative examples that follow:

First, while the boundary between slavery and freedom did not coincide with the boundary between the Union and the Confederacy, the intense relation of state boundaries and slavery—the geopolitics of freedom—did allow the slaveholders' rebellion to take the form of an interstate war. That there were such things as free states depended on a transatlantic embrace of formally free methods for organizing production. These emerged in the eighteenth century—far more gradually and tentatively than is generally remembered.[4] As political and economic elites scrambled to define and control the freedom they declared to be a quality of their states, fugitive slaves became powerful actors in interstate politics. This was true in Africa and the Diaspora, and the US case should be understood within this larger context.

Second, that freedpeople occupied and cultivated lands taken from slaveholders during the American Civil War was not simply an outcome of Union victories. Indeed, during the war Union officials subjugated these commons to 'loyal' planters, and the Union victory would spell the end of this economic self-valorization. But the self-managed and autonomous economic activity of former slaves did form an essential component of Union military strategy. This too was a US component of a much larger history. Ex-slaves organized their own economic production, on the most basic level, simply to survive outside of bondage. Maroon communities especially had to create new modes of politics and economics just to exist. However, as with the border crossings of fugitives, these economic activities did not just grasp at a preexisting conception of freedom, but actually defined, experimented with, and created freedom.[5] The problem of organizing production as a means of creating and securing freedom was one common also to the emerging European proletariat. Thinkers including Proudhon, Cabet, Fourier, and Marx and the Free Soil movement in the

United States helped formulate these demands. This surely helps explain why, even if some latter-day Marxists imagine that the American Civil War was a bourgeois or capitalist revolution, socialists and communists of the day recognized it as part of their revolution, "the alarm bell," as Marx put it in the preface to the first volume of *Capital* (1867), "for the European working class."[6] While the common is often imagined as the scene of a mythical past of plenty, many thinkers—most recently Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri—have highlighted it as the outcome of ongoing political and economic creativity by working people.[7] The enclosure of the common was not some ancient original sin, but rather, like its production, a permanent feature of capitalism and one of the many ways American elites subverted the revolution on which the Union victory depended.

The third point has to do with the geopolitics of imperialism and the political economy of capitalism. Elites met the struggles of slaves (like the struggle of formally free workers) for emancipation and autonomy by accepting some of the terms of these struggles while seeking to channel their energies in ways that would aggrandize their own political and economic power. In Africa this is perhaps most clear in the use of anti-slavery by colonial states to expand their sovereignty over and against both African and other European colonial states as well as over and against their own subjects. In the case of the American Civil War, this channeling maneuver appears perhaps most clearly in attempts to return freedpeople to the plantation system in a new labor-coercive system of leases, contracts, and wages.

* * *

The narrative of abolition told by later apologists for empire incorrectly suggested that the trade in slaves was, in the nineteenth century, gradually replaced by the trade in "legitimate" goods—palm oil, peanuts, ivory, and other commodities in high demand outside Africa. This shift from the slave trade to legitimate trade began, according to this narrative, under the tutelage of missionaries preaching the "three Cs"—Christianity, Civilization, and Commerce—and it was finally completed under the benevolent authority of colonial states.

In fact, there was nothing gradual about the decline of slavery in the nineteenth century. Newly intensified zones of slavery emerged alongside new zones of free soil. This polarization of slave and free soil allowed individual slaves to play important political roles in the geopolitics of slavery and freedom. The abolition of the slave trade, though for many a desired step on the way to ending slavery, had a paradoxical effect on

slavery in Africa. The export of slaves from West Africa to the Americas did decline rapidly in the first half of the nineteenth century, thanks to the efforts of the ships of the British West Africa Squadron and the diplomatic efforts of Britain to get other slaveholding nations to ban the trade. This ban did not, however, interfere with the institutions of slavery in the Americas or in Africa. European and American merchants had always traded in both "legitimate" goods and in slaves, and "legitimate" commodities, moreover, were often harvested and transported by slave labor inside Africa. With increasing demand for African goods, especially palm oil, in the world economy, and the decreasing effective demand for African slaves in the Americas, many former slavers began exploiting slave labor inside of Africa rather than selling captives overseas.[8] According to economic historian Anthony Hopkins, some former African slave ports began using barracoons, barracks built to hold slaves awaiting transport across the Atlantic, to store palm oil.[9] For Hopkins, this new use for the barracoons signifies the decline of the slave trade and the rise of free labor economies in Africa. However, the products of slave labor inside Africa also entered the Atlantic trade through the structures that had once facilitated the Atlantic trade in slaves. Thanks to the growing global demand for slave-grown products, by the mid-nineteenth century, according to Paul Lovejoy, slaves even outnumbered free people in Dahomey and a number of Yoruba states.[10] British slave patrols, many missionaries, and European officials generally avoided interfering with African slavery. Indeed, even in Freetown, Sierra Leone, the outpost of the British anti-slave-trade patrols, the domestic slave trade remained legal until 1896 and slavery until 1926.[11]

The growth of slavery inside of Africa was only one part of the picture of this massive transition of the regional political economy. The legitimate goods demanded by European and American markets could be produced by slave labor, to be sure, but they could also be produced by independent, free growers. Some historians have emphasized the growth of this small producer model, most notably Anthony Hopkins, while others, like Paul Lovejoy, have emphasized the growth of slave economies in the region.[12] On both sides of the Atlantic there emerged a set of newly exploitative slave states, including Dahomey, Abeokuta, and Lagos in West Africa and Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama in the United States. No matter which of the two forms of labor was more important, the West African economy, like the US economy, experienced a bifurcation when free labor economies and slave labor economies emerged from the same conjuncture. In Africa, this juxtaposition of conflicting forms of labor paved the way for

slave rebellions, self-emancipations, and, also, by appropriating and redirecting these insurgencies, European colonial rule. In the United States, the juxtaposition of slave and free states had comparable consequences.

The Ewe of the Bight of Benin offers a good example of both the production of commons against slavery and of the appropriation of these commons in the service of colonial rule. The Ewe lived in the no-man's land between the slave-trading kingdoms of Asante to the West and Dahomey to the East. (They would become subjects of German Togo and British Gold Coast.) The Bight of Benin as a whole, in the estimate of historian Patrick Manning, suffered the most pronounced and long-term population decline of any region in Africa affected by the slave trade. The disproportionate export of male slaves meant that the male-to-female sex ratio in the region recovered from its late eighteenth-century low of approximately sixty men for every hundred women only in the second half of the nineteenth century.[13] After the decline of the Atlantic slave trade and before the onset of German colonial rule, the Ewe created a free labor economy resistant to many forms of domination, including colonial capitalism. This was just one of thousands of instances of the production of commons around the Atlantic. Others included Fourierists, Icarians, and Bible Communists of Oneida, New York. Like all of these communities, Ewe polities built on local traditions, but by no commonly accepted measure can it be regarded as primitive.

The Ewe enjoyed a brief period of relative freedom and prosperity in the second half of the nineteenth century, as they recovered from the demographic, economic, and political catastrophe of the slave trade, and before the new catastrophe of German colonial domination.[14] The Ewe had had no unified state to protect them from the depredations of the slave trade—or to defend them against the later depredations of the colonial state—so, between the decline of the Atlantic slave trade and the imposition of German rule, no state to oppress them either. In southern Togo in this period, production occurred in extended households that allowed a level of collective and personal autonomy unusual in the Atlantic world at the time. This autonomy would become such an obstacle to German rulers that they would turn to the American New South for models and methods of subjecting the Ewe to colonial capitalism.[15]

The Ewe developed a system of autonomous households that carried on mixed agriculture and petty manufacturing for subsistence and trade. This not only made the Ewe as a whole resistant to outside control but also gave Ewe men and women a level of individual autonomy unusual in the Atlantic

world at that time. Several Ewe women shared a single husband and could each possess their own households and fields, which were linked to those of their husbands through gift and market exchange. Missionaries and colonial officials would later remark, mostly with dismay, upon the unusual independence of Ewe women. (Such democratic possibilities are also what led the so-called Bible Communists of the Oneida Community in New York, for example, to experiment with non-monogamous marriage.) Ewe households could also hold slaves, although the scale of production made this a society with slaves rather than a slave society. The growing world demand for palm oil, as well as the conditions of production of this crop, meant that not only large plantation owners but also individual producers could profitably harvest and market palm oil. Oil palms grow freely in much of West Africa, and, while they can be improved by cultivation, oil can also be collected and processed by individuals from wild palms. Palm oil had a wide variety of uses in Africa and in Europe. Palm oil was also a central ingredient in the West African diet, so producers could choose to consume palm oil themselves if they did not wish to market it locally or sell it to European merchants. While Ewe political economy was hardly a classless society or an idyllic "merrie olde Africa," it did afford many of its members a greater degree of political and economic autonomy than existed in slave economies of the Atlantic or, arguably, in the free labor economies of Europe.

Economic historian Anthony Hopkins noted the particular modernity of this small-scale production that emerged in the period preceding European colonial rule. Hopkins wrote: "In so far as firms of this size and type are the basis of the export economies of most West African states today [in 1973], it can be said that modernity dates not from the imposition of colonial rule, as used to be thought, but from the early nineteenth century."[16] I think we can take Hopkins's point even further: worker autonomy had long been the goal of enslaved and free workers across the Atlantic, and female political and economic autonomy had more recently become the goal of the most progressive political movements of the region; the Ewe, as well as other societies in West Africa, achieved this broader political and economic modernity relatively early, certainly well before the societies colonizing them did. The colonial state worked against this modernity, finally burying it in an imagined primitivism.

* * *

In West Africa (and in much of the Atlantic), the coexistence of two forms of labor—strengthened slavery and a free labor that would almost

prove stronger even than colonial capitalism—created new constellations of power, including inter-elite conflicts that offered new possibilities for emancipation and oppression. On the most basic level, increased concentrations of slaves working inside West Africa could carry out successful insurrections.[17] A wave of uprisings, for example, spread through the Niger Delta from the port town of Calabar in the 1850s, where slaves rebelled to end the practice of sacrificing them at funerals.[18]

Alongside African slave states and slaving elites there emerged competing colonial and missionary elites. While Europeans exercised significantly less political power in the middle of the nineteenth century than they would at the end of the century, regional centers of European colonial power did emerge, along with the mixed European and African enclaves of the mission stations. Most of these groups, while hardly advocates of slavery in Africa or anywhere else, nonetheless tolerated slavery in Africa. The Atlantic economy depended as much as ever on the labor of African slaves, and even if some administrators and missionaries would have liked to crush African slavery, they did not have the means to do so.[19] Most colonial officials and missionaries refused to interfere with slavery in their own regions of operation, even if their presence was justified by their opposition to slavery. The practical realities of returning escaped slaves, however, did sometimes allow for more informal, case-by-case interventions.

Yet, even while European colonial and missionary powers tolerated, and often benefitted from, slavery in their own spheres of influence, anti-slavery formed a component of their expansion into neighboring slaveholding polities. Beginning with an 1836 naval bombardment of the port town of Bonny by ships of the British West Africa Squadron, Britain gradually established coercive treaties with states of the Niger Delta, culminating in the 1851 bombardment of Lagos to support the anti-slavery sovereign King Akitoye, and the annexation of Lagos in 1861.[20] With Lagos conquered, the British there saw their abolitionism fade, and they continued to tolerate the widespread slavery in their new colony. We perhaps see a parallel in those erstwhile Radical Republicans who, with federal power reestablished in the South, found themselves liberal critics of Reconstruction and advocates of the racist reconciliation that David Blight has analyzed.[21]

Slaves in Abeokuta, about one hundred miles inland from Lagos, took the anti-slavery rhetoric the British used in their conquest of Lagos more seriously than the British themselves did. Abeokuta was an inland city settled by Egba Yoruba in the wake of the collapse of the Oyo Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Church Missionary Society

(CMS) and Sierra Leonean recaptives (slaves freed from ships intercepted by British Navy patrols) who were originally from the region soon settled there too. The head of the CMS in Abeokuta, Samuel Crowther, was himself one of these recaptives. Crowther would later become the first black Anglican Bishop. Abeokuta and Lagos both had major—in the estimate of Paul Lovejoy majority—slave populations, and neither the CMS in Abeokuta nor the British at Lagos challenged the local slave economies. This may have been as much a matter of their power as of their principles.

While many European administrators and missionaries wanted to adjust African emancipation to fit their own political and economic aims, slaves took the issue into their own hands. The coexistence of competing European and African political powers in Africa, in a manner similar to the coexistence of slave and free states in the United States, improved the chances of escape for slaves. CMS missionaries complained that in Abeokuta "the natives … see in Lagos a place of refuge for runaway slaves; they see that their slave property will become without value and that great changes and even revolutions will be the result."[22] The British in Lagos did indeed welcome most fleeing slaves from Abeokuta, sometimes paying compensation to their owners, even while accepting, and often benefiting, from slavery inside of Lagos. Escaped Abeokuta slaves were also employed as laborers for Lagos merchants. Hausa escapees were formed into the so-called Armed Hausa Police Force that defended British sovereignty at Lagos, including against outraged slaveholders from outside the colony seeking to reclaim escaped slaves. This British practice of using fugitive slaves in colonial armies also built on African traditions of military slavery. It was later imitated by French and German colonial powers. These armies of freedpeople, though employed in colonial conquest, also served as agents of emancipation, even, like African American Union soldiers, encouraging slave escapes during campaigns, especially in British Yoruba expeditions at the end of the nineteenth century.[23] As in the United States, both before and during the Civil War, the relation of slave escape and insurrection to the political and military projects of non-slaveholding elites remained vexed, amplifying the power and the possibilities for co-optation of both political-economic elites and enslaved workers.

* * *

The transformations of Atlantic slavery also created new relationships between African Americans and Africans. This had much to do with what

Ira Berlin has called the "Second Middle Passage" of the early nineteenth century, when the massive growth of the US cotton economy drove thousands of slaves into the Deep South.[24] (The expanded production of US cotton was part of the same global capitalist expansion that also fueled the increased demand for slave- and free labor grown palm oil and other African commodities.) Facing mass dislocation in the United States, this migrant generation became, Berlin has argued, a less Africa-identified and more distinctly African American and Christian population. Even if this population identified less strongly with blacks in Africa, as Berlin suggests, they shared a common experience with their African counterparts of intensified slavery in new slave states.

The African American abolitionist Martin R. Delany, although not born in slavery, belonged to this generation. His 1859–1860 journey to Abeokuta, the Yoruban town in conflict with Lagos over the fugitive slave issue, illustrates with particular clarity the transatlantic politics of the African diaspora in the changing political economy of the mid-nineteenth-century Atlantic. It also suggests how the generation of the second middle passage maintained some contacts to similar struggles in Africa. Delany hoped to transform the well-known cotton textile production of Abeokuta into a damaging economic competitor to the slaveholding US South with the expertise and management of African American settlers. Of course, even suggesting African American migration to Africa sounded too close to the racist and insufficiently anti-slavery position of the American Colonization Society for many, and Delany was widely criticized for this scheme.[25]

Delany concluded a treaty with the king of Abeokuta allowing him to bring African American settlers to grow cotton for the world market. Delany promised to bring from America "no heterogeneous nor promiscuous 'masses' or companies, but select and intelligent people of high moral as well as religious character" who would settle the land, live according to their own laws, and bring what Delany regarded as superior moral ways to local inhabitants. These American settlers would employ African cotton growers at wages lower than what American slaveholders laid out to purchase and maintain their human chattel. Delany concluded, "If the negro race—as slaves—can produce cotton as an exotic in foreign climes to enrich white men who oppress them, they can, they must, they will, they shall, produce it as an indigene in their own-loved native Africa to enrich themselves, and regenerate their race." If these settlers could be afforded "additional labor"—presumably from local African populations—"we shall very soon cultivate our own cotton.—Slavery Doomed."[26]

Delany acknowledged the wide practice of slavery in Abeokuta but, following a pattern typical of missionaries and colonists, his published report justified slavery in the region he wished to work while condemning its existence elsewhere (in Delany's report, in Asante and Dahomey). To avoid condemning slavery in Abeokuta, Delany repeated a slaveholder's ideology common to both sides of the Atlantic: there, according to Delany, slaves were members of the master's family, treated with paternal care. (While some slavery in Africa may well have corresponded to some domestic ideal, this was hardly the case for the majority of slaves in the staple economies of West Africa.) Of course, had Delany come to Abeokuta promising to abolish slavery there he would not have been able to strike bargains with African powers. Delany did not continue his work in Abeokuta, and would soon focus his energies on recruiting black troops for Union Army. When he was promoted to major in 1865 he became the first African American commissioned officer in the United States.

Delany's Abeokuta plan suggests the increasingly complex possibilities for collaboration and resistance and the ways multiple actors co-opted each other in political and economic struggles in the Atlantic. That most, if not all, foreign and domestic elites in Africa compromised with some combination of slavery, exploitation, and colonial domination says more about elites than about African history particularly. The driving force of this age of revolution was the stream of escaping slaves, the constituent power of the revolutionary Atlantic, and not any particular state, mission, or other constituted power into which they might subsequently be fit. Delany's work in Abeokuta suggests that Civil-War-era African Americans had direct knowledge of the geopolitics of slavery and freedom in West Africa, and that the resemblances between various forms of popular anti-slavery are not—or at least not only—coincidental but also include personal connections and networks.

* * *

The history of Liberia, the settlement of manumitted slaves founded by the American Colonization Society (ACS) in 1822, similarly illustrates the transatlantic connections of black anti-slavery in the Civil War era. It also suggests how the complex politics of slavery and anti-slavery in the Atlantic world could be appropriated by new forms of colonial sovereignty. Most abolitionists detected the racism at least implicit in the white concern to settle free blacks outside the United States. The support that many slaveholders showed the ACS further indicated the extent to which transporting

free blacks from the United States was entirely compatible with maintaining slavery in the United States. The relation of the Americo-Liberian settlers both to subsequent African recaptives, or "Congoes" as they were known in the American settlement, as well as to indigenous African societies, indicates the distance from which this generation of African Americans stood from Africans.[27] These American emigrants were the only residents of the Republic of Liberia who could be citizens, and, much like European colonists, they ruled indigenous inhabitants with military force in the name of Christianity and civilization. It is important to note, however, that African Americans did not travel to Liberia primarily out of a desire to colonize, but rather because emigration was often a condition of their manumission. European colonists, by contrast, were not faced with such a terrible choice in their decision to intervene in Africa.

Central to working out this tension around the issue of migration is to adequately theorize the political strategy of exodus, one beginning as early as the Hebrew Bible and very much alive in much slave resistance. Elites have also employed migration, emigration, and colonization as strategies of oppression and control, but as a kind of parasitical subversion of a primary, emancipatory exodus.[28]

When the American Civil War broke out, Americo-Liberians embraced it immediately as a war against slavery. Writing to the American Colonization Society, Liberian President Stephen Allen Benson claimed that his fellow citizens were especially enthusiastic about the election of Abraham Lincoln because "that good Christian statesman and advocate of freedom, Hon. Mr. Seward, is to be his sec. of State."[29] Seward had been recognized by friend and foe alike as the radical anti-slavery candidate for the 1860 Republican nomination. Lincoln's nomination was a compromise with more lukewarm opponents of slavery in the Republican Party, and in 1860 Seward still remained a potent symbol for those who had wished for a more radical president. Letters written to the ACS by Americo-Liberians, including the President of the Republic, reveal an understanding of the war as a divinely guided crusade against slavery.[30] Some also expressed concern that the war might inconvenience the work of the ACS, for example, by interrupting US supplies to Liberia.[31] Americo-Liberians were delighted by the official US recognition of their Republic in 1862. Lincoln's well-known support for colonization surely appealed to these Americo-Liberians, but they also expressed impatience that "contrabands" were not sent immediately to Liberia.[32] At least one Liberian also feared that Lincoln would settle freedpeople in Central America, rather than in

Africa.[33] The complex alliances between colonial power and anti-slavery shaped Liberian history as it shaped much of the Atlantic. Again, the primary movement was the revolutionary exodus of escaping slaves; the counterrevolutionary structures in which some of these freedpeople, such as the Americo-Liberian ruling class, found themselves was a secondary reaction to this larger movement.

Even before Lincoln made anti-slavery a war aim in the United States, in Africa he allowed the US Navy to take actions against the slave trade to which it had long been obligated by treaty. When the Africa Squadron of the US Navy began its operations in 1842, the Secretary of the Navy, the southerner Abel B. Upshur, insisted that its main goal be promotion of American commerce rather than suppression of the slave trade. The US naval presence, combined with agreements forbidding mutual inspection of British and American ships, had the paradoxical result, according to historian George E. Brooks, that "nearly all vessels engaged in the slave trade henceforth flew the Stars and Stripes."[34] Under Lincoln, the US African Squadron, though diminished by the need to divert ships to blockade the Confederacy, began serious efforts to suppress the slave trade. Africans played a role in the anti-slavery patrols, as in all West African shipping, from the slave trade to the suppression of the slave trade. Most important were the Kru from Liberia, whose boating skills were necessary for landing in the dangerously rough surf along much of the West African coast, and whose linguistic skills as "proper-talk-men" were necessary to communicate with African customers and merchants.

One important coup for these new anti-slavery patrols was the capture of the slave ship *Nightingale* in April 1861 by the USS *Saratoga*. Eight Kru participated in the operation and were awarded a share of the prize awarded for the capture of enemy ships.[35] The *Nightingale* was found to contain nearly one thousand captives held in such terrible conditions that only eight hundred survived the journey to Liberia. These survivors, now "Congoes" in Americo-Liberian parlance, were placed in a "receptacle," as locals termed the building to house newly arrived recaptives. As one Americo-Liberian reported to the ACS, these recaptives were "emaciated nay attenuated to the last degree, living skeletons. The dying, the dead, the sick crowded together in heaps, and the midst of filth and horrible effluvia that cannot be pictured." Initially the care of these dying recaptives was entrusted only to other African recaptives. The receptacle was soon judged a "public nuisance" by a Liberian court and shut down. The

Nightingale receptives were placed with "the citizens in whose families and under whose care the poor creatures could be fed and made comfortable."[36] The emancipation of the *Nightingale* slaves was only the beginning of a larger process of emancipation that, in the civilizationist ideologies common to Americans and Europeans, often placed these freedpeople in a new tutelage, albeit one arguably less malign than that from which they had been freed.

* * *

An emerging transatlantic anti-racism was one of the ways that Africans and American abolitionists began to untangle the unholy alliance of colonialism and abolitionism. Anti-racism represented a rejection both of slavery and colonization, seeing the crime of slavery as a crime against people of African descent that required more than racist expulsions and colonial conquests to correct. This is the central point of one of the founding documents of radical abolition, William Lloyd Garrison's 1832 *Thoughts on African Colonization*. The discussion of colonization of free people of color in Liberia was, for Garrison, at best a distraction from "the sacred duty of the nation to abolish the system of slavery now and to recognise the people of color as brethren and countrymen." Garrison maintained that the United States owed Africa a debt for the crime of slavery that it should pay by transforming "that ill-fated continent" into "the abode of civilization, of the arts and sciences, of evangelical piety, of liberty and of all that adds to the dignity, the renown, and the temporal and eternal happiness of man." Garrison, even while criticizing the ACS, endorsed a civilizing-mission rhetoric important to colonization. Unlike most colonists, however, Garrison did not believe that the 'failure' of the colonized to conform to the ideals of colonizers authorized corrective violence: "Any scheme," he wrote, "to proselytize which requires for its protection the erection of forts and the use of murderous weapons, is opposed to the genius of Christianity and radically wrong. If the gospel cannot be propagated but by the aid of the sword,… it were better to leave the pagan world in darkness."[37] Garrison suggested also that slavery had made the recently freed colonists unfit for the Christianizing and civilizing mission they should carry out. While Garrison's critique of colonization was limited by his endorsement of a Christian civilizing mission, and his critique of slavery weakened by the assumption that slaves were morally degraded by the institution, he nonetheless points to a resolution in anti-racist solidarity to the paradoxical combination of abolitionism and colonial rule in Africa.

This anti-racism also became a central aspect of African political thought, as George Shepperson has discussed in an important article.[38] Racism was long a central element of slavery and proslavery discourse in the United States, but not so in Africa, where ideologies of domesticity functioned without the support of doctrines of racial superiority. Yet a number of West African writers, above all James Africanus Beale Horton, an Igbo recaptive from Sierra Leone who rose in the CMS, developed an African political thought centered on disproving claims of black inferiority that emerged on the other side of the Atlantic. Shepperson traces these writings to later critiques of colonialism from African diaspora writers, including CLR James, Eric Williams, and George Padmore. Anti-racism would be the legacy of the anti-slavery movement that would allow it to effectively shed the colonial entanglements in which it sometimes found itself.

* * *

Longstanding African and African American anti-slavery politics played a fundamental role not only in the political issues raised by the American Civil War, not only in shaping the war aims of Union and Confederacy, but also in the actual course of the war itself. This was especially true in the West, which stood closer than the Eastern Seaboard to Atlantic radical traditions, both African and European. The West placed large populations of exiled European revolutionaries in proximity not only to the struggle in Kansas but also to the Mississippi Valley, which had become an area of intense plantation cultivation since the "second middle passage." Slave labor in this region generated massive surpluses, and the high level of organization of slaves on the large plantations of this region would become, as we shall see, central also to anti-slavery efforts in the war.

New forms of revolutionary war emerged as Union troops fought partisans of slavery in Missouri and moved through Arkansas, eventually reaching Helena on the Mississippi River to link up with Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Tennessee. Many, if not most, of the Union soldiers fighting in Missouri were German émigrés who had participated in, or were radicalized by, the revolutions of 1848–1849. In the march toward Helena, Arkansas, soldiers and slaves wove together longstanding international political movements developed by free workers and longstanding international political movements developed in the African diaspora. As early as November, 1861, German soldiers in Missouri armed and put in uniform self-emancipated slaves, who fought with the local home guards in the brutal guerrilla war in that state.[39]

The forms of political and economic autonomy that free and enslaved workers created around the Atlantic played a central role in conquering, controlling, and making productive for the Union the Mississippi Valley. The rivers of the West were important avenues for moving soldiers and war material, as well as confiscated cotton. Because the area was full of guerrillas, however, Union shipping could never be secure if the banks were not. Even a lone sharpshooter from the banks could explode a steamboat boiler, causing great loss of life among passengers and crew. Settling black agricultural workers on the banks of the river denied that territory to Confederate guerrillas, who nonetheless terrorized these free blacks. As Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas publicized in a circular, "The primary objects [of settling freedpeople along rivers] are to line the banks of the Mississippi River with a loyal population and to give aid in securing the uninterrupted navigation of the river at the same time to give employment to the freed negroes whereby they may earn wages and become self supporting."[40] Free black landholding transformed the political and economic geography of the South and also helped effectively control the territory. As in colonial Africa, capitalist elites would also subvert the autonomous and self-organized political and economic activities on which their power depended.

The radical politics of the African diaspora merged with the radical politics of European workers in the American Civil War, especially the Mississippi Valley. Nowhere was this realized more literally than on the plantation near Vicksburg, Mississippi owned by Jefferson Davis's brother Joseph and run following the cooperative principles of Robert Owen (modified for slavery). When the remaining Davises and other local plantation owners on Davis Bend fled advancing Union forces in the summer of 1862, the now de facto free plantation workers continued to run the enterprise cooperatively, now on their own account.[41] Official regulations by the Union Army for the Davis Bend plantation indicate that the military recognized and endorsed this cooperative management. Plantations elsewhere in the Mississippi Valley were usually leased to 'loyal' whites who worked them with often coerced, if formally free, black labor. The Davis Bend Plantation, by contrast, was divided into plots run by self-organized and managed all-black companies. These companies consisted of three to twenty five members, who elected their own head, received parcels of land proportionate to their number, and divided the labor and the profits among themselves.[42]

The Davis Bend plantation was not only an example of what a radical Reconstruction unbounded by capitalism might have looked like. It also played a major role in developing the hard war strategy of Ulysses S. Grant, for it bolstered his enthusiasm for emancipation and his confidence that mass emancipation and settlement of blacks could become a component of Union strategy. When Grant himself first observed the plantation, he decided that it might become a "Negro paradise." Its continued functioning under black management, according to John Eaton, the chaplain Grant put in charge of freedpeople, "distinctly demonstrated the capacity of the Negro to take care of himself and exercise under honest and competent direction the functions of self-government."[43] Grant came to the head of the Union Army, and was able to win the war, thanks in part to his ability to work with revolutionary strategies developed in the Mississippi Valley, aided and inspired by revolutionary trends from the black and red (that is, socialist) Atlantic.

The Davis Bend plantation illustrates in an atypically literal manner the intermingling of African American and European American radical traditions of political and economic autonomy in the Civil War. In fact, it suggests the outlines of a common Atlantic radical tradition, one whose history in the eighteenth century has received brilliant treatment in Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker's *Many-Headed Hydra*.[44] If we have trouble separating out the Fourierism from the Owenism from the Christian utopianism from the Free Soilism from African and African American antislavery politics this may be because these were in fact diverse parts of a common Atlantic radicalism. We might follow Jacques Rancière in blaming certain types of Marxism for artificially separating out these traditions of fragmentary utopianism from some imaginary grand progress toward communism, but we certainly should not blame Marx himself.[45] At his opening address to the First International, in 1864, Marx identified as two of the most important movements of the day the ongoing defeat of slavery in the United States and the cooperative movement in Europe that demonstrated "that, like slave labor, like serf labor, hired labor is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labor plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart."[46] Had Marx known about Ewe and other free African societies, he might have included them in this account of cooperative labor.

In this chapter I have highlighted the contribution of political traditions of African anti-slavery not only to the Atlantic struggle against slavery of which the American Civil War was such an important part but also to

the military history of the war itself. Historians who see anti-slavery as a side issue to the "real" military history of the war misdirect not only our understanding of the larger Civil War era, but also of the "real" military history of the conflict itself.[47] The powerful revolutionary movements of the nineteenth-century Atlantic were not available to the Confederacy, and this must be counted among the many strategic deficits of those slave states.[48] The Union, meanwhile, enjoyed enormous support in the South, not only from enslaved African Americans but also, in some areas, including Arkansas, from poor whites who had little sympathy for wealthy slaveholders. The Union victory depended on the creation of new commons, territorial sovereignties created by African, as well as European, radicalism. That this new common was enclosed by bourgeois elites, from African colonization to Reconstruction to the New South and beyond, in new movements of enclosure, has perhaps masked this. A national narrative might split the difference between revolution and reaction, drawing a diagonal with a narrative of liberal progress in a United States excepted from Atlantic Revolution. I have instead tried to offer a transnational and dialectical account of the Civil War, looking past the weak forces of a nationally bounded liberal gradualism to the stronger revolutionary currents of the Atlantic.

Notes

1. See, above all, John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
2. Stephen Hahn makes important connections between Civil War era African American politics and slave rebellions, such as that which created Haiti, and the long tradition of marronage. See Steven Hahn, *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).
3. E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 50 (1971): 76–136.
4. See especially Robert J. Steinfeld, *The Invention of Free Labor: The Employment Relation in English and American Law and Culture, 1350–1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991) and Robert J. Steinfeld, *Coercion, Contract, and Free Labor in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

5. For a study especially important for this discussion, see Jessica Krug, "They Glorify in a Certain Independence': The Politics of Identity in Kisama, Angola, and Its Diasporas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" (PhD diss., University of Madison, Wisconsin, 2012).

6. Karl Marx, Preface to the first edition of *Capital*, vol. 1, Ben Fowkes, trans. (1867; New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 91. I changed the translation of *Sturmglocke* from its usual "tocscin" to the simpler "alarm bell."

7. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

8. See Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

9. A. G Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 145–146.

10. Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 177.

11. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 255. Sierra Leone, as a protectorate rather than a colony, was not bound by the anti-slavery conventions governing European colonies in Africa. In these too, however, slavery also continued.

12. For an excellent recent discussion of this issue, see Gareth Austin, "Cash Crops and Freedom: Export Agriculture and the Decline of Slavery in Colonial West Africa," *International Review of Social History* 54 (2009): 1–37.

13. Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 66–69.

14. Michel Verdon rightly cautions against generalizing about the Ewe, which, in fact, he shows, differ significantly across three major geographical areas. See Michel Verdon, *The Abutia Ewe of West Africa: A Chiefdom That Never Was* (Berlin: Mouton, 1983). The best contemporary accounts of Ewe political economy from the German colonial period are Jakob Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme: Material zur Kunde des Ewe-Volkes in Deutsch-Togo* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1906) and Diedrich Westermann, *Die Glidyi-Ewe in Togo: Züge aus ihrem Gesellschaftsleben* (Berlin: Walter de

Gruyter, 1935). On the Togolese economy, see also Peter Buhler, "The Volta Region of Ghana: Economic Change in Togoland, 1850–1914" (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 1975) and M.B.K. Darkoh, "Togoland under the Germans," *Nigerian Geographical Journal* 10 (1967): 107–122 and 11 (1968): 153–168.

15. Andrew Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

16. Hopkins, *Economic History of West Africa*, 126.

17. Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 145–146; Hopkins, *Economic History of West Africa*, 146.

18. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 188.

19. On the continuing importance of slavery to the ostensibly free colonial states, see especially Suzanne Miers, "Slavery and the Slave Trade as International Issues, 1890–1939," in *Slavery and Colonial Rule in Africa*, ed. Suzanne Miers and Martin Klein (London: Frank Cass, 1999), 16–37.

20. Toyin Falola, *Colonialism and Violence in Nigeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

21. David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001). For an important analysis of a comparable case in East Africa, see Frederick Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters: Plantation Labor and Agriculture in Zanzibar and Kenya, 1890–1925* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1997).

22. *Iwe Irohin*, a CMS newspaper published in Abeokuta, June 1862, quoted in E. Adeniyi Oroge, "The Fugitive Slave Question in Anglo-Egba Relations, 1861–1888," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 8 (1975): 69–70.

23. See especially Oroge, "The Fugitive Slave Question in Anglo-Egba Relations," and Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 258–259.

24. Ira Berlin, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

25. See Richard Blackett, "Martin R. Delany and Robert Campbell: Black Americans in Search of an African Colony," *The Journal of Negro History* 62 (1977): 1–25; James T. Campbell, "Redeeming

the Race: Martin Delany and the Niger Valley Exploring Party, 1859–60," *New Formations* 45 (Winter 2001–2002): 125–149.

26. Martin R. Delany, "Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party (1861)," in *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States; and, Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party*, ed. Toyin Falola (Amherst, N.Y: Humanity Books, 2004), 298–299, 309–311, 355, 372.

27. Tunde Adeleke characterizes this group bluntly in *UnAfrican Americans: Nineteenth-Century Black Nationalists and the Civilizing Mission* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998).

28. Recently, Italian *autonomisti* have been especially good at theorizing the emancipatory potential of exodus. See, for example, Paolo Virno, "Virtuosity and Revolution: The Political Theory of Exodus," in *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*, ed. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt, *Theory out of Bounds*, vol. 7 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 188–209.

29. Stephen Allen Benson to Ralph R. Gurley, April 27, 1861, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B11, 80 (Reel 160).

30. For example, H.W. Dennis to Wm. McLain, June 24, 1861, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B11, 86 (Reel 160); W.S. Smith to William McLain, November 1, 1862, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B12, 55 (Reel 160); President Stephen Allen Benson to Ralph R. Gurley, April 9, 1863, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B12, 83 (Reel 160).

31. For example, Letter to John [Suss], June 20, 1861, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B11, 85(Reel 160); B.A. Payne to Wm. McLain, June 14, 1862, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B12, 41 (Reel 160).

32. C.S. de Randamie to William McLain, September 8, 1862, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B12, 50 (Reel 160); H.N.(?) Dennis to William McLain, October 11, 1862, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B12, 54 (Reel 160).

33. J.J. Roberts to Ralph R. Gurley, February 19, 1863, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B12, 76 (Reel 160).

34. George E. Brooks, *Yankee Traders, Old Coasters & African Middlemen; a History of American Legitimate Trade with West Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (Brookline: Boston University Press, 1970), 123–125.

35. "Appropriation—Prize Money," July 22, 1864, NARA, RG84, U.S. Embassy, Liberia, vol. 14, document 13.

36. Letter to John [Suss], June 20, 1861, American Colonization Society records, Library of Congress, Box I:B11, 85 (Reel 160).

37. William Lloyd Garrison, *Thoughts on African Colonization* (Boston: Garrison and Knapp, 1832), iii-iv, 24, 32, 34.

38. George Shepperson, "Abolitionism and African Political Thought," *Transition* 12 (1964): 22–26.

39. See the complaint by the private citizen Isaac P. Jones, Boonville, MO, to Major General Henry W. Halleck, November 30, 1861, OR, Ser.II, vol. 1, pp. 779–781.

40. Lorenzo Thomas, "Circular," October 27, 1863, Series III, vol. 3, pp. 939–940, OR. Cited in Carl H. Moneyhon, "From Slave to Free Labor: The Federal Plantation Experiment in Arkansas," in *Civil War Arkansas: Beyond Battles and Leaders*, ed. Anne J. Bailey and Daniel E Sutherland (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2000), 177–193.

41. On Davis Bend Plantation, see Thavolia Glymph, "The Second Middle Passage: The Transition from Slavery to Freedom at Davis Bend, Mississippi" (PhD diss., Purdue University, 1994) and Janet Sharp Hermann, *The Pursuit of a Dream* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

42. "Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Freedmen at Davis Bend, Miss.," 1865, Freedom, Ser. I, vol. 3, doc. 220, pp. 867–869.

43. John Eaton and Ethel Osgood Mason, *Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen: Reminiscences of the Civil War with Special Reference to the Work for the Contrabands and Freedmen of the Mississippi Valley* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1907), 85–86, 165–166.

44. Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (London: Verso, 2002).
45. Jacques Rancière, *The Philosopher and His Poor*, ed. Andrew Parker (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
46. Karl Marx, "Address of the International Working Men's Association (Inaugural Address)" (London, September 28, 1864), MEGA2 I/20, 3–12.
47. See, for example, Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).
48. As Stephanie McCurry has argued, the Confederacy failed internally and externally at least in part because of the essentially counterrevolutionary nature of the white supremacist and patriarchal polity precluded the kind of popular support and participation that it would have needed to survive. Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Nation Building and Social Revolutions: The American Civil War and Italy

The United States, Italy,
and the Tribulations of the Liberal Nation

Tiziano Bonazzi

On March 17, 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed in Turin and Vittorio Emanuele II, already the king of Piedmont and Sardinia, became the first king of Italy. Less than one month later, Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter.

The year 1861 marks a watershed in the history of both countries—for opposite reasons. In the United States 1861 means disunion, the birth of the Confederate States of America, and the Civil War. In Italy, it means independence, union, and the triumph of Risorgimento. Forty years later events unite the two countries again. In 1900, anarchist Gaetano Bresci killed King Umberto I. One year later, President William McKinley was also murdered by an anarchist, Leon Czolgosz, who is thought to have imitated Bresci. The two political murders were each preceded by severe social crisis and followed by a period of reforms: the Progressive Era and the Age of Giolitti. The situation, however, was at this point the reverse of that compared to 1861. The United States was a most important industrial country and a rising international power, while Italy was struggling with fledgling industrialization, and the attempt to become an important

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colonial power was frustrated by defeat at the hands of Abyssinians in the Battle of Adwa of 1896.

The contrasting trajectories the two countries followed seem to make the usefulness of a parallel between them unlikely except for the fact that union or reunion was obtained through military force. Nonetheless, it is not a certain fact that American and Italian history are "other," the one with respect to the other. For both countries the same problem lies at the heart of the year 1861, that is, the construction or the safeguarding of the state and the nation. The Risorgimento was a long, bitter struggle for independence and nationhood, legitimated, for the patriots, by the existence of an Italian people that asked to live in an Italian sovereign state and not in the six states that already existed in the peninsula, not to mention the regions in the Northeast that were part of the Austrian Empire.[1] In America, the North denied the South the right to secede on the grounds that it had been the people who ratified the Constitution, and that this had created a nation and not a league or a confederation. The South, instead, proclaimed its right to secession not just on the grounds of an opposing constitutional interpretation, according to which the states had founded the Union, reserving for themselves a part of sovereignty that allowed them to secede[2]; but rather proclaiming itself a nation based on the same principle of self-determination for which the European people had been fighting. On a par with the Greeks, Italians, Polish, Germans, Hungarians and the Irish, the Confederates used the language of the nation to justify the state which they aspired to.

Midway through the nineteenth century the Euro-American international political scenario was dominated by the states; but the state, or better still, the political institution that historians call the "modern state," had changed radically from the sixteenth century when Nicolò Machiavelli and Jean Bodin identified it.[3] The scientific debate on nation and nationalism seemed to have settled by then on the "imagined" or "constructed" nature of the nation,[4] which made it possible for it to be talked about not as an objective and natural reality, but as a historical and socially and politically negotiated one. Equally important is the connection created by Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm between the birth of the "modern nation" and the processes that underlie Western modernity.[5] Lastly, of essential importance is the connection between modernity, nation, and state, in that the state is the main institution through which for centuries the Euro-American historical processes were channeled. Today, we are not interested in identifying the state as model or ideal type, but instead

the history of the actual states and of the Euro-American system that linked them together while allowing and preserving their great diversity.[6] Similarly, after the studies carried out by Norbert Elias, Shmuel Eisenstadt and others,[7] we can no longer speak of a unilinear and teleological model of modernization, but rather of multiple modernizations, these too, like the states, organized in a system of inescapably linked historical processes.

Historiography dates to the second half of the eighteenth century, the period when, owing to the acceleration of the processes of modernization, the modern nation started to take shape in some countries and it began to impact the state. Along with the intensification of the ensuing physical and social communications, as Karl Deutsch pointed out in the 1950s,[8] socio-economic and cultural complexity and integration also grew, and in core states such as France and England vast urban strata gained a national political conscience. Equally strong, however, were disorientation and social dislocation. The idea of the nation, which began to be formed in England and France[9] was one of the answers given to these transformations.

The process that led to the nation and the nation-state differed from place to place and concerned both the countries in which the state already existed, and others, such as Germany and Italy, in which a single unified state did not yet exist. In the latter case it was the modernizing trauma of Napoleon's arrival, experienced both positively and negatively,[10] that provoked a cultural need for a nation that took on the shape of a quest for state unification. The central fact, in any case, is that the state could not fail to change under the impetus of the birth of the nation and that, at the same time, the nation could not do without the state.

The birth of the nation-state was not just a European phenomenon. During the nineteenth century it also involved the states born in the Americas as a result of the anti-British and anti-Spanish revolutions. Across the Atlantic the events had the same reasons and outcomes as they did in Europe, although the modalities were various and original. In the United States, in particular, the nation-state was not born in 1776. The American Revolution was an especially political revolution in that it created a state founded for the first time on popular sovereignty; but the American people of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were not yet, either in theory or in practice, a national people. The debates among historians on the American colonies' degree of Americanness in the eighteenth century reveal one very important thing, that is to say that the English who had settled down in a totally new environment far from their

native homeland tended to develop original characteristics, which is the same thing that happened for every population driven to the conquest of other continents. But this did not mean possessing an autonomous national sense. Furthermore, the founding documents of the United States define the American people according to the universal criteria of the Enlightenment: a people that, founded upon the natural rights of the individual, constitutes the ideal type of freedom. The American people were a "universal" people, which presented itself as the revolutionary avant-garde of a liberated humanity.[11] In the United States as well, though, the rapid processes of modernization and the influence of international events from the French Revolution to the Congress of Vienna, in just a few decades led to birth of a strong and assertive nationalism[12] that transformed the revolutionary freedom that had been manifested for the first time in 1776 into an American freedom.

* * *

In 1861, the ruling classes of the Union and the Kingdom of Italy were forced to come to terms with huge practical problems. But equally serious was the crisis of the idea of nation that had been imagined in the previous decades.

In the difficult decades of the Risorgimento, the Italian patriots were well aware of the peninsula's social, economic, cultural, and linguistic heterogeneousness. Yet they believed that it was the result of the ruins caused by centuries of division and foreign domination under which an Italian people could be identified ready for independence.[13] Based on this certainty they struggled for decades in spite of the deep-seated differences between their political projects, and, in order to obtain the said independence, the majority accepted the Piedmontese monarchist solution that was being delineated between 1859 and 1860. In 1861, however, the much-dreamed of Italian people did not materialize. The very difficult task of unifying the different administrative, juridical, and economic systems of the six pre-unification states was added to the divergent regional interests and to the strength of centuries-old communities impervious to national demands, posing dramatic practical and cultural questions to the ruling class that had founded the Kingdom of Italy. It was understood that, contrary to the nationalistic idea according to which in the nation-state the nation is forerunner to the state, the truth of the matter was that the state was born, but not the nation.[14] At the same time, across the Atlantic the political and institutional fracture that had been caused by the birth of the Confederation threw in the faces of the Unionists the

dramatic reality of an American nation believed to be solid, which instead disintegrated within just a few months.[15]

The systemic approach to the themes of the construction of modernity and the nation followed here allows us not to be blind to the huge differences between the United States and Italy, without, however, having to interpret them as examples of two opposing historical poles. Hence, it is true that in the first half of the nineteenth century the idea of nation was imagined in different ways in the two countries, because their historical conditions were very different. In America the values and political institutions of the 1776 revolution soon became a benchmark for the whole population; while in Italy, the debate on monarchy or republic, whether federal state or not, on the role of the Pope and Catholics was highly divisive. Moreover, American nationalism achieved its most complete form as of the 1830s, the decade of the democratic revolution, which meant that it was nationalism with a broad social base. In Italy, instead, the patriots who were fighting for independence, although more numerous than what is traditionally believed, were a part of the city-based bourgeoisies and a number of artisans and workers from various cities. Furthermore, democracy did not exist in the pre-unification states and only a few among the patriots wanted it. However, the concepts, symbols, metaphors based on which the discourse of the nation was put together in the two countries are similar and structured analogously.

The founding core of both ideas of nation is the freedom of the people or, better still, an experience of freedom, which had already taken place or was desired, from a condition of slavery. In the United States, this experience consists in the revolution against England, is reiterated in the opposition to the whole of Europe, and it has the structure, as noted by Michael Walzer, of the Exodus toward the Promised Land.[16] In the case of the Italian Risorgimento, instead, it was the centuries of shame for serfdom and for the suffering of a people crushed by foreigners that paved the way for the struggle for national redemption.[17] Italians were foreigners in their homeland who had to return to their homeland. Consequently, the comparison with Israel was also present in Italy, although, owing to the differences between Catholics and Protestants, it did not concern Israel as a people covenanted with God, but rather Israel torn away from their God-given land. Suffice it to recall the famous chorus of the *Nabucco* by Giuseppe Verdi, "Va pensiero," in which the people of Israel yearn to go back to their "native soil," which became a sort of soundtrack of the hopes of Italian patriots during the Risorgimento. Beyond the fracture

between Protestantism and Catholicism, the common Christian culture meant that in Italy as well as in the United States the themes of redemption and moral regeneration were constantly used, accompanied by the idea that liberty had to pass through the young patriots' martyrdom. At the end of the path of liberation, Italy could enact its own civilizing mission in the world, which consisted in a fusion between ancient Rome and Christianity.[18] Both in Italy and the United States, then, the discourse of the nation was formulated as a religious speech that justified the nation at a metahistorical level, and interpreted in Christian terms the respective political missions, the realization of liberty for the one, the return to Rome's civilizing task for the other.

The subject of this discourse is the people, individualized, that is, understood as a single person, and identified, that is, not exchangeable with anyone else. The people of nationalism, however, built up as such to cement the unity of the nation, is the starting point that leads to the naturalization of the same, that is, to the search for objective and unchangeable, "natural" elements that make it indissoluble. In the culturally romantic and politically liberal climate of the first half of the nineteenth century, the people were not imagined on the basis of *la terre et les morts* or *Blut und Boden*. Consequently, in the United States and in Italy metaphors of ethical and natural value were used. In Italy the nation acquired the character of a community of kinship based on a common tradition of civilization that harked back to Rome, a cultural and linguistic one that saw Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio as its unifying model, and a religious, that is, Catholic one, as well as on precise gender roles.[19] But the familiar model of the Italian nation is not the patriarchal, vertical one that would have exalted the king's rights over the people, but rather a horizontal model in which the stress fell on brotherhood and on the female role of the homeland in the national family. In recognizing each other as being Italian we recognize each other as being brothers and therefore equal, and we are willing to make the redemptive sacrifice of life to defend and save the country, and at the same time mother, sister, bride. The "Inno di Mameli" of 1847—one of the Risorgimento's most famous songs, and now the national anthem—begins with the words "Fratelli d'Italia" (Brothers of Italy), and it is a battle hymn that summons the young brothers to fight and die for the country's redemption. In the case of the American discourse of the nation—whose hidden racial contents I will overlook for the time being—the metaphor for the family is less strong, because the idea of the people is above all built around the civic values of Republicanism

coming from the English thinkers of the eighteenth century and made concrete by the revolution.[20] The people are objectively one, in that, as it is formed by true Christians, that is, Protestants, it is a "body" in the meaningful twofold spiritual and material sense of all of Christian tradition, which fought together for freedom in the name of Republican virtue. Yet the family enters the American discourse of the nation through Republican motherhood, the role as the midwives of the Republican sons and citizens assigned to women. As we said previously, the American people is indeed a people of individuals not isolated one from the other, but rather objectively united in a civic and religious community to which, at the same time, Republican motherhood bestows a natural foundation.[21]

The discourse of the nation in Italy and in the United States is not the same. Yet the "imagined community" built up in the two countries is structurally similar, even if in Italy the process is top-down, in that the élites are its authors, while in America it is also bottom-up. In both cases, the problem represented by the extreme heterogeneousness of the two countries was surpassed by making use of metaphors that aimed to prove the existence of an equal community of citizens and brothers. A common imagery was at work, based on the values of personal and collective freedom. Its main objective was to unite the population around the idea of belonging to a brotherly community and sharing the same progressive destiny. A political project that is wholly part of liberal nationalism and the construction of modernity in the first half of the nineteenth century[22] and whose ideal arrival point was a national community that was as indissoluble as it was homogeneous, inclusive, harmonious and peaceful.

* * *

The analysis sketched up to this point is based on the hypothesis that a nation is a historical product, an integral part of Euro-American processes of modernization. Within this context the liberal nation imagined both in Italy and in the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century had a precise function, in that it contributed to the birth in both countries of a community committed to realizing the political project of modernity via the nation-state. Nonetheless, the year 1861 proved that the concrete realization of the nation-state was founded on the violence and subsequent removal of that violence from the collective memory. This meant the failure of the project for a liberal nation that had served as a guide for both Italians and Americans: The nation, far from being the all-inclusive and brotherly reality that had been imagined, was contested terrain from which it emerged only by way of tough political clashes. The

offspring of modernity, it hypothesized a perfect community designed to deal with problems related to the growth of complexity; but it inevitably clashed with the contradictions related to the conflicts that pervaded the nation-state.[23]

In the case of the United States the process that led to imagining the nation in the early decades of the nineteenth century had to come to terms with an element that no longer existed in the territories of the European states, that is, slavery. The potential conflict that stemmed from this was muted for three quarters of a century by a series of compromises supported by the generally accepted idea of the inferiority of black people.[24] From the very beginning, then, the American nation, counter to all its founding premises, was erected upon an internal barrier that excluded a part of the population that had been brought to its territory. Equally important, albeit different, was the exclusion of the native people.[25] Indeed, while the black people were at the same time part of and excluded from the body of the nation-state, the natives were gradually pushed westward by way of a process of conquest that American nationalism both denied and concealed by exploiting arguments such as the advancement of civilization. With this policy the Americans, who had made their contraposition to Europe the heart of their idea of nation, proved to be wholly European, the loyal interpreters of faith in the superiority of European civilization and of the corollary that stemmed from it, that is, the right to expand its own power everywhere. A right that the powers of the Old World exerted outside of Europe through conquest and colonization—it is no accident that slavery lasted longer in the colonies than in the metropolitan territories of the European states—and that the Americans, part of the all-conquering Europe, instead exerted on the territory they had taken possession of, a wholly "Europeanized" one.

The racial barriers that were created as the American nation-state was forming were not, however, enough to give it solidity, because the problem of slavery slowly eroded national unity and breathed life into a particularly virulent sentiment of the South's diversity, and to a different interpretation of the principles on which the nation was founded, going all the way up to the Secession.[26] The North, albeit guided by men who were more willing to speak about economic growth than war, believed that the American nation and with it an American nation-state could not survive in just one part of the country. Consequently, the Union, although divided between different positions in regard to slavery, turned the country's unity into an inescapable ethical-political objective and chose war to safeguard

it.[27] Hence, we can envision the Civil War as a war between whites about the meaning of the American nation, which brought out into the open the impossibility of the brotherly ideal that had been elaborated previously.

In Italy, despite the unification of the states—something that had been achieved but not completed—the year 1861 severely tested both the idea of a nation of patriots and the monarchical ruling class that had guided the last stages of the Risorgimento. The Italian nation, which had to legitimate its new state, was in fact soon undermined by what the Garibaldini and the troops and the administrators arriving from the North in 1860–1861 wrote upon seeing the South of the country. Awesome backwardness and a true and proper decay that made Southern Italy appear to be alien to the ethical and cultural image of the Italian people that had fueled the Risorgimento. In this case as well, in spite of the diversity, there is a significant parallel between what was taking place on either side of the Atlantic, as pointed out by Don Doyle in *Nations Divided*.[28] The opinion on the barbarianism of the South, whose population was compared to Arabs or Africans, brought to the fore the racism that was implicit in the Italian patriots' Eurocentric vision of civilization. Those opinions, in fact, presupposed a Southern otherness that went beyond its actual backwardness, in that they were founded on the ideal of European civilization's absolute superiority, which excluded in principle and marginalized in practice, both inside and outside Europe, anyone who did not wholly embrace its standards. In the United States the internal barrier erected by slavery and racism, which was an integral part, albeit denied, of the imagined American nation of the first half of the nineteenth century, was more radical and ferocious than what took place in Italy. But it belonged to the same cultural constellation and, far from turning the American case into something that was alien to the Old World, it situated it within the dynamics of European civilization.

The immediate outbreak of "banditry,"[29] a complex phenomenon in part caused and certainly reinforced by the lack of preparation of the "Piedmontese," as all the Northerners were called in the South, in dealing with sociocultural realities that were far removed, made the matter of the existence of an Italian people a dramatic one. On this is based a choice parallel to the one made by the North in 1861, the no-holds-barred fight against banditry, in many ways actual full-fledged war, that for several years involved as many as 120,000 soldiers. On top of this was the decision to "Piedmontize" the state and manage top-down the birth of an Italian nation that had to exist, but that did not seem to be there. In the decades that followed the year 1861, it was not the nation that legitimized the

state; rather, it was the latter that created the conditions for the manifestation of the nation.[30]

* * *

The events of 1861 are indicative both of the discrepancy between the imagined liberal nation and the concrete ways in which the nation-state was constituted, and the structural similarities between what was taking place in both America and Italy. This similarity did not end with the outbreak of Civil War in the United States and the different events of the fledgling Italian state. Rather, it continued in the years that followed and it could begin to be seen in the apparently unlikely similarity between the American national ruling class and the one that had given birth to the Kingdom of Italy. Indeed, despite the great differences in social origin, culture, and ways of managing power, both were deeply rooted in the ideas of nineteenth-century liberalism. They were loyal to their fundamental charters and believed in limited government, separation of powers and the rule of law. They pursued progress and wanted to achieve it through liberty, individualism, and economic development in a free market economy.

The two national political classes had similar economic projects for the development of their respective countries, even though they were starting out from situations that were very distant from each other, in that in 1861 the Italian peninsula was far from experiencing sustained economic growth. At the heart of the ruling class's projects in both countries was the construction of a privately built and managed railway system that was meant to cover the entire territory and be capable of paving the way for a national market, as well as the reform, or the birth in Italy's case, of a strong banking system capable of funding the development and improvement of all the infrastructures. In Italy, in adherence with the principles of a liberal economy, a free trade policy was chosen which, however, soon made way for the sort of protectionism that had already been instituted by the United States.[31] We can clearly see the common economic and political matrices for the two projects. Italy and the United States were following a common historical pathway.

In Italy until 1876 political power was in the hands of the "Destra storica," the historical Right, the party, or rather, the alliance of regional élites, which in 1861 had won the first Italian elections and harked back to Camillo Benso di Cavour, who had died right after the Unification in 1861. The Right was well aware of the difficulties it would have come up against to realize its economic project given the conditions of Italian backwardness,

but it was certain that once banditry had been defeated and the state unified top-down by applying the Piedmontese political and administration institutions to the entire territory—with a few adjustments—then economic development should have taken off, thereby consolidating the nation-state. On the other side of the Atlantic, the Republican Party, which had also remained in power continuously until 1876, believed that the South, whose economy had been destroyed by war, would have adhered to the economic plan whose foundations had been laid by the Union during the conflict, and would have accepted the political verdict issuing from defeat. Both countries—although in 1861 it had to be accepted that the brotherly and inclusive nation imagined in the previous decades had not been realized—were confident that they had the means to create it.

The Reconstruction, nonetheless, failed in that the Southerners stuck to their interpretation of freedom and refused to live in a brotherly, biracial nation. The well-known outcome of this failure was the compromise that followed the 1876 presidential elections with which the Democratic Party, accepted a Republican President in exchange for the withdrawal of Northern troops and home rule.[32] As shown by David W. Blight, the 1877 agreement put an end to the blacks' hope of being fully empowered citizens, and breathed life into a profoundly racist memory of a Civil War.[33] Hence, 1877 was a racial compromise between whites, just as the war had begun as a war between whites. But this compromise allowed for a reconciliation between North and South and the chance to again imagine a brotherly American nation,[34] even if only between those who had been called to take part, the winners of the Reconstruction struggles. The American brotherhood had to be white, as emphasized in the law of 1882 which prohibited immigration from China, with the subsequent agreement with the Japanese government to prohibit immigration from Japan as well, and in the debates that took place at the end of the century on the whiteness of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.[35] The official silence on slavery, which before the war had allowed Americans to believe that they were a nation founded on universal values, after 1877 paved the way to overt racism, which became the nation's manifest cornerstone and aligned it with the scientific naturalism of the racist theories of evolution that were being voiced on both sides of the Atlantic.

In Italy, during those same decades, a series of events occurred relating to the construction of a nation-state that were structurally the same as the American ones. Two in particular warrant attention. In 1866 and

in 1870, the conquest of Venice and Rome, respectively, led to almost achieving national unification. Only the regions of Trento and Trieste under Austrian rule were still excluded. At the same time the defeat of banditry solved the problem within the fledgling Italian state which was consolidated by 1870. The victory over banditry pacified the South and allowed the Right to continue with its work of top-down construction of the nation-state—a construction whose pillars were the veneration for the monarchy and for King Vittorio Emanuele II. The institution of a public system of elementary education, whose goals included nurturing in lower-class children a love for the Italian nation, and conscription, which made it possible to move thousands of young men, mostly uneducated peasants, from one region to another and to "nationalize" them by teaching them loyalty to the king and the homeland.[36] The Italian élite agreed on all these points and when, in 1876, the "Sinistra storica," or historical Left took over, the establishment did not alter the policies that had been pursued by the Right.

The nationhood that was being taught in schools and in the army, and which scholars and politicians were dealing with, was not so different from the one that had been imagined during the Risorgimento, and it upheld the characteristics of brotherhood, inclusiveness, and love. Practically speaking, nonetheless, the case of the South shows that things were actually quite different. The fight against brigandage, in fact, brought the local élites of the southern countryside to the fore, which often had not developed internally significant groups with a national and modernizing culture. Indispensable to the management of the territory in that they were strongly rooted there, such élites were aligned with the unified state when they saw that it guaranteed, even implicitly, a form of 'home rule' that allowed them to uphold the relationships of traditional domination which fueled their power. In vast areas of the South, the peasant population was thus excluded from forms of participation in public life, even limited ones, and kept in a state of forced passiveness. In parallel fashion to what had happened in the United States after 1876, the political struggle raised an interior border, a barrier vis-à-vis the population's weaker groups, thus excluding them from nationhood, at the same time allowing the nation and the nation-state to impose itself. This was something that definitively characterized Italy, akin to racial segregation in the United States, because its outcome was the continuation of forms of rule that were not just exclusive, but that ran counter to modernity, thereby making it difficult to enact the birth of a social and economic

structure in Southern Italy like the ones that were being developed in other parts of the country.[37]

The consequences of this were evident also from a widespread ideological and cultural point of view because, as Don Doyle points out: "In Italy, as in the United States, reconstruction and radical social reform in each South were subordinated to the paramount goal of national unity."[38] In the case of Italy this further aggravated the split between the North and the South. In Italy it was not possible to create a precise racial barrier against a part of the Kingdom's subjects. But, as we observed previously, the comparison immediately made between the South and Africa or the South and the Arabs made the opinion even more radical, giving it a form that came very close to racial prejudice. In parallel to what took place in regard to the whiteness of Italian immigrants in the United States, doubt was cast on the whiteness, that is the capacity to be up to European civilization, of the whole Southern population, and the South remained in a borderline position within Italy itself.

Midway through the 1870s, then, Italy and the United States were both on their way to the construction or reconstruction of the nation-state. It is true that at this point their paths, already different, quickly diverged even more, and that the United States enjoyed a degree of success that Italy could not replicate. In our case, however, the question is whether the American Civil War and the Unification of Italy can be interpreted as events that have nothing to do with each other or whether they are part of a common and recognizable pattern. Andre M. Fleche has shown that from 1848 Americans did not feel alien to the events of European revolutionary nationalism, and they carefully observed the Risorgimento, just as the American consuls in the Italian states did.[39] Geyer and Bright, in turn, have identified a common thread between the wars that from Europe, to the United States, to South America to China studded the mid-nineteenth century,[40] and have called them all wars of nationalization or renationalization against the regional states or parts of the country that sought to be autonomous. The latter indication is important, but it is still too generic. They fail to discuss in depth the reasons why the nation was believed to be so essential that the existence of regional states and the regional yearning for autonomy were not acceptable. And this is the central point of events that would otherwise have very little to do with one another.

The hypothesis advanced in this chapter is to begin from the transformation of the state into a nation-state in answer to the changes triggered by modernization. The paradox that we are all familiar with is to envision

the nation as a self-enclosed entity, as homogeneous and brotherly inside as it is greatly different from every other one. In fact, the discourse of the nation is founded on the presence of an outside enemy that is constantly endangering the nation's independence. England was like this for France, France for England and Germany, Austria for Italy and all of Europe for the United States. The guarantee of national survival consisted in defending one's own culture and borders against such enemies, thus carrying forward one's special and unique mission of civilization, whether it was the American Manifest destiny, Rome's legacy in Italy, or Imperial England, Republican France or the German *Sonderweg*. At the same time, to add paradox to paradox, every national mission was believed to be the purest expression of a common European civilization in turn superior to every other one. These paradoxes reinforce everything we have seen in regard to Italy and the United States and lead to two different conclusions. The first of these is that not only were the processes of modernization multifarious, but far from being linear and progressive, they were conflictual and, instead of breathing life into inclusive social and political institutions, they created barriers and exclusions in the individual nation-states. The second conclusion concerns the fact that, although nationalisms tend to present each single nation as being autonomous and unlike every other one, in truth they form a system and belong to the same European civilizing process pervaded by the wars and contradictions that were clearly present in the liberal nationalism of the United States and Italy.

Hence, 1861 is much more than merely an important date for two different nations. It is a date that brings to light a crucial passage in the construction of modernity via the nation-state in two countries belonging to a common historical system that joins Europe and the Americas and that I am fond of calling the system of the Greater Europe.[41]

Notes

1. Alberto Maria Banti, *La nazione del Risorgimento* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000).
2. Alfred H. Kelly et al., *The American Constitution: Its Origins and Development* (New York: Norton, 1983), ch. 15 and 16; Andre M. Fleche, *The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2012), chs. 3 and 4.

3. Christopher Pierson, *The Modern State* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Brian R. Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State. A Theoretical Evolution* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

4. Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006).

5. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983); Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

6. By "system" I understand a group of necessarily interrelated, interacting elements forming a collective entity. See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System* (London: Academic Press, 1976).

7. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994); Shmuel Eisenstadt, ed., *Multiple Modernities* (New Brunswick: Transactions Publishers, 2002).

8. Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1953).

9. Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism, 1740–1830* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Linda Colley, *Britons. Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Max Gallo, *L'âme de la France* (Paris: Fayard, 2007).

10. Gilles Pécout, *Il lungo Risorgimento*, transl. Marco Di Sario (Milano: Mondadori, 1999), 42–70; Antonino De Francesco, *L'Italia di Bonaparte* (Torino: UTET, 2011); Louis Dumont, *L'idéologie allemande. France-Allemagne et retour* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991); James J. Sheenan, "State and Nationality in the Napoleonic Period," in *The State of Germany*, ed. John Breuilly (London: Longman, 1992).

11. Jack P. Greene, *The Intellectual Construction of America* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1993); Timothy H. Breen, "Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution," *Journal of American History* 84 (1997): 13–39; Tiziano Bonazzi, "Il 'popolo universale' e il corso degli umani eventi. 'Noi' e 'l'altro' nella storia statunitense," in *Riconoscimento ed esclusione*, ed. Tiziano Bonazzi (Roma: Carocci, 2003), 59–85.

12. George Dangerfield, *The Awakening of American Nationalism, 1815–1828* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); Elise Marienstras, *Nous le peuple. Lesik origines du nationalisme américain* (Paris:

Gallimard, 1988); Arnaldo Testi, *Capture the Flag. The Stars and Stripes in American History* (New York, New York University Press, 2010), part 2.

13. The plays and poems by Alessandro Manzoni are the best example of the patriots' faith in the rebirth of the Italian people.

14. Giorgio Candeloro, *La costruzione dello stato unitario, 1860–1871* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1968); Adrian Lyttleton, "The National Question in Italy," *The National Question in Europe in Historical Context*, ed. Mikulas Teich and Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993), 63–105; Ernesto Galli Della Loggia, *L'identità italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1998), ch. 3.

15. P C. Nagel, *The Union in American Thought, 1776–1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

16. Michael Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

17. Banti, *La nazione*; Paolo Bagnoli, *L'idea dell'Italia, 1815–1861* (Reggio Emilia: Diabasis, 2007); Silvana Patriarca, *Italianità* (Roma Bari: Laterza, 2010).

18. Galli Della Loggia, *L'identità*, ch. 2.

19. Giulio Bollati, *L'Italiano* (Torino: Einaudi, 1996); Alberto M. Banti, *Sublime madre nostra* (Roma Bari, Laterza, 2011), ch. 1.

20. Gordon Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–89* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1969); Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), ch. 5.

21. Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1980).

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23. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1991); Kathrin A. Manzo, ed., *The Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Boulde, 1996).

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CHAPTER 10

Nation-Building, Civil War, and Social Revolution in the Confederate South and the Italian Mezzogiorno, 1860–1865

Enrico Dal Lago

The nineteenth century was an age characterized by experiments in nation-building throughout the Euro-American world, and beyond. An established historiography has documented and interpreted the variety of these experiments, connecting it to the rise of modern types of nations, primarily in Europe and the Americas. Since the publication of the classic works by Eric Hobsbawm, Ernest Gellner, and Benedict Anderson, more and more American historians—among them James McPherson, Drew Faust, and Susan-Mary Grant, to cite but a few—have transferred some of those ideas onto the mid-nineteenth-century United States and have used them to add a new dimension to research on the American Civil War.[1] In these studies, scholars have seen the American Civil War either through its features of "crisis in nationalism" or as a process of consolidation of the American nation through the Union's defeat of the Confederacy and the making of emancipation. At the same

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time, though, a very important influence has come also from the recent "transnational turn" in US history, and particularly from the work of Thomas Bender, Carl Guarneri, and Ian Tyrrell, and also of scholars such as Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, C.A. Bayly, and Nicholas and Peter Onuf, all of whom have clearly placed the American Civil War in relation to contemporary processes of nation-building in mid-nineteenth-century Europe and the Americas.[2]

Despite these very important developments, though, very few scholars have attempted full-fledged, sustained comparisons between the American Civil War and the nineteenth-century processes of formation of Europe's nation-states. Among them, both Carl Degler, and Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler have made comparisons with German Unification, while Don Doyle has treated the "southern question" in the United States and Italy.[3] In this connection, studies focusing on the American South and southern Italy, the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, have demonstrated not only the comparability between the two regions but also the potentials for a novel appreciation of the problem of formation of the nineteenth-century American and Italian nation-states when seen through the lenses of the two southern peripheries.[4] In this chapter, I will focus primarily on establishing a comparison between the southern regions of the United States and Italy specifically at the time of the American Civil War and of the "Great Brigandage," southern Italy's own civil war, in 1860–1865. I will do so by focusing on the nature of the two conflicts as "inner civil wars," one within the Confederate South, and the other within the Italian *Mezzogiorno*.[5] The comparative perspective will serve to highlight the similarities and differences between two internecine struggles that, for different reasons and on different scales, unfolded in the southern regions of two different countries in the same period of the first half of the 1860s.[6]

In establishing the grounds for this type of comparison, it is important to acknowledge the convergence of two crucial elements in both the Confederacy's experience and the *Mezzogiorno*'s experience of inner civil war during that five-year period. The first element is represented by the struggle between regional elites and national governments and the two opposing types of nationalism that they represented. This struggle was, ultimately, part of a parallel process of national consolidation in the United States and Italy within the wider context of nation-building efforts in the nineteenth-century Euro-American world, specifically if we think that this was a time when attempts at imposing forms of national governmental centralization upon regional ruling classes were common in the processes of nation-building.

Thus, while in America, southern supporters of Confederate and Unionist nationalisms fought against each other, in the *Mezzogiorno* southern supporters of Bourbon and Italian nationalisms faced each other in a comparable way. This particular point ties in with several recent studies—among which the ones by Don Doyle, Timothy Roberts, Paul Quigley, and Andre Fleche—that have sought to look at issues related to the existence of different versions of nation-building in the formation of the United States and of different European and American nation-states in the Civil War era.[7]

Conversely, the second element of my comparison relates to the fact that, in both the cases of the Confederate South and of the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, the inner civil war had an enormous impact on the dimension of rural labor and on social relations in the countryside. In the Confederacy, the slaves were instrumental in taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the American Civil War in order to shatter the slave system and gain their own freedom, helped by the Union government. In southern Italy, the peasants, initially helped by anti-Italian supporters of the former Bourbon king, were instrumental in transforming the "Great Brigandage" into a war against the landowners supported by the Italian government. In both the Confederate and the southern Italian cases, the ultimate result of the civil war was a social revolution in the southern countryside, with a fatal irreparable blow to the slaveholding economy in the American South and a temporary, but powerful blow to the landowning economy of the Italian *Mezzogiorno*.[8] This second aspect of the comparison also ties in with much current scholarship that has moved increasingly toward an emphasis on comparative and transnational dimensions in investigating American slavery and its demise within a Euro-American and a world context of economic, social, and political transformation, as in important studies by scholars such as Edward Rugemer, Brian Schoen, Sven Beckert, Steven Hahn, Michael Bush, and Peter Kolchin.[9]

All the above scholars have broadened this perspective and have extended the comparison of US slave emancipation to the end of other forms of unfree labor in the Americas and Europe. The study that I introduce in the present chapter intends to follow in the footsteps of these scholars and to build on the crucial nuances of their works, even though it differs substantially from them in that it focuses on a comparison between the impact of inner civil wars on a slave society, the Confederacy, and on a society characterized by nominally free labor, as southern Italy was during the nineteenth century.

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In both the US South and the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, the initial impulse toward the creation of a new nation—the Confederacy in one case, and the Italian Kingdom in the other case—came from the peripheral agrarian elites' opposition to the centralizing policies of the previous national government. In the US South, slaveholders opposed the politics of the Republican Party, which in the second half of the 1850s succeeded in gathering the consensus of the majority of the northern antislavery forces, in a crescendo of sectional conflicts that reached its peak with the election of Lincoln, the first declared antislavery president, and the consequent crisis of 1860–1861 and the Secession of the Confederate South from the Union. In the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, landowners opposed the absolutist policies of the Bourbon dynasty, which after the failed 1848–1849 Revolution had increased the measure of suppression of civil liberties and of administrative centralization, leading eventually to the southern Italian elites' support for the 1860–1861 movement for Italian national unification and the consequent end of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Yet, from the start of the American Civil War, it was clear that, in the American South, the citizens were divided between supporters of the Union and supporters of the Confederacy. Comparably, in the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, from the start of the period of the "Great Brigandage," southern Italian people were divided between supporters of the Kingdom of Italy and of the Savoy dynasty and "legitimist" supporters of the Bourbons. As a result, from 1861, both the Confederate South and the Italian *Mezzogiorno* were caught in inner civil wars, and the divide between the competing groups of southerners in the two regions, and their opposing views of nation-building, increased in the course of the period 1861–1863.

In the United States, on 20 December 1860, the South Carolina legislature gathered in a special convention and unanimously approved the "ordinance of Secession," with which South Carolina's representatives dissolved the state's ties with the Union. South Carolina's act was, effectively, the catalyst that triggered the process of secession throughout the US South, and yet the unfolding of that process showed clearly that there were numerous fault lines between those southerners who wished to remaining loyal to the Union, and those who, instead, wished to create a new nation dedicated to the protection of slavery. In a relatively short time, during the winter of 1860–1861, one after the other, the five Lower South states of Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas followed South Carolina in seceding from the Union.[10] Then, on 4 February 1861, little more than a month after South Carolina's Secession,

delegates of the seven seceding states met at Montgomery, Alabama, where they proclaimed the birth of a new nation called Confederate States of America, and two weeks later, on 18 February 1861, Jefferson Davis was inaugurated President of the Confederacy. Yet, despite the best efforts by Confederate southerners to rally the majority of the people, both by consent and by force, even later, at the start of the American Civil War, as Paul Escott has pointed out, "a few pockets of Unionism remained in the Lower South."[11] At the same time, in the Upper South, in Virginia's capital Richmond, still according to Paul Escott, "pro-Union sentiment, written in chalk, had appeared on walls a few days after Davis's inauguration."[12] Similar manifestations of pro-Union sympathy characterized the other states of the Upper South, and yet, only a few months later, after the siege and battle of Fort Sumter, with the Confederacy's first victory over Union forces on 14 April 1861, the majority of those states joined the Confederacy in Secession from the Union.[13]

A few months later, the Confederate South commenced its epic struggle with the Union effectively caught within its own inner civil war between pro-Union supporters, and pro-Confederate supporters, that is, mostly the planter elite and the smaller slaveholders. The fault lines between the two characterized many different areas, since, even where Confederates were the majority, as in the original seven secessionist states, pro-Union sympathies that dated to the pre-war era and had been suppressed during the secession crisis had the possibility to resurface once the war commenced and the Union looked for support within the Confederacy. In general, though, the regions where Unionist sympathies were stronger were also the most difficult to control, since they were first and foremost in the mountainous areas of North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Here, mostly fiercely independent non-slaveholding yeomen lived, and they resented the Confederacy as a creation of the planters and of the slave system that guaranteed the latter's wealth.[14] A major turning point came with the Union's resounding victory on the Confederacy at the battle of Antietam on 17 September 1862. By then, pro-Union activities and anti-Confederate sentiment had literally generated miniature civil wars between Unionist guerrilla forces and the Confederate authorities in areas of several states, particularly in western North Carolina, in East Tennessee, in northern Alabama and Florida, and in Jones County, Mississippi.[15] In East Tennessee, for example, the area of Greenville was a major center of Unionist activities, and there pro-Union guerrilla forces held their ground for two years, also conquering the town of Knoxville, until most of the

region fell under the Union's control in 1863.[16] In all the areas mentioned above, though, the fault lines created a situation of inner civil war in which, while the Confederacy as a whole fought the war with the Union, "the Confederate States—according to Stephanie McCurry—waged war against its domestic enemies and they did not spare the women."[17]

In both the United States and Italy, 1860 was a crucial year in relation to the impending civil wars. In particular, the Secession of South Carolina in the United States in December 1860, which triggered a chain of events that led to the creation of the Confederacy and civil war with the Union, was mirrored by the culmination of Sicily's separatist movement, which led to the success of Giuseppe Garibaldi's and his Thousand's military expedition and his effective control of the island by August 1860.[18] At the start of his expedition, Garibaldi could equally count on the support of the majority of Sicily's landowners and also on the peasants, who thought that he would have introduced a much needed land reform. Yet, these hopes vanished quickly when Garibaldi showed he had no intention to harm the interests of the landed elites, and therefore opposition to his rule grew and led to episodes of repression of peasant rebellious activities, as in the famous one in Bronte on 2 August 1860.[19] During the entire period leading to the annexation of the *Mezzogiorno* to the Piedmontese Kingdom of Sardinia, peasant activity against the process of Italian national unification consistently increased in intensity and spread in different areas, with a replication of events similar to the ones in Sicily. At the same time, the "legitimist" circles, which wished to restore Bourbon King Francis II, joined forces with the peasant revolt engaging in the first phase of the anti-Italian inner civil war that characterized the "Great Brigandage." In fact, starting from the moment Francis II was under siege in Gaeta, the remaining Bourbon soldiers and the rebel peasants effectively engaged together in a large-scale guerrilla warfare with the purpose of undoing Italian national unification.[20]

As a result, in 1861, comparably to the Confederate South's inner civil war, southern Italy was caught in the middle of an inner civil war between the pro-Bourbon "legitimist" supporters and their ally peasant rebels on one side, and the Italian army and government, supported by the landowners, on the other side—a civil war that, in both cases, was fought almost exclusively on southern territory.[21] For the next year-and-a-half, until the end of 1862, Francis II and his advisers hatched out different plans to restore the Bourbon King to his throne, involving also help from military experts from abroad, especially Spain. The most celebrated of

these military experts was Spanish officer José Borjés, who coordinated his actions with brigand leader Carmine "Crocco" Donatelli, and fought, for several months, between September and December 1861, against the Italian army conquering village after village between the regions of Campania and Basilicata.[22] Yet, there were several other areas where peasant guerrilla activity had joined forces with the Bourbon "legitimist" efforts. This was especially the case of the region of Apulia, which was the center of the activities of a famous leader of mounted bands called Pasquale Domenico Romano and nicknamed significantly "Sergente Romano."[23] In June 1861, Romano became a member of a Bourbon Committee, which was dedicated to the aim of restoring "Francis II, King by the grace of God, defender of religion and beloved son of our Holy Father Pius IX … and defeat the infernal Lucifer of Victor Emmanuel [the Italian King] and his followers."[24] In fact, much more than Crocco's case, Romano's case shows how, in the first phase of the "Great Brigandage," the inner civil war within southern Italy involved southern Italians fighting against the Italian army and government and the landowners who supported them, mostly over Bourbon "legitimist" pretensions, but with an important component in the alliance between the latter and the anti-Italian peasant guerrilla activities that had started as early as 1860.[25]

There is little doubt that, in 1860–1861, at the time of the secession crisis in America and of national unification in Italy, most American slaveholders in the US South supported the creation of the Confederate States of America, while most southern Italian landowners in the *Mezzogiorno* supported the creation of the Kingdom of Italy. Yet, the parallel processes of creation of the two new nations and the subsequent attempts to establish the legitimacy of the Confederate and Italian governments in the midst of the American Civil War and of southern Italy's "Great Brigandage" led to increasingly larger movements of opposition to the two agrarian elites' projects of nation-building during the period 1861–1863. The consequences of these increasing oppositions showed particularly in the form of anti-Confederate and anti-Italian guerrilla warfare, which pro-Union supporters in one case and pro-Bourbon supporters in the other case engaged in, and whose activities encompassed large areas of the Confederacy and of the Italian *Mezzogiorno*. From 1862 to 1863, though, the guerrilla movements against the Confederate and the Italian governments were joined on an increasingly larger scale by anti-Confederate and anti-Italian activities originally initiated and carried on by the agrarian masses of the two southern regions for different, but comparable, social and political reasons.

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In both the American Civil War and the southern Italian "Great Brigandage," the period between autumn 1862 and the start of 1863 proved a veritable turning point. On the one hand, in the United States that period saw Lincoln's release of the *Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation* in September 1862 and then of the final *Emancipation Proclamation*, which freed slaves in the Confederate areas, on 1 January 1863. Conversely, in Italy, the same period saw the effective end of the last realistic plans for the restoration of Francis II as a result of the death or arrest of important pro-Bourbon supporters, including "Sergente Romano," between November 1862 and January 1863. As a result, within the context of the two inner civil wars that characterized the Confederate South and the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, the numerous and wide-spread episodes of unrest caused by the agrarian masses—American slaves and southern Italian peasants—assumed increasingly and rapidly more and more importance over the struggle between competing projects of nation-building. In both cases, the duration of agrarian unrest, until the end of both civil wars, in 1865, and its geographical extension, which encompassed large areas of both southern regions, make this phenomenon particularly difficult to both conceptualize and analyze. What is clear, though, is that the rebellious actions of American slaves and of southern Italian peasants affected deeply the course of the Confederate South's and the Italian *Mezzogiorno*'s inner civil wars, creating the preconditions for a social revolution in both regions.

In the Confederacy, by the autumn of 1862, the inner civil war within the white South increased in motivation and intensity as the fault lines between Confederates and Unionists showed in increasingly larger areas of most southern states. In particular, in the wildest areas of North Carolina, Florida, and Mississippi, ever increasing numbers of Unionists and deserters found their refuge, and here the fight with anti-Confederate guerrillas kept occupied the local Confederate authorities for many months.[26] As far as we know, for the most part, the slaves' own anti-Confederate struggle was unrelated to the white Unionists' fight against the Confederacy. Yet, the slaves' struggle for freedom inserted itself within the Confederate South's inner civil war, and ultimately the slaves' activities represented the single most important factor that led to the Confederate collapse. Through their anti-Confederate activities, the slaves literally transformed the Confederacy's inner civil war, unmasking the contradiction of a nation that fought both for its own freedom and for the freedom to keep

African Americans enslaved. From the very beginning of the war, slaves had resisted this notion with a variety of anti-Confederate actions, among which the most extreme were plots leading to open rebellion against the slaveholders. Already starting from 1861, rumors of imminent slave insurrections were heard in different areas of several southern states, as in the famous case of the slave conspiracy investigated by Winthrop Jordan in Adams County, Mississippi, and similar rumors would continue throughout the Civil War, adding another crucial dimension to the Confederate South's inner civil war.[27]

More generally, throughout the Confederacy, slaves "worked less, questioned more, and increasingly took to running away, not only singly or in pairs, as had been common before the war, but in large groups as well," as Peter Kolchin has noted.[28] Especially in the areas bordering the Union lines, such as Virginia and Tennessee, and in those areas where the Union had made its first territorial gains, slaves ran away and fled to Union camps. The massive scale of the phenomenon of slaves running away and fleeing to Union camps, together with the pressure of radical Republicans, in turn, had forced Congress to pass a *First Confiscation Act* in August 1861, about the seizure of all rebel property, and then a *Second Confiscation Act*, in July 1862, which declared all the slaves of Confederate masters free. Two months later, Lincoln released the *Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation,* and, on 1 January 1863, he signed the *Emancipation Proclamation*, which declared immediately, "thenceforward and forever free" all the slaves in areas under Confederate control. The *Proclamation* also provided the Union army with the legal means to support the freedom acquired by the slaves and the legal basis for the enlistment of African Americans.[29]

Yet, during the entire period of the Confederate South's inner civil war, the slaves' resistance expressed itself in many more ways than simply running away and perhaps joining the Union Army. In *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom* (2008), Stephen Hahn has asked, in a provocative essay, whether we should acknowledge the massive number and variety of slave rebellious acts, even though mostly unconnected, as if it were a single large-scale slave rebellion that occurred during the American Civil War, and thus similar and comparable to the Haitian Revolution; if this were the case, Hahn reasons that we might have missed the largest slave rebellion in history.[30] However, in *The Fall of the House of Dixie* (2013), Bruce Levine has portrayed a picture of the collapse of slavery in the Confederate South in many ways antithetic to Hahn's own; in fact, for

Levine, Lincoln's *Emancipation Proclamation* was, effectively, the indispensable trigger without which the slaves' resistance would have never transformed into a mass phenomenon and the American Civil War would have never become a social revolution, while it was the Union armies that "began to put Lincoln's revolutionary policy into action," as they probed deeper and deeper into Confederate territory.[31] Yet, even if the debates and controversies on the collective interpretation of the slaves' actions in the American Civil War will, undoubtedly, continue, it is still important to encourage researchers to investigate better and deeper the slaves' multiform acts of rebellion within the contest of the Confederate South's inner civil war, particularly from 1863 onwards, and also in giving these rebellious acts more significance than it has been often the case, as Stephanie McCurry has done in her *Confederate Reckoning* (2010). In this sense, McCurry's book has broken important ground, providing at the same time the first scholarly monograph that has placed the slaves' rebellion at the center of a study on the Confederacy, and also a basis for further, more detailed studies at the regional level, which will be crucial in determining the actual scope and significance of the slaves' rebellious actions within the context of the Confederate South's inner civil war.[32]

While in the Confederate South the inner civil war went through a new phase with the transformation of the war to preserve the Union into a war for the liberation of the slaves, in the Italian *Mezzogiorno* the inner civil war went through a new phase with the transformation of the struggle between the Italian Kingdom and the "legitimist" forces supporting the restoration of the Bourbons into a social war between peasant rebels and the Italian army and government. The result of the end of the "legitimist" phase of the "Great Brigandage," thus, was the recrudescence of the southern Italian civil war, as the peasants and brigands who had collaborated with the pro-Bourbon forces now fought their own war on their own terms against the Italian state. As it became progressively a social war, the "Great Brigandage" increased in size and intensity, enveloping in a spiral of permanent state of guerrilla warfare the majority of the southern Italian provinces, and forcing the Italian government to deploy an ever larger number of soldiers to suppress the widespread peasant rebellion. Starting from the summer of 1862, the activities of the brigands moved well beyond the two original regions of Basilicata and Capitanata and extended to large areas of Campania and Apulia. Here, according to Franco Molfese, "numerous bands organized themselves in the provinces of Bari, Terra d'Otranto, and Taranto, where until then there had been only sporadic brigand activities

'imported' from neighbouring Basilicata," creating the impression of large-scale "offensive" launched by the brigands against the Italian state, which deployed over 100,000 troops to suppress them.[33]

In turn, the increasingly larger scale of the very effective peasant guerrilla warfare led the Italian government not just to deploy larger numbers of troops, but also to promulgate special laws, starting with the enforcement of the state of siege in the *Mezzogiorno*, whose regions in the summer of 1862 were placed under martial law. On 1 June 1863, Left MP Giuseppe Massari recommended even more repressive measures to defeat the peasants' guerrilla warfare against the Italian army and to end the inner civil war in the *Mezzogiorno*.[34] Following Massari's speech, according to John Davis, "on 6 August the government ended prematurely the debate [on the "Great Brigandage"] approving the law proposed by [MP] Giuseppe Pica, which entailed the establishment of special military tribunals that were to deal with all the issues related to brigandage and were to collaborate with the local powers in the task of punishing with the death penalty whoever was caught rebelling against the authorities or helping the rebels."[35] These measures, in turn, led to countless atrocities and summary executions, and ultimately caused a number of casualties that oscillated between the official figure of 5,212 deaths found in governmental documents and a figure "between 18,250 and 54,750 shot or killed otherwise," calculated by Roberto Martucci.[36]

In a comparable way to the scholarship on the interpretation of the slaves' actions in the Confederate South during the American Civil War, the scholarship on the "Great Brigandage" has varied widely in its interpretations of the phenomenon. In *L'unificazione italiana* (Italy's Unification, 2011), Salvatore Lupo has pointed out that, even though the element of peasant revolt was clearly paramount, loyalty to the former Bourbon dynasty was still strong among large sections of the southern Italian population in 1861–1865, giving, thus, the "Great Brigandage" an ongoing character of Italian civil war.[37] For his part, in *Darkest Italy* (1999), John Dickie has looked at the civil war at the heart of the "Great Brigandage" as a way for the Italian state to construct a perception of "otherness" with the characterization of the peasants as "brigands," or as rebellious and treasonous outlaws to suppress.[38] Also Roberto Martucci, in *L'invenzione dell'Italia unita* (The Invention of a United Italy, 1999) has characterized clearly southern Italy's "Great Brigandage" as a civil war, and, in particular, he has gone as far as arguing about "a massacre still not exactly quantifiable today … [and] an operation of ethnic cleansing."[39] Therefore, it is clear from the recent

studies of these and other scholars, that the inner civil war at the heart of the "Great Brigandage" in the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, especially in the period 1862–1865, was essentially a mass phenomenon of armed peasant revolt against both the Italian government and those landowners who supported it. Yet, the particular modes and features of the inner civil conflict and its impact on southern Italian society still need to be investigated by scholars through specific and detailed studies at the regional level.[40]

In both the Confederate South and southern Italy, the period between 1862 and 1865 saw crucial changes in the ongoing inner civil war that ultimately created the premises for mass rebellion and social revolution in the majority of the rural areas. As a result of these changes, in both southern regions, the agrarian masses—American slaves and southern Italian peasants—came to the forefront of the inner civil wars. In the case of the Confederate South, the transformation of the American Civil War into a war for slave emancipation created the preconditions for a massive slave rebellion, which was aided by the Union government's policy and by the actions of the Union army. In the case of the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, the effective end of realistic "legitimist" chances to restore the Bourbon dynasty led to the transformation of the "Great Brigandage" into a social war of peasants against the landowners, brutally repressed by the Italian government and army. Thus, while in the American Civil War, runaway slaves joined the Union Army in increasing numbers, in the southern Italian "Great Brigandage" peasants were left fighting against Italian military repression without the help of the pro-Bourbon forces—a crucial difference that conditioned heavily the different courses and outcomes of the two civil wars.

In sum, between 1861 and 1865, the Confederate South and the Italian *Mezzogiorno* underwent the ordeals of horrific inner civil wars. In the first two years the American Civil War and of southern Italy's "Great Brigandage," between 1861 and 1863, the inner civil wars in the two southern regions focused mostly on competing ideas and intents for nation-building. In the Confederate South, supporters of the Confederacy fought to suppress the minority of supporters of the Union, who waged guerrilla warfare especially in the mountainous areas of several southern states. Conversely, in the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, the Italian government fought to suppress the minority of "legitimist" supporters of the Bourbon dynasty, who waged guerrilla warfare in different areas of southern Italy. Then, in the later part of the American Civil War and of southern Italy's "Great Brigandage," between 1862 and 1865, the inner civil wars in the two regions saw the transformation of the two conflicts into social revolutions, as a result of the increasing and

widespread rebellious actions of American slaves against Confederate authorities and of southern Italian peasants against Italian authorities. However, while in the Confederate South the slaves' rebellion received the help of the Union government's emancipationist policy, in the Italian *Mezzogiorno* the rebellion of the southern Italian peasants received little or no support from the pro-Bourbon forces and was, instead, brutally repressed by the Italian government. Yet, in both cases, the end of the inner civil wars, in 1865, and the aftermath of the rebellion did not lead to all the changes that American slaves and southern Italian peasants had hoped for—remaining, therefore, "unfinished revolutions," to adopt Eric Foner's words.[41] At the same time, the elites of the two southern regions faced, effectively, a situation of lack of power and of enduring opposition to the national government, which continued, in both cases, until 1876, with the end of Reconstruction in the United States and the rise of the Left in liberal Italy.

Notes

1. See Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, and Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); James McPherson, *Is Blood Thicker than Water? Crises of Nationalism in the Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Drew Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); and Susan-Mary Grant, *North over South: Northern Nationalism and America Identity in the Antebellum Era* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000).

2. See Thomas Bender, *A Nation among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2006); Carl Guarneri, *America in the World: United States History in Global Context* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007); and Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (New York: Palgrave, 2007). See also Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, "Global Violence and Nationalizing Wars in Eurasia and America: The Geopolitics of War in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38 (1996): 619–657; C.A. Bayly, *The*

Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Connections and Comparisons (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004); and Nicholas and Peter Onuf, *Nations, Markets, and Wars: Modern History and the American Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).

3. See Carl Degler, *One among Many: The Civil War in Comparative Perspective* (Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1990); Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1860–1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Don H. Doyle, *Nations Divided: America, Italy, and the Southern Question* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

4. See Enrico Dal Lago, *Agrarian Elites: American Slaveholders and Southern Italian Landowners, 1815–1861* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2005); and Susanna Delfino, "The Idea of Southern Economic Backwardness: A Comparative View of the United States and Italy" in Susanna Delfino and Michelle Gillespie, eds., *Global Perspectives on Industrial Transformation in the American South* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005), 105–130.

5. For a definition of "inner civil war," see David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* (New York: Norton, 2008).

6. See Enrico Dal Lago, "States of Rebellion: Civil War, Rural Unrest, and the Agrarian Question in the American South and the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, 1861–1865", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47 (2005): 403–432.

7. See Don H. Doyle, ed., *Secession as an International Phenomenon: From America's Civil War to Contemporary Separatist Movements* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Timothy Roberts, *Distant Revolutions: 1848 and the Challenge to American Exceptionalism* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2009); Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848–1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Andre Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861: The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

8. The idea of social revolution in the Confederate South and in southern Italy's "Great Brigandage" is at the center of two of the most important recent studies on the topics: Bruce Levine, *The Fall of the House of Dixie: The Civil War and the Social Revolution that Transformed the South* (New York: Random House, 2013); and Salvatore Lupo, *L'unificazione italiana. Mezzogiorno, rivoluzione, guerra civile* (Rome: Donzelli, 2011).

9. See Edward Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation: The Caribbean Origins of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008); Brian Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Politics, and the Global Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the World Wide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War," *American Historical Review* 109 (2004): 1405–1438; Steven Hahn, "Class and State in Postemancipation Societies: Southern Planters in Comparative Perspective," *American Historical Review* 95 (1990): 75–98; Michael L. Bush, *Servitude in Modern Times* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000); and Peter Kolchin, "Some Controversial Questions Concerning Nineteenth-Century Abolition from Slavery and Serfdom" in Michael L. Bush, ed., *Slavery and Serfdom: Studies in Legal Bondage* (London: Longman, 1996), 42–68.

10. On the Secession of the Lower South, see especially William Freehling, *The Road to Disunion*, Vol. 2: *Secessionists Triumphant* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 427–499; and Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 38–63.

11. Paul Escott, *The Confederacy: The Slaveholders' Failed Venture* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 14.

12. Escott, *The Confederacy*, 31.

13. Freehling, *Secessionists Triumphant*, 532; see also 499–530. See also Aaron Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in Civil War Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

14. See especially William W. Freehling, *The South vs. the South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); and John C. Inscoe and Robert Kenzer, eds., *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

15. See Victoria Bynum, *The Long Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and its Legacies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

16. See W. Todd Grace, *Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee and the Civil War, 1860–1870* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1999).

17. McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning, 117.* See also Paul Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

18. See Dal Lago, *Agrarian Elites*, 336–339. See also Giorgio Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, Vol. 5: *Dalla rivoluzione nazionale all'Unità (1849–1860)* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1964).

19. See Lucy Riall, *Under the Volcano: Revolution in a Sicilian Town* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 94–110. See also Lucy Riall, *Sicily and the Unification of Italy, 1859–1866* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

20. See Alfonso Scirocco, *Il Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860–1861)* (Naples: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1981).

21. See especially Lupo, *L'unificazione italiana*; and Alfonso Scirocco, *Il Mezzogiorno nell'Italia unita (1861–1865)* (Naples: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1979).

22. See Gigi Di Fiore, *Controstoria dell'Unità d'Italia. Fatti e misfatti del Risorgimento* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2007), 199–201. See also Aldo Albonico, *La mobilitazione leggitimista contro il Regno d'Italia. La Spagna e il brigantaggio meridionale postunitario* (Naples: Giuffrè, 1979).

23. See Lupo, L'unificazione italiana, 99–106.

24. The quote is in Lupo, *L'unificazione italiana*, 100.

25. See Marco Meriggi, "Dopo l'Unità. Forme e ambivalenza del legittimismo borbonico," *Passato e Presente* 29 (2011): 39–56.

26. See especially Gary Gallagher, "Disaffection, Persistence, and Nation: Some Directions in Recent Scholarship on the Confederacy," *Civil War History* 55 (2009): 329–353; and Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *Guerrilla, Unionists, and Violence on the Confederate Home Front* (Little Rock: University of Arkansas Press, 1999).

27. See Winthrop Jordan, *Tumult and Silence at Second Creek: An Inquiry into a Civil War Slave Conspiracy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995).

28. Peter Kolchin, "Slavery and Freedom in the Civil War South" in James McPherson and William J. Cooper, eds., *Writing the Civil War: The Quest to Understand* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 245.

29. See especially Ira Berlin et al., *Slaves No More: Three Essays on Emancipation and the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1–76; and Louis Gerteis, "Slaves,

Servants, and Soldiers: Uneven Paths to Freedom in the Border States, 1861–1865" in William A. Blair and Karen Fischer Younger, eds., *Lincoln's proclamation; Emancipation Reconsidered* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 170–194.

30. See Steven Hahn, *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 55–114.

31. Levine, The Fall of the House of Dixie, 153.

32. See McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*. See also an important synthesis of these issues in Steven Hahn, "But What Did the Slaves Think of Lincoln?" in Blair and Younger, eds., *Lincoln's Proclamation*, 102–119.

33. Franco Molfese, *Storia del brigantaggio dopo l'Unità* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1964), 171.

34. See Tommaso Pedio, ed., *Inchiesta Massari sul brigantaggio* (Manduria: Lacaita, 1983); and Tommaso Pedio, *Brigantaggio meridionale (1806–1863)* (Cavallino di Lecce: Capone, 1987), 128–130.

35. John A. Davis, "Le guerre del brigantaggio" in Mario Isnenghi and Eva Cecchinato, eds., *Fare l'Italia. Unità e disunità nel Risorgimento* (Turin: UTET, 2008), 746.

36. Roberto Martucci, *L'invenzione dell'Italia unita (1855–1864)* (Florence: Sansoni, 1999), 314. See also Daniela Adorni, "Il brigantaggio" in Luciano Violante, ed., *Storia d'Italia*, Annali 12: *La criminalità* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), 283–319.

37. See Lupo, *L'unificazione italiana*, 99–150; and Salvatore Lupo, "Il Grande Brigantaggio. Interpretazione e memoria di una guerra civile" in Walter Barberis, ed., *Storia d'Italia*, Annali 18: *Guerra e Pace* (Turin: Einaudi, 2002), 465–504.

38. See John Dickie, *Darkest Italy: The Nation and the Stereotypes of the Mezzogiorno, 1860–1900* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); and John Dickie, "A Word at War: The Italian Army and Brigandage, 1860–1870," *History Workshop Journal* 33 (1992): 1–24.

39. Martucci, L'invenzione dell'Italia unita, 295.

40. On some of these issues, see Dal Lago, "States of Rebellion," 403–432.

41. See Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988).

Race and Nationalism in Latin America and the Caribbean During the American Civil War Era

Race and Revolution: The Confederacy, Mexico, and the Problem of Southern Nationalism

Andre M. Fleche

In July 1859, Henry Watkins Allen, a prominent sugar planter from Louisiana, boarded a steamer in New York bound for Liverpool, England. He found himself in the company of several notable traveling companions, including future Confederate Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin and the Irish nationalist Richard O'Gorman. For Allen, though, the most interesting personage aboard was the recently ousted president of Mexico, Ignacio Comonfort. After Allen made Comonfort's acquaintance, the two talked about the future of the Mexican nation. Allen found his new friend "down upon his native country," convinced that the United States would "be doing God's service to go at once and take possession of the whole." Allen enthusiastically agreed. "Unless something is done, and that quickly," he exclaimed, the Mexican people, "like the Kilkenny cats," will "eat up one another, and leave the Anglo-Saxon land-robber nothing but the tail end of a once beautiful and rich country."[1]

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Anglo-Saxon land-robbers would not get their chance to devour Mexico. Within two years of Allen's trip to Europe, the United States would join Mexico in facing dissolution. European imperialists, not American expansionists, would further their territorial ambitions by taking advantage of the chaos in North America. In 1861, while Henry Watkins Allen and other white Southerners fought to establish an independent slaveholding republic, French soldiers invaded Mexico as part of Emperor Napoleon III's "grand design" to "regenerate" the New World through the reestablishment of European colonial rule. Still, Allen's diagnosis of Mexico's problems found echoes in the thought of his fellow Confederates. Indeed, Confederate impressions of Mexico worked in part to shape an incipient ideology of Southern nationalism. In Mexico, Confederate spokesmen detected a failed multiracial republic, a nation, they believed, in which leadership by mixed-raced peoples had resulted in anarchy. For white Southerners, the Confederacy represented a viable alternative—a nation that combined democracy for white men with slavery and subordination for African Americans.[2]

In contemplating the lessons that Mexico's plight offered for the prospects of Southern independence, the supporters of the Confederacy embarked upon a conversation regarding the meaning and nature of nationalism in the nineteenth-century world. The Confederacy's bid for nationhood came at a moment of transition in global politics. For the almost one hundred years since the American Revolution, nation-builders had equated the achievement of nationalism with the protection of liberal values. By the 1850s and 1860s, however, the European monarchies that had weathered the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century storms of republican revolution had returned to the project of imperialism, especially in India, Africa, and Asia. By the early 1870s, the conservative leader Otto von Bismarck had achieved the unification of Germany, not in order to establish a liberal constitution, but in order to construct a powerful and prestigious nation. In the midst of these developments, white Southerners fought to found a republic based on racial slavery.[3]

Confederate leaders struggled to square their conservative revolution with what might be termed the "problem" of Southern nationalism. As defenders of the right of self-determination, Confederate nation-builders had much in common with the revolutionaries of Europe and the Americas. The social system Confederate armies defended, however, appeared to be shockingly outdated to liberals of the mid-nineteenth-century world. Nonetheless, Confederate thinkers claimed that their peculiar institution

alone provided the order and hierarchy needed to sustain long-lasting nations. The failures of the European revolutions of 1848 and the struggles of Mexico and America's other emerging republics offered white Southerners proof that their social system could best guarantee stability for nineteenth-century nation-builders. In contemplating a world in which many people were not white, Confederates even came to question the fitness of much of the world for republican government, causing them to rethink the principles of American foreign policy originally outlined in the Monroe Doctrine. The resulting theory of Confederate nationalism came close to prefiguring the "white man's burden" by arguing that imperial tutelage might be a necessary step on the road to nationhood. In this way, white Southerners who had once been committed republicans became committed nationalists, and as nationalists, brought themselves to defend the goals of imperialists.

Confederate doubts about Mexican fitness for self-government drew on a body of negative writings about Mexico by European and American authors. The French, especially, held a pessimistic view about Mexico's prospects as an independent nation. The first French ministers to arrive in the newly independent country in the 1830s sent back negative reports about the character of the Mexican people. The role of race figured prominently in French assessments. Many French observers commented on the large population of Native Americans and *mestizos*, and others reflected unfavorably on stereotypes associated with the Spanish "race" in general. Most of these visitors characterized Mexicans as simple, dissolute, and ultimately incapable of governance. The representatives of France almost universally reached a single conclusion: Mexico was best suited for a monarchical or imperial government led by white Europeans. "There are seven million inhabitants in Mexico, but there is no nation," a French commercial agent asserted in 1828, "and without nationality it is difficult to comprehend the existence of a popular Government."[4]

In the years before the Civil War, white Southern observers echoed these assessments. Joel Poinsett of South Carolina was among the first American diplomats to travel to independent Mexico, and in 1824 he published an account of his experiences. Poinsett favored a republican government for Mexico, but he was disappointed to find that the nation had turned to an emperor, Augustín de Iturbide, as its first independent ruler. Poinsett believed that the white Mexican creoles possessed "good natural talents, and great facility of acquiring knowledge," but found it "difficult to describe, accurately, a nation composed of…so many different

casts." He frequently, though not always, characterized the "Indians," "*mestizos*," and "*mulattoes*" he had encountered as "indolent and poor." Poinsett concluded that "measures must be taken to educate them, and land distributed among them, before they can be considered as forming part of the people of a free government." Waddy Thompson, US envoy in Mexico between 1842 and 1844 proved less sanguine. In his *Recollections of Mexico*, published in 1846, Thompson decried the effects of the abolition of slavery in the country. He denounced free blacks in Mexico as the "same lazy, filthy, and vicious creatures that they inevitably become where they are not held in bondage," concluding that "bondage or barbarism seems to be their destiny." Thompson asserted that American slaves were better off than Mexican laborers held to debt service on the haciendas. He came away from Mexico wishing the Mexicans "ultimate success in establishing Republican institutions on a permanent basis," but sounding less than convinced that such goals would be achieved. Brantz Mayer, secretary of the US legation in Mexico between 1841 and 1843, offered a much blunter analysis. In his monumental two-volume history, *Mexico, Aztec, Spanish, and Republican* (1851), he attributed Mexico's failure to establish a national identity, especially when compared to the United States, to the presence in the former of widespread racial "amalgamation."[5]

Though Poinsett, Thompson, and Mayer all remained at least nominally committed to advancing the cause of republican government anywhere in the world, as the Civil War approached, white Southerners grew increasingly pessimistic about the political future of the Americas. Southern nationalists continued to revere the legacy of the American Revolution as they interpreted it, a revolution which they believed had secured self-government for white men by establishing the right of an aggrieved minority to cast off central authority. In the years since 1776, however, many Southerners worried that subsequent revolutions had only worked to free non-white peoples from bondage to what they considered disastrous results, as had occurred in Haiti, in much of Spanish America in the years after independence, and in the French Caribbean in 1848. As the Confederate states seceded from the United States in the winter of 1860–1861, many of the new nation's supporters proclaimed that only the preservation of slavery could ensure national prosperity and stability. A few even suggested that, if republican governments could not, monarchical or imperial government might be necessary to maintain racial hierarchies.[6]

During the early years of the Civil War, the prominent Southern intellectual George Fitzhugh called for such a solution to be employed in

Haiti. The nation of Haiti had been the focus for white Southern fears ever since a slave revolt and ensuing war had finally secured the country's independence in 1804. In the years afterward, white Southerners watched with self-satisfaction as the island nation endured a succession of governments and struggled to afford indemnity payments demanded by the French. In 1859, on the eve of the Civil War, a military coup led by Guillaume Fabre-Nicholas Geffrard deposed the emperor Faustin I, which Fitzhugh believed had proven Haitian unfitness for self-government. "The civilized world," Fitzhugh wrote, "will not much longer permit the naturally paradisiacal isle of Hayti to remain a useless waste, infested by a horde of idle savages and pagans, and ruled over by despots more cruel and blood-thirsty than the King of Dahomey himself." The island nation, he believed, "must and will be conquered, law and order re-established, and industry restored to its civilized course." Since the Confederacy was preoccupied by the Civil War, Fitzhugh called upon the French to take the lead. Fitzhugh professed to welcome a French reconquest of Haiti if it were followed by what he believed was a proper subordination of people of African descent. "Whether as slaves, or peons, or apprentices, or peasants," he wrote, "they would be compelled to work, but their lives would be secure, and their physical comfort and well-being very greatly enhanced." Only in that event, Fitzhugh believed, would a Haitian government avoid anarchy and achieve stability.[7]

The French did not invade Haiti, but Fitzhugh came close to predicting a turn of events that would befall the Confederacy's closest neighbor. As Confederates fought to establish a Southern nation, the people of Mexico also found themselves in the midst of a violent nationalist struggle. In 1855, a Liberal government came to power after a successful revolt planned at the town of Ayutla de los Libres overthrew the authoritarian government of Antonio López de Santa Anna. The following years were exciting ones for the supporters of reform. Benito Juárez drafted a law that subordinated the Catholic church to civil law, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada passed a statute outlawing church ownership of land, and Ignacio Comonfort became president under a newly drafted constitution. In 1857, however, alarmed conservatives organized a coup, to which Comonfort acquiesced, though he was eventually forced to resign. Comonfort's ouster initiated the War of the Reform, led by Benito Juárez, who, as president of the supreme court under Comonfort, claimed rightful succession to the presidency. The Liberals emerged victorious, and in 1861 Benito Juárez was officially elected president.[8]

Confederate foreign policy makers initially made moves to open relations with the Juárez government. In May 1861, Confederate Secretary of State Robert Toombs dispatched John T. Pickett to Mexico on a mission to enter into negotiations with the fledgling administration. Toombs instructed Pickett to make common cause with Juárez by appealing to the "principles of constitutional government" for which, Toombs implied, both Juárez and the Confederacy fought. Pickett's instructions also included a guarantee that the Confederacy would support any nation struggling to defend those values "against the tyranny of both the Old and the New World."[9]

Despite the friendly rhetoric, subsequent events made clear that the Confederate government's feelings of friendship toward, and ideological approval of, Juárez's government were far from sincere. A few short months later, Confederate diplomats reached out to Santiago Vidaurri, a sectional *caudillo* who, at the time, governed the northern states of Coahuila and Nuevo Leon with almost complete autonomy. The Confederate government dispatched José Agustín Quintero, a native Cuban and adopted Southerner who had fought for both Cuban and Confederate independence, to form an alliance with Vidaurri, who would eventually come to oppose Juárez's efforts at centralization. Confederates evidently found Vidaurri's cause analogous to their own. The state department assured Quintero that "the Government of the Confederate States feels a deep sympathy with all people struggling to secure for themselves the blessings of self-government," and, in subsequent dispatches, praised Vidaurri for defense "of the sovereignty of his State."[10]

Caudillos like Vidaurri continued to evade the authority of the central government because Juárez's victory in the War of the Reform had left the Mexican nation weakened, bankrupt, and divided. Juárez' government especially struggled to pay off loans to foreign bankers, and in July 1861, payments on the debt were suspended. In late autumn of that year, France, Spain, and Great Britain mounted a military expedition to collect the money that was due. Though Britain and Spain abandoned the effort shortly after it began, French Emperor Napoleon III hoped to use the expedition as a pretext to establish a French empire in the Americas. Napoleon III, once known by his given name, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, had come to power in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1848. In December 1852, he declared himself head of the Second French Empire, an empire that Louis hoped would recapture the glories France had known under his illustrious uncle. The Second Empire certainly

embraced overseas adventurism. Under Napoleon III, France heightened its administrative control over Algeria, established rule over Cambodia and Cochinchina, and encouraged the construction of the Suez Canal. In Mexico, Napoleon hoped that strong leadership by "civilized" Europeans would "regenerate" the Latin "race" in the Americas, which many French observers believed had descended into barbarism. A redeemed and reinvigorated Mexico, Napoleon believed, would develop mines, facilitate trade with the Pacific, counter Anglo-American hegemony, and attract the Spanish American republics to monarchy.[11]

Citizens in the United States and the Confederacy closely followed the situation in Mexico. The Lincoln administration and many average Northerners viewed the French incursion as a violation of the Monroe Doctrine. The Civil War, however, prevented the Union from responding with force. As for the Confederacy, cooperation with the French raised the prospect that Napoleon III might intervene in the Civil War and recognize Southern independence. The incipient Confederate nation certainly stood to gain by welcoming a friendly French government on its southern border, but the attraction was also ideological. Napoleon III proposed to establish an imperial government in which white Europeans would rule over a multiracial population. Benito Juárez, by contrast, offered the prospect that a nation led by a Native American and guaranteeing liberal values and the abolition of slavery would share a border with the Confederacy. Not surprisingly, many Confederate thinkers regarded the French venture as a step toward the realization of the principles embodied in their white, slaveholding republic. Although the French aimed to establish a monarchy in Mexico, Southern leaders welcomed the stability Napoleon promised to bring to their southern neighbor, whose chronic "anarchy" Southern whites blamed on Mexico's multiracial character. Mexicans, they argued, could only achieve a viable and prosperous nationality under the tutelage of a white ruling class.[12]

The French initially struggled to impose the Confederacy's preferred model of governance on the Mexican republic. The joint forces of Britain, Spain, and France had initially seized the port of Vera Cruz with ease in December 1861. When the British and the Spanish learned of Napoleon's intention to continue with an invasion of the country, however, they withdrew their troops, leaving French forces to march on toward the capital, Mexico City, alone. On May 5, 1862, just a month after the Confederate reversal at the bloody battle of Shiloh, in Tennessee, the Mexican Army halted the French advance at Puebla. Despite the uncertain progress of the

French, the Confederate press hailed Napoleon's endeavors in Mexico. Weeks after the Battle of Puebla, the *Index*, the Confederacy's mouthpiece in London, insisted that the new Southern nation continued to support French plans in Mexico not only out of self-interest and desire for recognition, but also out of commitment to what the paper proclaimed the "historical truth" that "two races cannot coexist in the same country without one being subservient to the other." The editorial insisted that all Mexico's problems could be solved by acting on the brief phrase— "Mexico needs a white man's government."[13]

Though white Southerners remained committed to a republican form of government for the Confederacy, some thinkers proved willing to see a monarchy established in Mexico. Indeed, some thinkers mused, perhaps an imperial monarchy was the only form of government that could bring stability to a multiracial nation like Mexico. "Too much democracy is not good, even for the white man," the *Index* reasoned. The paper found democratic institutions even less suitable for a population "composed of Indians, negroes, and the hybrid offspring of the crossing and re-crossing of half-a-dozen different races."[14]

Confederate racial theorists believed that their analysis of Mexico offered lessons for the nation-builders of the nineteenth century. A racially diverse population, the Confederacy's advocates argued, represented the biggest obstacle to the achievement of national stability. Some white Southern thinkers believed that perhaps only a country made up of racially homogenous citizens would ever be able to enjoy an independent national existence. An editor for the *Index* believed that the "greatest difficulty" facing those who wished to accomplish the task of uplifting Mexico was "the absence of anything that can properly be termed the nucleus of a nation." "Of the eight millions that are loosely termed Mexicans," the author asserted, "scarcely one and a half million are white, that is of pure European descent. The rest are Indians, Negroes, and the infinite mongrel breeds produced by the mixture of the races." An article in the *Richmond Examiner* blamed Mexico's problems on "the present Liberal Government," which, the author believed, was "made up mainly of men who are not of pure Castilian blood, but almost pure Indians." The Liberal policy of reform, the author argued, was based completely on "jealousy of the white race." Indeed, asserted one editorial, "in Mexico the inferior races have asserted their equality and the result has been anarchy."[15]

Confederate editors applauded Napoleon III for moving to replace this "anarchy" in Mexico with a stable government. The editors of the

Richmond Enquirer argued that the triumph of French arms in Mexico would mark "the triumph of civilization and regular responsible government; all of which Mexico sorely needed." The *Richmond Dispatch*, for its part, looked forward to "the change of affairs in Mexico—with its prospect of order and security in that country, and its control, at least during pupilage, by a power altogether friendly to us." Confederate leaders did not mind that a monarchical power took up the task of tutoring the Mexican nation. In fact, establishment of a monarchy might, in the eyes of some white Southerners, mark the essential first step toward achieving viable, stable nationhood in Mexico. "Mexico has, through a long series of convulsions and revolutions," asserted an article in the *Index*, "reached a point of imbecility where to reject the monarchy would be to court dissolution."[16]

Despite the reverse at Puebla, Napoleon did not abandon his attempt to bring monarchy to Mexico. In late 1862, the French forces regrouped along the coast, and in March 1863, an army under General Élie Frédéric Forey returned to the city and laid siege. In May, Mexican forces in Puebla capitulated. French troops entered Mexico City the following month. In London, the Confederacy's supporters hailed "the fall of Puebla" by declaring that the "first and greatest need of Mexico is 'a white man's government.'" In an interview at the Tuileries Palace, John Slidell chatted with Napoleon III about American reactions to the capture of Puebla. The emperor professed to have heard that the news occasioned "disappointment and hostility" in the North, while the streets of Richmond were "illuminated on the occasion." Although Slidell suspected that those reports were exaggerated, he did not endeavor to correct the French leader, assuring him that "there could be no doubt of the bitterness of the Northern people at the success of his arms in Mexico, while all our sympathies were with France." Slidell may not have been far off the mark, given reports from a Staunton, Virginia, paper that "widespread popular support" for the new government in Mexico could be noted among Virginians during the summer of 1863.[17]

As French troops suppressed all Mexican resistance, Napoleon invited Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Austria to become Emperor of Mexico. He arrived in May 1864, planning to "regenerate" the Mexican nation by establishing an empire in the New World. Confederate policy makers asserted that Maximilian's empire would, like the Confederate republic, impart a stable nationality on a multiracial population. In order to dispel any thoughts that the Confederacy's republican-leaning citizens might

object to the presence of an emperor in the New World, an author for the *Richmond Dispatch* declared that "the South is content, nay, pleased with the change of affairs in Mexico—with the prospect of order and security in that country." Even before Maximilian had accepted the throne, Judah P. Benjamin dispatched General William Preston as envoy plenipotentiary to Mexico. Benjamin's excitement at the new order south of the border was palpable. In his instructions to Preston, he asserted that "the secession of [the Confederate] States" and "the regeneration of Mexico from a state of almost ceaseless anarchy into a strong and settled government" will change the geopolitical situation in the Americas. He looked forward to the establishment of a "balance of power" in which any two strong states might align against the hegemony of the third. James Mason spoke for many white Southerners the preceding September when he pointed out to Benjamin that, in the event of peace, the Confederacy "must have for years a licentious and irresponsible mob government as our neighbor in the North." "It would seem to me of no little moment," he wrote, "to have France, through its interests in Mexico, as our ally against it."[18]

Confederate officials believed that they would gain more than an ally in a regenerated Mexico; the Southern nation would also acquire a lucrative trading partner. White Southerners, like Napoleon III, assumed that social stability would bring commercial development. If Maximilian adopted the racial hierarchies espoused by the Confederacy's white republic, many white Southerners believed, then Mexico might join the Confederacy in becoming a prosperous nation. "With a strong and steady government, and security to person and property, Mexico will become a great producing country," asserted one article in the *Richmond Dispatch*. Under the tutelage of a white ruling class, the author argued, "the industry of the nation will improve, and the tide of commerce and of power in the Gulf be immensely swelled in volume." The *Richmond Examiner* imagined that the French Empire and the Confederacy, joined by the principles of white supremacy, could overcome the "disorganization and disintegration" of the Mexican nation and link the two neighbors with railroads "instead of the long mule trains" emblematic of the "simplicity of a barbaric race."[19]

According to Confederate editorialists, only the Northern war effort stood in the way of the French project that promised to establish strong nations throughout the Americas. Confederate publications in Europe were filled with reminders of Northern hostility to monarchy and empire. The North's attachment to doctrines of universal equality, one article in the *Index* declared, stood in the way of "any stable government in

Mexico." Scores of articles recalled the commitment of the US government to enforcing the Monroe Doctrine, and predicted unending trouble for the ambitions of European heads of state in the event of a Union victory. The *Memphis Daily Appeal* warned that a restoration of the Union would sound the "death knell" of French hopes on the American continent since it would reestablish a power capable of enforcing the Monroe Doctrine. Though in June 1863 the Memphis paper had suggested that the Confederacy might adopt the doctrine, by the end of the summer it opined that Monroe's famous foreign policy pronouncement lay in "ruins." One Confederate correspondent residing in New York agreed, pointing out that John C. Calhoun himself had understood that the Monroe Doctrine was never to be taken as an absolute. According to Calhoun, the letter writer insisted, Monroe had opposed European interference in the Americas only if it threatened the stability of the United States. As for the supposed duty to countenance nothing but republican governments, Calhoun pointed out that the United States tolerated without complaint Mexico's first imperial government led by Augustín de Iturbide.[20]

Even as Confederate military fortunes waned, many supporters of Southern independence argued that a victory in the Civil War would reverberate throughout the Americas. Indeed, some thinkers argued that the Confederacy's success might prove crucial to the nationalist hopes of white peoples, at least, throughout the world. One editorial asserted that "the South alone" could maintain republican forms of government since it had based its "social fabric" upon the "principle of subordination of one race to the other." Inspired by the Confederate example, the "white man's government" under construction in Mexico might join the Confederacy in reclaiming the Americas from the "barbarism" into which much of the hemisphere had descended. The author concluded with an assertion that might well sum up Confederate understandings of the significance of the conflicts of the 1860s: "The establishment of monarchy in Mexico is the beginning of a new, and, we hope a better era in the history of the New World."[21]

The French incursion into Mexico, like the Confederacy's bid for independence, did not succeed in the end. After the last Confederate armies surrendered, the US government rushed troops to its southern border in a show of force designed to intimidate Maximilian's French backers. The action proved successful. In 1866, anxious to avoid a war with the United States, Napoleon III withdrew all remaining French troops from Mexico. Without French support, Maximilian's forces quickly crumbled in the face

of mounting republican resistance. In 1867, forces loyal to Benito Juárez regained control of the country. In May, Maximilian was captured and sentenced to death. He was executed the next month. Napoleon's dream of a French empire in Mexico ended with the demise of the slaveholding Confederacy and the death of Maximilian. Confederate faith in achieving national stability through racial subordination proved to be misplaced. Unfortunately, Confederate doctrines lived on. In the years after the Civil War, nationalist thinkers in Europe and America continued to link nationalism and racism, as the tragic history of imperialism and the two world wars made abundantly clear.

Notes

1. Henry Watkins Allen, *Travels of a Sugar Planter, or Six Months in Europe* (New York: John F. Trow, 1861), 1–3.
2. For a study that portrays the French intervention in Mexico as part of a wider "North American Crisis," see Patrick J. Kelly, "The North American Crisis of the 1860s," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 2 (2012): 337–368. For more on Napoleon's "grand design" for the Americas, see Nancy N. Barker, "Monarchy in Mexico: Harebrained Scheme or Well-considered Prospect?" *Journal of Modern History* 48 (1976): 51–68; Alfred Jackson Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico: American Triumph Over Monarchy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), 3–20, 58–68; Thomas Schoonover, "'Napoleon is Coming! Maximilian is Coming?" The International History of the Civil War in the Caribbean Basin," in Robert May, ed., *The Union, The Confederacy, and the Atlantic Rim* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1995), 104–121.
3. See Don Doyle and Marco Pamplona, eds., *Nationalism in the New World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 1–3.
4. French commercial agent quoted in Nancy N. Barker, "Monarchy in Mexico, 53. See also Barker, "The Factor of 'Race" in the French Experience in Mexico, 1821–1861," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 59 (1979): 64–80.
5. Joel Roberts Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico, Made in the Autumn of 1822* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, 1824), 119–121; Waddy Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico* (New York: Wiley and

Putnam, 1846), vi, 6–7. Mayer quoted in Michael O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810–1860* 2 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 1:207. For in-depth analysis of all three works, see O'Brien, 1:196–207.

6. For the reaction of slaveholders to emancipation in the Caribbean, see Matthew Pratt Guterl, *American Mediterranean: Southern Slaveholders in the Age of Emancipation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 35–46; Edward Bartlett Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation: The Caribbean Roots of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 42–143, 180–221, 258–290. For further discussion of the "rightward shift" in wartime Confederate thinking, see Robert E. Bonner, *Mastering America: Southern Slaveholders and the Crisis of American Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 263–271, 300.

7. George Fitzhugh, "Hayti and the Monroe Doctrine," *DeBow's Review* 31 (1861): 131–132. See also Matthew J. Clavin, *Toussaint Louverture and the American Civil War: The Promise and Peril of a Second Haitian Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 98–121, 144–162.

8. For the political situation in Mexico and its connection to the French intervention, see Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*, 10–28.

9. Robert Toombs to John T. Pickett, May 17, 1861, in James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Confederacy Including the Diplomatic Correspondence, 1861–1865*, 2 vols. (Nashville: United States Publishing Company, 1905), 2:25.

10. William M. Brown to J. A. Quintero, September 3, 1861, January 14, 1862, in ibid., 2:78, 152. See also, Ronnie C. Tyler, *Santiago Vidaurri and the Southern Confederacy* (Texas State Historical Association, 1973), 11, 13, 14, 45–46.

11. See Barker, "Monarchy in Mexico," 51–68; Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*, 3–9, 38–46, 58–68; Schoonover, "'Napoleon is Coming! Maximilian is Coming?," 104–121.

12. For Union and Confederate reactions to intervention, see Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*, 47–57, 116–130, 155–166, 209–220; Kathryn Abbey Hanna, "The Roles of the South in the

French Intervention in Mexico," *Journal of Southern History* 20 (1954): 3–21; Howard Jones, *Blue and Gray Diplomacy: A History of Union and Confederate Foreign Relations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 285–320; Kelly, "The North American Crisis of the 1860s," 337–362; Schoonover, "'Napoleon is Coming! Maximilian is Coming?" 104–121; Schoonover, *Dollars Over Dominion: The Triumph of Liberalism in Mexican-United States Relations, 1861–1867* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011), 123–158.

13. "French Diplomacy in America," *Index*, May 22, 1862. See also, Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*, 40–45, 69–83.

14. Ibid.

15. "The Fall of Puebla," *Index*, June 18, 1863; *Richmond Examiner*, October 7, 1861, p1; "Mexican Prospects," *Index*, October 15, 1863.

16. "France in Mexico," *Richmond Enquirer*, July 10, 1863; article from the *Dispatch* reprinted in "The Mexican Empire," *Index*, October 29, 1863; "The Mexican Empire," *Index*, March 24, 1864.

17. "The Fall of Puebla," *Index*, June 11, 1863; John Slidell to Judah P. Benjamin, June 21, 1863, enclosure C, in Richardson, ed., 2:516; *Staunton Spectator*, August 18, 1863, *Valley of the Shadow Project*, Virginia Center for Digital History, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/news/ss1863/va.au.ss.1863.08.18.xml#01; Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*, 77–96.

18. Article from the *Dispatch* reprinted in "The Mexican Empire," *Index*, October 29, 1863; James Mason to Judah P. Benjamin, September 4, 1863, Judah P. Benjamin to General William Preston, January 7, 1864, in Richardson, ed., 2:557, 616. For more on Napoleon's choice of Maximilian, see Nancy Nichols Barker, "France, Austria, and the Mexican Venture, 1861–1864," *French Historical Studies* Vol. 3, no. 2 (Autumn 1963): 224–245; Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*, 96–115.

19. "The Mexican Empire," *Index*, October 29, 1863; *Richmond Examiner*, October 7, 1861.

20. "The Empire of Mexico," *Index*, March 24, 1864; "Mexico as an Empire, and the United States, *Memphis Daily Appeal*, August 7, 1863; "The World in Trouble," *Memphis Daily Appeal*, October 3, 1863. See also, "France Threatened," *Index*, January 7, 1864. Correspondent quoted in "The Federal Government and the Monroe Doctrine," *Index*, October 1, 1863. To track the evolution of opinion in the *Memphis Daily Appeal*, see "European Position in Regard to the American War," June 13, 1863; "Self Reliance," August 7, 1863. For more on Confederate abandonment of the Monroe Doctrine, see Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine*, 137–139.
21. "The Empire of Mexico," *Index*, August 13, 1863.

Tocqueville's Prophecy: The United States and the Caribbean, 1850–1871

Nicholas Guyatt

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the islands of the Caribbean were at the crossroads of two great questions: How should people be governed in an age in which empires and nations coincided? And how would racial differences affect society and politics in an era of emancipation? One might imagine that, given its proximity and power, the United States would have an enormous bearing on these questions, and that the American Civil War would transform the racial and political landscape of the Caribbean. In fact, when the US went in search of territory and influence after 1865, the results were modest. Not a single West Indian harbor was annexed to the US in the 30 years after Appomattox. Slavery survived until 1873 in Puerto Rico and 1886 in Cuba; Spanish rule endured until 1898, in spite of Cuba's cherished status among American expansionists.[1]

By the early twentieth century, US legislators and propagandists had embraced technologies of empire that projected American power throughout the region. But before the sweeping campaigns of 1898 came a halting and conflicted US involvement. Americans struggled to understand the complex politics of the region; they debated whether particular peoples were "white," and what those peoples might be capable of if they were not; and they pondered the limits of the federative principle by which the Danish West Indies,

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Cuba or Santo Domingo (as they called the Dominican Republic) might become integral parts of the United States. This thinking took place against the backdrop of sectional conflict, and was eventually shaped by the furious racial politics of Reconstruction. Would the United States absorb the former colonies of the Caribbean, and could blacks and whites live alongside each other in a free society? Alexis de Tocqueville, in the first part of *Democracy in America* (1835), was pessimistic on both counts. It was folly to imagine that freed slaves would be satisfied with second-class citizenship after slavery. The choice facing white Americans was "either to emancipate the negroes, and to intermingle with them; or, remaining isolated from them, to keep them in a state of slavery as long as possible." The likeliest outcome was a calamitous race war. With an eye on both the Haitian Revolution and the 1831 uprising of Nat Turner in Virginia, Tocqueville anticipated "the most horrible of civil wars" and "the extirpation of one or other of the two races" before the restoration of equilibrium on either side of the Florida Straits.[2]

In this respect at least, Tocqueville was a lousy prophet. America got a different civil war to the one he had predicted, and neither the Caribbean nor the mainland experienced racial Armageddon. But his vision resonated through the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Tocqueville doubted that abolition would resolve "the struggle of the two races in the United States," and thought that a durable armistice between blacks and whites would require physical separation on a vast scale. This thesis received its sternest test on the mainland, but it also haunted US dreams of expansion.

* * *

In the mid-nineteenth the Caribbean presented a varied picture to American observers. The peoples of Hispaniola had broken entirely with empire, though Haiti and the Dominican Republic struggled to defend their sovereignty from outside powers and from each other. Britain and France abolished West Indian slavery in the 1830s and 1840s, but Spain moved in the opposite direction. After the Haitian Revolution terminated Saint-Domingue's career as the world's most profitable sugar producer, Spanish officials and creoles positioned Cuba (and, to a lesser extent, Puerto Rico) to take its place. By 1850, with empire, slavery, and cash crops in retreat across the Caribbean, Cuba had become a startling exception to the regional pattern. The canniness of Spanish development strategies—which brought foreign capital and expertise to Cuba, but not American settlers—piqued the interest of observers in the United States. The slave system drew admiration from southerners, but Cuba's investments in communications and industry—not to mention its harnessing of the latest

innovations in the international labor market, like indentured Chinese workers—made it seem to some northerners like a perfected version of the South. While Spain worked to retain the loyalty of its bustling colony, American observers—statesmen, financiers, journalists—closed in on "the Queen of the Antilles."[3]

Politically, the peoples of the Caribbean struggled in the nineteenth century for meaningful participation. In the British and French West Indies, tiny white minorities attempted to contain the effects of emancipation while former slaves worked to expand the limits of their freedom. Slavery had been abolished in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, but those neighboring regimes developed a deep enmity based on territorial disputes and racial distinctions. The Dominicans, a Spanish-speaking people estranged from both their former empire and the mythology of the Haitian Revolution, bounced between Spain and Haiti until finally winning independence in 1844. While creoles and *peninsulares* chafed against each other in Cuba and Puerto Rico, local elites were important components of the imperial machinery. To these diverse peoples, the United States before 1861 took on several meanings: to disaffected creoles, it stood as a republican example that embarrassed the claims of empire; to Haitians, its free black population was a promising source of potential immigrants; to ambitious Dominican leaders, it might confer protection and legitimacy on a shaky regime; and to free blacks across the region, it was a slaveholding nation that could not be trusted.[4]

In the United States, the Caribbean became a theater in the war between abolitionists and the defenders of slavery, and a canvas for the fervid dreams of American expansionists. The Caribbean had been a testing ground for black ability since the Haitian Revolution: abolitionists insisted that Haiti disproved the old canard about black inferiority, while proslavery writers emphasized the political and economic problems of the new nation. A similar pattern developed in the 1830s, as both sides sculpted the evidence of British emancipation to fit their arguments. Abolitionists rejected the claim that former slaves had simply stopped working after 1838, and promoted a more positive image of post-slavery societies in the Antilles. Black and white radicals like James McCune Smith and Wendell Phillips praised Toussaint Louverture's achievements; the *New York Evening Post* journalist John Bigelow visited Jamaica in 1850, and supplied an upbeat account of emancipation and free black prospects in the British West Indies. Charles Sumner, the leading anti-slavery force in the US Senate, pushed successive American administrations to offer

diplomatic recognition to Haiti, and quietly asked British politicians to be more forceful in their defense of West Indian emancipation.[5]

Over the course of the 1850s, meanwhile, US diplomats and policymakers focused on two contrasting opportunities for extending American sovereignty into the Caribbean: Cuba and the Dominican Republic. From 1852, US negotiators courted General Pedro Santana, the Dominican leader. Santana had led his country to independence in 1844, but continuing tensions with Haiti—and the challenges of his domestic rival, Buenaventura Báez—made him see annexation as a means of consolidating his rule. American strategists looked hungrily toward Samaná Bay, the great natural harbor on the northern coast of the Dominican Republic, while land speculators and steamship operators envisaged a steady stream of American migrants after the absorption of the entire republic. This was, predominantly, a northern initiative—an extension of free labor ideology into the tropics. The mixed-race Dominican population was finessed in General Santana's official dealings with Washington: he spoke of the "white Dominicans" and "Spanish inhabitants" who were threatened by Haitian aggression. But American enthusiasm was checked by the messiness of the broader political situation, with Spain and France adamantly opposed to any cession of Dominican territory.[6]

US expansionists refused to abandon these hopes, and James Buchanan made another tilt at Dominican annexation in 1859. But for most of the period between 1854 and 1860, American policymakers targeted Cuba instead. This was, in some ways, a still more quixotic obsession: Spain showed no interest in selling the island, and Cuban creoles preferred independence to American statehood. Most Congressional supporters of an American Cuba came from the South, and slavery played a prominent role in debates about annexation. But it would be a mistake to view Cuban annexation as a proslavery initiative. The Caribbean had been an early fixation of "manifest destiny" proponents, and in the 1850s both Democrats and Republicans offered gymnastic arguments linking the geography of the hemisphere to American expansion. (Republican senator William Seward insisted in 1859 that "every rock and grain of sand in that island were drifted and washed out from American soil.") Congressmen also noted the quickening progress of Britain, France, Russia, and the other great powers, and insisted that the United States had to expand to keep pace with these rivals. That Cuba could, in the process, be saved from the debilitating rule of Spain added considerable force to this argument.[7]

Some southerners embraced proslavery arguments for annexation, though the sectional accent of this language limited its reach. Judah P. Benjamin, US senator from Louisiana, suggested that Cuban slaves would benefit from the "milder" forms of slavery that had been perfected in the South, and that an American Cuba would destroy the last remnants of the African slave trade. But the island was more often imagined within a hemispheric slave system that was fluid and dynamic. Robert Walker, the Mississippi senator, had argued in the 1840s that slavery would eventually be spirited away from the South through the slow migration of forced labor into the tropical zone. His fellow Mississippian, the House member Albert Brown, applied this logic in 1853 to Cuba. Slavery had flourished in America because of its essential mobility, Brown argued. It moved southward into new soils, drawing white planters and black slaves toward the siren song of profit. Brown feared that, without expansion into Cuba or Mexico, the music might stop while millions of blacks remained in the Deep South. He was loath to deny to his constituents the same release from blacks that, he argued, every northern state had been granted in earlier decades. For precisely the same reason, slavery stalwarts like James Henry Hammond of South Carolina viewed the acquisition of Cuba with intense suspicion. How could the defenders of slavery benefit from four or even six Cuban senators, if Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland—perhaps even Virginia—shed their slaves and moved into the free labor column?[8]

Northerners and southerners struggled with another question: Were the Cuban creoles white? Or, perhaps, the wrong kind of whites? William Boyce of South Carolina warned Congress in 1855 that the Spanish had encouraged equality between Cuba's sizeable free black population and its white creoles. Their supposed denial of racial hierarchies could only end badly: in the amalgamation of the races, in the terrible scenes of the Haitian Revolution, or in the slow erosion of slavery's hold on the rest of Cuba's black population. Even the "pure" creoles were "inferior whites," in Boyce's assessment, a category that drew upon the supposed backwardness of Spanish culture and Catholicism. Republicans also doubted creole ability: Cubans were "ignorant, vicious, and priest-ridden" (Zachariah Chandler of Michigan); "entirely unintelligent" (Jacob Collamer of Vermont); "different in language, different in race, different in habits, […] and radically different in religion" (William Seward of New York).[9]

The issue of Cuban ability was crucial because virtually everyone who discussed annexation agreed that the island would enter the Union as

a state rather than a colony or protectorate. Miles Taylor of Louisiana insisted that the United States "cannot acquire and retain territory occupied by any distinct portion of the human family" without "making that community part and parcel of ourselves." This point united Whigs, Democrats, Know Nothings and, eventually, Republicans. It focused minds on the citizenship potential of Cubans, but prompted a broader question: did the United States have the power to absorb and transform the peoples in its path, or was it a vehicle for a special people—white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant—to overwhelm their less distinguished neighbors? Many Republican lawmakers took the conservative view that "free institutions" (in the words of James Dixon of Connecticut) were "not a cause, but an effect. They are produced by the character of the people previously; they do not create the people." Expansionists, on the other hand, depicted Cuban creoles as doughty freedom fighters who shared America's aversion to European empire. Easy agreement on the question of creole ability proved elusive, even before legislators determined how they could incorporate Cuba's substantial slave minority.[10]

It was Republicans, rather than Democrats, who helped to craft a different version of expansion in the midst of the Cuba debate. Since the formation of the party in the mid-1850s, Republicans had couched their hostility toward slavery in an embrace of black colonization. But the practical difficulties of removing huge numbers to Liberia persuaded leading Republicans to seek an alternative to the American Colonization Society. James Doolittle of Wisconsin raised this issue during the 1859 debate over Cuban annexation. Given the Spanish government's reluctance to sell the island, Doolittle asked his fellow senators to focus instead on the "two great questions" of the age:

> One is the solution of the Anglo-American question, the other the solution of the Africo-American question. In the solution of these great questions the men of our own race, from the temperate zones of the Old World, mingling with us and being Americanized, will hold, in the end, exclusive possession of the temperate zones of the New; while the descendants of the man of the tropics of the Old World now among us will find their homes in the tropics of the New; and, sir, they will not go there as slaves, but as freemen, to live among freemen, and where color is no degradation. They will go, under our instrumentality, not to overturn the Governments to which they emigrate, but to aid in developing the most productive regions of the whole earth.

Doolittle's vision of tropical homesteading quickly won converts among Republicans. Francis P. Blair, the Missouri Congressman, traveled the Midwest and Northeast promoting a chain of black dependencies incorporating "all the nations and islands of the gulf." Linking territorial expansion to black colonization would give the United States "our India," thought Blair. (Though "under happier auspices.") Although the precise territorial arrangements remained unclear, Doolittle and Blair had placed the spirit of Tocqueville's prophecy at the heart of their party's thinking about slavery. Continental segregation was no longer mooted as the consequence of racial apocalypse, but as a policy to be secured through the ascendancy of the Republican party.[11]

The prospect of Caribbean expansion played an important role in the battles over slavery in the 1850s. Charles Sumner, among others, urged Americans to view Cuba in the same light as Kansas; Abraham Lincoln, in explaining his rejection of the Crittenden Compromise in early 1861, envisaged that, without an explicit ban on the extension of slavery, the South would soon demand Cuba as a condition for remaining in the Union. The Cuba debate, though, was more than a dry run for the Civil War. James Buchanan and other leading Democrats recognized that even anti-slavery stalwarts like Gerrit Smith and William Seward had a weakness for American expansion. Hence Buchanan's otherwise-baffling belief in 1859 that Caribbean expansion might unite the nation—or, at least, his party. Buchanan's hope was demolished even before Lincoln's celebrated inflexibility in the winter of 1860–1861, though the issue of slavery was hardly the only factor that would determine American relations with the Caribbean in the coming years. In the 1850s, an aggressive US nationalism had been married to profound confusion about the power of American institutions, the complex politics of the Caribbean, and the ability of Cubans and Dominicans to embrace republican ideas. These unresolved questions would attain a new urgency at the war's end.[12]

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On April 1, 1861, less than two weeks before the start of the Civil War, the new Secretary of State William Seward sent Abraham Lincoln an astonishing memo. Despite the gathering war clouds, the administration was "yet without a policy either domestic or foreign." In order to "change the question before the public" from slavery to national honor, Lincoln should "send agents into Canada, Mexico and Central America, to rouse a vigorous continental spirit of independence on this continent

against European intervention." He should also demand explanations from France and Spain about their American intentions and, if those proved wanting, "convene Congress and declare war against them." The event that prompted Seward's outburst was the Spanish annexation of the Dominican Republic. Threatened once more by a Haitian invasion in 1859, Dominican leader Pedro Santana confessed to the Spanish queen Isabel that his people should never have declared independence in the first place. Isabel, like Seward, was already looking to silence her domestic critics with foreign adventures. When Santana asked the Cuban governor Francisco Serrano to send troops to bolster his defenses against Haiti, annexation became a fait accompli. Isabel was delighted that, despite the shrill republicanism of the age, a threatened people looked to empire to secure their liberties. In Eugenio Matibag's striking term, Spain became a proud pioneer of "retrocolonization."[13]

France initially objected to re-annexation, but by April 1861 Napoleon III had concluded, as James Cortada puts it, that "the Monroe Doctrine finally should die." (Mexico would soon be the theater for Napoleon's ambitions.) While European threats to kill the Doctrine remained private, the diplomatic machinations of France and Spain were enough to stir the most palsied Young American from his armchair. But unless one followed Seward's course and embraced all-out war with Europe—a prospect that Lincoln viewed as deranged—diplomatic options were limited. American troops would be needed to combat the rebellion in the South, and the Union was desperate to prevent European nations from recognizing the Confederacy. Newspaper editor Carl Schurz urged Lincoln to "make short work of the secession movement and then to make front against the war abroad," but this was easier said than done. Seward tried in vain to unite Britain and France in opposition to the re-annexation of the Dominican Republic, and Lincoln sent Schurz to Madrid in a futile attempt to plead the American case. By the summer of 1861, Bull Run had offered a painful demonstration of the North's limited reach. If the Union army could not intervene successfully in Virginia, was it likely to drive Spanish troops from Santo Domingo? Lincoln and Seward dropped the Dominican issue, leaving the door open for European powers to embarrass American exceptionalism in the years ahead.[14]

While the war effort limited American military and diplomatic options in the Caribbean, it hastened the advance of the Republicans' tropical homesteads policy. In his first weeks in office, Lincoln began developing plans for free black colonies in Central America and the Caribbean. By the

summer, as Congress approved the confiscation of slaves serving in the Confederate armies, Lincoln extended the reach of black colonization to freed people as well, and encouraged the Border States to enact emancipation schemes in tandem with federal colonization efforts. In his message to Congress in December 1861, Lincoln envisaged that blacks should be colonized "at some place or places in a climate congenial to them," which meant that the United States would require new territory in the tropical zone. Although this would surely rankle those who insisted that "the only legitimate object of acquiring territory is to furnish homes for white men," the results of colonization would answer its critics: "the emigration of colored men leaves additional room for white men remaining or coming here." Lincoln used this opportunity to urge the diplomatic recognition of Haiti and Liberia, the two nations that had received the most African American emigrants before the war.[15]

While Liberia had been largely discarded by Republicans as a destination for mass black emigration, Haiti had the advantage of proximity and a preexisting enthusiasm on the part of African Americans. Since the late 1810s, free black communities had viewed Haitian emigration in a more favorable light than the murky plans of the Colonization Society. In the early 1820s, around 6000 people left for the black republic, though many returned in disappointment. Three decades on, in the shadow of the Fugitive Slave Act, black leaders organized a national convention in Cleveland to revive the Haitian option. James Holly, a teacher and newspaper editor, opened negotiations with Haiti's rulers to secure a formal emigration agreement. The new regime of Fabre Geffrard warmly embraced Holly's proposal in 1859, and within months the Haitian Emigration Bureau had been established under the direction of the (white) anti-slavery activist James Redpath.[16]

Free blacks were torn over whether emigration would undermine or bolster southern slavery. Holly and Redpath targeted the staunch abolitionist Frederick Douglass as the public figure who could contribute most to their cause, and Douglass—a firm foe of Liberia—initially judged the Haitian option as "a possible necessity to our people." Having pledged to visit the Caribbean in 1861, Douglass changed his mind at the outbreak of the Civil War. In June, he protested that "this simple overture of benevolence has hardened into a grand scheme of public policy," and lamented the "doctrines of races, of climates, of nationalities and destinies" that would locate blacks and whites in separate countries. James Redpath was undeterred. He asked Charles Sumner, the abolitionist senator, to speed diplomatic

recognition of Haiti from Congress. (This "would give a greater impetus to emigration than anything that the Cabinet would do," Redpath insisted.) More than 2000 black emigrants left the United States for Haiti between 1860 and 1862 under the auspices of the Emigration Bureau, even as the Lincoln administration struggled to find overseas partners for its removal schemes.[17]

But the onset of war had helped to "change the question" among free blacks in ways that William Seward could not have envisaged. An increasing number shared Douglass's insight that the war would transform the United States, and that black people should fight for their rights in the restored republic rather than accept the inevitability of racial separation. Lincoln resisted this conclusion. After a clumsy attempt to persuade a delegation of black Washingtonians in 1862 that they had a duty to accept colonization in the Caribbean or Central America, Lincoln directed his removal plans to the swelling ranks of freed people surrounding the Union armies. Latin American governments responded coolly to his requests for territory, reasoning that a colony of African Americans might easily allow the United States to project its power into their midst. Lincoln canvassed the British government about sending freed people to its plantations in Belize and Guyana, but the complications of the ongoing war effort prevented the sides from reaching agreement. The only federal colonization plan to leave the drawing board was implemented on Île à Vache, an island off the southern coast of Haiti. More than 450 freed people were recruited from Fort Monroe in Virginia in July 1863, but the experiment was a disaster. The contractor chosen by the federal government, Bernard Kock, displayed an "avarice" which later stunned American investigators, and the effort quickly collapsed amidst privation and recrimination. The colonists who survived the experience were restored to the United States in March 1864, and the federal government made no further progress on colonization before the Confederate surrender at Appomattox.[18]

We might conclude at this point that the war had inflicted a double blow on Tocqueville's prophecy: the federal government failed in its efforts to demonstrate the practicability of large-scale colonization, and the course of the war suggested the advent of a race-blind citizenship within the United States. In fact, the Civil War's impact on ideas of racial separation was more modest. During the debates over the Thirteenth Amendment and Reconstruction in 1864 and early 1865, Democrats and Republicans clung to the idea that, when free, the black population would gravitate toward the tropical regions. Some legislators even suggested that black soldiers could march into Mexico and expel the invasion forces of Napoleon III. The government investigation

into Île à Vache, meanwhile, confirmed that the plan had rested on solid foundations: it was the management of the effort that was to blame for its failure.[19]

If William Seward failed to change the question from slavery to patriotism, the war years at least marked a belated shift in the debate over black prospects. From the summer of 1861, it was clear to many Republicans that slavery would not survive the conflict. But the issue of black citizenship was still unresolved in 1865. When American policymakers looked again at the Caribbean after Appomattox, they did so with a parallax view. Expansionists could reprise their claims that the islands of the Caribbean would be transformed by American influence, or that they belonged to the Union because they had originally been washed from the Mississippi River. But the place of non-white people in a reconstructed nation was anything but secure, and the lure of a tropical divide between white and non-white populations endured.

* * *

We owe the term "Latin America" to the Civil War era. In the mid 1850s, Spanish American critics of US imperialism invoked a common identity and interest south of the Rio Grande in opposition to US expansion. But by 1862 Napoleon 111 had appropriated the term to promote the imperial ambitions of Spain and France in Mexico. With the United States distracted by its Civil War, Napoleon surmised, French- and Spanish-backed regimes in Mexico, Santo Domingo, Cuba, and Puerto Rico could demonstrate the benefits of empire in humiliating proximity to the American republic. Things did not work out this way. In Santo Domingo, opponents of Pedro Santana teamed up with the Haitian government to forge a powerful resistance movement. Queen Isabel reluctantly signaled the end to "retrocolonization" on March 3, 1865—the day before Lincoln's second inaugural. Later that year, Andrew Johnson sent 50,000 troops to the Mexican border, while William Seward (who remained as secretary of state) asked Napoleon to withdraw his forces from the hemisphere. In 1866, the fall of Emperor Maximilian, Napoleon's puppet leader in Mexico, seemed to confirm a republican resurgence.[20]

Cuba and Puerto Rico became the last redoubts of Spanish control in the hemisphere. Among Americans, the notoriety of the former was enhanced by news that Confederate exiles like Judah Benjamin had taken refuge there. (In one of the war's many ironies, this former expansionist had gained Cuba but lost the United States.) But the reactionary appearance of the Spanish Caribbean masked a burgeoning anti-slavery movement. In 1865, the Puerto Rican Julio Vizcarrondo helped to found the Abolition Society of Madrid. The Spanish poet Carolina Coronado, a

favorite of Isabel, became the Society's vice-president. Coronado and Vizcarrondo, who were both married to Americans, belonged to a transnational anti-slavery network that spanned the Atlantic. Its Spanish-speaking members labored against significant political headwinds, however. In 1868, weakened by economic failure and military disappointments, Queen Isabel was overthrown by a coalition of generals and republicans. This in turn prompted creoles in the Caribbean to question their attachment to empire, even as anti-slavery sentiment gathered momentum. For American observers, mapping the ensuing debates over empire and slavery proved especially challenging.[21]

William Seward witnessed this unusually plastic moment from close quarters. In January 1866, he left Washington for a month-long tour of the Caribbean. He sailed first to the Danish West Indies, where he complimented local officials on their successful emancipations, mooted the possibility of American annexation, and bumped into the exiled Mexican leader, Antonio López de Santa Anna. In Port-au-Prince, Seward toured the Haitian Senate and House of Representatives, spoke warmly with Fabre Geffrard in the state drawing room, and admired a portrait of Abraham Lincoln. In Havana he met with the Spanish captain-general and a carefully selected group of American expatriates. But it was in Santo Domingo that he gave a sense of where American policy was headed. The new president, Buenaventura Báez, begged Seward for diplomatic recognition, and the secretary was happy to oblige. The Dominican Republic had an important role to play in the future of the hemisphere. The United States had become an "imposing, possibly a majestic empire":

> Like every other structure of large proportions, it requires outward buttresses. These buttresses will arise in the development of civilization in this hemisphere. They will consist of republics like our own, founded in adjacent countries and islands, upon the principle of the equal rights of men. To us it matters not of what race or lineage these republics shall be. They are necessary for our security against external forces, and, perhaps, for the security of our internal peace. We desire those buttresses to be multiplied, and strengthened, as fast as it can be done, without the exercise of fraud or force on our own part.

With this in mind, Seward really had "no choice but to recognize the Republic of Dominica."[22]

Similar ideas coursed through Washington after the Civil War. Republican leader Thaddeus Stevens expected the Caribbean to form a

republic "not less powerful than was the Achaean League;" unless, of course, the islands were "added to our dominion by our enterprising Foreign Secretary." Báez, with an eye on his domestic opponents, viewed an American annexation of Samaná Bay or the entire republic as a means of consolidating his power—in the short term, at least. But the political instabilities that gave the United States an opening in the region had a powerful undertow. By the end of 1868, six Dominican regimes had come and gone since the Spanish retreat of 1865, and Haitians and Dominicans continued to nurture their long enmity. Britain had put down an uprising in Jamaica, and major rebellions had broken out in Puerto Rico and Cuba. American expansionists suggested that a US advance into the region would itself secure stability. But the region's unsettled politics fed the anxieties of annexation opponents. Meanwhile, the deepening domestic struggles over Reconstruction, which had ravaged the presidency of Andrew Johnson, suggested that the United States should consolidate its existing territory before broadening its horizons. "I think that we shall both of us live to forget the smaller troubles of these days," wrote Seward to Thad Stevens in 1867, "and see the continual development of our country." But the prospects of expansion into the Caribbean were clouded by tensions at home and abroad.[23]

When Ulysses S. Grant entered the White House in March 1869, Cuba demanded his immediate attention. Spain had poured troops into the island, and Cuban exiles in New York and Washington were steering American opinion toward the rebels. Should the United States intervene, by recognizing the rebels? If it did, would it become the midwife of Cuban independence, or swallow Cuba whole? During the last months of Andrew Johnson's administration, Congress had confirmed that any new territories would enter the Union under the terms of the 1787 Northwest Ordinance: an American Cuba or Dominica could expect statehood rather than colonialism from Washington. Many Cuban exiles in the United States were prepared to accept annexation as the price of American intervention in the struggle with Spain, but this prospect failed to unite the American public. One Southern newspaper bemoaned the addition of "another large negro constituency, petted and favored at the expense of white society." The *New York Times* thought that Cuba had been a "splendid milch cow" under slavery, but would meet the same fate as Jamaica or Haiti if it became "a state of the American union." "Why should we trouble ourselves about the blacks of the West Indies," the paper asked, "while the problem involved in the emancipation of the Southern blacks is not half solved?"[24]

When American abolitionists squeezed the Cuban revolution into an anti-slavery frame, the details became harder to see. Were the rebels abolitionists, or were they trying to defend slavery from imperial Spanish reformers? Rebel leaders initially shied from a commitment to immediate abolition, looking to recruit planters to the cause of independence. They became more strident in their opposition to slavery as they became aware of American concerns, but their initial uncertainty allowed celebrated American abolitionists to traduce the rebel cause. Charles Sumner claimed that the rebels had "a proslavery constitution to be read at home, and an antislavery constitution to be read abroad." For William Lloyd Garrison, the Cubans had resolved "to unfurl the standard of secession" only when abolition sentiment had taken hold in Europe. Garrison conceded that Spain had been slow to adopt the cause of immediate emancipation, but hadn't northerners been equally reticent in their own battle with slaveholding separatists? He cheerily predicted that, if Americans left the island alone, Spain would eventually be forced to adopt military emancipation—"in imitation of our own tardy example"—and destroy Cuban slavery. With patience, Americans would see that the causes of empire and abolition were aligned.[25]

Grant kept alive the prospect of Cuban recognition throughout 1869, and Republicans were split evenly on the issue. Those who favored extending belligerent status to the rebels claimed that the American public demanded action, and that a rebel victory in Cuba would secure abolition. Republicans who opposed recognition cataloged the practical problems of American involvement in the conflict. John F. Farnsworth of Illinois lamented the prospect that "semi-civilized, semi-barbarous men who cannot speak our language" would soon be permitted "to help to legislate for us." The American eagle had flown far enough, he claimed, and the "poor wearied bird" now deserved a rest. (Unless Canada was available.) As the prospect of Cuban intervention receded, Grant switched his focus to the Dominican Republic, and to Buenaventura Báez's offer of a treaty of annexation. In the spring of 1870, Grant began a concerted effort to promote the benefits to his party: Annexation would resolve the deep-seated tensions among Dominicans and Haitians, draw countless settlers from the American mainland, and emulate Cuba's pell-mell development in every respect but one: it would sustain free labor rather than slavery.[26]

What followed was a frantic year of controversy which brought the nation closer to a Caribbean acquisition than at any previous moment, but revealed deep divisions among Republicans and alumni of the abolition movement. Given their skepticism toward Cuba, northern newspapers were surprisingly

supportive of Grant's plan. The *New York Times*, which had changed its editor in 1869, provided a steady stream of pro-annexation pieces in 1870; so did the *New York Tribune* and the *Independent*. Resistance came from southerners wary of absorbing a non-white population, and from an unlikely source: Charles Sumner and Carl Schurz, veterans of the abolition struggle. Sumner insisted that Dominican annexation would threaten Haitian independence and the principle of black self-determination. But in exalting Haitian history and decrying any Caribbean intrusion by the United States, Sumner revived the separatist arguments that had upset Frederick Douglass during the debates over Haitian emigration. "To the African belongs the equatorial belt," Sumner told the Senate, "and he should enjoy it undisturbed." As Schurz joined Sumner in linking race to "the unalterable laws of climate," an alliance of white and black abolitionists pushed back against their efforts. Frederick Douglass presented annexation as an opportunity for the nation to discard its old ideas about race and climate. Samuel Howe, the Boston abolitionist, had "no more sympathy with the cry of 'a black man's government' for Haiti than with that of a 'white man's government' for the United States." For Howe, white Americans had a debt to repay to blacks after centuries of slavery and oppression, but "we cannot do it by the scheme of building up a great negro confederacy in the tropics. That implies the converse—to wit, a white republic in the temperate zone; and we want no conditions of color."[27]

The strangest element of the annexation craze, though, was the quiet presence of an old idea about racial separation. When, in 1868, the *New York Times* judged Cuba to be worthless without slavery, the paper made one exception:

> Cuba would be an excellent place to which the negroes from the South could be shipped, purging the Southern States of an element which could be advantageously replaced by emigrants and settlers from the older States. […] It would undoubtedly prove the ruin of the Island, but that would be a matter of small importance to the people who bought it, if by these same means they could improve the Southern States to such an extent as to make them the equals of the Northern and Western States in the value of their productions and the increase of population.

Under these circumstances, Cuban creoles would abandon Cuba, the "old race will die out, and the island will belong to the negroes, verifying De Tocqueville's prophecy." As American attention shifted to Santo Domingo, the idea was modified by the *New York Tribune*. In all likelihood, an

American Dominica would benefit Southern blacks: it would "encourage and strengthen them in every way" to see "a State occupied and controlled by men of their own race and color." But if Reconstruction spiraled away from its benevolent sponsors in Washington, the State of Dominica could play a different role: "If the worst came to the worst, the island could be to them a harbor of refuge."[28]

This idea held a special attraction for Ulysses Grant, who noted privately in 1869 that the Dominican Republic would support "the entire colored population of the United States, should it choose to emigrate." As the prospects of annexation receded in 1871, with Sumner and Schurz successfully dividing the Republican majority in the Senate, Grant kept alive two visions for Santo Domingo: it could be a republican paradise in which racial distinctions would dissolve, or a Republican lifeboat in which African Americans would be evacuated from white prejudice. The press mocked the President for his "amazing obstinacy," especially when Santo Domingo popped up in his farewell address in 1876. But Grant had confronted an intractable question about race and nation—the question of whether blacks and whites could live together in equality—and thought that an American Dominica promised a fudge, if not an answer. When he dictated his memoirs in 1885, just a few weeks before his death, he seemed finally to have fallen on one side of the question: "I took it that the colored people would go there in great numbers, so as to have independent states governed by their own race," he recalled. "They would be still be States of the Union, and under the protection of the General Government; but the citizens would be almost wholly colored." Blacks had as much right to remain in the United States as anyone else, he conceded, but the prospect of a "a conflict between races" was now very real. "It was looking to a settlement of this question that led me to urge the annexation of Santo Domingo."[29]

* * *

The American Civil War resonated throughout the Caribbean. Crowds gathered in Havana in the spring of 1865 to mourn the passing of Abraham Lincoln; slaves in the Cuban sugar fields sang "Avanza, Lincoln, avanza" under the noses of their masters; the Haitian government gratefully commissioned portraits of Lincoln and Charles Sumner. The war's outcome, though, was more ambiguous than it initially appeared. By the time that the rebels of Morant Bay in Jamaica launched their uprising in October 1865, demanding access to Crown land and an opportunity to

consolidate their freedom, Andrew Johnson had already aborted General William T. Sherman's transfer of confiscated Confederate land to freed slaves; the promise of "forty aces and a mule" was stillborn. Cubans who wore black ribbons for the slain Lincoln, or who imagined that the United States would hasten the demise of slavery throughout the hemisphere, were frustrated by the failure of the American government to take a decisive stand during the Ten Years' War. José Martí, who had idolized Lincoln as a child, came to think that the United States of the 1870s and 1880s had lost its way, that the "country of Lincoln" had become something less noble. Even the Haitian diplomats who feted Charles Sumner for his stand against the annexation of Santo Domingo, striking a medal in his honor and promising that his birthday would forever be a national holiday in Haiti, had to confront the fact that his principal ally in the fight against Grant—Carl Schurz—viewed the black republic as an object lesson in tropical debility.[30]

The Civil War disrupted the world economy and the politics of the Caribbean and Central America, but its ideological influence is harder to determine—partly because its meaning was never decisively established within the United States. In 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville had identified America's demography and republican ethos as a combustible mixture: If slavery was not maintained, an epic race war would ensue. The only alternative was abolition with amalgamation, and Tocqueville claimed that neither North nor South would accept this. Empires could manage these problems dexterously, as Tocqueville discovered in his work on the French colonization of Algeria. But in the American case, black freedom could only be achieved through violence and continental segregation. The end of American slavery came in very different circumstances than Tocqueville had envisaged, but his accounting of the challenges of emancipation proved prescient. Frederick Douglass believed that the defeat of the Confederacy had opened the prospect of race-blind citizenship, and that Caribbean expansion would consolidate and extend this egalitarian vista. Critics of Dominican annexation doubted that the United States could manage the racial diversity of the South, let alone the Caribbean. Carl Schurz spoke of the former Confederacy as a zone of "semi-tropical States," whose membership of the Union was more a "continental necessity" than a republican boon. While Ulysses Grant understood Douglass's proposition—that an American state in the tropics would buttress black citizenship on the mainland—he eventually consoled himself with a crude

alternative: African Americans could enjoy perfect equality with whites in a state of the Union which would be exclusively black.[31]

The American engagement with the Caribbean in the 1860s and 1870s coincided with two political developments in the eastern hemisphere: the consolidation of peoples into new nation-states, especially in Germany and Italy; and the reaffirmation of empire by Britain and France, which looked to bolster their rule over India and Algeria respectively. In the American debates over Cuba and Santo Domingo, these developments were often conflated. When the question was put directly, empire remained unappealing. It upset the mythology of American expansion, in which territorial governments had supposedly extended liberty to everyone in their path, and it stirred fears of centralization and tyrannical government. The radical proponents of Reconstruction—including, most plangently, Charles Sumner—had invoked the language if not the practices of empire to claim dominion over the South during the Johnson administration. In 1867, Sumner had insisted that "no local claim of self-government can for a moment interfere with the supremacy of the nation, in the maintenance of human rights." He welcomed the Southern charge that Congressional radicals had trampled on the defeated states: "Call it imperialism if you please; it is simply the imperialism of the Declaration of Independence, with all its promises fulfilled." But his unwillingness to extend this empire into the Caribbean made him an unwitting ally of southerners and Democrats who opposed any federal promotion of racial justice. Sumner's most notorious attack on Grant—in which he insisted that the President was pioneering "a new form of Ku Klux on the coasts of St. Domingo"—delighted white conservatives and appalled Republican radicals.[32]

The alternative to empire—equality—brought its own challenges and burdens. Despite the passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which proclaimed the universality of American citizenship, the advocates of extending the Union into the Caribbean confronted a maze of race and climate theories. They had also to explain how an expanded non-white population could alleviate the problems of integration that were already visible in the South. The boldest answer to this—that the republic could confirm its transcendence over race by adding more non-white citizens—was ultimately too strong for Congress, especially given the defection of Sumner and Schurz from the radical cause. After so much American interest in the Caribbean, the choice between empire and equality was postponed for a generation. When it reemerged at the century's end,

the brightest boasts of the Reconstruction era—the promises that defied Tocqueville's prophecy—were a distant memory.

NOTES

1. I have overlooked the handful of (very small) islands claimed by American citizens under the eccentric provisions of the Guano Islands Act of 1856. See Natsu Taylor Saito, *Meeting the Enemy: American Exceptionalism and International Law* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 139–142.

2. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Henry Reeve, 2 vols. (New York: J. & H.G. Langley, 1841), 1: 406–407, 409.

3. Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, second edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Luis Martínez-Fernández, *Torn Between Empires: Economy, Society, and Patterns of Political Thought in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1850–1878* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994); Eugenio Matibag, *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint: Nation, State, and Race on Hispaniola* (New York: Palgrave, 2003); Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy toward Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 39–58; Brian Loveman, *No Higher Law: American Foreign Policy and the Western Hemisphere since 1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 40–52; Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011), 47–84; Louis A. Pérez Jr., *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality & Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 17–38; Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854–1861* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 3–21.

4. Knight, *The Caribbean*, 159–192; Matibag, *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint*, 81–130; Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

5. Alfred N. Hunt, *Haiti's Influence on Antebellum America: Slumbering Volcano in the Caribbean* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 107–192; Edward Bartlett Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation: The Caribbean Roots of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008);

Gale L. Kenny, *Contentious Liberties: American Abolitionists in Post-emancipation Jamaica, 1834–1866* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Matthew J. Clavin, *Toussaint Louverture and the American Civil War: The Promise and Peril of a Second Haitian Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). John Bigelow, *Jamaica in 1850: Or, the Effects of Sixteen Years of Freedom on a Slave Colony* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1851). Sumner to Brougham, Apr. 11 and June 20, 1858, in *The Selected Letters of Charles Sumner*, ed. Beverly Wilson Palmer, 2 vols. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990), 1: 506, 503.

6. Matibag, *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint*, 114. Martínez-Fernández, *Torn Between Empires*, 28–30, 40–49. Hudson, *Mistress of Manifest Destiny: A Biography of Jane McManus Storm Cazneau* (Austin: Texas State Historical Society, 2001), 148–156. "Our Relations with Dominica," *New York Daily Times*, Oct. 20, 1855, p. 1.

7. Martínez-Fernández, *Torn Between Empires*, 49–57; Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, 51–58; *Congressional Globe*, 35 Cong., 2 sess., February 17, 1859, 1084; ibid., Jan. 24, 1859, 539.

8. ibid., February 11, 1859, 961–962. *Congressional Globe*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., Jan. 3, 1853, 193–195. James Henry Hammond, "Speech at Barnwell Court House, Oct. 29, 1858," in *Selections from the Letters and Speeches of the Hon. James H. Hammond* (New York: John F. Trow, 1866), 323–357. Even the *North American Review* concluded that acquiring Cuba's slave system would enable Virginia, Kentucky, and Delaware "the more speedily [to] become free." "Cuba and the Cubans," *North American Review* 79 (1854): 109–137, 133. On Walker and the diffusion of slavery, see Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 26–54.

9. *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 2 sess., Jan. 15, 1855, 91–94 (Boyce); ibid., 35 Cong., 2 sess., February 17, 1859, 1080 (Chandler); ibid., February 21, 1859, 1181 (Collamer); ibid., Jan. 24, 1859, 538 (Seward).

10. *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, 35 Cong., 2 sess., February 10, 1859, 148. *Congressional Globe*, 35 Cong., 2 sess., February 25, 1859, 1337.

11. *Congressional Globe*, 35 Cong., 2 sess., February 9, 1859, 907; Frank P. Blair Jr., *The Destiny of the Races of this Continent* (Washington, D.C.: Buell & Blanchard, 1859), 23–24. See also Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (New York: Norton, 2010), 123–131; Mark E. Neely, "Colonization and the Myth that Lincoln Prepared the People for Emancipation," in *Lincoln's Proclamation: Emancipation Reconsidered*, ed. William A. Blair and Karen Fisher Younger (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 45–74; and Elbert B. Smith, *Francis Preston Blair* (New York: Free Press, 1980), 249–255, 319–324.

12. Charles Sumner to the Duchess of Argyll, Mar. 30, 1858, in Palmer, ed., *Selected Letters*, 1: 497. Lincoln to James T. Hale, Jan. 11, 1861, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy E. Basler, 8 vols. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953–1955), 4: 172.

13. Seward to Lincoln, Apr. 1, 1861, in ibid., 4: 316–318. James W. Cortada, *Spain and the American Civil War: Relations at Mid-Century, 1855–1868* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1980), 30–33; Matibag, *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint*, 119–121; William D. Phillips Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips, *A Concise History of Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 220; Martínez-Fernández, *Torn Between Empires*, 208–222.

14. Cortada, *Spain and the American Civil War*, 34–37. Carl Schurz to Abraham Lincoln, 5 Apr. 1861, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Series 1. General Correspondence, 1833–1916, Library of Congress. Howard Jones, *Abraham Lincoln and a New Birth of Freedom: The Union and Slavery in the Diplomacy of the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 40–41.

15. Abraham Lincoln, "Annual Message to Congress," Dec. 3, 1861, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 5: 48, 39. See also Foner, *Fiery Trial*, 171–189.

16. *Proceedings of the National Emigration Convention of Colored People* (Pittsburgh: A.A. Anderson, 1854). James Holly, *A Vindication of the Capacity of the Negro Race* (New Haven: William H. Stanley, 1857). See also James T. Campbell, *Middle Passages: African American Journeys to Africa, 1787–2005* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 57–98; and Chris Dixon, *African America and*

Haiti: Emigration and Black Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000), 87–175.

17. Ibid., 129–141, 145–167. *Douglass' Monthly*, Jan. 1861, pp. 386–387. Frederick Douglass, "The Haytian Emigration Movement," *Independent*, 27 June 1861, p. 1. John R. McKivigan, *Forgotten Firebrand: James Redpath and the Making of Nineteenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 61–71. Hunt, *Haiti's Influence*, 173–177.

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Reconstructing Plantation Dominance in British Honduras: Race and Subjection in the Age of Emancipation

Zach Sell

At the 1868 Louisiana State Fair, a large crowd gathered at an exhibition dedicated to the display of colonial products from British Honduras. At one table, spectators looked at exemplary lumber. At another table sat several jars of different grades of sugar—"all of Colonial manufacture."[1] The cane was "enormous," a journalist wrote, adding that "planters should *see* it."[2] For planters in New Orleans to see such sugar in the wake of the American Civil War was to imagine the process of plantation production. To see sugar in Louisiana was to know the possibility of sugar plantations in the aftermath of emancipation in the American South. The visceral impact that such sights had on individuals who thought that their lives as planters and as white people had been destroyed by Civil War could not be represented in print.

In April 1868, two months after the Louisiana State Fair, *The British Honduras Colonist* noted that for the past four or five months, vessels continuously arrived at the wharf of Belize with passengers from the southern United States. Following the Civil War, hundreds of Southerners migrated

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to British Honduras.[3] Perhaps few, if any, of these passengers attended the fair. Yet, many imagined sugarcane growing on plantations and estates that they would manage or own. In British Honduras, already settled whites, colonial officials, and landholding companies engaged in similar imaginations. A columnist for the *British Honduras Colonist* described his vision of arriving planters transforming the small colony, causing sugar to depose mahogany (then the colony's most important export) as king.[4] Arriving white Southerners would transform British Honduras into a colony of "rich fields of the world-famed golden cane."[5] If capital and labor could be obtained, these rich fields of cane would reach vast export markets and "capitalists" would have no reason to be concerned about the safety of their investments.

In 1866, Samuel McCutchon, a former slave-owning planter and Confederate Army colonel, relocated from south Louisiana to British Honduras. In British Honduras, McCutchon worked as a sugar plantation manager for the England-based Young, Toledo and Company on the Regalia Estate along the Sittee River. In St. Charles Parish, Louisiana, McCutchon was known for his methodical management and organization of Ormond plantation.[6] His success in business as a slave-owning planter made him seem crucially important to Young, Toledo and Company. Along with the British Honduras Company, the company was the largest landowning company in British Honduras; both owned nearly a million acres of land each by the 1860s.[7]

Following the defeat of the Confederacy, McCutchon's move from the American South to British Honduras was the result of the interlocking histories of race, colonialism, and capital spanning continents and empires. In British Honduras, McCutchon's organization of plantation labor, practices of land management, and development of plantation machinery were part of an effort to reconstruct relations of social domination in British Honduras following African American emancipation. Slavery and slave-owning in the American South, through which McCutchon made himself, had been destroyed and would never return. Yet, in moving to British Honduras to manage the Regalia Estate, McCutchon moved into a profession where his skills as both a planter and settler would continue to have currency. McCutchon's movement from plantation slavery in the American South to colonial plantation management in British Honduras reveals the continuing significance of US planters to projects of colonial economic transformation following African American emancipation.

* * *

The Civil War is often framed as a clash between two competing, nation-bound modes of production. Within this narrative, the North, based upon burgeoning industrial capitalism, diverges from the slaveholding South which is defined by pre-capitalist paternalism.[8] During the American Civil War, southern pre-capitalism is defeated by northern capitalism consolidated around the settler ideology of "free soil, free labor, and free men."

When situated in relation to the transnational circuits of capital, this history appears much different. The particularity of black exploitation through settler slavery in the American South made it integral to factory production in Lancashire, England, the center of the Industrial Revolution. The singular relationship between the American South and the British Empire engendered searches for other domains for plantation production not least because of the explosive instability of enslaving regimes. From India, Natal, Fiji, Egypt, to the American West and elsewhere, industrial and colonial interests such as the Manchester Cotton Supply Association sought to further incorporate colonized regions into a capitalist order through the expansion of cotton cultivation.[9]

Scholars have been attentive to this dynamic and the Civil War's impact upon "the worldwide web of cotton."[10] Yet the Civil War and black emancipation's impact upon other transnational circuits of agricultural commodity production is often less apparent and less understood. Though cotton was king in the American South, the region was also central to the production of sugar, wheat, tobacco, and rice. The Civil War and black emancipation unevenly impacted all of these commodity chains. In Australia, the first major increase in tobacco production was brought about by the Civil War.[11] Rice plantations in North and South Carolina provided most of Britain's rice before the Civil War. When cultivation in North and South Carolina decreased dramatically with the outbreak of the Civil War, there was a global response.[12] The British Empire, having annexed Burma in 1855, began to work toward the introduction of large rice paddy plantations in the face of decreased supply caused by the Civil War.[13]

Sugar cultivation in the United States offers a striking example of how regionally cultivated plantation commodities produced for national consumption engendered transnational transformations following black emancipation in the United States. Before the Civil War, south Louisiana was among the wealthiest plantation districts in the United States.[14] Throughout the nineteenth century, Louisiana's sugar-producing plantations accounted for 90 percent of US production.[15] Though the United

States did not generally export sugar, when the sugar economy of south Louisiana collapsed during the Civil War, so did one of the most concentrated sites of sugar production in the world. In a section entitled "To Capitalists" from a report on the productivity of sugar plantations, Louis and Alcée Bouchereau noted that the Civil War had caused productive sugar plantations to cease operations. As one planter noted, "With Capital in the hands of our planters, we would rapidly recuperate, and progress with the giant strides peculiar to all American enterprise."[16]

At the same time, sugar production did not decrease. In 1860, the amount of global cane sugar production was estimated at 1,510,000 tons increasing in 1870 to 1,585,000.[17] The increase in production was accompanied by the expansion of plantation enterprise. This occurred in both small and dramatic ways. In Hawaii, for example, sugar production increased significantly between 1860 and 1870 from approximately 750 tons to roughly 7,700.[18] This increase was the result of technological developments and price increases from the Civil War and a product of the depression in supply from south Louisiana.[19] The establishment of such new sugar plantations was based upon the extension, expansion, and refinement of forms of indigenous and Chinese labor exploitation.

British Honduras was united with other mid-nineteenth-century colonial domains such as Fiji, India, Natal, Burma, New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, and the American West not only through commodity chains but also through rules of colonial and racial difference. These regimes were impacted by black emancipation in the United States just as enslavement in the United States transformed in relation to black emancipation in the Caribbean. The Haitian Revolution, after all, in part made the ascent of sugar production through black enslavement in south Louisiana possible.[20]

In and beyond the United States, settlers were integral to projects for the extension of colonial and national rule. In a letter sent to *The British Honduras Colonist*, white Texan settler Z. N. Morrell wrote of his first day in British Honduras: "you would have been reminded of Texas 30 years ago, in examining the maps of the country, and to see emigrants scattering in every direction."[21] Morrell's memory draws attention to the settler-expansionist impulse of the American South. Sugar and cotton planters needed constantly to relocate because of soil depletion caused by plantation cultivation. In order to secure white planters' safety, British Honduras policed an ever-shifting frontier region to prevent attacks by the Maya. These efforts to police the frontier and the arrival of war-hardened planters became increasingly bound together. White Southerners seemed necessary

not only for managing labor but also for protecting landed property interests against the Santa Cruz Maya. As the manager for the British Honduras Company wrote, "the importation of energetic Americans accustomed to arms" would provide an example of "self-reliance in securing safety to life and property within the Colony."[22]

While white Southerners were seen as necessary for challenging Maya claims against colonial interests, planters also believed it was necessary to remove Maya cultural influences to ensure efficient sugar cultivation. Maya culture was seen as deleterious to plantation culture and settler suggestions argued the necessity of reshaping colonial culture in a way that replicated the United States. In particular, Xaibe, a Maya festival that occurred in May, was seen by planters as an impediment to plantation production that should be eliminated.[23] According to one *Sugar Cane* observer, laborers took a week off to participate in the festival. Though planters recognized the celebration as an "odious saturnalia," they felt that they were forced to accept laborers participation in order to maintain labor control. The *Sugar Cane* writer continued:

> However much this necessity might have been felt in the infancy of the colony, when the staple of the country was mahogany and logwood, which required no continuous labour save at one season of the year; now that attention is to be turned to agriculture, and especially to the cultivation of the cane and the manufacture of sugar, which, more than any other species of industry, require constant application and uninterrupted labour; to submit to such a sacrifice at the shrine of Bacchus, and countenance and encourage a usage whose advent occurs at a critical time, in the midst of crop, when the utmost energy and exertion are required to reap the reward of all the planter's previous toil—is a suicidal policy that must subvert his best interests, and entail ruin in the end.[24]

The anonymous author further suggested that Xaibe be substituted with another holiday celebration around Christmas time. Such a suggestion to reorganize time mirrored the holiday practice of the antebellum South where it was custom for enslaved people to receive a week off during Christmas. Frederick Douglass noted that the holiday which lasted a week in the American South was "part and parcel of the gross fraud, wrong, and inhumanity of slavery" because it was a mechanism of social control that presented planters as benevolent while obscuring their brutality.[25] Undergirding the suggestion that Xaibe be revoked in favor of a Christmas celebration is an acknowledgement that such a

transformation would enact white control over celebratory leisure time giving whites the power to revoke the holiday, if necessary. The push toward revoking Xaibe was an attempt to make time align with plantation production. May was a time of intense activity on sugar plantations while December was relatively lax.

* * *

The wide-ranging Immigration Act of 1861 was central to the recruitment of labor intended to transform the economic foundations of the colony toward one based upon the export of agricultural production. The Act was variously deployed in efforts to obtain laborers from Cuba, the United States, Barbados, India, China, West Africa, and elsewhere to do the work of agricultural cultivation. The most sustained efforts to bring labor to the colony involved first a project to recruit African American laborers during the American Civil War. The failure of this project was followed by a turn toward Chinese indentured labor which arrived in the colony in 1865.

The recruitment of emancipated African Americans for colonial agricultural production was a significant transnational experiment involving both the North and South. In 1863, for example, a colony of liberated African Americans was brought—along with white American plantation overseers—to Haiti to establish an experimental cotton plantation at Île à Vache. The effort failed as recently emancipated African Americans refused to labor on plantations and to work for former overseers just as they would refuse to work in intensive sugar plantation production in south Louisiana just a few years later.[26] In their important *Colonization after Emancipation*, Phillip Magness and Sebastian Page have described the failed efforts of Abraham Lincoln to colonize African Americans in British Honduras following the Emancipation Proclamation and before Abraham Lincoln's death.[27] The two note the interest in colonization in British Honduras within Abraham Lincoln's cabinet. This interest was coordinated with the British government in its broader attempt to secure labor and transform agriculture in the colony.

However, in British Honduras, colonization after emancipation took a different form than first explored by either the Lincoln cabinet or British colonial officials. Rather than for emancipated African Americans, British Honduras became an important location in the "Confederate diaspora"—the movement of white Southerners, often planters, from the American South following the war to locations including Brazil, Mexico, and British Honduras.[28] In British Honduras, the technical, managerial, and settling

techniques of war-hardened planters such as Samuel McCutchon became seen as integral to the introduction of plantation-based sugar cultivation. By 1870, after McCutchon began to manage sugar production at the Regalia Estate for Young, Toledo and Company, it was estimated that the plantation was cultivating sugarcane on 250 acres of land.[29] Such increases in production and McCutchon's ability to realize them through the exploitative organization of labor caused *The British Honduras Colonist* to report that sugarcane production in British Honduras would "astonish planters and agriculturalists of other sugar producing countries."[30]

McCutchon was brutal and methodical in organizing and managing plantations in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana. McCutchon organized the cooking of meals according to those who could no longer perform field-work—a practice that followed common plantation managerial wisdom. Further, McCutchon standardized labor organization and effectively differentiated skilled and unskilled occupations to maximize production.[31] In his 1861 Ormond plantation journals, McCutchon offered descriptive details of the types of labor different enslaved people were to perform and the levels of experience such work positions required. This ordering of labor practices between unskilled and skilled differentiated enslaved labor according to age and gender, having women perform different work than men at different levels of intensity in order to maximize productivity. In his journal, McCutchon meticulously noted when enslaved laborers were sick and regularly calculated their value in inventories. At the same time, McCutchon was attentive to the technological processes of sugar cultivation and observant of global innovations. Employing advanced technology, McCutchon's sugar plantations in south Louisiana came to resemble a "factory in the field."[32] By 1849, the Ormond plantation had 850 arpents (a little over 700 acres) of sugar plantation land in active cultivation.

Writing for *De Bow's Review*, Charles A. Pilsbury reflected upon the importance of white Southern planters in the introduction of new techniques of plantation management in British Honduras, noting that plantations had become "scientific" with the migration of white Southerners.[33] Further, the movement of Southern planters like McCutchon was seen by white colonists in British Honduras as essential for procuring investments in sugar plantation production: "If the events shall demonstrate that the Southern planters have neither miscalculated the resources of British Honduras nor the effect of their own energy, British capitalists will speedily show the sagacity in recognizing this new channel of profitable

employment."[34] Such forms of agricultural collaboration were meant to enable the reconstruction of white racial dominance while also increasing the value of colonial land.

Southern planters like McCutchon were seen as integral to the establishment of plantation regimes as managers of land and labor with knowledge about sugar cultivation. As an organizer of production, McCutchon had demonstrated an ability to mobilize violence against a hierarchically divided labor force in St. Charles Parish. At Regalia Estate, McCutchon demonstrated an interest in the use of scientific methods of machine production for the cultivation of sugar, drawing upon techniques used in other parts of the Caribbean. This increased reliance upon the use of machines was meant to address labor scarcity in the colony. As one plantation observer noted, technological innovations "greatly reduced the amount of hand labour required" making it possible to "dispense with the [N]egro and replace him with European skill."[35]

Yet, despite such aspirations for technological innovation to displace dependence upon black labor, estates such as Regalia instead relied upon new forms of racialized labor exploitation. In 1865, 474 Chinese indentured laborers arrived in British Honduras aboard the *Light of the Age*. The experience of these laborers was defined by plantation exploitation and violence backed by the colonial state. By March 1869, 109 Chinese laborers had died in the colony.[36] Chinese laborers resisted these conditions in a variety of ways including through mass desertion when more than 100 laborers abandoned plantations to join the Santa Cruz Maya.[37]

At Regalia Estate, McCutchon employed a system of management that depended upon both Chinese indenture in addition to labor from the region. In 1868, Regalia relied upon a labor force of nearly one hundred which included sixty Chinese indentured laborers. The deaths of Chinese laborers on Regalia reflected broader patterns of conflict and violence between indentured laborers, planters, and the colonial state. At Regalia, So Tsing Whan drowned on 16 April 1868, on 18 March 1868 Si Tsai and another Chinese laborer died of "sunstroke."[38]

The death of So Tsing Whan in April 1868 provides insight into the extreme forms of violence undergirding everyday relations at the Regalia Estate. On 16 April 1868, ten Chinese laborers were sent to clear land on a neighboring estate in return for carpentry services. The laborers' driver returned to complain about a work stoppage and Regalia's overseer George Hyde was sent for. When Hyde arrived, he demanded to be shown the leader of the work stoppage. When Whan was pointed out,

Hyde brought him to a nearby estate. According to McCutchon, when Hyde was visiting the estate's sugar house, "the Chinaman walked in the river and was drowned."[39] So Tsing was brought from the river by fellow laborers and his body was taken to their quarters at Regalia. When plantation managers and police arrived, the men refused to remove So Tsing's body. Laborers allegedly also stated their desire to kill Hyde for his responsibility in So Tsing's death. At the following day's inquest, the verdict was "voluntary drowning" and in response Chinese laborers refused to return to work. To break down the work stoppage, several striking laborers were taken, imprisoned, and forced to two weeks' hard labor on public roads.[40]

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When W. E. B. Du Bois emphasized the necessity for considering "the stretch in time and space between the deed and the result," he was specifically addressing the complexity of colonial production and metropolitan consumption. Yet, Du Bois' emphasis also provides a vantage for considering the continuing transnational impact of US slavery following the American Civil War. While McCutchon and other white Southerners extended the cultivation of sugar in British Honduras through brutal violence against labor, their efforts ultimately failed to transform the economic basis of the colony. *The Light of the Age* was the only ship of indentured laborers to arrive in the colony during the period. Despite this, US planters' involvement in the failed project serves as a reminder that the stretch of time and space characterizing US settler slavery's impact extended past the US Civil War and beyond the United States.[41] These stretches also went far beyond such failures.

NOTES

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Index