

DRAWN WITH THE SWORD



REFLECTIONS ON THE
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

JAMES M. MCPHERSON

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WITH THE
SWORD**

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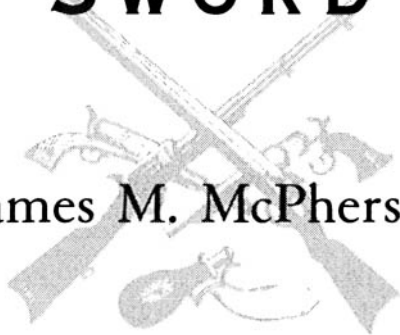
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**TO MY FATHER
AND THE
MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER**

*Fondly do we hope—fervently do we
pray—that this mighty scourge of war
may speedily pass away. Yet, if God
wills that it continue, until all the
wealth piled by the bond-man's two
hundred and fifty years of unrequited
toil shall be sunk, and until every
drop of blood drawn with the lash,
shall be paid by another drawn with
the sword, as was said three thousand
years ago, so still it must be said
“the judgments of the Lord, are true
and righteous altogether.”*

Abraham Lincoln
second inaugural address
March 4, 1865

P R E F A C E

IN 1976 A DELEGATION OF HISTORIANS FROM THE SOVIET UNION visited the United States to participate in commemorations of the bicentennial of the American Revolution. Upon their arrival, a local host asked them which sites they would like to visit first. He assumed that they would want to see Independence Hall, or perhaps Lexington and Concord, or Williamsburg and Yorktown. But the answer was none of the above. They wished to go first to Gettysburg. The host—a historian of the Revolution and the early republic—was dumfounded. Why Gettysburg? he asked. Because, they replied, it is the American Stalingrad—the battlefield in America's Great Patriotic War where so many gave the last full measure of devotion that the United States might not perish from the earth.

Some historians might question whether the battle of Gettysburg was as crucial a turning point in the Civil War as the battle of Stalingrad was in World War II. And many might challenge the implied comparison of the Confederacy to Nazi Germany. But few would gainsay the importance of the Civil War as a defining experience in American history equal to and perhaps even greater than the Revolu-

tion itself. The war of 1861–1865 resolved two fundamental questions left unresolved by the war of 1776–1783: whether the United States would endure as one nation, indivisible; and whether slavery would continue to mock the ideals of liberty on which the republic was founded.

Little wonder, then, that popular interest in the Civil War eclipses interest in any other aspect of American history—a phenomenon analyzed in chapter 4 of this book. One reason for our fascination with the Civil War is that momentous issues were at stake: slavery and freedom; racism and equality; sectionalism and nationalism; self-government and democracy; life and death. The crucible of armed conflict called forth leaders who have acquired almost mythical stature in the American pantheon. These issues and leaders are the subjects of the essays that follow. Several themes tie the essays together: slavery as a polarizing issue that split the country and brought war (part 1); the evolution of the conflict from a limited war for restoration of the old Union to a “total war” for a new birth of freedom (parts 2 and 4); the role of blacks in the war (parts 2 and 4); the reasons for Northern victory (part 3); political and military leadership (parts 3 and 4); the enduring impact of the war on consciousness and institutions abroad as well as at home (parts 2, 4, and 5).

All of the essays in this volume except chapter 15 have been previously published as independent articles, lectures, or review essays, but each has been modified and updated for publication here. Each is complete in itself, but if I have done the job right, they also fit together in a cohesive pattern of chapters that can be read consecutively from beginning to end. Although the essays are grounded in many years of reading and research, they are more interpretive than monographic and I have therefore confined the footnotes mainly to citations for quotations.

The essays were written for all three of the “audiences” described in chapter 15. I hope that they may contain insights of value to professional historians, Civil War “buffs,” and “general readers” alike. In 1873, as noted in chapter 5, Mark Twain wrote that the Civil

War had “uprooted institutions that were centuries old, changed the politics of a people, transformed the social life of half the country, and wrought so profoundly upon the entire national character that the influence cannot be measured short of two or three generations.” If readers will take away from this book a greater understanding of how and why it did so, I will have accomplished my purpose.

Princeton, N.J.
July 1995

J. M. M.

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PROVENANCE OF THE CONTENTS

ALL BUT THE FINAL ESSAY IN THIS VOLUME HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY published. In most cases, however, I have updated and slightly revised the essays in order to give the volume thematic coherence. I am indebted to the publications that own the copyrights to previously published articles for permission to reprint them here in their modified form. In some cases the original essay was published under a different title, as indicated below.

1. "Antebellum Southern Exceptionalism: A New Look at an Old Question," *Civil War History* 29 (1983), 230-44.
2. "Tom on the Cross," published originally as the Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), xi-xx.
3. "The War of Southern Aggression," *New York Review of Books*, 19 January 1989, 16-20.
4. "The War that Never Goes Away," first published as "A War That Never Goes Away," *American Heritage* 41 (1990), 41-49.
5. "From Limited to Total War, 1861-1865," first published as

"From Limited to Total War: Missouri and the Nation, 1862–1865," *Gateway Heritage: Magazine of the Missouri Historical Society* 12 (1992), 4–19.

6. "Race and Class in the Crucible of War," first published as "Wartime," *New York Review of Books*, 12 April 1990, 33–35.

7. "The *Glory* Story," first published as "The 'Glory Story': The 54th Massachusetts and the Civil War," *New Republic*, 8 and 15 January 1990, 22–27.

8. "Why Did the Confederacy Lose?" first published as "American Victory, American Defeat," in Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 15–42.

9. "How the Confederacy Almost Won," first published as "How the North Nearly Lost," *New York Review of Books*, 12 October 1989, 43–46.

10. "Lee Dissected," first published as "How Noble Was Robert E. Lee?" *New York Review of Books*, 7 November 1991, 10–14.

11. "Grant's Final Victory," first published as "Ulysses S. Grant's Final Victory," *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 2 (1990), 96–103.

12. "A New Birth of Freedom," first published as "Liberating Lincoln," *New York Review of Books*, 21 April 1994, 7–10, and "The Art of Abraham Lincoln," *New York Review of Books*, 16 July 1992, 3–5.

13. "Who Freed the Slaves?" *Reconstruction* 2 (1994), 35–40.

14. "The 'Whole Family Man': Lincoln and the Last Best Hope Abroad," in Robert E. May, ed., *The Union, the Confederacy, and the Atlantic Rim* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1995), 131–58.

15. "What's the Matter with History?" first delivered as a paper at a conference entitled "The State of Historical Writing in North America," at the University of San Marino, Republic of San Marino, 6 June 1995.

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I

ORIGINS
OF THE
CIVIL WAR



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1

ANTEBELLUM SOUTHERN EXCEPTIONALISM

A New Look at an Old Question

THE THEME OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM PERMEATED WRITING about the United States from its beginning but has come under attack in recent years. Ever since Hector St. John Crèvecoeur asked his famous question in 1782, "What Is the American, This New Man?" native and foreign commentators alike have sought to define what supposedly makes the United States exceptional, indeed unique, among peoples of the world. Reaching the height of its influence in the 1950s, the exceptionalist school argued that something special about the American experience—whether it was abundance, free land on the frontier, the absence of a feudal past, exceptional mobility and the relative lack of class conflict, or the pragmatic and consensual liberalism of our politics—set the American people apart from the rest of humankind. During the last three decades, however, the dominant trends in American historiography have challenged and perhaps crippled the exceptionalist thesis. Historians have demonstrated the existence of class and class conflict, ideological politics, land speculation, and patterns of economic and social development similar to those of western Europe which placed the United States

in the mainstream of modern North Atlantic history, not on a special and privileged fringe.¹

While the notion of American exceptionalism has suffered considerable damage, another exceptionalist interpretation remains apparently live and well. Even though America may not be as different from the rest of the world as we thought, the South seems to have been different from the rest of America. In this essay, "Southern exceptionalism" refers to the belief that the South has "possessed a separate and unique identity . . . which appeared to be out of the mainstream of American experience."² Or as Quentin Compson (in William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*) expressed it in reply to his Canadian-born college roommate's question about what made Southerners tick: "You can't understand it. You would have to be born there."

The idea of Southern exceptionalism, however, has also come under challenge. The questions whether the South was indeed out of the mainstream and, if so, whether it has recently been swept into it have become lively issues in Southern historiography. The clash of viewpoints can be illustrated by a sampling of titles or subtitles of books that have appeared in recent decades. On one side we have *The Enduring South*, *The Everlasting South*, *The Idea of the South*, *The Lasting South*, *The Continuity of Southern Distinctiveness*, and *What*

1. For the pros and cons of the exceptionalism thesis, the following are valuable: Laurence Veysey, "The Autonomy of American History Reconsidered," *American Quarterly* 31 (1979), 455-77; Sean Wilentz, "Against Exceptionalism: Class Consciousness and the American Labor Movement," *International Labor and Working Class History* 26 (1984), 1-24; Byron E. Shafer, ed., *Is America Different? A New Look at American Exceptionalism* (Oxford, 1991); Ian Tyrrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review* 96 (1991), 1031-55, 1068-72; Michael McGerr, "The Price of the 'New Transnational History,'" *American Historical Review* 96 (1991), 1056-67; and Michael Kammen, "The Problem of American Exceptionalism: A Reconsideration," *American Quarterly* 45 (1993), 1-43.

2. Monroe L. Billington, ed., *The South: A Central Theme?* (Huntington, N.Y., 1976), p. 1.

Made the South Different?—all arguing, in one way or another, that the South was and continues to be different. On the other side we have *The Southerner as American*, *The Americanization of Dixie*, *Epitaph for Dixie*, *Southerners and Other Americans*, *The Vanishing South*, and *Into the Mainstream*. Some of these books insist that “the traditional emphasis on the South’s differentness . . . is wrong historically.”³ Others concede that while the South may once have been different, it has ceased to be or is ceasing to be so. There is no unanimity among this latter group of scholars about precisely when or how the South joined the mainstream. Some emphasize the civil rights revolution of the 1960s; others the bulldozer revolution of the 1950s; still others the chamber of commerce Babbittry of the 1920s; and some the New South crusade of the 1880s. As far back as 1869 the Yankee novelist John William De Forest wrote of the South: “We shall do well to study this peculiar people, which will soon lose it peculiarities.” As George Tindall has wryly remarked, the Vanishing South has “staged one of the most prolonged disappearing acts since the decline and fall of Rome.”⁴

Some historians, however, would quarrel with the concept of a Vanishing South because they believe that the South as a separate, exceptional entity never existed—with of course the ephemeral exception of the Confederacy. A good many other historians insist not only that a unique South did exist before the Civil War, but also that its sense of being under siege by an alien North was the underlying cause of secession. A few paired quotations will illustrate these conflicting interpretations.

In 1960 one Southern historian maintained that “no picture of the Old South as a section confident and united in its dedication to a neo-feudal social order, and no explanation of the Civil War as a conflict between ‘two civilizations,’ can encompass the complexity

3. Charles Grier Sellers, ed., *The Southerner as American* (Chapel Hill, 1960), pp. v–vi.

4. George Brown Tindall, *The Ethnic Southerners* (Baton Rouge, 1976), p. ix.

and pathos of the antebellum reality.” But later in the decade another historian insisted that slavery created “a ruling class with economic interests, political ideals, and moral sentiments” that included an “aristocratic, antibourgeois spirit with values and mores emphasizing family and status, a strong code of honor, and aspirations to luxury, ease, and accomplishment” that “set it apart from the mainstream of capitalist development.” This ruling class possessed “the political and economic power to impose their values on [Southern] society as a whole.” Since submission to the hegemony of Northern free-soilers would have meant “moral and political suicide” for this “special civilization” of the South, a “final struggle [was] so probable that we may safely call it inevitable.” The first historian is Charles Sellers; the second, Eugene Genovese.⁵

Or let us examine another pair of quotations, the first published in 1973 by a Southern historian who asserted that the thesis of a “basically divergent and antagonistic” North and South in 1861 is “one of the great myths of American history.” Almost as if in reply, a historian wrote a few years later that such an assertion “belies common sense and the nearly universal observation of contemporaries. We submit a single figure that . . . attests to the irrelevance of all [statistical manipulations] purporting to show similarities between North and South. The figure is 600,000—the number of Civil War graves.” The first of these quotations is from Grady McWhiney. The second is from—Grady McWhiney.⁶

Finally, let us look at another pair of statements, the first from one of the South’s most eminent historians writing in 1958: “The

5. Charles Grier Sellers, “The Travail of Slavery,” in Sellers, ed., *The Southerner as American*, p. 40; Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery* (New York, 1965), pp. 7–8, 28–29, 247, 270; Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made* (New York, 1969), p. 33.

6. Grady McWhiney, *Southerners and Other Americans* (New York, 1973), p. 3; McWhiney and Forrest McDonald, “Communication,” *American Historical Review* 86 (1981), 244. In *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1988), McWhiney offers the provocative hypothesis that the Celtic heritage of many white Southerners accounts for Southern distinctiveness.

South was American a long time before it was Southern in any self-conscious or distinctive way. It remains more American by far than anything else, and has all along." The second is from an equally eminent historian writing in 1969: "A great slave society . . . had grown up and miraculously flourished in the heart of a thoroughly bourgeois and partly puritanical republic. It had renounced its bourgeois origins and elaborated and painfully rationalized its institutional, legal, metaphysical, and religious defenses. . . . When the crisis came [it] chose to fight. It proved to be the death struggle of a society." The first historian was C. Vann Woodward. The second—it should come as no surprise by now—was C. Vann Woodward.⁷

If given the opportunity, McWhiney and Woodward might be able to reconcile the apparent inconsistencies in these statements. Or perhaps they really changed their minds. After all, as Ralph Waldo Emerson told us more than a century ago, "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." In any case, the more recent vintage of both McWhiney and Woodward has a fuller, more robust, and truer flavor.

Many antebellum Americans certainly thought that North and South had evolved separate societies with institutions, interests, values, and ideologies so incompatible, so much in deadly conflict that they could no longer live together in the same nation. Traveling through the South in the spring of 1861, London *Times* correspondent William Howard Russell encountered this "conflict of civilizations" theme everywhere he went. "The tone in which [Southerners] alluded to the whole of the Northern people indicated the clear conviction that trade, commerce, the pursuit of gain, manufacture, and

7. C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (Baton Rouge, 1960), p. 25; Woodward, *American Counterpoint: Slavery and Racism in the North-South Dialogue* (Boston, 1971), p. 281. Woodward subsequently noted that the English-born Northern journalist Edwin L. Godkin indulged in only "some exaggeration" when he wrote in 1880 that the South "differs nearly as much from the North as Ireland does, or Hungary or Turkey." Woodward, *Thinking Back: The Perils of Writing History* (Baton Rouge, 1986), p. 123.

the base mechanical arts, had so degraded the whole race" that Southerners could no longer tolerate association with them, wrote Russell. "There is a degree of something like ferocity in the Southern mind [especially] toward New England which exceeds belief." A South Carolinian told Russell: "We are an agricultural people, pursuing our own system, and working out our own destiny, breeding up women and men with some other purpose than to make them vulgar, fanatical, cheating Yankees." Louis Wigfall of Texas, a former U.S. senator, told Russell:

We are a peculiar people, sir! . . . We are an agricultural people. . . . We have no cities—we don't want them. . . . We want no manufactures: we desire no trading, no mechanical or manufacturing classes. . . . As long as we have our rice, our sugar, our tobacco, and our cotton, we can command wealth to purchase all we want. . . . But with the Yankees we will never trade—never. Not one pound of cotton shall ever go from the South to their accursed cities.⁸

Such opinions were not universal in the South, of course, but in the fevered atmosphere of the late 1850s they were widely shared. "Free Society!" exclaimed a Georgia newspaper. "We sicken at the name. What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists . . . hardly fit for association with a southern gentleman's body servant." In 1861 the *Southern Literary Messenger* explained to its readers: "It is not a question of slavery alone that we are called upon to decide. It is free society which we must shun or embrace." In the same year Charles Colcock Jones, Jr., a native of Georgia who had graduated from Princeton and from Harvard Law School, spoke of the development of antagonistic cultures in North and South: "In this country have arisen two races [i.e., Northerners and Southerners] which, although claiming a common parentage, have been so entirely sepa-

8. William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South*, ed. Fletcher Pratt (New York, 1954), pp. 38, 78, 99.

rated by climate, by morals, by religion, and by estimates so totally opposite to all that constitutes honor, truth, and manliness, that they cannot longer exist under the same government."⁹

Spokesmen for the free-labor ideology, which was the dominant political force in the North by 1860, reciprocated these sentiments. The South, said Theodore Parker, was "the foe to Northern Industry—to our mines, our manufactures, and our commerce. . . . She is the foe to our institutions—to our democratic politics in the State, our democratic culture in the school, our democratic work in the community, our democratic equality in the family."¹⁰ Slavery, said William H. Seward, undermined "intelligence, vigor, and energy" in both blacks and whites. It produced "an exhausted soil, old and decaying towns, wretchedly-neglected roads . . . an absence of enterprise and improvement." Slavery was therefore "incompatible with all . . . the elements of the security, welfare, and greatness of nations." The struggle between free labor and slavery, between North and South, said Seward in his most famous speech, was "an irrepressible conflict between two opposing and enduring forces." The United States was therefore two nations, but it could not remain forever so: it "must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation." Abraham Lincoln expressed exactly the same theme in his "house divided" speech. Many other Republicans echoed this argument that the struggle, in the words of an Ohio congressman, was "between systems, between civilizations."¹¹

These sentiments were no more confined to fire-breathing Northern radicals than were Southern exceptionalist viewpoints confined

9. *Muscogee Herald*, quoted in *New York Tribune*, Sept. 10, 1856; *Southern Literary Messenger* 32 (Feb. 1861), 152; Robert Manson Myers, ed., *Children of Pride: A True Story of Georgia and the Civil War* (New Haven, 1972), p. 648.

10. Parker, "The Nebraska Question" (1854), in John L. Thomas, ed., *Slavery Attacked: The Abolitionist Crusade* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965), p. 149.

11. Quoted in Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York, 1970), 41, 68–70.

to fire-eaters. Lincoln represented the mainstream of his party, which commanded a majority of votes in the North by 1860. The dominant elements in the North and in the lower South believed the United States to be composed of two incompatible civilizations. Southerners believed that survival of their special civilization could be assured only in a separate nation. The creation of the Confederacy was merely a political ratification of an irrevocable separation that had already taken place in the hearts and minds of the people.

The proponents of an assimilationist rather than exceptionalist interpretation of Southern history maintain that this concept of a separate and unique South existed *only* in hearts and minds. It was a subjective reality, they argue, not an objective one. Objectively, they insist, North and South were one people. They shared the same language, the same Constitution, the same legal system, the same commitment to republican political institutions and a capitalist economy intertwined with that of the North, the same predominantly Protestant religion and British ethnic heritage, the same history, the same shared memories of a common struggle for nationhood.¹²

Two proponents of the objective similarity thesis were the late Edward Pessen and David Potter. In a long article entitled "How Different from Each Other Were the Antebellum North and South?" Pessen concludes that they "were far more alike than the conventional scholarly wisdom has led us to believe."¹³ His evidence for this conclusion consists mainly of quantitative measures of the distribution of wealth and of the socioeconomic status of political officeholders in North and South. He finds that wealth was distributed in a similarly unequal fashion in both sections, voting requirements were similar, and voters in both sections elected a similarly disproportionate number of men from the upper economic strata to office. The problem with this argument is that it could be used to

12. This is the central thesis of F. N. Boney, *Southerners All* (Macon, Ga., 1984). See also James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York, 1990), esp. pp. 40–42.

13. *American Historical Review* 86 (1980), 1119–49; quotation from p. 1147.

prove many obviously different and mutually hostile societies to be similar. France and Germany in 1914 and in 1932 had about the same distribution of wealth and similar habits of electing men from the upper strata to the Assembly or the Reichstag. England and France had a comparable distribution of wealth during most of the eighteenth century. Turkey and Russia were not dissimilar in these respects in the nineteenth century. And so on.

David Potter's contention that commonalities of language, religion, law, and political system outweighed differences in other areas is more persuasive than the Pessen argument. But the Potter thesis nevertheless begs some important questions. The same similarities prevailed between England and her North American colonies in 1776, but they did not prevent the development of a separate nationalism in the latter. It is not language or law alone that is important, but the uses to which either is put. In the United States of the 1850s, Northerners and Southerners spoke the same language, to be sure, but they were increasingly using this language to revile each other. Language became an instrument of division, not unity. The same was true of the political system. So also of the law: Northern states passed personal liberty laws to defy a national Fugitive Slave Law supported by the South; a Southern-dominated Supreme Court denied the right of Congress to exclude slavery from the territories, a ruling that most Northerners considered an infamous distortion of the Constitution. As for a shared commitment to Protestantism, this too had become a divisive rather than unifying factor, with the two largest denominations—Methodist and Baptist—having split into hostile Southern and Northern churches over the question of slavery, and the third largest—Presbyterian—having split partly along sectional lines and partly on the question of slavery. As for a shared historical commitment to republicanism, by the 1850s this too was more divisive than unifying. Northern Republicans interpreted this commitment in a free-soil context, while most Southern whites continued to insist that one of the most cherished tenets of republican liberty was the right of property—including property in slaves.

There is another dimension of the Potter thesis—or perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a separate Potter thesis—that might put us on the right track to solve the puzzle of Southern exceptionalism. After challenging most notions of Southern distinctiveness, Potter concluded that the principal characteristic distinguishing the South from the rest of the country was the persistence of a “folk culture” in the South.¹⁴ This *gemeinschaft* culture, with its emphasis on tradition, rural life, close kinship ties, a hierarchical social structure, ascribed status, patterns of deference, and masculine codes of honor and chivalry, persisted in the South long after the North began moving toward a *gesellschaft* culture with its impersonal, bureaucratic, meritocratic, urbanizing, commercial, industrializing, mobile, and rootless characteristics. Above all, the South’s folk culture valued tradition and stability and felt threatened by change; the North’s modernizing culture enshrined change as progress and condemned the South as backward.

A variety of statistics undergird the *gemeinschaft-gesellschaft* contrast. The North was more urban than the South and was urbanizing at a faster rate. In 1820, 10 percent of the free-state residents lived in urban areas (defined by the census as towns or cities with a population of 2,500 or more) compared with 5 percent in the slave

14. This brief summary of and gloss upon Potter’s writings necessarily oversimplifies arguments that are complex, subtle, and at times ambivalent. Potter’s emphasis on the commonalities of Northern and Southern culture can be found in his essay “The Historian’s Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa,” in Potter, *The South and the Sectional Conflict* (Baton Rouge, 1968), pp. 68–78, and Potter, *The Impending Crisis 1848–1861* (New York, 1976), pp. 8–14, 29–34, 449–50, 469–74. The brief explication of his “folk culture” argument can be found in *ibid.*, 451, 456–57, and in *The South and the Sectional Conflict*, pp. 15–16. The notion of a persistent folk culture in the South is associated mainly with the work of the Southern sociologist Howard Odum; for an analysis of this concept in the context of Odum’s work, see Daniel T. Rodgers, “Regionalism and the Burdens of Progress,” in J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson, eds., *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward* (New York, 1982), pp. 3–26.

states. By 1860 the figures were 26 percent and 10 percent, respectively.¹⁵ More striking was the growing contrast between farm and nonfarm occupations in the two sections. In 1800, 82 percent of the Southern labor force worked in agriculture compared with 68 percent in the free states. By 1860 the Northern share had dropped to 40 percent, while the Southern proportion had actually increased slightly, to 84 percent.¹⁶ Southern agriculture remained traditionally labor-intensive while Northern farming became increasingly capital-intensive and mechanized. By 1860 the free states had nearly twice the value of farm machinery per acre and per farmworker as the slave states. And the pace of industrialization in the North far outstripped that in the South. In 1810 the slave states had an estimated 31 percent of the capital invested in manufacturing in the United States; by 1860 this had declined to 16 percent.

A critic of the inferences drawn from these data might point out that in many respects the differences between the free states east and west of the Appalachians were nearly or virtually as great as those between North and South, yet these differences did not produce a sense of separate nationality in East and West. This point is true—as far as it goes. While the western free states at midcentury did have a higher proportion of workers employed in nonfarm occupations than the South, they had about the same percentage of urban population and the same amount per capita invested in manufacturing. But the crucial factor was *the rate of change*. The West was urbanizing and industrializing more rapidly than either the Northeast or the South. Therefore while North and South as a whole were growing relatively farther apart, the eastern and western free states were drawing closer together. This process frustrated Southern hopes for an alliance with the Old Northwest on grounds of similarity of

15. Unless otherwise specified, the data presented here and in following paragraphs are from the published tables of the U.S. census.

16. Stanley Lebergott, "Labor Force and Employment, 1800–1960," in *Output, Employment, and Productivity in the United States after 1800, Studies in Income and Wealth*, vol. 30 (New York, 1966), p. 131.