Introduction

The Problem and the Method

Abraham Lincoln's first annual message to Congress was conveyed with excitement on the front pages of the Scandinavian-American press.[1] Questions surrounding civil war, military service, and slavery set the agenda for *Emigranten* (the Emigrant) and *Hemlandet* (the Homeland), and their intimate connection to issues of citizenship and American empire were revealed by the president's words on December 3, 1861.[2]

"Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives," the president began.[3] Due to the "factious domestic division," the United States was exposed to a "disrespect abroad."[4] One strong nation, Lincoln explained, would ensure a more "durable peace" and "reliable commerce" than would that "same nation broken into hostile fragments."[5] Now that Civil War was upon the United States, however, the president recommended Congress' consideration of a series of war-time legislation.[6]

Mindful of avoiding the term "slavery," Lincoln explicitly addressed the fate of enslaved people. As "the legal claims of certain persons to the labor and services of certain other persons" had "become forfeited" due to the Confiscation Act of August 8, 1861, formerly enslaved people in the

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[1] "Præsidentens Budskab [The President's Message]," *Emigranten*, December 9, 1861; "Presidentens Budskap [The President's Message]," *Hemlandet*, December 11, 1861.

[2] "Washington," *Emigranten*, December 2, 1861; "The Proceedings of Congress," *New York Times*, December 4, 1861.

[3] Abraham Lincoln, "First Annual Message" (online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/first-annual-message-9, 1861).

[4] Ibid.   [5] Ibid.   [6] Ibid.

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insurgent states would have "to be provided for in some way," Lincoln specified.[7]

To this end, the president proposed that steps toward colonization – the settlement of Black Americans outside the nation's borders – be taken.[8] It "may be well to consider, too," Lincoln added, "whether the free colored people already in the United States could not, so far as individuals may desire, be included in such colonization."[9] To realize colonization plans, acquisition of territory and "appropriation of money" would be necessary: "If it be said that the only legitimate object of acquiring territory is to furnish homes for white men, this measure effects that object, for the emigration of colored men leaves additional room for white men remaining or coming here."[10]

Lincoln's First Message to Congress, arguing for acquisition of land and funding to remove people of African descent to "a climate congenial to them," revealed important aspects of his administration's ideas about white citizenship and empire through expansion. Lincoln's renewed call for colonization built on political ideas stretching back decades, despite Black people's opposition and search for alternatives.[11]

In a developing American empire, "ruled in the interests of white people," nonwhites were, as Steven Hahn reminds us, forced to "leave or submit."[12] Debates over colonization and acquisition of territory therefore became closely related "intellectually and politically, as well as chronologically."[13] The white supremacist ideology underpinning colonization also justified territorial expansion on the North American continent.[14]

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid. For a discussion of colonization, see Eric Foner, "Lincoln and Colonization," in *Our Lincoln*, ed. Eric Foner (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 136. Also Sebastian N. Page, *Black Resettlement and the American Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 1–9.

[9] Lincoln, "First Annual Message."   [10] Ibid.

[11] Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 163–171; Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 64.

[12] Steven Hahn, *A Nation without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830–1910* (New York: Viking, 2016), 45.

[13] Ibid. Also Natalie Joy, "The Indian's Cause: Abolitionists and Native American Rights," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 8, no. 2 (2018): 215–216. According to Joy, the anti-slavery movement drew important inspiration from opposition to dispossession of American Indians.

[14] Foner, "Lincoln and Colonization," 137; Michael J. Douma and Anders Bo Rasmussen, "The Danish St Croix Project: Revisiting the Lincoln Colonization Program with Foreign-Language Sources," *American Nineteenth Century History* 15, no. 3 (2014):

Lincoln's call for territorial acquisition to ensure "one strong nation" was an idea widely shared among intellectuals and politicians in the nineteenth century and one clearly expressed by influential German-born economist Friedrich List, who was shaped "in a profound way" by his experience in the United States between 1825 and 1830.[15]

List emphasized the need to secure "a large population and an extensive territory endowed with manifold natural resources," due to the belief that expansion was needed to establish a healthy nation (and, one might add, empire).[16] The perceived importance of population growth and territorial expansion – what Eric Hobsbawm has called the *threshold principle* – helped guide policy in the mid-nineteenth-century United States as well as in Europe.[17] According to Hobsbawm, nations had to engage in *Grossstaatenbildung* (large state building) or at least maintain a threshold of a "sufficient size" in order to preserve their "historical justification."[18] The alternative, a descent into *Kleinstaaterei* (a "system of mini-states"), was seen as a sure path to foreign domination or annihilation.[19]

8–10; Stephen Kantrowitz, "White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, and the Two Citizenships of the Fourteenth Amendment," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 10, no. 1 (2020): 32, 39–40. As Kantrowitz notes, "the history of settler-colonialism has unfolded in close and complicated relationship with the history of white supremacy with regard to African Americans. The histories are not the same, but they cannot be disentangled from each other."

[15] Gregor Thum, "Seapower and Frontier Settlement: Friedrich List's American Vision for Germany," in *German and United States Colonialism in a Connected World: Entangled Empires*, ed. Janne Lahti (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 18; Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 29; William Notz, "Frederick List in America," *American Economic Review* 16, no. 2 (1926): 260.

[16] Quoted in Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 30–32. My definition of "empire" is inspired by Paul Frymer, who points out that building an expanding nineteenth-century "American empire" was "a project of population control and settlement" with land policy as a central instrument, based on the premise that being American "meant to be white." See Paul Frymer, *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 11, 21–22.

[17] Lincoln, "First Annual Message," 31; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*; Rasmus Glenthøj, "Pan-Scandinavism and the Threshold Principle?," in *A History of the European Restorations: Governments, States and Monarchy*, ed. Michael Broers and Ambrogio Caiani (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019). I am grateful to my colleague Rasmus Glenthøj for sharing his ideas on Hobsbawm and "the threshold principle" with me.

[18] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 30–35.

[19] Ibid.

The importance of a large population had been pointed out at least since Adam Smith's 1776 claim that the "most decisive mark of the prosperity of any country is the increase of the number of its inhabitants."[20] As an example, J. David Hacker's argument that "eighteenth- and nineteenth-century political observers equated rapid population growth with economic and political strength" was clearly expressed in the 1850 US census.[21] The census pointed to an increase in the US population (over five million "whites" between 1840 and 1850) and directly compared its numbers to European powers such as the more populated Great Britain (less than one million people added between 1841 and 1851).[22]

Additionally, the republic's "territorial extent" was now "three times as large as the whole of France, Britain, Austria, Prussia, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark, together" and was "of equal extent with the Roman empire, or that of Alexander."[23]

Indeed, ideas of territorial and population expansion, in Hobsbawm's words, "seemed too obvious to require argument" for nineteenth-century policymakers.[24] Still, in his first annual message to Congress, Lincoln expressed pride in the nation's population growth and concluded his address with the prediction that some Americans alive in 1861 would "live to see" the Union "contain 250,000,000" (if it could be preserved).[25]

In the decades leading up to the Civil War, several ascending and established American politicians either directly or indirectly articulated their belief in the threshold principle.[26] In an 1844 speech entitled "Elements of Empire in America," William Seward, the future Republican secretary of state, laid out the themes of nonwhite subjugation

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[20] James R. Otteson, ed., *Adam Smith: Selected Philosophical Writings* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2004), 119.

[21] J. David Hacker, "New Estimates of Census Coverage in the United States, 1850–1930," *Social Science History* 37, no. 1 (2013): 75.

[22] *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington, DC: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, 1853), xxxi–xxxiv.

[23] Ibid., xxix; Torben Grøngaard Jeppesen, *Danske i USA 1850–2000. En Demografisk, Social Og Kulturgeografisk Undersøgelse Af De Danske Immigranter Og Deres Efterkommere* [*Danes in the United States 1850–2000: A Demographic, Social and Cultural Geographic Study of the Danish Immigrants and Their Descendants*] (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2005), 67.

[24] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 30; Glenthøj, "Pan-Scandinavism and the Threshold Principle?," 4.

[25] Lincoln, "First Annual Message."

[26] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 29.

and expansion when he argued that "expansive territory inseparably belongs to the idea of National Greatness."[27] The following year, James K. Polk took office with an Inaugural Address celebrating the new states "admitted," the territories created, the population expanded, and the "title of numerous Indian tribes to vast tracts of land" extinguished.[28]

Moreover, in his first Senate speech in 1850, Seward expressed the view that white Europeans, what he called "the ruling homogeneous family planted at first on the Atlantic shore," was destined to spread "itself westward" through continued population growth.[29] Speaking in Saint Paul, Minnesota, an increasingly attractive locality for Scandinavian immigrants, a decade later Seward explicitly mentioned American expansion north, west, and south as part of a crosscontinent national project and reiterated the idea that "this is the land for the white man."[30] Seward, along with Wisconsin Senator James Doolittle, who spoke of "the great national policy which is to control this continent," also welcomed annexation of Cuba if slavery was abolished.[31]

As it turned out, the deep-seated belief in continued territorial expansion, and the underlying issue of slavery, was a central cause of the Civil War.[32]

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[27] Quoted in Richard H. Immerman, *Empire for Liberty: A History of American Imperialism from Benjamin Franklin to Paul Wolfowitz* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 8–11, 106. Immerman notes, "Even as they annihilated or forcibly relocated Native Americans, executed foreign nationals, and conquered territories," Americans generally perceived empire positively. See also Frymer, *Building an American Empire: the Era of Territorial and Political Expansion*, 12–15.

[28] James K. Polk, "Inaugural Address" (online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/inaugural-address-30, 1845).

[29] Quoted in Immerman, *Empire for Liberty: A History of American Imperialism from Benjamin Franklin to Paul Wolfowitz*, 112. Seward also expressed the view that the "African race" and "the aborigines, savage and civilized" were incapable of assimilation and thus articulated his and many white contemporaries' view of territorial and population expansion.

[30] George E. Baker, ed., *The Works of William H. Seward*, vol. 4 (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1884), 333–334. Seward's speech made such an impression on Swedish-born Hans Mattson that he explicitly mentioned it in his memoirs thirty years later. See Hans Mattson, *Reminiscences: The Story of an Emigrant* (Saint Paul, MN: D. D. Merrill Company, 1891), 56.

[31] Quoted in Gregory P. Downs, *The Second American Revolution: The Civil War–Era Struggle over Cuba and the Rebirth of the American Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 87. For leading Republican politicians' support of colonization, see Page, *Black Resettlement and the American Civil War, 104-114*

[32] James Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861–1865* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013), 78–80; Steven E. Woodworth, *Manifest Destinies: America's Westward Expansion and the Road to Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 2010), 341–358. See also James M. McPherson, "'Two Irreconcilable

Fiercely opposed to slavery's expansion but willing to accept slavery's temporary survival inside a "cordon" of freedom, leading Republican politicians in the Civil War era supported an expanding white man's republic.[33]

   Still, when South Carolina's leaders voted to secede from the Union on December 20, 1860, their decision threatened an American decline toward *Kleinstaaterei*.[34] Such fears were articulated by Seward on January 12, 1861, when he warned the Senate of a looming "momenteous and disastrous revolution" that imperiled an "empire" that had grown to "thirty-three parts" and "no less than thirty million inhabitants."[35] Seward's trepidations proved prescient as other states soon followed South Carolina's lead. By February 1861, representatives from seven southern states were meeting in Montgomery, Alabama, to form a new nation, and two months later four more joined the Confederate States of America.

Peoples'? Ethnic Nationalism in the Confederacy," in *The Civil War as Global Conflict: Transnational Meanings of the American Civil War*, ed. David T. Gleeson and Simon Lewis (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2014), 89; Stephen Kantrowitz, *More Than Freedom: Fighting for Black Citizenship in a White Republic, 1829–1889* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012), 176–180. See also Charles B. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 14–15. In a speech to the Confederate Congress on April 29, 1861, President Jefferson Davis emphasized the Republican Party's threatening position regarding slaveowners' access to the territories as a central reason why "the people of the Southern States were driven by the conduct of the North to the adoption of some course of action to avert the danger with which they were openly menaced." Also, in his so-called "Cornerstone Speech," Confederate vice president Alexander Stephens in March 1861 described the issue of slavery as the "immediate cause" of secession. See Alexander H. Stephens, "'Corner-Stone' Speech, March 21, 1861," in Brooks D. Simpson, Stephen W. Sears, and Aaron Sheehan-Dean, eds., *The Civil War: The First Year Told by Those Who Lived It* (New York: Library of America, 2011), 226.

[33] Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861–1865*, 42. George Julian, Owen Lovejoy, and Richard Yates, among other Republican politicians, supported homestead legislation in the 1850s. See Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 29, 236. See also Roy P. Basler, ed., *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 4 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 203. See as well Hahn, *A Nation without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830–1910*, 196–197, 284.

[34] Lincoln, "First Annual Message."

[35] John C. Rives, ed., *The Congressional Globe: Containing the Debates and Proceedings of the Second Session of the Thirty-Sixth Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Globe Office, 1861), 39; Kantrowitz, "White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, and the Two Citizenships of the Fourteenth Amendment," 39–40.

If states could break away from the Union this easily, then the possibility existed that, in Steven Hahn's words, "the United States might unravel in a variety of ways and leave the North American continent awash in potentially rivalrous states and confederations."[36]

Scandinavian-born men and women, even if unfamiliar with List's work or Republican oratory, proved receptive to ideas of territorial and (white) population expansion based on free labor, as they generally associated American citizenship with the liberty and equality embodied in landownership but downplayed the violence toward American Indians involved in landtaking.

Consequently, the two main strands of Hobsbawm's threshold principle – the need to attract "a large population and an extensive territory" – coupled with an exploration of citizenship's malleable meaning to Scandinavian immigrants constitute the foundation for the following chapters.[37]

By analyzing eastern political decision-making and western settlement experience – meaning the chronological, intellectual, and political connections between national policies of an American imperial project and their concrete ramifications at the local level – this book details the lived community experience and worldview among Scandinavian-American immigrants.

These transnational connections are significant in order to understand Civil War–era politics at both the ideological and social levels, and the story that unfolds therefore heeds recent calls to combine "micro-historical work in the archives [with] macro-historical frameworks."[38] As an example, foreign-born immigrants resisting military service in their communities took up so much energy in the American Department of State that Ella Lonn later wondered how Secretary of State Seward "had time to attend to any other duties"?[39]

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[36] Hahn, *A Nation without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830–1910*, 228.

[37] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 30.

[38] Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 121. See also Susannah J. Ural, ed., *Civil War Citizens: Race, Ethnicity and Identity in America's Bloodiest Conflict* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 1–8. Also David T. Gleeson and Simon Lewis, "Introduction," in *The Civil War as Global Conflict: Transnational Meanings of the American Civil War*, ed. David T. Gleeson and Simon Lewis (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2014).

[39] Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Union Army and Navy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 469–70.

Civil War Settlers thus contributes to American nineteenth-century historiography along transnational, ethnic, and racial dimensions. First, the book nuances the immigrant populations' role in the Republican Party's Civil War–era coalition. In the existing literature, German and Irish immigrants have taken center stage due to their larger share of the population. However, their experience and at least partial attraction to the Democratic Party does not generally represent European immigrants because of differences in religious background, language, settlement patterns, and Old World history.[40]

Second, despite more than 20 percent of the Union army claiming foreign-born roots, the ethnic aspect of the Civil War has only recently attracted wider scholarly attention.[41] The scrutiny of

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[40] See for example Susannah Ural Bruce, *The Harp and The Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861–1865* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 47; Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Helbich, eds., *Germans in the Civil War: The Letters They Wrote Home* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 12. Though leading clergymen of the Norwegian Synod, inspired by the German Missouri Synod, argued that slavery was sanctioned by the Bible, their congregations were largely anti-slavery during the Civil War. Brynjar Haraldsø, *Slaveridebatten i Den Norske Synode: En Undersøkelse Av Slaveridebatten i Den Norske Synode i USA i 1860-Årene Med Særlig Vekt På Debattens Kirkelig-Teologiske Aspekter* [*The Slavery Debate in the Norwegian Synod: A Study of the Slavery Debate in the Norwegian Synod in the United States During the 1860s Emphasizing the Debate's Church-Theological Aspects*] (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1988), 68–71.

[41] For a valuable overview of the "imperial" trajectory in Civil War–era studies of immigration, see Alison Clark Efford, "Civil War–Era Immigration and the Imperial United States," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 10, no. 2 (2020): 233–253. Other recent studies of Civil War era immigration include Paul Quigley, ed., *The Civil War and the Transformation of American Citizenship* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2018); Ryan W. Keating, *Shades of Green: Irish Regiments, American Soldiers, and Local Communities in the Civil War Era* (Fordham University Press, 2017); Kristen Layne Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri: German Immigrants and Racial Ideology in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016); David T. Gleeson and Simon Lewis, eds., *The Civil War as Global Conflict: The Transnational Meanings of the American Civil War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2014); Alison Clark Efford, *German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era* (Washington, DC: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Don H. Doyle, *Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 2013); David Armitage et al., "Interchange: Nationalism and Internationalism in the Era of the Civil War," *Journal of American History* 98, no. 2 (2011): 455–489; Ural, *Civil War Citizens: Race, Ethnicity and Identity in America's Bloodiest Conflict*; Christian G. Samito, *Becoming American under Fire: Irish Americans, African Americans, and the Politics of Citizenship During the Civil War Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Bruce, *The Harp and The Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861–1865*; Dean Mahin, *The Blessed Place of Freedom: Europeans in Civil War America* (Washington, DC: Brassey's Incorporated,

Scandinavian-American immigrants' ideology adds to a growing body of research examining the evolving definitions of American citizenship and the way citizenship was used to construct, challenge, or maintain racial hierarchies and political power in the Civil War era.

Third, this book contributes to the English-language scholarship of Scandinavian-American immigration where Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish writers have frequently sought to accentuate narrow ethnic and national contributions to American history, not least in terms of patriotism and civic contributions, despite significant evidence of necessary pan-Scandinavian cultural and political cooperation in the years surrounding the Civil War.[42] This study recalibrates those claims to show that many Scandinavian-born immigrants, often publicly embracing a common Scandinavian identity, were reluctant to accept the citizenship duty of military service and after emancipation remained reluctant to embrace equal citizen rights for freedpeople.[43]

Lastly, the Scandinavian scholarly contribution to American historiography has mainly been focused inwardly on the Scandinavian communities, while immigrants' encounters with other ethnic groups have taken a back seat. As Gunlög Fur has pointed out, "settlement and [Indian] removal is rarely discussed in the same context, and in most immigration history, these processes remain unconnected."[44] Building on Fur and other contemporary Scandinavian American historians, this study redirects the historiographical focus in order to emphasize Scandinavian

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2002); William Burton, *Melting Pot Soldiers – The Union's Ethnic Regiments*, 2nd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998).

[42] For a discussion of ethnic categories ascribed to Scandinavian-Americans and the reason they must be studied collectively in the Civil War era, see Jørn Brøndal and Dag Blanck, "The Concept of Being Scandinavian-American," *American Studies in Scandinavia* 34, no. 2 (2002): 4–13; Anders Bo Rasmussen, "'Drawn Together in a Blood Brotherhood': Civic Nationalism amongst Scandinavian Immigrants in the American Civil War Crucible," *American Studies in Scandinavia* 48, no. 2 (2016): 8–13.

[43] See for example, Waldemar Ager, *Oberst Heg Og Hans Gutter* [*Colonel Heg and His Boys*] (Eau Claire, WI: Fremad Publishing Company, 1916); Theodore C. Blegen, ed., *The Civil War Letters of Colonel Hans Christian Heg* (Northfield, MN: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1936); Nels Hokanson, *Swedish Immigrants in Lincoln's Time*, reprint ed., Scandinavians in America (New York: Arno Press, 1979); Peter Sørensen Vig, *Danske i Krig i Og for Amerika* [*Danes Fighting in and for America*] (Omaha, NE: Axel H. Andersen, 1917).

[44] Gunlög Fur, "Indians and Immigrants – Entangled Histories," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 33, no. 3 (2014): 55–56.

collaboration, encounters, and entanglements with other ethnic groups as these interactions became increasingly important in the Civil War era.[45]

Thus, inspired by Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur's effort to investigate "precisely how the changes that rippled out from the Civil War did – and did not – echo in people's lives and communities," the book is guided by the following questions:[46]

- How did Old World ideology, not least related to territory and population, inform Scandinavian immigrants' attempt to navigate life in the New World?
- Why did Scandinavian immigrants overwhelmingly support the Republican Party between 1860 and 1868 when Irish and German immigrants, among other ethnic groups, did not?
- How did implicit and explicit American definitions of citizenship impact perceptions of ethnic identity and belonging among Scandinavian immigrants?

Methodologically, *Civil War Settlers* adapts the German and Italian schools of microhistory (focusing on community studies and marginal individuals, respectively) based on the premise that "microscopic observation will reveal factors previously unobserved."[47]

The following chapters provide a "thick description" of New Denmark, a small immigrant community in Wisconsin's Brown County, by utilizing a previously untapped wealth of letters, diaries, and memoirs, which are bolstered by census data, pension records, and draft rolls.[48]

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[45] The Civil War, for example, forced people of many different backgrounds to serve together or at the very least contemplate serving together. See Rasmussen, "'Drawn Together in a Blood Brotherhood': Civic Nationalism amongst Scandinavian Immigrants in the American Civil War Crucible."

[46] Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur, "Echoes of War: Rethinking Post–Civil War Governance and Politics," in *The World the Civil War Made*, ed. Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 3.

[47] Giovanni Levi, "On Microhistory," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 97. See also, for example, Hans Medick, "Weaving and Surviving in Laichingen, 1650–1900: Micro-History as History and as Research Experience," in *Agrarian Studies: Synthetic Work at the Cutting Edge*, ed. James C. Scott and Nina Bhatt (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001). See as well Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982).

[48] This approach, a combination of letters and diaries with census data and draft rolls, allows for what Hans Medick has called the possibility of pursuing "a qualitative life-history approach as well as a quantitative analysis" of community relations. See Medick, "Weaving and Surviving in Laichingen, 1650–1900: Micro-History as History and as Research Experience," 288. Also Levi, "On Microhistory," 98. Levi stresses the

New Denmark was not "representative" or "typical," since, as Stephen Kantrowitz rightly notes, "no community was," but it did play an important part in the Scandinavian-American chain migration that picked up speed by the 1840s with Wisconsin as a central hub.[49] Along with slightly older and slightly bigger Scandinavian immigrant communities in Wisconsin such as Muskego and New Upsala, New Denmark served as an important early link between Old World Scandinavia and the United States. Moreover, the lack of attention paid to New Denmark and its inhabitants by historians is in and of itself methodologically important. As Carlo Ginzburg argued in his now famous *The Cheese and the Worms*, through deep engagement with a "modest individual who is himself lacking in significance" it is possible to "trace, as in a microcosm, the characteristics of an entire social stratum in a specific historical period."[50] Accordingly, the centrality of historical actors' own "point of view" is here accentuated and their words and behavior illuminated.[51]

Furthermore, the researcher's role in the constructed narrative is laid bare in microhistorical writing in order to allow the reader to follow the researcher's narrowing of the interpretive range based on the available information while weighing the impact of structural factors in relation to individual agency.[52] Central to this understanding of historical writing is the conviction that it is impossible to reproduce exactly "what really

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importance of identifying "a series of signifying events or facts which would otherwise be evanescent" through "microscopic analysis."

[49] Kantrowitz, *More Than Freedom: Fighting for Black Citizenship in a White Republic, 1829–1889*, 7.

[50] Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, xx. See also Medick, "Weaving and Surviving in Laichingen, 1650–1900: Micro-History as History and as Research Experience," 283–287. In Medick's words, the reduction of the analytical scale can achieve "new insights into the constitution of historical structures." See also Lawrence Stone, "The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History," *Past & Present* 85 (1979): 19.

[51] Clifford Geertz, "'From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 28, no. 1 (1974): 28–30. Carlo Ginzburg, "Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian," *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 1 (1991): 90. As Ginzburg notes, "the hypotheses, the doubts, the uncertainties, … [become] part of the narration; the search for truth [becomes] part of the exposition of the (necessarily incomplete) truth attained." See "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know About It," *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (1993): 24.

[52] Levi, "On Microhistory," 94–95. As Levi has pointed out, "all social action is seen to be the result of an individual's constant negotiation, manipulation, choices and decisions in the face of a normative reality which, though pervasive, nevertheless offers many possibilities for personal interpretations and freedoms. The question is, therefore, how to define the margins – however narrow they may be – of the freedom granted an individual by the interstices and contradictions of the normative systems which govern him."

happened," yet it is possible to construct convincing historical narratives "in search of meaning" through microhistorical methodology.[53] To achieve this end, scholars of microhistory, in Giovanni Levi's words, take the "highly specific and individual" as a starting point to analyze how a word, a concept, or an event was perceived in order to establish "its meaning in the light of its own specific context."[54]

In sum, by reducing the analytical scale to a relatively small group of Scandinavian-born men and women, focusing on seemingly marginal communities and individuals, highlighting their point of view in their own words, and placing the interpretations in a contemporary historiographical context, certain historical explanations, presented in the pages that follow, gain credence over others.[55]

In Part I, *Civil War Settlers* details the impact of the 1848 revolution in Europe and North America in terms of renewed ideas about liberty, struggles over territory, and Caribbean emancipation. Additionally, the importance of Old World colonial culture, religion, and scientific racism are highlighted as keys to unlocking Scandinavian-born men and women's perception of citizenship and empire in the New World. Scandinavian immigrants' understanding of American citizenship rights was often articulated as liberty and equality, which led to widespread opposition to slavery, but this understanding of citizenship paradoxically did often

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[53] Ibid., 99. On the impossibility of reproducing "what really happened" and the importance of using "narrative as a means of illuminating structures," see, for example, Peter Burke, "History of Events and the Revival of Narrative," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 290–293.

[54] Levi, "On Microhistory," 110; Geertz, "'From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding," 44–45.

[55] See Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, "Afterword: Crime and the Writing of History," in *History from Crime*, ed. Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 232–235. Spatial and temporal factors derived from surviving historical documents "define a range of possibilities," according to Muir and Ruggiero, and some texts a "more narrow range than others." It is therefore logically impossible, for example, to claim that Thomas Jefferson's presidency, which ended in 1809, was meaningfully influenced by Abraham Lincoln (who was born on February 12, 1809). See also Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, xii; Carlo Ginzburg and Anna Davin, "Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method," *History Workshop* 9 (1980): 7–10. See as well Ginzburg, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know About It," 32. Ginzburg notes: "All phases through which research unfolds are *constructed* and not *given*: the identification of the object and its importance; the elaboration of the categories through which it is analyzed; the criteria of proof; the stylistic and narrative form by which the results are transmitted to the reader." Also Alun Munslow, *Narrative and History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 5–6.

not include nonwhites. Scandinavian immigrants, not least the Scandinavian elite, perceiving themselves as superior to other ethnic groups, directly and indirectly supported an American imperial project defined by territorial expansion and conflict with nonwhite and, to an extent, non-Protestant peoples.[56]

Furthermore, Part I delves into the question of why Scandinavian immigrants' understanding of American citizenship led them almost unanimously to support the Republican Party by 1860. As the Republican Party, partially prompted by its interest in German-born voters, retreated somewhat from nativist policies and built a coalition on homestead advocacy, free labor ideology, and anti-slavery, Scandinavian immigrants increasingly embraced the party's platform.

At a time when Scandinavian-American civic participation grew through involvement in local, statewide, and national elections, Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes embraced the possibilities of American equality and pointed to these democratic opportunities as departures from Old World monarchical and religious practice. Economic equality and free labor ideology, which in the Scandinavian view meant an opportunity to improve one's social standing through landownership and hard work, were some of the key pull factors associated with American citizenship.

As the antebellum era came to a close, Scandinavian immigrants' Old World experience and New World settlement patterns in rural enclaves built around strands of Lutheran religion, separated Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish immigrants from many Irish and German settlers to such an extent that the Scandinavians – whether the issue was landownership, access to credit, or ties to a political spoils system – came to see themselves in opposition to and in competition with these larger, more urban and Catholic ethnic groups, many of whom supported the Democratic Party.[57]

Part II details the Scandinavian immigrant experience during the Civil War and argues that Scandinavian ethnic leaders successfully constructed a public pan-Scandinavian ethnic identity to spur military mobilization in late 1861. When the Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish immigrants initially went to war, many rhetorically did so "for God and Country" – an invocation adapted from the Old World rallying cry "For God, King, and

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[56] Jon Gjerde, "'Here in America There Is Neither King nor Tyrant': European Encounters with Race, 'Freedom,' and Their European Pasts," *Journal of the Early Republic* 19, no. 4 (1999): 675. See also Fur, "Indians and Immigrants – Entangled Histories."

[57] Efford, *German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era*, 11. Efford demonstrates that the Republican Party alienated German immigrants in Wisconsin, but this was not the case with the numerically smaller group of Scandinavian immigrants.

Country" – and over time benefited economically and politically from such service. Several Scandinavian-born officers became political leaders after the war, and several enlisted specifically to make sure German and Irish immigrants did not profit disproportionately in terms of political office-holding after the war.

Moreover, this part of the book explores the fierce religious and ideological debate within the Scandinavian-American church over slavery's sinfulness. In this religious and political controversy, Old World currents of white superiority revealed themselves among the state church–affiliated clergy and, from their congregation members' standpoint, came dangerously close to pro-slavery paternalist arguments (e.g. rejection of the nation's egalitarian principles) used by Southern planters.[58] Part II demonstrates the nuances along class lines of Scandinavians' commitment to a white man's republic, as the majority of Scandinavian immigrants openly opposed slavery and empathized with the enslaved, but a larger share of the well-educated immigrants openly opposed racial equality. Still, they all, consciously or unconsciously, participated in, and often supported, a settler colonialist project which, in Patrick Wolfe's words, was predicated on "access to territory."[59]

Additionally, underscoring the ideological, rhetorical, and chronological connection between colonization and Indian removal, the intense colonization negotiations initiated by the Danish government and in revised form consummated in 1862 occurred simultaneously with Scandinavian immigrants increasingly settling on former Dakota land in Minnesota. The subsequent 1862 US–Dakota War left lasting imprints on Scandinavian immigrants' perceptions of American Indians in Minnesota and, broadly speaking, strengthened the commitment to landtaking and opposition to indigenous people's citizenship rights.[60] Underlining the centrality of racism to both colonization and Indian dispossession

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[58] Hahn, *A Nation without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830–1910*, 68–69. "Slavery's defenders commenced to reject the egalitarianism that the Declaration of Independence had enshrined."

[59] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387–388; Karen V. Hansen, *Encounter on the Great Plains: Scandinavian Settlers and Dispossession of Dakota Indians, 1890–1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2–7; Kantrowitz, "White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, and the Two Citizenships of the Fourteenth Amendment," 31.

[60] En Minnesotabo, "Minnesota D. 21. Aug 1862," *Hemlandet*, August 27, 1862. For an English-language example of the same perspective, see "Matters in Minnesota," *Green Bay Advocate*, October 9, 1862.

schemes, Scandinavian-born men by 1862 referred to both enslaved Africans and American Indians as "savages."[61]

Lastly, despite later hagiographic ethnic accounts, enlistment enthusiasm was low among Scandinavian immigrants, not least the Danes and Swedes; even in 1861 and by 1862, the pan-Scandinavianism on display through the earlier formation of purely ethnic Scandinavian military units was challenged by Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish immigrants' reluctance to volunteer for military service. The draft resistance exposed fault lines between the Scandinavian elite and their countrymen without formal education, as the latter's draft resistance complicated ethnic leaders' aspirations for later political gain.

For many Scandinavian-born farmers, the coercive Old World state, from which they had fled, found a new form in New World draft legislation and spurred widespread forms of resistance such as renouncing interest in American citizenship in Scandinavian enclaves. This draft resistance has generally been overlooked historiographically, but a close examination of rural Wisconsin enclaves nuances James McPherson's statement that "virtually all those who denounced and resisted the militia draft were Democrats" and, building on Tyler Anbinder, shows concretely how "immigrants employed" citizenship, or lack thereof, as a means to obtain exemptions from the draft.[62]

Part III analyzes the post–Civil War era along two main strands: on the one hand, the American government's interest in imperial expansion into the Caribbean through the purchase of the Danish West Indies; and on the other hand, Scandinavian immigrants' engagement with contiguous expansion and debates over universal citizenship.

This final part of the book shows the Homestead Act's centrality to Scandinavian immigrants' economic aspirations after the Civil War and demonstrates the continued discrepancy between their egalitarian idealism and a racial reality centered on whiteness. Scandinavian immigrants' enthusiasm for landownership opportunities did not extend to enthusiasm

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[61] Lincoln, "First Annual Message"; James Mitchell, *Report on Colonization and Emigration Made to the Secretary of the Interior by the Agent of Emigration* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1862), 8. Also Hahn, *A Nation without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830–1910*, 45.

[62] See, for example, James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 493; Tyler Anbinder, "Which Poor Man's Fight? Immigrants and the Federal Conscription of 1863," *Civil War History* 52, no. 4 (2006): 352; Vig, *Danske i Krig i Og for Amerika* [*Danes Fighting in and for America*], 185–197; also Ager, *Oberst Heg Og Hans Gutter* [*Colonel Heg and His Boys*], 223–261.

for freedpeople's economic opportunities or regard for indigenous peoples' landholding rights.

Emancipation highlighted the issue of equal rights for the formerly enslaved, and in the Scandinavian communities these debates revealed well-educated immigrants' reservations about freedpeople's potential for full and equal citizenship. Using the impeachment trial of President Andrew Johnson as a pretext, the Scandinavian elite publicly started to abandon reconstruction no later than 1868 to focus their collective political energy on issues of more evident self-interest such as economic growth, agricultural opportunities, and industrial development. In the process, Scandinavian Civil War veterans and community leaders underscored the importance of a white complementary identity, meaning "the dual loyalties to nation and subgroup," by exhibiting greater solidarity with recently arrived Old World countrymen than they did with recently emancipated fellow Black citizens.[63]

On women's citizenship rights, Scandinavian-born men continued to perceive of themselves as the main economic and practical decision-makers even as the women in Midwestern settlements at times during the war were elevated to being heads of their households. Moreover, the Scandinavian-American press, often emphasizing women's subordinate role, ran letters ridiculing the emerging post-war women's movement and left little room inside or outside the home for Scandinavian women's social or political aspirations, including voting, which was deemed central to Scandinavian immigrant men's understanding of citizenship.

Lastly, the attempted purchase of the Danish West Indies, initiated by the Lincoln administration in 1865 but rejected by the Senate in 1870, is here explained in the context of domestic American reconstruction politics, which led to a lack of political will in Congress to fund the transaction. Political conflict between the Johnson administration and Congress, centered on freedpeople, clearly outweighed any personal relationships, however strong, that Danish diplomats had built in the United States.

As an example of the threshold principle's importance, the widening asymmetrical power relationship between the United States, stepping more forcefully onto the global political scene, and Denmark, a declining international power following the loss of territory at the hands of Prussia and Austria in the Second Schleswig War of 1864,

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[63] Jon Gjerde, *The Minds of the West: Ethnocultural Evolution in the Rural Middle West 1830–1917* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 59.

allowed the Senate to ignore an agreed-upon treaty with international impunity.

This last part of *Civil War Settlers* thereby details the chronology of continued American attempts at territorial and population growth, while the Danish fear of falling under a crucial threshold, or being incorporated into the German Confederation, is shown to be an important variable in the ongoing negotiations between Denmark and the United States.[64]

The early American attempts to build a *Grossstaat* through war with Mexico and the Danish fear of descending into *Kleinstaaterei* by losing German-speaking territory through revolutionary violence can, in important respects, be traced to 1848, which is where this study begins.

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[64] Torben Grøngaard Jeppesen, *Dannebrog På Den Amerikanske Prærie* [*Dannebrog on the American Prairie*] (Odense: Odense University Press, 2000), 10.