

Interchange: Nationalism and Internationalism in the Era of the Civil War

The nineteenth century was called by contemporaries the “age of nationalities.” New nation-states emerged around the world during this period. Many of these new nations were formed by and through warfare, so in that respect the United States’ experience of violent national consolidation during its civil war was not unique. Just to the south, violence, ideological confrontation, and foreign intervention marked Mexico’s process of national consolidation. To the north, the peaceful creation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867 transformed the internal organization of Canada and changed its place in the British Commonwealth. Across the Atlantic Ocean, national unification and modernization took place, most notably in Italy and Germany. The 1860s also witnessed the Meiji Restoration in Japan, and the Paraguayan War accelerated processes that were transforming Brazil and Argentina. All of those events produced new, more robust forms of nation-states. Around the world, new nation-states replaced older structures of political organization—but why?

The *levée en masse* of the French revolutionary wars, America’s Civil War, and the German wars of unification all exemplified the nationalist impulses involved in the development of the modern nation-state and modern nationalism. This online interchange examines the ideological and material underpinnings of such conflicts to connect the nationalist impulses in the Atlantic world, Europe, and more broadly in this period. While a generation of historians worked to make American colonial history fit into a wider international frame of Atlantic history, and twentieth-century U.S. history is now routinely seen in a global context, the nineteenth century has traditionally been seen as a period of blissful isolation in which the United States was preoccupied with internal issues to the exclusion of connections with the wider world. The goal of this interchange is to explore the extent to which the American Civil War was—and was understood to be at the time—a central event in global history and to examine how the construction of the American nation was related to the global processes of national formation in the mid-nineteenth century.

This online discussion took place during the first two months of 2011. The *JAH* is indebted to all of the participants for their willingness to contribute to this “Interchange”:

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JAH: What opportunities and challenges do transnational and global approaches present to the study of the American Civil War?

JÖRG NAGLER: One of the great opportunities made available by studying the American Civil War from a transnational and/or global perspective is the chance to de-provincialize one of the central events in American history, put it into new contexts and see connections we have neglected. Antebellum America was already embedded in global market processes and movements of people. Two transnational/global dimensions should be mentioned here: first, the economic international entanglement—specifically through cotton exportation—and, second, the transatlantic mass migration in the antebellum period of mainly Irish and German immigrants who later joined the Union army in great numbers. The multiethnic character of this army clearly indicates the international dimension of the war. While early studies of the “ethnic element” in the Union army had a strongly contributionalist or filio-pietist flavor, we now can better contextualize this phenomenon by applying a transnational approach.¹ A transnational focus also provides the opportunity to explore ideological connections to the United States before the war (such as the European revolutions of 1848–1849) and the impact of the American Civil War on, for example, liberal or progressive reform movements.

When we address the transnational significance of the American Civil War, we also need to ask about the contemporaneous awareness and perception of this conflict. The communication channels of the mid-nineteenth century were already quite developed. With specific political intentions, newspapers supplied information and basic themes of the Civil War to their readership. The Western world observed this conflict with great interest since its themes—the definition of nationhood, the future of unfree labor, warfare for an industrial age, the possibilities and means of a democratic society to endure such a horrendous conflict, majorities versus minorities in a democratic process, and the power of the central state—were also pertinent to other industrializing societies.

A transnational approach could also better explain the relationship between war and nation building, as well as examine the context of the dialectics between the globalization

¹ Wilhelm Kaufmann, *Die Deutschen im amerikanischen Bürgerkriege: Sektionskrieg, 1861–1865* (Germans in the American Civil War, 1861–1865) (Munich, 1911). For a translated version, see Wilhelm Kaufmann, *The Germans in the American Civil War: With a Biographical Directory* (Carlisle, 1999). Albert Bernhardt Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (2 vols., New York, 1927), I, 522–77.

of violence and national wars from 1850–1871, from the Taiping Rebellion to the Franco-Prussian War. The American Civil War appears then as one part of those processes, albeit the one with the greatest impact. Abraham Lincoln’s “last best hope” envisioned an interconnection between the American national conflict and world history. A further challenge is one of terminology and definitions. The term “transnational history” is in danger of becoming a mere buzzword used by historians in an almost inflationary way. There is a need for more precision in methodology and reflections on what we expect to gain when we apply transnationalism in our research. To help, there is a good literature on the theory of transnationalism.² To place the American Civil War and its meaning in an international/global context we need a holistic approach, getting away from an artificial methodological division between comparative, transnational, and entangled history. We can compare, for example, the development of nationalism in the nineteenth century in different regions of the world and then realize that in certain cases these developments were interconnected by transnational networks of politicians, intellectuals, and other multipliers. We should also be aware of the dialectical relationship between outside-in and inside-out movements: global influences shaped the United States at the same time that the nation was shaping the world.

TOM BENDER: Jörg Nagler has made a number of extremely important points. We need precision in discussions about global, transnational, or comparative history. They are different conceptually, asking different questions. Global implies that there is a general history within which a local history is embedded; and that local history can, in turn, change global history. There are causal connections crossing borders and common to large parts of (if not the entire) world. This is not a new idea. In the 1890s Frederick Jackson Turner observed: “In history there are only artificial divisions . . . not only is it true that no country can be understood without taking account of all the past; it is also true that we cannot select a stretch of land and say we will limit our study to this land; for local history can only be understood in the light of the history of the world.” One can find similar observations in the writings of Turner’s contemporaries and successors until the 1940s, when a resurgent and distinctive phase of American exceptionalism powerfully affected historical writing.³

So what is the history in which the Civil War is embedded? Certainly it is part of the history of liberalism—the French Revolution and the Enlightenment, the invention (to use Lynn Hunt’s phrase) of human rights, British abolitionism and the general rejection

² Abraham Lincoln, “Annual Message to Congress,” Dec. 1, 1862, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler (9 vols., New Brunswick, 1953–1955), V, 537. Patricia Clavin, “Defining Transnationalism,” *Contemporary European History*, 14 (no. 4, 2005), 421–39; “AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,” *American Historical Review*, 111 (Dec. 2006), 1441–64; Ian Tyrrell, “Reflections on the Transnational Turn in United States History: Theory and Practice,” *Journal of Global History*, 3 (Nov. 2009), 453–74.

³ Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of History,” 1891, in *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” and Other Essays*, ed. John Mack Faragher (New York, 1994), 22. Albert Bushnell Hart, W. E. B. Du Bois’s Harvard Kendall Adams thesis adviser, insisted that “no nation has a history disconnected from the rest of the world: the United States is closely related, in point of time, with previous ages, in point of space, with other civilized countries.” Quoted in Bert James Lowenberg, *American History in American Thought: From Christopher Columbus to Henry Adams* (New York, 1972), 435. Other commentators of Frederick Jackson Turner’s era include his Wisconsin colleague Charles Kendall Adams, who said, “we are under the same rigorous laws that have shaped the destinies on the other side of the Atlantic.” Quoted in John Higham, *History: Professional Scholarship in America* (1973; Baltimore, 1983), 96. Herbert Baxter Adams urged comparative history because it would make American history “less provincial and more universal.” See Herbert Baxter Adams, *Methods of Historical Study* (Baltimore, 1884), 38. The most ambitious statement is Herbert Bolton’s 1932 American Historical Association presidential address. Herbert E. Bolton, “The Epic of Greater America,” *American Historical Review*, 38 (April 1933), 448–74.

of unfree labor in many nations. The Civil War is also related to a particularly important moment in the history of liberalism—1848. Here nation and freedom were linked. The nation would be the instrument of freedom. That new conception of nation presages the modern nation-state. The Civil War and freedom (of various kinds) were entangled with that development. The modern nation-state also made an implicit promise to enable economic development, which was both a global and a U.S. phenomenon. The biggest challenge for historians is to uncover the engine driving this international history. Ernest Gellner, and to some degree Eric Hobsbawm, linked the making of the modern state with industrialism, which they saw as producer or product of a national economy. Certainly there is some association, but to determine if industrialism (and, for Gellner, high culture) was a key element of this emergence, we need to find the common, global historical developments and patterns of causation behind the conjuncture of emancipation and nation making that occurred in roughly a single generation in different parts of the world.⁴

LESLIE BUTLER: Are the “methodological divisions” between comparative, transnational, and entangled history really so artificial? I’m attracted to the idea of a “holistic approach” and can see how a full understanding of an event such as the American Civil War depends on a variety of approaches, but I also see those kinds of history as quite different in aim, orientation, and method. Tom says “they are different conceptually, asking different questions,” and I agree, but I might also go further and say they require different tools from the historian’s tool box. It seems to me that historians seeking to understand how American emancipation was like or unlike other New World emancipations will be engaged in a rather different sort of work than historians tracing the response of European labor groups to Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. All may be contributing to the same big picture, but do they employ different brushes or paints to make their contributions? Are there good examples of works that operate on all registers? For a different, earlier period, maybe David Brion Davis’s work is a good example of comparative, transnational, and entangled history all at once.⁵

JAY SEXTON: One could employ a transnational approach to complement the traditional narratives that we already have of the Civil War period. We could simply slot new research on transnational networks or ideas into existing frameworks. Yet one could also use transnational or global perspectives to reframe the Civil War in more fundamental ways. Leslie Butler is right that this requires different tools. The way I’d put it is that we need more focus on underlying structures. Some of the best works that situate the Civil War in its global context take such an approach.⁶

Tom Bender asks a big question: what underlying structures explain the emergence of the nation in this period? Do we need to distinguish between different kinds of processes

⁴ Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York, 2007). Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001). Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, Eng., 1990).

⁵ David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823* (Ithaca, 1975).

⁶ C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford, 2004), esp. 161–65; Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848–1875* (1975; London, 1999), esp. 164–77; Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (London, 2007), 84–93; Thomas Bender, *A Nation among Nations: America’s Place in World History* (New York, 2006), 116–81.

in different places? The case of the United States is often compared to Europe at the same time, especially Germany. Another angle would be to view the U.S. example through a hemispheric lens and in relation to Latin American nation building. It seems to me that American historians tend to overlook the fact that nineteenth-century America was a “postcolonial” entity; deep into the nineteenth century, Americans struggled to consolidate their independence.⁷ Indeed, one could view the Civil War as the climax of the American Revolution.

PAUL QUIGLEY: As Leslie has said, different historical problems require different approaches, and so the approaches or frameworks we choose—global, transnational, comparative, whatever—should fit our subject rather than vice versa. Turner may have been right that “no country can be understood without taking account of all the past”—but the implications of this must terrify any historian striving to finish a book within a reasonable amount of time! If we are thinking about writing an overview of the Civil War and its global significance (as Jörg indeed is) then a “holistic” or “total” approach is apposite. But comparative or “entangled” approaches may better suit other projects. Selecting parameters becomes one of the major challenges once you discard (or rethink) the idea that the nation-state is the supreme unit of modern history.

DAVID ARMITAGE: A major challenge for transnational and global approaches to any historical problem is where to set the boundaries, both chronological and geographical. Let me propose four possible contexts for the U.S. Civil War in this regard:

(1) Continental. If we take seriously the thrust of much recent work on the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, “the” Civil War of the mid-nineteenth century was not the first, or even the second, “civil” war fought in anglophone North America, but the third.⁸ Viewing the United States as postcolonial and the Civil War as a long-term consequence of the Revolution is vital. What would happen if we reperiodized the arcs of American history as two century-long movements, from the Stamp Act to Appomattox (1765–1865) and then again from 1865–1964?

(2) Hemispheric. The sequence of imperial reconstruction, independence, and civil war—often leading to the breakup of states and the creation of new ones—is familiar from the history of Spanish America after 1808, though usually in a tight period of twenty years at most, rather than ninety years (ca. 1775–1865). Can we examine the dynamics of sovereignty, state formation, and territoriality in North America with similar—perhaps at times intersecting—dynamics in Central and South America and the Caribbean in the nineteenth century?

(3) Atlantic. This might be the most traditional, well-tried, and immediately pursuable path for comparison and connection. Comparisons between nation-state formation in

⁷ Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861–1871* (Cambridge, Eng., 1997). On America as a postcolonial entity and its struggle to consolidate its independence, see Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World* (Charlottesville, 2010).

⁸ Wim Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York, 2009), 11–44; Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York, 2011), 21–53; Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, and Indian Allies* (New York, 2010).

North America, Germany, and Italy have been common for decades but—*pace* the title of our interchange—is nationalism the right optic for comparison?⁹

(4) Global. One criterion for using a global frame might be large-scale militarized violence. Make that the metric and, following what Jörg suggested, we can place the U.S. Civil War in the context of what we might call the world crisis of the nineteenth century, spanning 1850–1871, and including the world's first industrial war (the Crimean War [1853–1856]), its bloodiest war by far (the Taiping Rebellion [1850–1864]), the Indian Rebellion (1857), the Boshin War in Japan (1868–1869), and the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871). If we characterize this period as a world crisis, at least for heuristic purposes, we can compare it to other periods and processes, such as the mid-seventeenth-century “general crisis” proposed by Eric Hobsbawm or the “world crisis” of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries described by Christopher Bayly. The thesis of a general crisis of the seventeenth century has taken a battering of late and that of a world crisis of the Age of Revolutions is under active debate, but the period 1850–1871 seems a uniquely tight, unusually destructive, and possibly interconnected moment of global violence that deserves analysis as a temporal unit on a worldwide scale.¹⁰

A final thought: Should we follow the transnational/global connections we discern in hindsight or only those evident to contemporaries? Are we to be “electricians, connecting circuits by acts of imaginative reconstitution” or to reconstruct “connections [that] did exist and were known to past actors, but have for some reason been forgotten or laid aside”? Global connections were quite evident to actors in the period we are examining: “Nations do not now stand in the same relation to each other that they did ages ago. No nation can now shut itself up from the surrounding world, and trot round in the same old path of its fathers without interference. . . . The arm of commerce has borne away the gates of the strong city. Intelligence is penetrating the darkest corners of the globe. . . . Space is comparatively annihilated.” Those words are not from the modern-day scholars David Harvey or Tony Giddens, but from Frederick Douglass in 1852! How widespread was such a consciousness of globality or transnationality? And what causal force did it have for actors at the time?¹¹

SUSAN-MARY GRANT: Fundamentally, the nineteenth century is the period when citizen armies come into their own. But to get a clearer sense of the nationalist

⁹ David M. Potter, “Civil War,” in *The Comparative Approach to American History*, ed. C. Vann Woodward (New York, 1968), 135–45; Carl N. Degler, *One among Many: The Civil War in Comparative Perspective* (Gettysburg, 1990); Förster and Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War*; Don H. Doyle, *Nations Divided: America, Italy, and the Southern Question* (Athens, Ga., 2002); Nicholas Onuf and Peter Onuf, *Nations, Markets, and War: Modern History and the American Civil War* (Charlottesville, 2006).

¹⁰ Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, “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 (Oct. 1996), 619–57. On the battering of the thesis of a general crisis of the seventeenth century, see Eric J. Hobsbawm, “The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century,” *Past and Present*, 5 (May 1954), 33–53; Eric J. Hobsbawm, “The Crisis of the 17th Century—II,” *ibid.*, 6 (Nov. 1954), 44–65; Jonathan Dewald, et al., “AHR Forum: The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Revisited,” *American Historical Review*, 113 (Oct. 2008), 1031–99; and J. H. Elliott, *Spain, Europe, and the Wider World, 1500–1800* (New Haven, 2009), 52–73. On the “world crisis” of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, 86–120; and David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760–1840* (New York, 2010).

¹¹ David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “The Age of Revolutions, c. 1760–1840: Global Causation, Connection, and Comparison,” in *Age of Revolutions in Global Context*, ed. Armitage and Subrahmanyam, xxxi. Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July? An Address Delivered in Rochester, New York, on 5 July 1852,” in *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, series 1, ed. John W. Blassingame et al. (5 vols., New Haven, 1979–1992), II, 359–88.

implications of that fact we first need to pull the Civil War more tightly into the orbit of other nineteenth-century conflicts and then consider the life-span of those involved, beyond 1865, beyond 1877, and view the generation longitudinally across time and geographical space, as Tom Bender suggests. On individuals specifically, some of the questions asked of European veterans have not yet been asked of their Civil War counterparts: questions about the relationship between the veteran and postwar society, between those who had fought and those who constructed the memory of the fighting, between the veteran and the nation, the living and the dead.¹² There are also additional issues—I'm thinking particularly of gender—that could benefit from a more transnational treatment, because as things stand for the Civil War, I believe we still struggle to see past the crinoline of the Confederacy.

Isolating discrete strands—the economic, nation building (the state), nationalism, and cultural, and the political bases of all of these elements—may achieve a more “entangled” history of the Civil War. To David's very useful contexts, I would add “generational,” positioned within hemispheric. I think we are asking questions here that take us beyond “Atlantic,” since the implication of “Atlantic” is that there was an investment in an “Atlantic world” in ideas, ideologies, trade, and transport, but we are trying to see what lies beyond that. To make the metric, as David suggests, “large-scale militarized violence” may be productive. As Michael Geyer and Charles Bright argue, the Civil War was, after all, only one small part of “a universe of endemic, world-wide, violence played out within global patterns of conflict in which warfare was dispersed, decentered, and mostly of low-intensity yet capable of threatening the survival of whole ethnics.” An “integral part of the nationalizing outcome of the American Civil War,” they pointed out, were the Indian wars of the 1870s, “the truly ‘destructive wars’ of the North American continent” in this era, but not the only destructive (or constructive, nationally speaking) wars of the nineteenth century.¹³

NAGLER: I still believe that these approaches and methodologies are inherently interconnected with fluid transitions. U.S. historians might look to recent European historiography for examples. When Stig Förster and I conceptualized our project on total war in America and Germany, we started with a strictly comparative approach. Our 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 phenomenon of “people's war” was evident: mobilization and self-mobilization of civilians—including women—and the close interconnection between the home fronts and battle fronts became instrumental for conducting this kind of warfare. The federal state needed to expand to efficiently organize warfare, and it closely cooperated with private industry. Propaganda also became a tool to mold public opinion for the national war effort.¹⁴

¹² Karine Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat: The War of 1870–71 in French Memory* (Basingstoke, 2008); Karen Hagemann, “Of ‘Manly Valor’ and ‘German Honor’: Nation, War, and Masculinity in the Age of the Prussian Uprising against Napoleon,” *Central European History*, 30 (no. 2, 1997), 187–220; Dan Ungurianu, “Visions and Versions of History: Veterans of 1812 on Tolstoy's *War and Peace*,” *Slavic and East European Journal*, 44 (Spring 2000), 48–63.

¹³ Geyer and Bright, “Global Violence and Nationalizing Wars in Eurasia and America,” 619–57, esp. 629–30, 628.

¹⁴ Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, eds., *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (New York, 2009). Förster and Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War*.

Our comparative approach, however, also became a transnational one when we 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 methods he had applied during his Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1864.¹⁵

GRANT: The differences between a civil war and a war between separate nation-states have become blurred over the decades, and the extent to which those differences pertain to any given aspect of the American civil conflict has become dependent not on contemporary events but on subsequent interpretations. This latter phenomenon is especially acute when the topic is the thorny question of nationalism; the dominance of the Confederate variant has, if anything, increased apace in the last few years, making it almost impossible to discuss the Civil War without distinguishing clearly between Union and Confederate. This may seem blindingly obvious, but my point is that many historians' default approach is to treat the Civil War as a war between separate nation-states anyway. Civil War-era historians frequently divide themselves, or are divided by their peers, into either "northern" or "southern" experts as soon as they stray off the battlefield; only military historians, it seems, are acknowledged as having an overview of the conflict in its entirety.

DON H. DOYLE: Susan-Mary's and David's questions about the global consciousness of the actors involved in the Civil War highlight the role of historians in recovering a global view of the American war that was common not only among sophisticated observers—including politicians and intellectuals—but also soldiers and the broad public. That international framework of understanding the war became obscured later by the dominant mode of writing history within a narrowly national context, often with a nationalistic purpose. What came to be seen as a purely domestic, sectional conflict—a stand-alone American story about secession, Union, and slavery—was at the time understood by many as an epic battle in a prolonged struggle between liberal republican ideas and the "monarchic principle."

Many in the British upper class took delight in the American crisis and saw in it not only the fragmentation of a commercial rival but proof of the failure of the whole "republican experiment." When Lord Ramsden's comment that the "great republican bubble has burst" was announced in Parliament there were loud cheers. Many were the predictions that all the American republics would soon return to some form of monarchy. In Mexico, Napoleon III set about to create a model of monarchical government that he and others hoped would provide a counterforce to the ills of democracy throughout the Americas and elsewhere. There was considerable affinity for this kind of antidemocratic sentiment within the Confederacy, as Stephanie McCurry's *Confederate Reckoning* argues. We're familiar with the aristocratic pretensions of the Southern planters, but observers at the time, such as the *London Times* war correspondent

¹⁵ Carl N. Degler, "The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification: The Problem of Comparison," in *On the Road to Total War*, ed. Förster and Nagler, 68.

William H. Russell, noted considerable enthusiasm for reintroducing monarchy in the South.¹⁶

Likewise, American supporters, such as the abolitionist republican John Bright, attached their aspirations for reform at home to the Union cause abroad.¹⁷ Many politicians and reformers throughout the Atlantic world saw in the American contest not only a proxy for their own cause at home but also a war whose outcome would have an impact on the course of world history.

Then there were the hundreds of thousands of foreign-born soldiers to whom Jörg Nagler refers, young men who had enlisted abroad or were refugees from the failed revolutions of 1848 or were immigrants who had for one reason or another reassigned their national allegiance and taken up arms in the United States or, less often, in the Confederate States of America (CSA). How could they not think about the war they were fighting in a transnational context?

All of which is to say that historians do not need to impose our own cosmopolitan ideas on the American Civil War so much as we must try to recover the contemporary understanding of this conflict as part of a larger global history.

CHARLES S. MAIER: I have doubts about the whole transnational history program, which has too often meant just doing national history while paying attention to developments that impinge from abroad or just spillover offshore. All countries have a fuzzy membrane when it comes to their development in time. My own approach to single countries is to see them as examples of more encompassing tendencies and developments. I would have applied the term “transnational history” to refer precisely to this method of embedding national histories within a larger, sometimes global context, but the term has been already appropriated for what I think of as the fuzzy-membrane approach to national histories. In any case, to study embeddedness often leads implicitly to comparative history as soon as one considers more than one national history; for it requires tracing varieties of response to an overarching context and field of action. I also think that entangled histories, or *histoires croisées*, offer a fine object of study, though not particularly challenging in terms of theory. In effect, all histories are entangled with many other histories, so of course we must follow the entanglements or the mutual influences.

I would argue that there are at least two major global contexts in which historians can embed the American Civil War. One is to envisage it as a link in the chain of liberal-democratic revolutions from the 1770s on, as Tom Bender implies by his idea of an ongoing history of liberalism or in his emphasis on the renewed themes of republicanism. But the other, which I have found more compelling or suggestive, is to place it as one of the key episodes of transformed nationalism after 1848. This perspective is closer to the notion of an era of midcentury violence that David Armitage cited, although I would propose a

¹⁶ *Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard), hc Deb. 27 May 1861, vol. 163, cc68–149, http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1861/may/27/committee-first-night#S3V0163P0_18610527_HOC_58. Alfred Jackson Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico: American Triumph over Monarchy* (Chapel Hill, 1971); Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010). William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South* (Boston, 1863), 134, 263–64; William Howard Russell, *Pictures of Southern Life, Social, Political, and Military* (New York, 1861), 3, 4; Sheldon Vanauken, *The Glittering Illusion: English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy* (Washington, 1989).

¹⁷ John Bright, *Speeches of John Bright, M.P., on the American Question* (Boston, 1865); George Macaulay Trevelyan, *The Life of John Bright* (New York, 1913).

particular type of violence, the widespread wars of national reconstitution. I have made a case for this schema in my forthcoming study, “Leviathan 2.0: Inventing the Modern State.”

Why transformed nationalism? Before the disappointments of 1848, I would describe the nationalism in play as a Romantic and emancipatory nationalism—expressed in such movements as Young Italy, Philhellenism, and associated with Giuseppe Mazzini’s vision of democratic fraternity or George Bancroft’s celebration of American democracy. One can trace this current of enthusiasm from its roots in the 1770s with such thinkers as Johann Gottfried von Herder, then into the Napoleonic period, and thereafter into the years after 1815 with Risorgimento liberalism. Giving it traction was the half-century crisis of the “old regimes,” social and political systems characterized by differing degrees of agrarian dependency and statist governance. The mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century was marked by the worldwide intrusion of market relationships into agrarian production and control of land and the consequent crises of precapitalist elites or their need to adapt to market relations by the 1830s and 1840s. What remained of the old regime fell into crisis between the 1830s and 1850s, whether in the Mediterranean monarchies and empires, the Mexican Republic, the U.S. South, the Qing Empire assailed by the British without and the immense rebellions within (the earlier White Lotus uprising and the immensely destructive Taiping Revolution of the 1840s and 1850s), the besieged Tokugawa regime in Japan, or the recurring conflicts within the German states. Despite the crises, the ambitions of “romantic” nationalism failed in Central Europe and Italy in 1848—but not nationalism per se, which a series of new developments reconfigured: the rise of long-distance railways, the advent of vulgarized Darwinian ideas, the strategic alliance of agrarian magnates with the newer elites of commerce, industry, and ambitious bureaucrats. The “romantic” nationalists of 1848 became the sober national liberals of the 1850s and 1860s, rallying to Bismarck as he unified Germany around the Prussian monarchy, supporting Camillo di Cavour vis-à-vis Giuseppe Garibaldi, evicting the French from Mexico and seeking to end communal and church lands in Mexico, carrying through the so-called Meiji Restoration, and eventually abandoning Reconstruction in the South. As C. Vann Woodward argued, the post-Civil War ruling groups in the South were interested in railroads and commercial development as well as cotton. The new nationalism—which emerged vigorously within a decade after the setbacks to the older varieties in 1848—was based on a more “realistic” ideology, whose adherents had less patience for *vox populi* and more enthusiasm for technology, armies, and the positivism summarized by Auguste Comte’s slogan Order and Progress.¹⁸

¹⁸ For English-language selections of Johann Gottfried Herder and Giuseppe Mazzini, see Johann Gottfried Herder, *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*, ed. Frank E. Manuel (Chicago, 1968); Stefano Recchia and Nadia Urbinati, eds., *A Cosmopolitanism of Nations: Giuseppe Mazzini’s Writings on Democracy, Nation Building, and International Relations*, trans. Stefano Recchia (Princeton, 2009); and C. A. Bayly and Eugenio F. Biagini, eds., *Giuseppe Mazzini and the Globalisation of Democratic Nationalism, 1830–1920* (Oxford, 2008). For George Bancroft’s democratic nationalism, see Lilian Handlin, *George Bancroft: The Intellectual as Democrat* (New York, 1984). For insights into the global crises and transformations preceding 1850, see Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*; and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt* (The transformation of the world) (Munich, 2009). This work is currently in translation at Princeton University Press. For the transformations of nationalism across the century, see the diverse country histories of national unification such as those by Denis Mack Smith, Raymond Grew, and Otto Pflanze. See also the chronologically and/or regionally organized syntheses John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Chicago, 1994); and Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*. C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877–1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951); Edward Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (New York, 1992).

JAH: How did contemporary actors conceive of the Civil War as an event that transcended the borders of the American state? Were there significant transnational/global processes at work of which contemporaries were either unaware or, alternatively, acutely conscious?

NAGLER: We could use the rich historiography and research on (mutual) national perceptions in our endeavor to learn more about the “consciousness of globality” in the nineteenth century. As Harold Hyman wrote in 1969, “probably makeweights of the Civil War generation would have found amusing, or, worse, irrelevant, today’s continuing campus concern over interconnections. For the age of Lincoln required no proofs that the affairs of men and nations were a tangle of internal goads and external wants, economic pressures and selfless passions, inextricably involving societies with each other.” I think one of the keenest analysts of globality was Karl Marx. He perceived the American Civil War as one integral part of a global crisis, and in his famous 1864 letter to Lincoln he points out the transnational/global significance of this war several times.¹⁹

BUTLER: The metaphor (quoted by David Armitage) of the historian as electrician is a brilliant one. Just like master electricians, who must know how to rewire old systems as well as employ new technologies to connect the previously unconnected or even previously unconnectable, historians must attend to transnational connections that historical actors perceived as well as those that can be seen fully only in hindsight. This is especially true in comparative histories, which include comparisons across time as well as space.

There are, of course, numerous good, important reasons to think about the American Civil War in transnational, global, and comparative terms, but the most obvious one for me—as someone interested in thought, ideas, and arguments—is the fact that the historical figures themselves thought about the conflict in that way. So I will see Jörg’s Karl Marx and raise him one John Stuart Mill. Mill’s February 1862 article “The Contest in America” is famous mostly for raising the specter of a grasping proslavery Confederacy “professing the principles of Attila and Genghis Khan as the foundation of its Constitution.” A victory by this outlaw regime threatened, he said, to “propagate their national faith at the rifle’s mouth through Mexico and Central America,” to perpetuate slavery in Cuba and Puerto Rico, and to reimpose bondage in Haiti and Liberia. “We should be at war with the new Confederacy within five years about the African slave-trade,” Mill predicted. Yet such proslavery expansionism was not the only international menace posed by Confederate victory. In the same paragraph, Mill also highlighted the matter of Jefferson Davis’s willingness, as Mississippi governor, to repudiate public debt, an issue that resonated

¹⁹ Harold Hyman, ed., *Heard Round the World: The Impact Abroad of the Civil War* (New York, 1969), vi. The Karl Marx letter to Abraham Lincoln was written on behalf of the International Working Men’s Association. Especially the last paragraph of this letter reflects the transnational understanding of the American Civil War: “The working men of Europe feel sure that, as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American Anti-Slavery War will do for the working classes. They consider it an earnest of the epoch to come that it fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single-minded son of the working class, to lead his country through the matchless struggle for the rescue of an enchained race and the reconstruction of a social world.” See Kevin B. Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago, 2010), 109–10. On Marx as a global thinker, see Will Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture* (Edinburgh, 2006), 132–35.

with those who had just witnessed the force required “to redress the wrongs of private British subjects” when the Mexican government repudiated its foreign debt.²⁰ Mill was more archetypal than exceptional in perceiving the conflict—or, more accurately, one alarming possible result of it—in transnational/global, entangled, and even comparative terms.

BENDER: I agree with Jörg and Leslie that among intellectual elites (conservatives as well as radicals and liberals) the democratic or republican or liberal (and it varied) implications of the Civil War were on their minds. Leslie’s point that Mill publicly addressed the implications of a Confederate victory is important, as he was acting on his belief about the implications. But I would add that he was writing the last chapter of his autobiography (1873) during the Civil War, and the meaning of the war keeps intruding into his narrative. James McPherson quotes ordinary soldiers who in letters home frame the battle as one of liberalism against monarchism or aristocracy. For these soldiers the fate of Atlantic liberalism hung on the outcome of the war.²¹

That said, however, I want to suggest that the transnational or global turn need not depend upon subjective meaning. There are always two kinds of historical analysis. The type that recovers the issues and causes understood by the actors is a kind that as an intellectual historian I particularly value. But there are historian-defined questions and answers perhaps unimaginable by the historical actors, and they are also legitimate.

Jörg’s mention of Marx prompts another, more historiographical point. Marx and Marxism indeed offered a global framing of modern history and especially of capitalism. One of the great losses suffered by the marginalization of Marxism in the American academy after World War II was the loss of Marxism’s global framing of history and the subsequent narrowing of the geography of history read by increasingly specialized historians of the United States. Were the Marxist tradition a bit more present then, non-Marxists as well as Marxists would have had to maintain a broader terrain of knowledge and framing, and transnational approaches might have emerged much sooner.

SEXTON: A couple of points spring to mind on this issue of what contemporaries thought was at stake in the American Civil War. First, the issues were not always clear-cut to participants or observers, particularly in the early years of the conflict when political considerations led Lincoln to move slowly on emancipation. Liberals in Britain and Europe who admired the United States could have found aspects of the Southern cause appealing, such as its commercial policy or advocacy of self-determination. The obvious example here is William Gladstone, a towering figure in Victorian liberalism who declared in 1862 that Jefferson Davis had made a nation (a statement he would later call “an undoubted error, the most singular and palpable, I may add the least excusable of them all”). Second, and related, is that foreign observers viewed the American conflict through the prism of

²⁰ John Stuart Mill, “The Contest in America,” *Fraser’s Magazine for Town and Country*, 65 (Feb. 1862), 258–68, esp. 267. On Mexican debt repudiation, see Howard Jones, *Blue and Gray Diplomacy: A History of Union and Confederate Foreign Relations* (Chapel Hill, 2010).

²¹ John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (London, 1873). James M. McPherson, *What They Fought For, 1861–1865* (Baton Rouge, 1994); James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (Oxford, 1997).

their own local and national contexts. I think there is much to be said, for instance, for the old interpretation that many British observers misunderstood the fundamentals of the conflict, viewing it as an adjunct of their own class/political conflict at home (which, perhaps in some regards it was, but not across the board). Local and national contexts also shaped the way foreign observers conceived of and remembered the war after its conclusion. One of the most surprising findings from the Global Lincoln project, a collaborative enterprise that charted Lincoln's legacy outside of the United States, was how infrequently foreign images of Lincoln have focused on his role in emancipation. The images of Lincoln that traveled most widely—even in Africa and a former slaveholding society such as Cuba—were those of the self-made man, the wartime leader, or the statesmen who outlined how to consolidate and modernize a nation.²²

The ways historical actors perceived the world around them should also be kept in mind when interpreting how Americans viewed the Civil War and its relationship to the wider world. When nineteenth-century Americans looked beyond their union, they tended to do so through a particular lens that led them to see reenactments of their Revolution wherever they looked! It isn't surprising that both North and South viewed the conflict as one in which the principles of 1776 were at stake. The lens of their own imagined Revolution also colored their view of contemporary events such as the French intervention in Mexico beginning in 1862, which many Republican statesmen saw as an attempt to roll back the Declaration of Independence.²³

QUIGLEY: As Jay says, foreigners had their own visions of the Civil War, often distinct from Americans' and often structured by local conditions. (The same had been true, in reverse, with the events of 1848 in Europe, which Americans had interpreted in terms of their own circumstances and revolutionary history.) This raises an interesting question: If Americans and non-Americans had different conceptions of the Civil War's broader significance, did Northerners and Southerners?

Yes, but not completely. It's tempting to contrast Lincoln's position (embedding the Union war effort within the global ascendancy of liberty and democracy) with the well-known March 1861 "cornerstone" speech by Confederate vice president Alexander Stephens, which laid out a racialized vision of the Confederacy's world historical significance. ("Our new Government is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth," Stephens declared, referring to the fundamental inequality of racial slavery.²⁴) But in positioning the Confederacy on the cutting edge of mankind's sociopolitical development, Stephens was actually thinking in a similar mode as Lincoln. Although they disagreed on the specific meaning of democracy (or "self-government"), both men drew on a nationwide antebellum faith that America's historic mission was to model self-government for the rest of the world.

²² Peter J. Parish, "Gladstone and America," in *Gladstone*, ed. Peter J. Jagger (London, 1998), 99. For British public opinion on the Civil War, see R. J. M. Blackett, *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge, 2001); and Lawrence Goldman, "'A Total Misconception': Lincoln, the Civil War, and the British, 1860–1865," in *The Global Lincoln*, ed. Richard Carwardine and Jay Sexton (New York, 2011), 107–22.

²³ Joshua Leavitt, *The Monroe Doctrine* (New York, 1863); Thomas D. Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion: The Triumph of Liberalism in Mexican–United States Relations, 1861–1867* (Baton Rouge, 1978).

²⁴ Speech of Alexander H. Stephens, March 21, 1861, reprinted in *The Civil War Archive: The History of the Civil War in Documents*, ed. Henry Steele Commager, updated by Erik Bruun (1950; New York, 2000), 566–67.

This reminds us that white southerners had been Americans for much longer than they were Confederates. They shared with northerners a very American sense of their exemplary role in world history, even presenting secession in those terms. Thus Southern diplomats made the argument that they, like the Italians and others, were fighting for self-government. Small wonder that, as Jay points out, Europeans were sometimes uncertain about what was at stake and which side they should support.

DOYLE: Tom Bender mentioned the soldiers' letters that depicted the war as a battle between democratic and aristocratic forces, which I think offers an excellent chance to emphasize how such international understandings of the war could take hold on a popular level. One also finds recruitment posters, broadsides, and speeches that play on these themes of European struggles going back to 1848 and further, to the French Revolution. Regiments such as the Garibaldi Guard from New York (and another from New Orleans), the Irish Brigade, and the many German immigrant units often inspired men to conflate Old World causes with the American conflict.²⁵

The idea that the "American question" was part of a historic struggle between liberal republicanism and its enemies seemed to resonate on both a popular and elite level, particularly among immigrant soldiers in the Union army. The foreign born made up some one in four of those who fought for the Union (as opposed to approximately 5 percent of the Confederate army), and it is hard to imagine the Union sustaining its military let alone winning without these immigrant soldiers.²⁶ Instead of becoming Americanized through military service, I wonder if it might be more the case that these European soldiers brought their own ideas to bear on the international meaning of the American Civil War.

GRANT: Both Paul's and Don's points raise the issue, which Jörg and Tom emphasized earlier, of the ways the Civil War is embedded in the histories of liberalism, human rights, and the creation of the modern nation-state. Can we try to identify the "engine driving this international history," as Tom put it, and how far the links extend between those histories and America's domestic history?

The historiographical take on freedom (whether economic or individual) and America's development after Appomattox seems rather more multidimensional than for other nations in some respects—for example, the argument by George Fredrickson (and others) about elites and the growth of state bureaucracies, which merges into works that challenge cultural histories related to soldiers, bodies, death, and memorialization. In other ways, this historiography can be much narrower, such as the nearly total dominance of the emancipationist impulse. The centrality of emancipation and freedom to the Civil War

²⁵ On immigrant soldiers, see Susannah Ural Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861–1865* (New York, 2006); Christian B. Keller, *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory* (New York, 2007); Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Johannes Helbich, eds., *Germans in the Civil War: The Letters They Wrote Home* (Chapel Hill, 2006); and William L. Burton, *Melting Pot Soldiers: The Union's Ethnic Regiments* (New York, 1998).

²⁶ For estimates on foreign-born participation on each side, see Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Union Army and Navy* (New York, 1969), 578–82; Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (Gloucester, 1965), 218; and Benjamin Apthorp Gould, *Investigations in the Military and Anthropological Statistics of American Soldiers* (New York, 1869), 27, 574.

and America's national "story" can take us in ever-decreasing circles of hopes raised and dashed regarding both liberalism and liberty within America.²⁷

SEXTON: Let me expand on the surprisingly small role that emancipation has played in foreign images of Lincoln, particularly at the height of his global celebrity, circa 1865–1925. To be sure, one can find the Great Emancipator trope, but it was often subsumed into a larger narrative that heralded Lincoln's exemplary role in national consolidation and economic development. I think this is where Susan-Mary was headed, and I'm echoing what Tom Bender wrote earlier, but I wonder if this might suggest that emancipation was understood in the nineteenth-century world not so much as a singular achievement (as it often is today) but as a part of larger processes of national formation, reform, and modernization? I imagine, for example, that this was how observers on either side of the Atlantic viewed the emancipation of Russian serfs.

Don raises some interesting points about the persistence of the old republican versus monarchy bifurcation. I'm keen to learn more about this, particularly the way that this language crisscrossed the Atlantic in the revolutionary and nation-making eras, as well as how it fit into the Confederate experience.

BENDER: I think Jay's point about the Civil War as both nation-preserving and nation-making, which builds on a sequence of preceding observations, is fundamental. Certain "liberal" nationalist ideas of the nation were circulating around the Atlantic world at this time. The clearest point, I suspect, was the opposite of monarchy/aristocracy. (But compare Germany and Japan, who knew those ideas but took to a different framing of nationalisms and nation-state.) Such ideas, as Fredrickson pointed out long ago, were perfectly compatible with *herrenvolk* democracy (and would be the partial outcome of the war, according to David Blight).²⁸

Economic development is consistently a part of the making of nation-states; it is one of the justifications for the power centralized governments claim over people who possess formal sovereignty, including raising citizen armies by a draft. And economic development was a significant part of the Republican agenda. All of the Morrill Acts except the one regarding polygamy, were intended to advance development. This brings me to the main point: Republicans were nation-state makers with very few guidelines. No one really knew what the nation-state looked like in 1861. They had only a vague outline, which made grasping it so difficult. But that does not lessen the importance of this global theme.

If the middle third or so of the nineteenth century was the seedbed of nation making, it was also an age of emancipations. About 44 million unfree laborers were freed to various degrees worldwide, including 4 million enslaved people in the United States. For

²⁷ George M. Fredrickson, *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (New York, 1965). David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001); Edward J. Blum, *Reforming the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865–1898* (Baton Rouge, 2005).

²⁸ On Japan, see James C. Baxter, *The Meiji Unification through the Lens of Ishikawa Prefecture* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996); W. G. Beasley, *The Rise of Modern Japan* (New York, 1995); and Alistair D. Swale, *The Meiji Restoration: Monarchism, Mass Communications, and Conservative Revolution* (New York, 2009). George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817–1914* (New York, 1971); Blight, *Race and Reunion*; Blum, *Reforming the White Republic*.

some opponents of slavery there was the argument that free labor was more economical. Slavery, Adam Smith said, is inefficient, and so did Frederick Law Olmsted in his great books on the South in the 1850s.²⁹ For others, antislavery was a moral question. And for still others it was a bit of both. So if we cannot quite lock together the key themes of the formation of the modern “liberal” nation-state, it is because the people making it had not yet fully grasped it—in the United States or elsewhere.

JAH: To what extent do the nationalisms of the Union and Confederacy fit with global patterns of nation making in the mid-nineteenth century?

QUIGLEY: The answer depends on whether you look backward from 1865 (or 1877 or 1900) or forward from 1861. If you look through the lens of Union victory, the most persuasive answer is the one superbly advanced by Tom Bender in *A Nation among Nations*: the Union war effort fits into a broad trajectory of nation-state formation in which liberal ideas of individual freedom and state-stimulated economic development were central.³⁰

If you approach the question from the perspective of 1861, problems arise. How does including the Confederacy as an aspiring nation-state (rather than a dissenting minority doomed to defeat) change the American Civil War’s place in these global developments? What do we do with the fact that state formation proceeded even more rapidly in the Confederacy than in the United States? Or that nationalism in Europe was a varied phenomenon in the nineteenth century? Alongside the triumphant unification movements in Italy and Germany, for example, were less successful ethnocultural separatist movements—in Ireland, and Hungary, for example—whose rhetoric (if not substance) echoed in the secessionist South.³¹ Everywhere, nationalism arose from contingent political developments more than sentiment alone. As well as looking for an underlying economic/social driver of nation-state formation in the nineteenth century, we can also compare the messy, unpredictable political processes through which different claims of nationhood rose to the surface in America as well as Europe.

DOYLE: If we consider the South’s rebellion within the larger history of what historians have sometimes called the age of nationalism, it is no wonder the Confederates thought history was on their side and that they would join a legion of new nations that had successfully claimed the right to self-government. The Confederacy wrapped its cause in the popular language of liberal nationalism and situated itself among the many aspiring

²⁹ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. R. H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner (2 vols., Indianapolis, 1981), I, 389, II, 684. On Frederick Law Olmsted, see Thomas Bender, *Toward an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore, 1982), 167–68.

³⁰ Bender, *Nation among Nations*.

³¹ Paul Quigley, “Secessionists in an Age of Secession: The Slave South in Transatlantic Perspective,” in *Secession as an International Phenomenon*, ed. Don H. Doyle (Athens, Ga., 2010), 151–73; Frank Towers, “The Origins of the Antimodern South: Romantic Nationalism and the Secession Movement in the American South,” *ibid.*, 174–90. On separatist nationalism in Europe, see Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson, eds., *What Is a Nation? Europe 1789–1914* (Oxford, 2006); Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, 123–48; D. George Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland* (London, 1991); John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London, 1987); and Istvan Deak, *Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848–1849* (London, 2001).

nations that had taken their place in the sun in recent decades. Confederate emissaries in Europe were instructed to cite the many precedents for diplomatic recognition of de facto governments such as their own. These included the United States itself, the Spanish American republics, the Republic of Texas, and the Kingdom of Italy. Many of these governments were still in the throes of rebellion against their erstwhile rulers when recognition was bestowed.³²

At the beginning of the war, it was the Confederacy that invoked the language and logic of liberal nationalism to justify its bid for independence. The Union found itself defending an argument all too familiar among European empires: the right of sovereign rulers to suppress dissident rebels within their realm. The Confederate appeal to liberal world opinion might have succeeded were it not for the ability of its opponents in the United States and abroad to characterize the illiberal ends of Southern nationhood—the perpetuation of human slavery and antidemocratic, even aristocratic designs.

GRANT: The relationship we may be trying to comprehend is not just that between nationalism and liberalism, but between nationalism, liberalism, and the state. As Paul (and Tom) have argued, from a Union perspective the war effort “fits into a broad trajectory of nation-state formation in which liberal ideas of individual freedom and state-stimulated economic development were central.” Yet definitions of the state, as the sociologist Michael Mann points out, “contain two different levels of analysis, the ‘institutional’ and the ‘functional’ . . . the state can be defined in terms of what it looks like, institutionally, or what it does, its functions.”³³ Definitions of nationalism involve multiple layers of analysis: the political, relating to the state, and the cultural and ideological, or what the state stands for. Within those parameters we might include the specific components of class, identity, localism, gender, and ethnicity. Nationalism can, therefore, also be described institutionally and functionally. Yet we as historians still seem to know more about—and seem more exercised by—how the Confederacy conceived itself ideologically.

I think Paul’s point about looking through the lens of 1861 may be a pertinent one to pursue. The Confederate perspective appears fixed, whether one’s vantage point is 1861 or 1865, while the Union’s position evolved. Without that evolution, Confederate echoes of the American Revolution may have reverberated to greater effect not just in America, but globally.

BUTLER: While the Confederacy employed the rhetoric of liberal nationalism, such an effort faced serious challenges even before the Union seized on the “illiberal,” proslavery end of Confederate nationhood to discredit it. Cavalier/Yankee rhetoric to the contrary, Confederates were not an ethnically distinct people striving to achieve their independence, as

³² Ann L. Tucker, “Internationalizing the Confederacy: Italy and the Creation of Southern Nationalism” (M.A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 2008); Quigley, “Secessionists in an Age of Secession.” The Confederate secretary of state Robert Toombs instructed William Yancey, the envoy in London, to point out the policy of recognition accorded other nationalist movements in Europe, such as Italy in March 1861. See U.S. Naval War Records Office, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, series 2, vol. III: *Proclamations, Appointments, etc. of President Davis; State Department Correspondence with Diplomatic Agents, etc.* (Washington, 1922), 193.

³³ Michael Mann, “The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms, and Results,” *Archives européennes de sociologie*, 25 (no. 2, 1984), 185–213, esp. 185.

was the case for Hungarian, Irish, or Polish nationalisms. Rather than being a subject people, Southerners had played a crucial role in founding and leading the government from which they sought to secede in 1861.

Further, just as the Confederacy was presenting itself as a liberal nationalist movement, its threat to an extant liberal nationalist project could be interpreted as an assault on democracy more generally. In Lincoln's famous words, secession was "the essence of anarchy"—an antidemocratic rejection of the rules of democratic governance. From that point came Lincoln's central claim on behalf of the Union cause: liberal, democratic, republican government was in danger of perishing from the earth. The Confederacy endangered the liberal nationalist project by threatening the demise of a "Federal Union" conceived in and dedicated not simply to liberty (a capacious notion to be sure) but also to popular sovereignty, as expressed through an agreed-upon constitutional method of transferring power. So even before the conflict became a war over illiberal slavery, Confederate appeals to "the language and logic of liberal nationalism," as Don put it, struck some as hollow rhetoric.³⁴

As Paul suggests, we might think also about how nationalism is born of war, rather than the other way around. As in Germany and Italy, the United States would achieve unity in political, economic, and constitutional terms. But the events of the state-making war helped consolidate nationalism in cultural terms as well, especially through the two crucial forces of print and bloodshed. The war effort on both sides gave rise to active print publicists who sought to unite the states and rally widespread public support. The startling casualties on both sides made the war a crucible in which a shared sense of national suffering and purpose was forged. The nationalist/nationalizing power of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, delivered adjacent to fields that had only recently ceased to reek of rotting corpses, cannot be adequately understood apart from that "last full measure of devotion" paid in blood for a "nation so conceived and so dedicated."³⁵

SEXTON: I think we need to consider the economic foundation of national movements in the mid-nineteenth century—the other side of the coin of the liberal ideas about which others have commented. In part what we are talking about is the story of economic and infrastructure development that linked peoples together—the market revolution in America, technological innovation, and increasingly sophisticated networks of finance and inland trade all worked in similar ways and were part of the print culture to which Leslie refers. The Republican legislation of the war years brought coherence to this emerging system of political economy and in doing so helped unite the diverse peoples and sections of the union (in a way not unlike, I'd venture to guess, the German Zollverein system). The paradox is that nations formed in this era amid a process of economic integration, including the booming flows of transatlantic trade, migration, and investment, that transcended the hardening national borders.

The Southern story, here as elsewhere, looks ambiguous to me. On the one hand, Southerners began to develop a concept of the national market that shared features of the one created by Northern Republicans—for example, the South's surprising embrace of moderate protectionism and state-supported economic development. On the other hand,

³⁴ Abraham Lincoln, "First Inaugural Address—Final Text," March 4, 1861, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Basler, IV, 268.

³⁵ Abraham Lincoln, "Address Delivered at the Dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg," Nov. 19, 1863, *ibid.*, VII, 17–23.

liberal concepts of free trade, rooted in the cotton-export economy, remained powerful in the South.³⁶ In this regard, the Confederacy shared traits of staple exporting economies, such as Britain's settler colonies and certain Latin American states embedded in Britain's global commercial system.

NAGLER: I would like to come back to the issue of the driving force behind the idea of a nation capable of mobilizing citizens to a degree that they risked ultimate sacrifices. In an attempt to develop a generalizing comparative analysis, Dieter Langewiesche recently described the nation as a "resource community." Independent of its territorial uniqueness, the idea of the nation always offered its members participation in the political, social, economic, and cultural success of this entity. To achieve that success the nation needs to be organized as a state and capable of enforcing its territorial sovereignty and its internal power and authority. The establishment of central state power and its continuous consolidation proceeded quite differently in Europe than in the United States. Whereas in the United States the relatively early establishment of a participatory democracy prevented a centralized and powerful state, in Europe central state power was established before participatory elements were incorporated into the nation-state. In this respect the subject of federalism is central, an issue that was debated intensely all over the world during the American Civil War era. German liberals in 1848 had praised American federalism and wanted to create their nation with this principle. Although in theory the twenty-two states of the North German Federation were given rights as in a federal nation-state, Prussia dominated. It is not surprising, then, that Bismarck supported the Union during the war, since in his concept of nation building the idea of secession was unthinkable.³⁷

BENDER: The object of our inquiry is the making of a modern nation-state and its institutional form. We have focused on nationalism, which is, as Leslie points out, a cultural development, a form of identification, and a powerful emotional bond (however, this bond has yet to be explained, though Robert Wiebe tried). My point here is that the differences in nationalisms and nations may derive from the different paths to the condition of a modern nation-state.³⁸

Nineteenth-century state theory is important. Theories of the state that derive from Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's work point to a very different origin of citizenship and the rights associated with it than that found in the U.S. Declaration of Independence or the Lockean tradition generally. Liberalism and state theory as generated in the Declaration

³⁶ Onuf and Onuf, *Nations, Markets, and War*; Brian Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Politics, and the Global Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore, 2009); John Majewski, *Modernizing a Slave Economy: The Economic Vision of the Confederate Nation* (Chapel Hill, 2009).

³⁷ Dieter Langewiesche, "The Nation as a Developing Resource Community: A Generalizing Comparison" in *Comparative and Transnational History*, ed. Haupt and Kocka, 133–48. In the Paulskirche in Frankfurt, the seat of the first German national assembly, delegates such as Johann Tellkamp and Moritz von Mohl praised American federalism in 1848. See A. E. Dick Howard, "Willi Paul Adams and American Constitutionalism," in *Atlantic Passages: Constitution—Immigration—Internationalism*, ed. Andreas Etges and Ursula Lehmkuhl (Berlin, 2006), 46–48.

³⁸ Robert H. Wiebe, "Framing U.S. History: Democracy, Nationalism, and Socialism," in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. Thomas Bender (Berkeley, 2002), 236–49; Robert H. Wiebe, *Who We Are: A History of Popular Nationalism* (Princeton, 2002). For a classic analysis of different routes to modernity and their different outcomes, see Barrington Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston, 1967).

of Independence locates rights in the individual, but a conservative theory of the nation-state, such as Bismarck's, argues that rights are derived from the state. Lincoln's view followed the Declaration of Independence and Locke; for him sovereignty resided in the people and rights in the individual. By the end of the nineteenth century there was in U.S. legal and political theory a shift toward the German understanding of the origin of rights. That theory was imported from Germany by John W. Burgess, who powerfully shaped the disciplines of political science and public law in the United States. This is important for the story Blight and others tell about the failure of nationalism to protect those rights that we think (if not everyone then thought) were what the Civil War was significantly about.³⁹

For our conversation it is important as the beginning of a way to think about the complexity of the nation-state, liberal and conservative. We must think of the nation-state as a compound of nation and state—crudely Herder's cultural nationalism and Hegel's state structure.⁴⁰ Because Germans did not have a territorial state, Herder turned to culture and language, arguing that a national identity was achieved through cultural production. For Hegel, social and political developments were central. Considering the character of the United States in the 1820s, he argued that cities and industry, both necessary economic and social consolidations for the formation of a nation-state, were too little developed to call the United States a nation-state. Lincoln and the Republicans brought together both the cultural and socioeconomic elements, Herder and Hegel. We need to think about them both together and separately to get a handle of some of the complexities we are dealing with here.

Another relevant dimension of the state is the Republican—or at least the Radical Republican—faith in the capacity of the state. Republicans had an outsized sense of what the modern state could do, just as the expansion of the Confederate institutional state has been mentioned already. Here again, nation and state are both singular and linked items.

I think we may want to incorporate Theda Skocpol's notion of the state as having its own interests.⁴¹ These can involve self-preserving activities, including a concern for homogeneous territory and boundaries, especially in liberal nation-states. If sovereignty is rooted in the people, who is in and who is out is important—and sameness is preserved. In the nineteenth-century United States, race and territory defined who was in and who was out.

GRANT: From the perspective of observers of the Civil War, the idea of “the state” was something of a mystery. “During my short sojourn in this country,” the *London Times* correspondent William Howard Russell noted, “I have never yet met any person who could show me where the sovereignty of the Union resides. General Prentiss, however, and his Illinois volunteers are quite ready to fight for it.” The arguments of the political scientist Stephen Skowronek regarding the development of the American state after

³⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge, Eng., 1975); G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Cambridge, Eng., 1942). Daniel Rodgers, *Contested Truths: Key Words in American Politics since Independence* (New York, 1987), esp. 144–75. John W. Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution, 1866–1876* (New York, 1902). See also Blight, *Race and Reunion*.

⁴⁰ F. M. Barnard, ed. and trans., *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture* (Cambridge, Eng., 2010); Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. Nisbet, 134, 168–70. More generally, see Charles S. Maier, “Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era,” *American Historical Review*, 105 (June 2000), 807–31.

⁴¹ Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (New York, 1979); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).

1877 notwithstanding, by the turn of the twentieth century we seem to be no further forward, at least as H. G. Wells saw things. The “typical American has no ‘sense of the state,’” Wells observed in 1906, and America as a unified entity found expression only through “the flag,” beneath which “America is lost among constituent States and cities.”⁴²

So, Russell looked for the state institutionally; Wells intuitively, by and large. Are we now able to identify the relationship between the institutional and intuitive in any precise way? “In 1865,” Liah Greenfeld argues, “the soul of the American nation, which had been before but a resident tenant in its vast territorial body, became its owner: the national identity finally achieved a geo-political embodiment.” How did this work in practice? The post-1877 era of industrialism and immigration may have functioned to create the state apparatus, but it was not in the security of that state that nationalism developed but in reaction to its complexity. The historian Robert C. Binkley emphasized that nationalism “responded to human needs . . . that were all the more insistent as the kaleidoscopic changes of the business world were reflected in the experiences of the millions in terms of insecurity.” I wonder to what extent we have fully unpacked the complexities of the Civil War memorial industry, which peaked in the 1877–1920 period as part of the reaction against an impersonal industrialism and an apparently threatening swell of immigration? Does the nationalism of the post-1877 era, in fact, represent not the failure but the success of an ethnic nationalism wrapped in a civic shell?⁴³

Certainly, this is one thread in the broad historiography of the United States: when analyzing the Grand Army of the Republic, Stuart McConnell identified its brand of nationalism as essentially backward looking; Michael Kammen, painting with a broad cultural brush, pointed to the emergence of groups whose claim to America took physical form by the positioning of markers on the landscape and who deployed an essentially ethnic-origins argument to defend their position, a position not necessarily at odds with the emancipatory/equality imperative, but one that undermined it nevertheless.⁴⁴ Was America lost among its states and cities, as Wells believed, or simply struggling to make sense of its own contradictory history? America has less opportunity to obfuscate here than some nations: it is harder to construct myths of the mist-covered Teutonic forest when the trees have been chopped down and turned into a carefully preserved paper trail of the civic nation’s ideals and imperatives.

To follow Tom’s point, and to get Herder’s cultural nationalism and Hegel’s state structure working together, perhaps we need to look more closely at other areas such as religion, education, or the reform impulse more broadly. I have always been puzzled by how quickly individuals with strong antebellum and Civil War liberal/democratic/abolitionist credentials dropped the ball after 1865. Was it because, as Tom suggests, they had an optimistic, “outsized sense of what the modern state could do”? Or was it, as Scott Poole proposes, more the result of their “profound cynicism . . . about the possibility of fulfilling [their ideals] within the American national experiment.” I know cynicism (or irony) has been proposed elsewhere as one of the war’s outcomes, but how far do we incorporate that argument into our assessment of Union (or Confederate) nationalism, indeed into nation

⁴² Russell, *My Diary North and South*, 338. Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877–1920* (Cambridge, Eng., 1982). H. G. Wells, *The Future in America: A Search after Realities* (New York, 1906), 153, 205.

⁴³ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (1992; Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 480. Robert C. Binkley, *Realism and Nationalism, 1852–1871* (New York, 1935), 123.

⁴⁴ Stuart McConnell, *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, 1992); Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York, 1991).

making as a whole in this period, and does it alter Greenfeld's proposition that, in a fundamental way, the Civil War made the American ideal real?⁴⁵

SEXTON: These rich exchanges raise an important issue: the need to historicize the relationship between central state development and nationalism. Much has been written about how the Union war effort hinged upon the capacity of Union leaders to harness the power of a historically strong civil society—volunteer organizations, politicized newspapers and Union Leagues, churches (we haven't discussed religion enough in these posts!), and the individual states themselves. Surely, Lincoln's ability to do this was one of the main reasons why he was such an effective wartime leader.⁴⁶

The bigger point, however, is that the "state" in nineteenth-century America is hard to pin down, not least because it often outsourced to or collaborated with third parties. The prerequisite for state development during the Civil War was not only a conflict that required unprecedented central direction but also the self-mobilization and unification of nonstate structures, which had been forming and cohering for decades. I like the argument that the exigencies of war encouraged nonstate networks and voluntary organizations to assimilate into Union-wide structures, which in turn was important to the realization of an imagined community of the nation, as well as the ability of the central state to more effectively extract resources and will from its constituents. Old traditions of localism were not destroyed, but rather co-opted into new structures. An obvious example here would be the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a volunteer organization committed to the care of Union soldiers that relied on activities organized at the grass-roots level while at the same time developing a sophisticated and national institutional structure.⁴⁷

The other point that springs to mind concerns the strengths and weaknesses of the American state as it emerged ad hoc in the nineteenth century and during the Civil War in particular. It is illuminating to compare the results of the new American nation-state in the West—where it successfully facilitated voluntary settler migration and the exploitation of natural resources and Indian lands—to the South—where the Reconstruction project was left "unfinished" and "home rule" was restored. There are many ways to explain those outcomes—and the "who is in and who is out" issue Tom raised is crucial here—but perhaps the kind of state in question needs to be considered.

DOYLE: Popular sentiment is often what historians talk about when they discuss nationalism, but there is another function of nationalism—as something intended for international export. That presentation of the nation includes everything from diplomatic

⁴⁵ W. Scott Poole, "Memory and the Abolitionist Heritage: Thomas Wentworth Higginson and the Uncertain Meaning of the Civil War," *Civil War History*, 51 (June 2005), 203. Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York, 2001); Drew Gilpin Faust, *"A Riddle of Death": Mortality and Meaning in the American Civil War* (Gettysburg, 1995); Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York, 2008).

⁴⁶ Richard Carwardine, *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power* (New York, 2006); Adam I. P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (New York, 2006).

⁴⁷ Brian Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight: The Mystery of National Authority in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 2009), 209. Judith Ann Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston, 2000).

communications to state-sponsored or privately supported propaganda campaigns outside the nation. Here is where the Confederacy had some real problems. What worked at home to motivate soldiers and those on the home front might not appeal abroad, and vice versa. Generating outrage against meddling abolitionists who would incite slaves to cut their masters' throats might work well to raise troops at home but not to win international recognition in the courts or meeting halls of Europe. Conversely, Southerners might not try to lead the charge up Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg with a full-throated call to strike at the abominable tariff.

The Union, in contrast, fashioned an idea of what they fought for that worked well at home and abroad, a war for "Union and Liberty." I understand the Union side had problems squaring national ideals with racial phobias, but Chandra Manning's book on common soldiers in the Union and Confederate armies makes a good case for Union soldiers accepting emancipation, contrary to what many historians have argued. Emancipation was the right thing, necessary to end the war, and a well-deserved punishment for the rebels, her Union soldiers seem to think. Those convictions could be embraced without unleashing Northern racial phobias, which, of course, embarrassed the Union cause when they were exposed.⁴⁸

State making, technology, and economic development were all important to nationalism, but it was, above all, an "ism," an ideology, a narrative of who "we" are and what "we" stand for in the world. It is worthwhile to ask what gave rise to this nationalist ideology in the nineteenth century, and I propose that we begin with the movement toward total war. Historians of nationalism often blame nationalism for causing wars but it may be the other way around. The huge citizen armies required for modern warfare demanded a powerful nationalist sense of patriotic loyalty and sacrifice.⁴⁹

ARMITAGE: It's vital to have been reminded that what we mean by nationalism is the desire of nations (however defined) to possess states to create the peculiar hybrid we call the nation-state, and likewise, to recall that there's also a beast we might call the state-nation, which arises when the state is formed before the development of any sense of national consciousness. The United States might be seen as a, perhaps the only, spectacular example of the latter.

Lest we get too fixated on nations looking for states and states generating nations, we might recall Fred Cooper's salutary warning that the mid-nineteenth century was the great age of empires, not of nation-states, with the European saltwater empires expanding toward their zenith, Maximilian becoming emperor of Mexico, Queen Victoria being proclaimed empress of India for the first time, and the Meiji Restoration creating a Japanese empire.⁵⁰ Are empires a form of state, the expansion of a state, or a different creature altogether? Is it sufficient to ask about nationalism and internationalism without also adding empire and imperialism to the mix of factors we need to consider? Where do we fit Confederate dreams of Caribbean empire into this equation? Wasn't the Confederacy consciously entering a world of empires as well as a world of states?

⁴⁸ Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York, 2007).

⁴⁹ Paul Lawrence, *Nationalism: History and Theory* (London, 2005); Robert H. Wiebe, "Humanizing Nationalism," *World Policy Journal*, 13 (Winter, 1996/1997), 81–88.

⁵⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley, 2005), 182.

MAIER: The nineteenth-century nation-state isn't just an imagined community, it is also a materialist and armed community that requires or believes it requires territory as its underlying resource, not language. Binkley pointed out much of this in his brilliant piece of "premature" argumentation in the mid-1930s.⁵¹ From the Mexican-American War and the little Sonderbund War in Switzerland in the late 1840s through the Franco-Prussian War, this was a period of continuing wars of what I term national reconstitution. But they were also wars for elite reconfiguration. By around 1880 the new social class constellation and the territorial reconfigurations were sorted out, and nation-states could seek expansion and the enclosure of colonies abroad. Historians don't have to choose analytically between empire or state: any self-respecting state of a feasible size strived to be an empire in that post-1850 era, but the new empires were not those of confederal structures (such as the Mughals or the Holy Roman Empire) but modernized states with peripheral annexations either next door in the trans-Mississippi West, the Caucasus and the Balkans, or overseas in Asia and Africa. Nationalism as such wasn't liberal or conservative; it was expansionist, whereas "liberal" and "conservative" describe to what degree elites were open or closed and to what degree they sought to incorporate agrarian and urban proletariats. To be sure, nationalism, which accompanied liberalism and romanticism, provided a program whereby conservative elites could rally electorates in an age of mass male suffrage.

We have to integrate the end of the nomad realms (brilliantly analyzed for the United States by Brian DeLay and Pekka Hämäläinen) into the overall picture, as well as the role of British capital as a force for making viable the liberal alternatives in the Americas. British capital was crucial at points in Mexico and for the *porteños* in Argentina. British river steamships were important, too, for the Chinese middle-way reformers of the 1860s to finally defeat the Taiping. The task, then, is not just to do a transnational history of the United States or the Confederacy but a world history in which these and other countries, normally studied alone, are embedded in a study of overarching intellectual movements and material developments, financial and technological.⁵²

SEXTON: The point about empire is important and returns us to the issue of reperiodizing revolutionary America as 1765–1865. The objective would be to see the Civil War as pivotal not only to the rising American imperialism of the nineteenth century but also to its anti-imperial consolidation. Both sides of the Civil War saw themselves as carrying on the torch of 1776 and, revealingly, came to view the other in relation to the persistent (and, in part, imagined) British threat. By determining the political and economic arrangements that would emerge from an internally contentious postcolonial period, the Civil War was a culmination of sorts of the Revolution.

We can go further and see how the North's triumph both consolidated the independence of the new nation and sowed the seeds of the American empire that emerged in the coming decades. The result of 1865 cemented the bonds of union between the states, thus foreclosing the possible reintroduction of European balance-of-power politics into the American union. The ascendancy of Northern Republicans in the 1860s also inaugurated

⁵¹ Binkley, *Realism and Nationalism*.

⁵² Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven, 2008); Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, 2008).

the “golden era of American protectionism” that insulated the United States from British commercial power and sheltered the nation’s burgeoning industries. When British capitalists shied away from funding the Union war effort, the result was the development of homegrown structures of finance centered on Wall Street that, in time, would supplant those in London. Those economic developments decreased reliance on British capital and commerce while also creating a powerful cluster of interests in America that promoted overseas commercial expansion after the war.⁵³

What I’m getting at is the obvious, yet often neglected point that the Civil War was a final phase of America’s liberation from the British Empire, as well as a central event in the emergence of its own empire (in both the continental and overseas commercial forms). One could go even further with this anti-imperial/imperial tangle in the context of Latin American policy and the emergence of the new Monroe Doctrine of the 1860s, which sought not only the anti-imperial objective of kicking the French out of Mexico but also the imperialist one of turning Mexico into an economic satellite of the United States.⁵⁴

DOYLE: To view the nineteenth century as a contest between imperial-monarchical and democratic-republican nationalist movements is not only very useful but it is also in keeping with the way many actors at the time understood things. I am struck by how desperate the “republican experiment” must have looked to Lincoln and others at that time. In Europe, after all the revolutionary and reform movements following the French Revolution, the only republican governments I can identify were Switzerland—which adopted a federal republican system in 1848 modeled after the United States—and “The Most Serene Republic of San Marino,” whose constitution went back to 1600. Granted, England had a proud tradition of representative government, but the ruling classes were generally hostile to democracy at home and abroad and had kept the franchise narrowly limited until at least 1867.

There were more republics in Africa than Europe, by my crude count. In Latin America most of the Spanish American republics had either fallen under the control of military *caudillos* or were torn by civil war between liberals and antidemocratic conservatives. Mexico was facing an invasion by the French and was about to have a Hapsburg monarch installed. Santo Domingo had been re-annexed by the Spanish Empire. All of which is to say that David’s point is well taken: the tide of democracy and self-governing nations seemed to be ebbing, and that of imperialist ambitions was rising, particularly in the Americas. Though the Confederacy was a democratic republic constitutionally, it has long been pointed out that ideologically there was an affinity among the Southern upper class for the aristocracy of Europe and considerable distrust of “excessive democracy” or “mobocracy,” particularly in the North.

SEXTON: There certainly were many actions or threats of European intervention in the 1860s. One of the effects, as Don rightly points out, was the reemergence of a sense of republican solidarity among those in the New World fighting against European imperialists and their collaborators. Indeed, Latin American liberals such as the Mexican diplomat

⁵³ Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860–1898* (Ithaca, 1963). Alfred E. Eckes, *Opening America’s Market: U.S. Foreign Trade Policy since 1776* (Chapel Hill, 1995), 28.

⁵⁴ Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion*, esp. 252–76.

Matias Romero spoke more about the Monroe Doctrine during the Civil War years than did Lincoln and Secretary of State William H. Seward.⁵⁵ Of course, when Latin Americans embraced the Monroe Doctrine it was not just an ideological or political statement but also an exercise of public diplomacy intended to curry favor among those in the United States whose support they sought.

I would also suggest, however, that the Monroe Doctrine that emerged in the minds of U.S. statesmen in the 1860s was more than just a reiteration of hemispheric republican solidarity; it carried with it new assumptions concerning national security requirements, economic policy, and the alleged inferiorities of Latin Americans themselves—all of which contributed to the formulation of new policies and structures that would project American power and interests beyond its borders. The traditional anti-imperialism of the 1823 version of the doctrine, in other words, was yoked with a proto-imperialist program.

The 1860s witnessed the preservation of the American union. It also saw the failure of the French intervention in Mexico, the devolution of British power and the granting of confederated home rule in Canada, and a rebellion in Cuba beginning in 1868 that portended the collapse of Spanish rule there.⁵⁶ In short, the decade was a crucial moment in what we now call North American history and its decolonization. To what extent were these events interrelated and/or linked to, or even caused by, the American Civil War?

GRANT: To pick up on points that both Jay and Don have made here, I'd invoke David Potter's question about the Civil War's global significance, which for Potter began with the questions: "what were the prevalent tendencies of the nineteenth century, and what did the Civil War contribute in causing these tendencies to prevail?" He proposed a two-part answer. The Civil War had "turned the tide which had been running against nationalism for forty years, or ever since Waterloo; and second, it forged a bond between nationalism and liberalism at a time when it appeared that the two might draw apart and move in opposite directions." Historians, as I have said before, have perhaps focused on one part of this answer: the triumph of liberalism against conservative forces as an international paradigm shift, of which the Civil War was but one aspect. As Jay reminds us, Thomas D. Schoonover stressed the international context within which the ideological battle between the Union and the Confederacy was played out. Both the Civil War in America and *la reforma* in Mexico were, he argued, conflicts "between liberalism, the ideological and world view of industrial capitalism, and the conserve remnants of mercantilistic, paternalistic, and agrarian institutions supporting monarchical and aristocratic management of society."⁵⁷

DOYLE: In response to Jay's point about European threats to Latin America, it seems clear that the French would never have risked war with the United States by invading Mexico, let alone installing Maximilian as emperor, had the United States not been embroiled in

⁵⁵ Thomas D. Schoonover, ed. and trans., *Mexican Lobby: Matias Romero in Washington, 1861–1867* (Lexington, Ky., 1986). Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 2011), 123–58.

⁵⁶ Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*; Phillip Buckner, "The Creation of the Dominion of Canada, 1860–1901," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip Buckner (Oxford, 2008); Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868–1898* (Chapel Hill, 1999).

⁵⁷ Potter, "Civil War," 136, 137–38. Schoonover, ed. and trans., *Mexican Lobby*, 168.

civil war. Nor would Spain have attempted re-annexation of Santo Domingo. Conversely, as both Jay's and Susan-Mary's comments suggest, the Union victory in 1865 helped fortify democratic and republican movements, particularly in Mexico, where the United States played a crucial role in returning to power Mexico's duly elected liberal president, Benito Juárez, by openly declaring support for him and sending U.S. troops to the border.⁵⁸ U.S. victory also must have encouraged the Cubans to revolt and the British to devolve power to Canada as well.

Potter's argument that Union victory reestablished a link between liberalism and nationalism is interesting but involves a complicated answer. I'm not so sure liberalism and "the national idea," as they called it, had been severed insofar as movements for national independence and self-rule had generally been supported by ideas of natural rights and equal citizenship, and usually in opposition to empire and monarchy in principle.

If we look at the abolition of slavery as a liberal project, it scored one victory after another between circa 1780 and the 1860s when the United States and Cuba gave up slavery, and Brazil began to phase it out in 1871 with the "free womb" law (which granted freedom to children born to slaves) before it became the last to abolish slavery altogether in 1888. All the Latin American republics had abolished slavery after winning independence. In this respect nationalism and liberalism were joined and successfully so.⁵⁹

I wonder if Potter was identifying the twilight rather than the new dawn of liberal nationalism. Most historians of nationalism seem to mark the turn from liberal nationalism to its less benign version associated with imperialism, racism, and war around 1870, about the time Potter sees nationalism and liberalism realigning. Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* is one handy example of this periodization. I suppose this trend connected with the rise of Bismarck's Germany and the tendency among historians of nationalism to find in Germany the taproot of a new racialized, imperialist, and all together illiberal brand of nationalism.⁶⁰

JAH: Naturalist theories posit national(ist) sentiments as causal factors in conflict; formative ones perceive national(ist) sentiments arising from conflict. Do the Union and Confederate positions, respectively, fit either pattern neatly?

BENDER: The most important point I would suggest here is that the North and South may have followed different paths. Before going into this difference, I am prompted by an important point that David Armitage made about the Declaration of Independence to make some distinctions that build on his. He pointed out that the important issue at the time was not "all men are created equal" but rather the statement that the colonies were claiming to be "Free and Independent States." There were three frames in operation in the document: English rights, universal rights, and the system and the rights of nations. Opening up this level of complexity in the Declaration of Independence helps me think about making distinctions in the later nation-making process.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico*.

⁵⁹ Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (New York, 2009), 181–204, 333–71.

⁶⁰ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*.

⁶¹ David Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007); David Armitage, "The Declaration of Independence and International Law," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 59 (Jan. 2002), 39–64.

It seems that Hungary in 1848 and the various oppressed minorities there in 1918 claimed the rights of nations. Nationalism or nationalist sentiments forced conflict, which resembled the case of the South. One might note that the first of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points proposed for the peace process at Versailles, which laid the foundations for the success of the minorities in Hungary, would have justified not only the nationalist movements within Hungary in 1848 and 1919 but also the claims of the Confederacy.⁶²

The North followed a different path. It became more specifically nationalist as the conflict proceeded. The United States saw itself in universalist terms—the pioneer republic from the formation of the union onward—and that self-perception was a resource the North appropriated with more success than the South. And it was a motivating element in the North's response, but gradually nationalism became more important. Nation replaced Union, and nation carried more emotional force. Lincoln, or Lincoln's language, can be a case study on this. As has often been remarked, after the war there was a nationalist development with grammatical implications: the United States became a singular noun.

If we see the creation of Germany in 1871 as an expansion of Prussia, it might be like the North; if we see it as a secession from the German Confederation, it may look more like the South. I think Argentine nationalism and state making is more like the North than the South, and this is true, I think, of most Latin American nations.⁶³ Japan, too, probably is more like the North.

QUIGLEY: On the Confederate side I agree that war made nationalism more than vice versa. It's tempting to assume that the eruption of a political independence movement in 1861 must mean that there was a widespread sentiment of southern national identity welling up beforehand, but that was not the case. There were certainly individual southern nationalists before 1861, but a deeply rooted, extensive sense of national identity did not begin to emerge until after secession.⁶⁴

In that respect the Confederacy's experience is comparable, though not identical, to that of mid-nineteenth-century Italy and Germany. Unification was not preordained in either place; it was not the inevitable result of some naturally occurring and consensual nationalist sentiment that neatly corresponded to the ultimate national borders. Cultural nationalism certainly had deeper roots in Italy and Germany than in the American South, but both unifications were the product of a combination of untidy, often unplanned political developments—and war.

In the Confederacy, war drove both nation formation and state formation, simultaneously and symbiotically. The intertwining of the two is exemplified in the theme of death sacrifice. Across the post-1789 world the willingness to sacrifice one's life voluntarily for the nation has been the ultimate expression of emotional commitment to the nation as an object of cultural identification. But death sacrifice in the Confederacy was, after conscription was enacted in April 1862, a legal obligation demanded of white male citizens by the central government in Richmond, Virginia. The crisis of modern war intensified death sacrifice in terms of both cultural identity and formal citizenship (the

⁶² Deak, *Lawful Revolution*. Charles Seymour, "The End of the Empire: Remnants of Austria-Hungary," in *What Really Happened in Paris: The Story of the Peace Conference, 1918–1919*, ed. Edward Mandell House and Charles Seymour (New York, 1921), 87–111.

⁶³ Nicolas Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina* (Berkeley, 1991); Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Politics, Economics, and Society in Argentina in the Revolutionary Period* (New York, 1975).

⁶⁴ Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848–1865* (New York, 2011).

latter category is one to which Civil War historians have paid too little attention). I don't think it's possible to say that either state formation or nation formation preceded or controlled the other, but I want to emphasize war as an important driver of both.⁶⁵

There are a number of complications and additional avenues here. What about the place of those denied formal citizenship (and to some degree membership in the national cultural community)—white women and the enslaved? Stephanie McCurry has made a wonderful start of suggesting ways to incorporate those unfranchised groups into the story of state formation in the Confederacy. Another question: How did federalism complicate the war's stimulation of both state formation and nation formation in the Confederacy? This too raises fascinating comparative possibilities with Italy and Germany, both of which were outcomes of what Tom Bender has identified as a global "federative crisis" in the mid-nineteenth century.⁶⁶

ARMITAGE: I'd like to take up some points made by Tom and Paul. First, many of the secession proclamations drew on the language of the 1776 Declaration of Independence to argue that the seceded states were "resuming" their place among the powers of the earth. Equally predictably, the Confederate states ignored the second paragraph of that document in their reworkings and made no reference to individual rights to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."⁶⁷ They must have understood the acts of secession within at least two "frames" (to use Tom's term): first, domestic law (the theory of the Union as a compact) and, second, within the law of nations, as each state reverted to a primal sovereignty first declared in 1776, recovered in 1860–1861, and then amalgamated again to create a new confederal state.

My questions arising from this point are: (1) Do we need to break down this initial question state by state (for the Confederacy) as well as region by region (for the United States as a whole)? Would the answer to the chicken-and-egg question of the priority of nation or state be answered with different inflections in the Deep South or for the border states? (2) What was the role of law in defining nationality and statehood in the conflict? (Law and, as Jay has pointed out, religion are two big areas of discourse and practice that haven't come up much in our discussion so far, either comparatively or specifically in the American cases.) (3) How was the Confederacy understood and underpinned, legally and constitutionally? The Confederate constitution was, in the words of the Confederacy's attorney general, Thomas H. Watts, "almost a transcript" of the U.S. Constitution, with only minor changes to protect slavery and to enshrine a contractual theory of the union underlying the Confederacy. But to what end? How did it function as a fundamental document of union for the Confederacy? Was it intended in part to secure international recognition for the Confederate States of America?⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Robert E. Bonner, *Colors and Blood: Flag Passions of the Confederate South* (Princeton, 2002); Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*; Albert Burton Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (New York, 1924); Charles Royster, "Founding a Nation in Blood: Military Conflict and American Nationality," in *Arms and Independence: The Military Character of the American Revolution*, ed. Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville, 1984), 25–49; Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York, 1994); John L. Comaroff and Paul C. Stern, eds., *Perspectives on Nationalism and War* (Amsterdam, 1995).

⁶⁶ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*. Bender, *Nation among Nations*, 133–50.

⁶⁷ Armitage, *Declaration of Independence*, 128–29.

⁶⁸ David M. Golove and Daniel J. Hulsebosch, "A Civilized Nation: The Early American Constitution, the Law of Nations, and the Pursuit of International Recognition," *New York University Law Review*, 85 (Oct. 2010), 932–1066. On the Confederate constitution, see Constitution of the Confederate States of America, March 11, 1861, in *The Statutes at Large of the Provisional Government of the Confederate States of America* (Richmond, 1864), 11–23; Marshall L. De Rosa, *The Confederate Constitution of 1861: An Inquiry into American Constitutionalism* (Columbia, Mo., 1991); and Stephen C. Neff, *Justice in Blue and Gray: A Legal History of the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010), 14–15.

Continuing to go back to points made by Tom and Paul, what happens when we spotlight not nation or state but the hinge between them—war? How was the conflict understood legally, constitutionally, and politically by both sides? How did conceptions of the war change over the course of the conflict and with what effects on conceptions of nationhood and statehood? It's my understanding—and I may be wrong—that it's not until the *Prize Cases* (1862–1863) that the conflict is legally determined to be a “war,” meaning both de facto a conflict that had all the appearances of an interstate war (without being recognized as an international conflict) and de jure a war, rather than, say, a police action by the United States against an internal rebellion, even though Congress had not formally declared it to be a war. As far as I can discover, Congress didn't agree to call the conflict the “Civil War” until 1907; until then, and in the official history, it was the “War of the Rebellion.”⁶⁹

One other point has been lurking in my mind for a while and became clearer with Paul's mention of McCurry's *Confederate Reckoning*. Our conversation throughout has been about white and male nationalism, statehood, internationalism, and cosmopolitanism. How, following McCurry, do we open up our rich suite of questions to include *all* the actors—black and white, free and unfree, men and women—who took part in the Civil War and similar comparable conflicts? Is there an implicit racial—and even gender—provincialism in our discussion that we've overlooked in our attempts to overcome nation(alist) provincialism? This is meant as a provocation, not an accusation!

GRANT: One thing that struck me about Tom's distinction between the North and the South was the thought that if the move for the Union was toward nation and we see it as an essentially constructive (formative) shift, then those whose emotional investment was in the Confederacy had to move twice: once away from the Union and, after 1865, back toward it. We may regard the taking of loyalty oaths as something performed under duress and postwar declarations of relief that slavery was gone as sometimes disingenuous, and I think we'd be right to do so; yet the South became such an overtly “patriotic” part of the United States that, at some point, something more than the semblance of national (Union) sentiment developed. I wonder to what extent Civil War historians are sometimes too focused on the “remnants” of the War of the Rebellion—such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans or the United Daughters of the Confederacy—to consider the bigger southern picture? Or has this “emotional shift” in parts of the white South (and I concur with David's point about state and regional differences: that we will see different inflections in Tennessee [divided, despite its designation as the Confederate “heartland”] from, say, Texas [the state with most CSA veterans by the later nineteenth century]) been fully explained by the move away from the civic ideal toward ethnic constructs of the nation in the postwar era?⁷⁰

I would also like to address the gender agenda of Civil War historiography, which, as David highlights, has been rather underplayed in our discussion so far. In the context of post-1871

⁶⁹ *Prize Cases*, 67 U.S. 635 (1863). U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (70 vols., Washington, 1880–1901). *Congressional Record*, 59 Cong., 2 sess., Jan. 11, 1907, pp. 944–49; Michael P. Musick, “A War by Any Other Name,” *Prologue*, 27 (Summer 1995), 149; John Coski, “The War between the Names: What Should the America War of 1861 to 1865 Be Called?,” *North and South*, 8 (Jan. 2006), 62–71.

⁷⁰ Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge, 1988); Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861–1868* (Chapel Hill, 2005); Blum, *Reforging the White Republic*; Robert E. Bonner, “Flag Culture and the Consolidation of Confederate Nationalism,” *Journal of Southern History*, 68 (May 2002), 293–332.

Germany, Jean Quataert proposed a form of postwar alignment between a masculine (war-making) state and a feminine (care-giving) aspect of the state in the form of widows and veterans support. It was this “dual conception of the state,” she argued, that “worked to transform the state into an institution inspiring loyalty—into a nation.” In the German case, groups such as the Vaterländische Frauenvereine (patriotic women’s associations) suggest a stronger female activism accepted by the state after 1871. The Union case, however, reveals a male usurpation of that female activism from the period of the war onward. The Confederacy’s position and the gender debates surrounding women and postwar Confederate nationalism (the “Lost Cause”), alongside the exclusion of Confederate veterans from federal support until almost the twentieth century, further complicates the picture, as does the apparent and fairly swift disappearance of activist Union women from the postwar Union landscape (compared to the situation in the former Confederacy and in Germany after the Franco-Prussian War).⁷¹

BUTLER: I would like to second David’s suggestion that the flattening out of particularity, variety, and complexity may be one of the costs of the holistic, macro-level comparative approach to history. An inquiry into an issue such as this returns us to the topic of methodology and raises the question of whether historians individually and collectively should be more explicit about the costs and benefits of the comparative, transnational, and global histories now being assembled.

I would also like to push back gently against David’s comment that our discussion has been about white and male nationalism and internationalism. I think much of what we have discussed on the war/nationalism chicken-and-egg front involves crucial state-formation and cultural-nationalism processes for nonwhite and nonmale actors as well as for white male actors. The case of black soldiers enlisted in the U.S. Colored Troops is possibly the most trenchant example we have of how voluntary “death sacrifice” demonstrated commitment and, more crucially, provided a route to formal citizenship. Frederick Douglass immediately understood the importance of black participation, and Lincoln’s own dawning recognition of black citizenship emerged directly out of it. In cultural terms as well, the figure of the black soldier held immense power in innumerable contexts. John Stuart Mill’s reflections on the “high minded and heroic feelings” of a long-despised people stirred by the “idea that they were to fight for liberty, and humanity, and civilization” found counterparts in an emerging visual archive (in the work of Thomas Nast, most notably) and in the proliferation of popular literature.⁷²

Scholars have demonstrated how war transformed the relationship of black and white women to the state and their cultural engagement with the nation. The intensified interaction of Union and Confederate women with government officials cut across racial, class, and regional lines. Freedwomen directly appealing to President Lincoln in the search for loved ones can be juxtaposed with middle-class white women who, in being mobilized by quasi-governmental entities such as the Sanitary Commission, extended the crucial

⁷¹ Jean H. Quataert, “Mobilizing Philanthropy in the Service of War: The Female Rituals of Care in the New Germany, 1871–1914,” in *Anticipating Total War: The German and American Experiences, 1871–1914*, ed. Manfred F. Boemeke, Roger Chickering, and Stig Förster (New York, 1999), 217–40, esp. 224; Jeanie Attie, *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War* (Ithaca, 1988).

⁷² David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass’s Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (Baton Rouge, 1991), esp. 148–74. Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (New York, 2010). John Stuart Mill to Henry Fawcett, Aug. 24, 1863, in *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, by John Stuart Mill (33 vols., Toronto, 1963–1991), XV, 877.

precedent of female nurses set by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War. Louisa May Alcott and Clara Barton explicitly linked their service as nurses to that of male soldiers (for example, Barton commented that “no soldier has eaten harder ‘tack,’ slept on barer ground, or under more malarious damps than I have within these four years”). Beyond these somewhat exceptional cases, scholars have shown recently that women had a much sharper understanding of their own sacrifice (of their husbands, fathers, sons, comfort, and well-being) than previous historians have recognized.⁷³

In the Confederate states, the emerging sense of reciprocal obligation between state and citizen that McCurry found for poor rural women in *Confederate Reckoning* also appears in the diaries and letters of elite Southern women that Drew Faust examines in *Mothers of Invention*. The notion that sacrifice for the state entails protection by that state seems to have occurred even among those whose citizenship was partial. What was the impact of these new claims on the development of the state? I also would like to return briefly to Susan-Mary’s question, what happens after the war? The stories McCurry and Faust tell, at least, do not seem to have had long-term transformative effects. Does this tell us something again about the elusive, limited nature of the American state and about the war’s singularity in that regard?⁷⁴

On emerging nationalism in cultural realms, Alice Fahs has established the breadth of women’s engagement in the war effort, in North and South, across lines of race and class. By expressing and imagining that engagement through print, a broad-based, collective meaning emerged that lasted through Reconstruction, only to be eclipsed later by what David Blight called the “veterans’ war,” a perspective that was solidified by *Century* magazine’s Battles and Leaders of the Civil War series in the mid-1880s. How this body of popular literature incorporated a variety of actors invites further comparative or transnational approaches.⁷⁵

GRANT: For the Confederacy, even for its modern “incarnations,” there is no escaping Paul’s point about the war producing nationalism; but the war’s outcome leaves anything like Confederate nationalism in a no-man’s (or no-woman’s) land, albeit one on which they were fairly prompt to stick monuments. Does this petrified nationalism challenge the “print capitalism” that Leslie highlights as central to the Union’s sense of “collective meaning”? It’s the eclipse of that meaning that bothers me as far as American nationalism goes. If we applied the methodology of, say, the Europeanists to “memory” and its cultural expression, as Bruce Baker has done, would we get a different answer to some of the questions we ask about the Civil War?⁷⁶

⁷³ Louisa May Alcott, *Hospital Sketches* (Boston, 1863); Elizabeth Young, “A Wound of One’s Own: Louisa May Alcott’s Civil War Fiction,” *American Quarterly*, 48 (Sept. 1996), 439–74; Clara Barton quoted in Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass., 2005), 201. For more on women’s transformed relations to the state, see, for example, Thavolia Glymph, “‘This Species of Property’: Female Slave Contrabands in the Civil War,” in *A Woman’s War: Southern Women, Civil War, and the Confederate Legacy*, ed. Edward D. C. Campbell Jr. and Kym S. Rice (Charlottesville, 1996), 55–71; Laura F. Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn’t Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era* (Urbana, 2000); and Stephanie McCurry, “Women Numerous and Armed: Gender and the Politics of Subsistence in the Civil War South,” in *Wars within a War: Controversy and Conflict over the American Civil War*, ed. Joan Waugh and Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill, 2009), 1–26.

⁷⁴ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*; Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill, 2001).

⁷⁵ Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South, 1861–1865* (Chapel Hill, 2001). Blight, *Race and Reunion*. R. U. Johnson and C. C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (4 vols., New York, 1884).

⁷⁶ Caroline Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies’ Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill, 2008). Bruce Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant: Historical Memory in the American South* (Charlottesville, 2007).

If it was not until the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil War that it was finally decided (as David reminds us) that it was a civil conflict, are we, one hundred years later, in danger of letting that designation drift? The Sons of Confederate Veterans declare on their Web site: “The citizen-soldiers who fought for the Confederacy personified the best qualities of America. The preservation of liberty and freedom was the motivating factor in the South’s decision to fight the *Second American Revolution*.”⁷⁷ In the public realm, it looks like the war and the questions it raises about the nature of nationalism are still ongoing.

QUIGLEY: Susan-Mary and Leslie raise the issue of the lasting effects of Civil War nationalism. These are fairly easy to chart for the North, whose war effort directly resulted in the strengthening of the Union and the newly robust American national identity mentioned by Tom. But what about for the Confederacy? Although people sometimes talk about southern or Confederate nationalism after 1865, I don’t think that’s the right term to use, since what distinguishes modern nationalism is the claim for political independence in a nation-state. There is certainly some continuity—the experience of the war left in its wake a potent southern identity—but since 1865 there has been no serious movement for political independence.

Why is this so? The answer lies partly in the North’s relatively easy terms of readmission for the white South, which included the narrative of white reconciliation. It also lies in the capaciousness and flexibility of nationalism itself. A general working definition of nationalism is a project to bring into alignment the nation (a group of people with some claim to shared distinctiveness) and the state (as their sovereign institutional embodiment). But sometimes the cultural identification part of this equation is multifaceted, crooked rather than straight. Perhaps Scotland is a better parallel than Ireland, at least in the nineteenth century, when “unionist-nationalism,” as Graeme Morton calls it, combined cultural pride in Scotland with loyalty to the United Kingdom in a harmonious mix.⁷⁸

Looking at white southerners’ identities and allegiances in the long term also encourages us to consider the possibility that even though Confederate nationalism died in 1865, Southerners’ wartime experiences went on to inform their American nationalism thereafter. How, for instance, did changing wartime relationships with government go on to inform southern ideas and behavior as American citizens? My point holds true for both the prewar and the postwar decades. It is impossible to understand wartime nationalism without attention to white southerners’ pre-1861 experience as American nationalists. There are striking continuities in white southerners’ core beliefs and assumptions about nationalism and citizenship—their faith in America’s global significance, for example, or their almost spiritual veneration of 1776—even as the referent changed from the United States to the Confederacy and back again.⁷⁹

Conclusion

SEXTON and GRANT: With the Civil War sesquicentennial upon us, there is perhaps no better time to reconsider the transnational and global implications of the American

⁷⁷ “Welcome to Sons of Confederate Veterans General Headquarters,” *Sons of Confederate Veterans*, <http://www.scv.org/>.

⁷⁸ Graeme Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland, 1830–1860* (Edinburgh, 1999).

⁷⁹ Quigley, *Shifting Grounds*; Robert E. Bonner, *Mastering America: Southern Slaveholders and the Crisis of American Nationhood* (Cambridge, Eng., 2009); Rubin, *Shattered Nation*.

conflict, not least in response to David Blight's injunction that, in contrast to the war's centennial "celebrations" of the 1960s, the United States might seek to "do better" with the commemoration of the sesquicentennial.⁸⁰ There has been a palpable historiographical and political shift since the 1960s, which has relocated the United States within the global processes at play in the nineteenth century: the interchange of peoples, goods, political concepts, and ideas related, most specifically, to liberalism and to the territorial and ideological integrity of the individual nation-state created through conflict.

By opening debate on these processes as they played out in the era of the American Civil War, this "Interchange" has highlighted that historiographical shift, as well as suggested how historians might further examine the transnational construction of the nation-state. The rise of what scholars have assumed was a new kind of empire and a new kind of nation, centrally driven and bureaucratically complex, in the space formerly occupied by native peoples, may represent less of a break from than a reconfiguration of the relationships that informed earlier exchanges between peoples in the Atlantic world and elsewhere. As the nineteenth century progressed, the power of nationalist sentiment and the imperatives of often-violent nation-formation processes altered the currents of global exchange. Nation-states hardened borders and boundaries through a broad array of structures and processes, including citizenship, tariffs, and the invention of national myths. The consolidation of the United States in the 1860s both reflected this process and contributed to it by fueling the expansion of the liberal and democratic nationalism articulated by Lincoln.

Yet the nation-states established in the nineteenth century were not all-powerful or immutable. The transnational forces that helped create the nation-state continued to link it to the wider world, particularly in an era of technological innovation and proto-globalization. Furthermore, the case of the United States reveals that countervailing national and sectional forces could remain in play within the nation-state as it developed over time. Those forces challenged the nation's legal and constitutional safeguards between 1861 and 1865 in a conflict that would redefine the American nation and reverberate throughout the world.

⁸⁰ David W. Blight, "Marking the Civil War Sesquicentennial: Will We Do Better This Time?," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 26, 2009, p. 1.