

# Transatlantic Anxieties: Amalgamation, Colonization, Democratization

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## Abstract

The transatlantic world nurtured the American mind: the American public sphere was neither exceptional nor isolated, and Americans closely followed and were active participants in discursive communities in England, France, Germany, Ireland and elsewhere. From this fact follow some important implications for the study of American political development. For one, many critical developments in the United States cannot be understood by a sole focus on the country's domestic politics, eviscerated from the trans-national context in which public acts and debates had meaning. To understand antebellum American politics requires that we understand co-occurring developments in the transatlantic world, and begin detailing the ways in which political processes in one country impinged upon and informed processes in the others. This paper aims to contribute to such a project, by exploring how a set of broadly shared axioms of political science constrained the political projects activists were willing to envision, and how differing responses to these constraints shaped political action. In particular, I hope to understand the association between abolitionism and 'amalgamation' in public discourse, and how this association shaped the strategies of the anti-slavery movement leading to innovations in political theory that radically separated the sphere of social equality from that of political equality.

*“A transatlantic cloud began to skirt the eastern horizon, already angry with the turbulence of the storm. The atmosphere was quickly darkened; the lightnings played athwart the heavens; the thunder rolled.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“The pride of the American people is aroused by this bold tone of defiance to the trans-Atlantic world.”<sup>2</sup>*

## THE YUCATÁN

Southerners were anxious for news, brought in on the *Invincible*, the *Decatur*, the *Amistad Campechana*, the *Dream*, from Havana, from Vera Cruz, from Belize, from Tampico, from Campeche. The Yucatán was in revolt, “the whole Indian population of that State had risen against the whites, and in some districts massacred entirely the white population, with the exception of the women, whom they only spared for a fate still worse than death.”<sup>3</sup> Lurid details were suggested, but left largely to the reader’s imagination, as too “shock[ing to] the moral feeling of any christian people.”<sup>4</sup> But the key fact was clear: a war of the races had begun, one that contemporaries believed would necessarily be a war of extermination.<sup>5</sup> It gripped the region’s attention, an ominous inflection to triumphant news of American conquests.

The Yucatán “caste war” erupted in the summer of 1847, while American forces were preparing to advance on Mexico City. Less than a year later, the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo signed but with Mayan forces in control of most of the Yucatán peninsula, the state Governor appealed for assistance from the United States, or failing that, the United Kingdom or Spain. While southern representatives and attentive publics divided on the question of intervention and occupation, the “caste war” was widely interpreted as a thorough validation of longstanding American anxieties.<sup>6</sup> The war was not the consequence of exactions by local whites, nor even of the massacre of Mayan villages that preceded the revolt. Rather, it was the fault of liberal ideas of political and social equality, circulating in the transatlantic world and propagated by foreign—usually English—agents. And it was the fault of the Yucateco whites, who had failed to heed the stric-

tures of political science and recognize the necessary consequences of these ideals in a diverse society.

“The sufferings which had fallen on Yucatan,” noted the *Richmond Whig*, were “the unavoidable consequence of elevating a race, closely allied to the class of slaves, to an equality of rights and privileges with the white race.”<sup>7</sup> The *New Orleans Delta* likewise considered the cause of the “deplorable condition of the Peninsula” to have been “the whites having considered the Indians as their equals—having bestowed upon them the right of citizens, furnished schools for their instruction, and attempted to bring them to a state of civilization.”<sup>8</sup> Senator Calhoun blamed the “indiscriminate liberality with which political rights had been given to the Indians.”<sup>9</sup> Justo Sierra O’Reilly, the future novelist and self-styled “Commissioner and Special Agent” of the Yucatán to the United States, likewise suggested that this had been the great miscalculation of the peninsula’s whites: “if, on the one hand, we have obtained the object contemplated by our policy. . . [and] have elevated many of the indigenous class, we have, on the other hand, the mortification to find that some immoral and designing men of that class, have infused among the Eastern tribes a mortal hatred of the entire white race.”<sup>10</sup> As Calhoun remarked on this point, “these whites have no very enlarged views of political science.”<sup>11</sup>

Many Americans, north and south, had been warning of exactly this danger in the United States for years. That the revolt in the Yucatán might have been encouraged by foreign agents likewise reinforced a recurring American anxiety. Building on themes common since at least the French Revolution, the ‘foreigner’—the immigrant, the visiting emissaries to anti-slavery meetings, the scheming English Government (“England is the Power referred to,” noted Senator Miller), and not least, the foreign ideas themselves that circulated in transatlantic networks—was recast as an existential threat to American liberty and the racial hierarchy that made such liberty possible.<sup>12</sup>

But while southern newspapers worked to keep their readers informed of developments in the region, they also sought to limit any unintended conveyancing of news beyond the anticipated audience. A pattern in southern newspapers was evident: in the middle of detailing what was presented as an extermination campaign, the writer would abruptly stop, announcing that “we do

not enter into the details of this affair, as they possess little interest save to the people of Yucatan themselves.”<sup>13</sup> Or, that while “we have a great mass of information on this subject... it is not of such consequence as to demand a place in our columns to the exclusion of more interesting matter.”<sup>14</sup> Or perhaps more directly, “consider that the predominance of the Indian race is as bad for us as that of the African race—consider the necessity of maintaining the predominance of the whites—but I need not go into details upon such a question as this, a word to the wise is sufficient.”<sup>15</sup>

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This paper has two objectives. The first is to persuade the reader that important developments in American political history cannot be understood by a sole focus on the United States, eviscerated from the trans-national context in which its public debates and public acts were imbued with meaning. To understand antebellum American political development requires that we understand co-occurring and implicated developments in France, in England, in Ireland, in the West Indies, in Mexico. This is not the same as placing America in ‘comparative perspective,’ itself a worthwhile endeavor. Rather, we need to detail the ways in which political processes in one country impinged on and informed processes in the others, in which political actions in the United Kingdom might be taken with an eye to their effects on American public audiences and vice versa.

The second objective is to sketch out a particular set of ideas that, I argue, constituted an axiom of political science in the 19<sup>th</sup> century transatlantic world, and to detail how these conditioned different strategies for political action. In particular, I am interested in understanding the context in which American anti-slavery activists could be effectively accused of supporting racial amalgamation—the blending of the races through interaction and intermarriage—and the consequences of these accusations for the development of an anti-slavery ideology that denied any essential relation between social, civil, and political spheres of equality.

I argue that it was a commonly accepted maxim of 19<sup>th</sup> century political thought that free institutions could not survive in heterogeneous societies without as their necessary consequences

extermination or expulsion. Only in societies where there was sufficient cross-class and community sympathy, founded on social mobility and social equality, could free institutions be sustained. Persistent diversity necessarily impeded the development of such sentiment, and so the homogeneity of a community was a fundamental factor determining the fate of free governments. Expressed by multiple voices, in defense of often divergent objectives, the tenets of this theory and its implications for political and social life often varied.<sup>16</sup>

Distinctive liberalisms were defined in part through the respective efforts to reconcile commitments with this axiomatic principle and its different implications across the Atlantic world; distinctive conservatisms were similarly defined in part through efforts to draw upon this principle to defend local hierarchies. The American Colonization Society reconciled an abstract opposition to slavery with the danger of a free “foreign” population by proposing to remove from the country the nominally free “lower caste” blacks. English Radicals, supportive of a more “humane” settler colonialism as well as immediate emancipation, reconciled their commitments with the danger of diversity by proposing plans to actively encourage amalgamation through intermarriage of the freed slaves with the whites, of settlers with natives. And American abolitionists, attacked for their connections with these English Radicals, disclaimed any desire to amalgamate and increasingly denied the relevance of social equality altogether.

The paper proceeds as follows: Section I sketches a foundational political theory of free government in the 19<sup>th</sup> century transatlantic, one that had importance consequences for the political projects different actors envisioned. Section II examines a particular response to the constraints imposed by political theory for liberal political developments, a sustained effort by the British Colonial Office to encourage and facilitate “racial amalgamation.” Section III turns the focus to the United States, where the logic of amalgamation was both widely recognized and provided a resonant basis for attacks against the abolitionist movement. Amalgamation was a biopolitical project that appealed to Radicals in the metropole and to Colonial Officials, but one that left abolitionists in America vulnerable and eager to disclaim both the project and ultimately the underlying political theory. I conclude in Section IV.

## 1 THE PROBLEM OF DIVERSITY

The events in the Yucatán peninsula validated a longstanding belief in the transatlantic world, namely that free government could not exist in heterogeneous societies. The basic problem of diverse societies was that they lacked a natural impulse toward social intercourse, or rather, that the “powerful obstacle interposed by the arrogant expedient of caste” impeded such intercourse and the sympathies it engendered.<sup>17</sup> Do not political rights, asked a delegate to the Pennsylvania state constitutional convention in 1837, “depend, for their preservation and right exercise, on social intercourse and equality”?

“Not that every man, must associate with every man in the community, but I hold there must be that free and unrestrained interchange of sentiments on public questions, which can only attend a state of general equality. . . . Every man, from the highest to the lowest, has his sphere, and his appropriate circle of friends, and in his daily intercourse with them, both in the business and pleasures of life, opinions become formed and matured. . . . These separate circles or little societies which wealth or adventitious circumstances, and not our political institutions, have made distinct, have connecting links that extend the opinions thus formed by the contact of minds, from and to the extremities of the body politic, and keep up a sympathy between the whole and all its parts; and here is the foundation of the system of universal suffrage. For suffrage is only the expression of the opinions which are perpetually maturing under the influence of social intercourse and equality.”<sup>18</sup>

This basic argument—that social equality and intercourse were essential to generate the social sympathy required of free governments—was repeated countless times. “Unity in fundamental opinions constitutes the spiritual essence, the very life and soul of nationality,” argued a member of the House of Representatives, while “difference in race inevitably develops a corresponding difference in primary belief. . . [and] must tend naturally to social and political anarchy, inasmuch as it leads to fundamental antagonisms in opinion, feeling, and habit.”<sup>19</sup> “The true foundation,” it was frequently claimed, “of all our political, religious, and moral privileges, lies in the fostering of domestic associations. The basis of these is laid even in the nursery.”<sup>20</sup>

It constituted a central political axiom of the age that “two distinct races of people” who did not have social equality between them, would have no social intercourse and thus would not develop the necessary sympathy with each other. As a result, they “cannot dwell together in the

same community, unless the one be in subjection to the other.”<sup>21</sup> In “every well-constituted state” a “certain homogeneousness of parts” was necessary, so that “the body politic . . . be in harmony,” with a “healthful circulation” of sympathy ensuring that “one common spirit pervades the entire community.” When there existed a “foreign mass in the midst of a society . . . the life blood of the body social does not circulate.”<sup>22</sup> The Rev. Dr. Fisk, president of Wesleyan University, “challenged any to show how there could be political equality or even harmony where there was not domestic equality. Domestic relations were the foundation of all others—here in the domestic circle the elements combine and amalgamate, and from these elementary bonds the different parts of society become consolidated.”<sup>23</sup>

Only under conditions of social equality and intercourse could there be the formation of sympathy with the whole. Absent this sympathy, representative government would gradually but surely descend into a racial contest, and ultimately into a racial war. In a community where the “heterogeneous part” enjoyed political rights, the disorder to the body politic would “become ten-fold worse . . . the body of a man possessed at once by two discordant spirits.”<sup>24</sup> It was an “utter impossibility” to harmonize peoples of different origins and habits “under a representative Government,” the inevitable result being that when elections were to be held the people would be “arrayed on the side of their respective races, and their dissensions, instead of being diminished by a lapse of time, were only increased.”<sup>25</sup> It was the “common rule” of politics, that “when races meet, they struggle for the mastery,” and that different races sharing a representative government would each try to claim this government for their own advantage. The inevitable result would be degeneration into chaos and racial war.<sup>26</sup>

In the American context this argument was perhaps most prominently used to explain why slaves could not be emancipated and why free blacks were a danger to society. Free blacks were “in the lowest state of social gradation—aliens—political—moral—social—aliens, strangers, though natives.”<sup>27</sup> But if they were to be raised, to be given civil or especially political rights, then electoral contests would become racial ones: “There would be constant bickering and ill-blood between them. . . . A legal and political equality, therefore . . . would only be a combination of conflicting elements, producing commotion, effervescence, collision and bloodshed.”<sup>28</sup> Eman-

cipation “without political rights would be no blessing,” while “with political rights it would be ruinous to ourselves.”<sup>29</sup> Could not equal participation “take place in a political, without taking place in a domestic point of view? . . . It is utterly impossible!”<sup>30</sup> To enfranchise free blacks without establishing social equality “would be to bring an irritated and bitter enemy into the body politic, who could never be reconciled by a vote for the insult to his feelings and pride, in his exclusion from your society.”<sup>31</sup> It would lead to electoral strife, to racial domination in government, and ultimately to extermination. This would be a war to the finish: “shall not we too kill,” asked John Randolph, “shall we not react the scenes which were acted in Guatemala and elsewhere, except, I hope, with far different success.”<sup>32</sup>

The belief that free institutions rested on a foundation of social intimacy and homogeneity was hardly unique to the United States. The notion of a communal sympathy generated through social intercourse and social mobility was likewise seen by liberal Englishmen as central to their constitution. This might seem absurd to us, but for liberal Britons in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was a widely accepted fact often highlighted for special praise. Future Prime Minister John Russell’s *Essay on the History of the English Government and Constitution*, for instance, repeatedly returns to the theme of social mobility, founded in a supposed perfect equality of civil rights. While Russell conceded that “the order of civil society required the relations of superior and inferior ranks,” he insisted that the liberty of England had been secured by a mutual sympathy that had developed across these ranks, precisely because ranks were supposedly open on grounds of merit and were not accompanied by different legal treatment.<sup>33</sup>

Where distinctions in law, in culture, in color impeded social mobility, social harmony across ranks could not develop, threatening free government. Russell would note years later that “in those States which are composed of people of different races and nationalities,” representative institutions did not provide a popular bulwark against despotic government but gave “greater scope to those popular feelings of jealousy, and perhaps of dislike which prevail among those races.”<sup>34</sup> In heterogeneous states riven by conflict, Lord Durham argued, one might be “ready to believe that the real motive of the quarrel is something else, and that the difference of race has slightly and occasionally aggravated dissensions” resulting from “a more usual cause.” This

conclusion would be wrong, as “dissensions, which appear to have another origin, are but forms of this constant and all-pervading quarrel.”<sup>35</sup> Rather than a uniquely American belief, it was broadly recognized as “an axiom in politics” throughout the transatlantic world, “that where there are two races in the same land, which, for any reason whatever, cannot amalgamate by intermarriage, they can only exist in peace in the relations of master and slave, or the oppressors and the oppressed.”<sup>36</sup>

The most well-known expounder of the argument that heterogeneity was destructive to free government had been Montesquieu, and it is often taken for granted that a solution had been discovered by Madison: in an extended republic, faction would balance faction. Antebellum Americans and Britons did not take it for granted. “I know,” commented one representative from Vermont, “what was once considered as a problem is now regarded as settled—that extent of territory is no serious obstacle to a free and representative Government; but, sir, whether your territory be great or small, it is indispensable to the maintenance of a representative Government that its population should be homogeneous people.”<sup>37</sup> “Is there no limit to the extent of a federative republic?” asked an Ohio newspaper after extolling the virtues of Madison’s discovery. “Yes! the limit is the virtue and intelligence of the people: as long as the population is homogeneous, or the territory unoccupied.”<sup>38</sup>

Not only did the impossibility of free governments in heterogeneous societies remain an axiom of politics after Madison, but it was claimed to have been validated by the central conflicts of the period: in national conflict in Ireland, in French revolutionary tendencies, in successive slave insurgencies and revolts in the United States, in the Canadian rebellion of 1837, in the Greek War of Independence, in the Indian Mutiny, and in the various disorders preceding and following emancipation in the West Indies. The Yucatán “caste war” was just one more link in a long chain of events interpreted through the lens of the impossibility of diversity in a free society: “The conquerors and the conquered live upon the same soil, in daily intercourse with each other. . . . The hostility existing between them can probably never be eradicated. . . . Ancient grievances, growing out of the conquest of the country, are at the bottom of all this hostility.”<sup>39</sup> Americans and Britons, in this regard, hewed closer to John Jay’s argument about the advantages of ethnic

homogeneity than Madison's argument about the advantages of an extended republic.

The fact of diversity posed a hard constraint for political theorists, state officials, and political activists, admitting only a limited number of alternatives: (1) foregoing free, representative government; (2) expulsion, (3) extermination, (4) enslavement, and (5) amalgamation. Additional commitments might further curtail these options. Extermination was widely agreed to be barbarous, although in many circumstances it remained a viable option and in places such as California would even be decided policy. Enslavement was not an appropriate policy suggestion for English colonial officials to propose after the 1830s, just as abandoning representative government was not proposed in the United States. This latter option, however, was pursued by different English ministries for colonies where the problem of diversity was seen as having gotten out of hand: Trinidad was denied a representative assembly in 1832 because self-government could not be safely extended under conditions of racial diversity, while Jamaica would lose its assembly after the Morant Bay Rebellion in 1865, a failed experiment of free government under conditions of social diversity.<sup>40</sup>

Amalgamation—making one race out of several—was believed to be a slow process, and even then could only occur under highly propitious circumstances. “Time is necessary to harmonize these various elements,” argued Henry Clay about the discordant populations of new territories, “and to amalgamate and consolidate them. If they were to populate faster than they now do, the elements of discord would be disseminated, and the period of their becoming homogeneous would be postponed.”<sup>41</sup> But time alone would not always ensure amalgamation. France, according to widely praised histories, had for centuries been “the grand theater of civil wars,” her “social soul” a “volcanic cradle of perpetual revolution,” because she had failed to amalgamate the Franks with the Gauls. These two races, “resid[ing] for a long course of centuries, not only under the same government, but in the very same neighborhood, without losing any of their ethnological attributes or instincts,” now respectively constituted the country's aristocracy and peasantry. Class conflict in France was in fact an ongoing race war, which explained why the country “knows not how to develop a democracy, or obey a despotism.”<sup>42</sup> “Two nations” had lived “juxtaposed on the soil, and ha[d] not amalgamated.”<sup>43</sup>

The same failure of amalgamation explained the persistent unrest and violence in Ireland. The extermination of the native Irish, argued Thomas Macaulay, would have been more “humane in reality” than the situation of caste imposed on the Irish Catholics: “they were doomed to be what the Helots were in Sparta, what the Greeks were under the Ottoman, what the blacks now are at New York.”<sup>44</sup> This was the “very worst of tyrannies that can exist... the tyranny of race over race.” English nationalists and settlers, “by [their] own boasting and taunts” had encouraged the racial pride of England and were continuing to impede that which “we have seen in our own country... [where] Celt and Saxon—Dane and Norman—all have been fused down and melted together, to form the great and united English people. A similar amalgamation, we might have hoped, would have taken place in Ireland.”<sup>45</sup> Amalgamation was not impossible. It had taken place in England, and indeed it was the racial amalgamation of the Normans and the Anglo-Saxons, romanticized by Walter Scott in *Ivanhoe* (1820), that had established the necessary conditions for representative institutions and free government.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, amalgamation was often seen as occurring in America, a salutary consequence of liberal policies that ensured social mobility and intercourse: “This unity of the American people and nation is, in fact, one of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of nations... We are composed, in the aggregate, of many people, nations, tongues; and yet, under the amalgamating influence and equality of our republican principles and organization... we unite and cohere to form one great united coherent and homogenous political body. It is a sublime, a wonderful spectacle... Such is the wonderful effect of the civil and religious liberty we enjoy. Such is the influence of our political equality.”<sup>47</sup> Free government, then, could facilitate amalgamation, even as the maintenance of free government was nearly impossible so long as the groups were not amalgamated. Others were less sure that amalgamation could occur even among putatively ‘white’ Americans, arguing that “the tender and beautiful attraction of sexual sympathy scarcely reveals itself at all betwixt the heterogeneous elements,” namely the German and the Irish.<sup>48</sup> It was nonetheless considered a real alternative to discord and extermination; but it required time, equal political rights, and social intimacy.

The set of alternatives proposed by different authors and speakers varied with local circumstances and commitments. But over and over we find the same basic rhetorical offering: “What is to be the result?” asked J.H. Latrobe of the American Colonization Society, “where there are two races in the same land, which cannot amalgamate. . . : That the safety of the weaker can be found in migration only—that the alternative must ultimately be extirpation or removal.”<sup>49</sup> The necessary consequences of diversity resulting from conquest were “First: The conquered people are reduced to slavery; or, Secondly: They are removed from the country by extirpation or expulsion,” or “union [is] brought about by amalgamation. . . intermarriages [being] a necessary condition of a harmonious blending.”<sup>50</sup> In settling the American continent, “our forefathers [had] tried to do something with the Indians. The question was, shall we put them in reservations; shall we incorporate them; or shall they be driven before the great advancing tide of civilization?”<sup>51</sup> The British Empire had “only three alternatives which imagination itself can suggest,” argued Herman Merivale, “the extermination of native races,” their expulsion into confined reservations, where they could be gradually civilized, and “their amalgamation with the colonists.”<sup>52</sup> “Amalgamation is impossible,” argued an opponent of annexing northern Mexico, “extermination too barbarous, and the doctrine that it is our mission to prepare neighboring nations to live under the same government with us, too ridiculous.”<sup>53</sup> The ancient Egyptians, it was claimed, had “but one of four plans to adopt” vis-à-vis the Hebrews: “either to expel the Hebrews, or to amalgamate them with the Egyptians, or to see the Egyptians inferior to the Hebrews, or to enslave, if possible, the Hebrews.”<sup>54</sup> The emancipation of African slaves “would be a positive curse,” argued Governor McDuffie of South Carolina. “The idea of their remaining among us is utterly visionary. Amalgamation is abhorrent to every sentiment of nature; and if they remain as a separate caste. . . they will become our masters or we must resume the mastery over them.”<sup>55</sup> “It would be no amelioration of the condition of the blacks to emancipate them,” argued Judge Nicholas of Kentucky (quoted in an article praising his liberal views on slavery). “Great trouble and inconvenience to us, and ultimate extermination for them, are the inevitable results to be anticipated from such an operation.”<sup>56</sup> But when the “heterogeneous” class of the community “is in subjection to the other,” argued another “there may then exist a state of perfect harmony.”<sup>57</sup>

As the above quotes suggest, by the 1830s most American political thinkers had ruled out the possibility of racial amalgamation, at least between whites and blacks. That this would be the case is not entirely obvious. For one, racial ‘amalgamation’ was steadily ongoing, a point frequently made by anti-slavery activists, who predicted that “in a few generations. . . *color*, will cease to be a distinction between the master and the slave.”<sup>58</sup> When Thomas Jefferson claimed that a natural repulsion prevented sexual relations with blacks, he was widely mocked by southerners for pronouncing such an absurdity, especially among those aware of his personal relations.<sup>59</sup> In light of prevailing theories of the consequences of diversity for free government, however, the significance of Jefferson’s claim becomes clear. As much as anything else, it was an announcement that the South would keep its slaves, and that the only alternatives were extermination or expulsion.

This theme became a central argument of the American Colonization Society, who more than any other group helped disseminate and propagate the belief of an inherent distinction between blacks and whites, a natural antipathy or revulsion that no policy, no matter how liberal, could overcome.<sup>60</sup> The ACS organized in favor of what they claimed was the one, most liberal solution: the expulsion of free blacks—that class neither enslaved nor fully included in social and political rights necessary for free government—to Africa. The presence of free blacks, argued Henry Clay, was an “evil” requiring a remedy. The country’s salvation and domestic tranquility required it to be “render[ed] one homogeneous people.” In an 1827 speech to the Colonization Society, Clay based the need for expulsion on the grounds that “there are so many among us of a different caste, of a different physical, if not moral, constitution, who can never amalgamate with the great body of our population. . . . Of the utility of a total separation of the two incongruous portions of our population. . . none have ever doubted.”<sup>61</sup> Twenty-years later, in a speech to the Society, he declared that not only was amalgamation impossible, it was wrong: “It is vain to attempt the amalgamation of two races whom God himself, by the difference of color, and other constitutional differences, has declared ought to be kept separate. (Cheers.) The two races can never become one harmonious and homogeneous people.” And he immediately connected the impossibility of amalgamation to the necessity of social equality in a free republic, asking where in the Union “does the black man enjoy equal political rights with the white? Nowhere. It is out

of the question. He is nowhere regarded as standing on an equality of condition with the white man.”<sup>62</sup> Other Colonization advocates might be less strident—one noting that “the amalgamation of the whites and blacks in on homogeneous community was deemed impracticable”—but it was a central theme in ACS literature and public speeches, and supporters of colonization regularly pointed to the supposed impossibility of amalgamation to buttress their position.<sup>63</sup>

The consequences, of course, were that only extermination or expulsion could secure the continued existence of free government. But even colonization was seen as simply shifting the location of the inevitable conflict: free blacks transported to Africa would be “elevated above the natives of the country, as such as they are degraded here below the other classes of the community.”<sup>64</sup> If emancipated, argued the Governor of South Carolina, the freed would have to be “transport[ed] to Africa to exterminate the natives or be exterminated by them.”<sup>65</sup> As news of problems experienced in Liberia were reported in the United States, the immediatist abolitionist newspaper the *Emancipator* gloated: “Unless the U.S. Government will interfere... all the colonists must be brought back to ‘their own country,’ or amalgamate with the larger tribes, or be exterminated. To this issue things will come at last.”<sup>66</sup>

## 2 RADICAL AMALGAMATION

While the axiom that diversity and free government were incompatible was shared throughout the transatlantic, among slavery’s opponents and supporters, its strictures impinged on political action in divergent ways across the region’s imperial geography. The problem for settler states and for slaveholding colonies was, in the telling of their representatives, existential: if they were to retain their free institutions, which almost all were committed to defending, then the options ranged from continued enslavement through to racial amalgamation. Given the considerable investments in humans-as-property, it is not surprising that the balance of organized opinion weighed most strongly in favor of continued enslavement or the form of limited colonization promoted by the ACS.<sup>67</sup>

The problem for the English Colonial Office, for American officials debating intervention in the Yucatán, for colonial agents in the West Indies and in the English settler colonies, was that of

governance, how to preserve order despite the heterogeneous makeup of the population. It is most likely, I suggest, for this reason that a set of radical proposals found official favor in England, and to a lesser extent France, but not in the United States or among the West Indian slaveholders.<sup>68</sup>

In the abstract, the preferred English solution to the problem of diversity across most of the political spectrum was amalgamation. This, after all, had been the foundation of English homogeneity and its free institutions. Indeed the racial amalgamation that had occurred in England had been for Macaulay—the most influential historian in the transatlantic world—of greater importance than the Magna Carta to the development of free institutions.<sup>69</sup> Most liberals—and many Conservatives—believed that the principal cause of Irish unrest, the central ‘problem’ of British governments in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had been the failure to amalgamate the native Irish and the settler population. The ostensible objective of a liberal policy in Ireland would be ensure racial amalgamation, the “fusion—lamentably incomplete as yet, but in the natural course of things progressively advancing towards completeness—of the interests, opinions and wills of Great Britain and Ireland into one.”<sup>70</sup>

Racial amalgamation, as noted by historian Damon Salesa, appealed to a broad political constituency, including “not only Whigs and ‘philosophical radicals,’ but Chartists as well as Tory vicars.”<sup>71</sup> That amalgamation had, in the abstract, broad support across the English political perspective is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that Robert Peel, leader of the Conservatives, argued that the desired consequence of the abolition of slavery was—and needed to be—racial amalgamation. While “the distinction of colour” posed a greater difficulty than was realized—not, he was careful to add, because of “any inferiority between the black and the white”—the “amalgamation between the slave and the free population. . . all must admit to be desirable.”<sup>72</sup>

But it was the entry of the ‘Radicals’ into political prominence with the passage of the Reform Act of 1832 that enabled amalgamation to be developed into a practical set of policies for governing heterogeneous populations. The ‘radicals’ of the 1830s were by no means the same as the radicals of the revolutionary 1790s; upper middle class, and sometimes even members of the nobility (Lord Durham, for instance, was widely known as ‘Radical Jack’), they called for an expanded suffrage, more regular elections, and free trade. It was in large part the influence of

this group that ensured the passage of abolition in the English colonies in 1833—a measure that John Quincy Adams worried would “pass like a pestilence over all the British Colonies in the West Indies” and “prove an earthquake upon this continent.”<sup>73</sup> And it was they who pushed for policies that would not only facilitate amalgamation but would actively encourage it.

They pushed for the removal of all legal distinctions and an equal suffrage between the freed slaves and whites, explicitly in order to speedily achieve the amalgamation of the races. In their telling, it had been legal discriminations in civil and political rights that had prevented “the due amalgamation of the European and African races,” and these constituted the “only reason” for European prejudice in social relations.<sup>74</sup> They promised on the hustings and in parliament to “amalgamate two distinct and separate races.”<sup>75</sup> In colonial affairs they believed that racial distinctions in law would “produce not friendship but hostility,” and prevent “the amalgamation of the native population with the English settlers.”<sup>76</sup>

In the late 1830s and 1840s, the Whig government and Radical MPs closely monitored colonial legislation to ensure adherence to non-exclusivity.<sup>77</sup> Lionel Smith, the Governor of Barbados and later Commander-in-Chief of Jamaica, who had claimed that Jamaica was populated with “white savages and black Christians,” regularly fought planters over ensuring the removal of political discriminations and insisted on social equality and social intercourse between the races.<sup>78</sup> In the post-emancipation West Indies, the stipendiary magistrates—whose ostensible purpose was to protect the rights of the freed, but who often quickly fell under the influence of former masters—were instructed to provide regular reports on the “progress of amalgamation” in their districts, including details on the number of intermarriages and mixed race children.

Racial amalgamation, argued the Radicals, was not only essential for the success of abolition, but it could also make colonization “humane.” New Zealand offered what was seen as an unparalleled opportunity for settlement, and a systematic policy of encouraging racial amalgamation would ensure that this would be a colonizing project unlike those of previous centuries, admitted by all sides to have been both desirable and yet barbaric in their violent exterminations. Of the many groups proposing a colonization program in New Zealand, *every single one* of them placed an active policy of encouraging racial intermarriages with the purpose of amalgamating

the natives and settlers at the core of their proposal.<sup>79</sup>

By the 1840s, it had become official policy expressed at the highest levels to arrange colonial institutions—including the sale of land, the prohibition of legal distinctions, the establishment of schools, the provision for mixed hospitals, the recognition of marriages between natives and settlers—in order to ensure “the civilisation of the black, and the ultimate amalgamation of the two races.”<sup>80</sup> This was especially pronounced in New Zealand, but was also an important aspect of policy in the West Indies and in the Cape Colony as well. And for Radicals and many Whigs—both of which were involved in colonization projects, held offices in the colonial apparatus, and had influence with the ministry—amalgamation was “not that eventual and distant process. . . [but] an immediate and an individual process,” one that would be achieved by a careful attention to arranging colonial life to maximize cross-racial social intercourse and, from this, intermarriage.<sup>81</sup>

The commitment of successive English ministries and foreign officers to amalgamation did not, it seems, result in an effective re-ordering of colonial society. The settler population, the white former slaveholders, the steadily arriving new immigrants, the natives and the freed people all seem to have their own priorities and proclivities in the area of sexual reproduction and social mingling, and it seems as though most efforts to encourage amalgamation were quickly—and quietly—derailed in their implementation.

But the importance of amalgamation for different English ministries was clearly recognized in the colonies, whose officers and elite would frame their repeated appeals for representative institutions on the grounds that they had made progress toward its achievement. John Montagu, the Government Secretary for the Cape Colony in south Africa, regretfully acknowledged that while “this distinction [“of colour”] has ceased to be the badge of civil disabilities and moral wrongs, yet. . . it still forms a bar to social intercourse and intimate relations.” But he stressed that near perfect equality in political matters had been achieved, insisted that with a new constitution this would be furthered, and especially that “the prejudices, feelings, and habits thought to result from diversity of race and origin, are daily passing away.”<sup>82</sup> In short, that the impediments to social intercourse were rapidly fading. Such claims to racial liberalism, a mainstay of ministerial

correspondence with colonial elites, cannot be taken at face value. But they are indicative of what the colonists believed the English government wanted to hear, and became a recurring trope of colonial communications.<sup>83</sup>

But the British colonists were not the only ones paying attention. American publics were also following, in newspapers and in private correspondence, the shifting tenets of British colonial policy; and white Americans, reading and listening to English abolitionists, were highly anxious that others might be reading and listening as well.

### 3 AMERICAN ANXIETIES

American publics followed news in the transatlantic closely, perhaps especially during the revolutionary early 1830s and late 1840s. And they could not but notice that on the issue of slavery, “within the last thirty years, or thereabouts. . . a total change has taken place in public opinion, in Great Britain—which always acts as possessing a common language and almost a literature and laws in common, she must and she ought to act with great force on us.”<sup>84</sup> John Quincy Adams associated the growing prominence of the English abolition movement with a broader European rise of democracy, which he saw in the French revolution of 1830 and in the proposed English reform bill. He worried that reform would lead ultimately to the overturning of the established church, the peerage, the monarchy, and the “spunging” of the public debt, which would “stagger the rights of property and shatter the confidence of credit.”<sup>85</sup> Martin Van Buren, who was in England during passage of the Reform Act, expressed similar fears, and in his correspondence the organizer of the Democratic party suggested his opposition to the moderately democratizing measure.

But it was abolition that was most threatening to the well-being of America. It was abolition, noted Adams, that “is, perhaps, the only part of the doctrine of European democracy which will find no favor here.” He nonetheless hoped that Americans, and southerners in particular, would continue to follow the English debates closely, as it was “possible that the danger of the abolition doctrines, when brought home to the Southern States, may teach them the value of the Union—the only thing that can maintain their system of slavery.” He expected “bitter fruits” of the “inevitable

predominance” of democracy in Europe for the tranquility of American institutions.<sup>86</sup> Even the *Christian Spectator*, taking for granted that their readers were following English debates with their casual reminders of noted speeches, worried that the progress of abolition in the United Kingdom was likely to result in “a war of extermination [in the South]. . . , in which the African cause may excite as much sympathy and as liberal contributions in England and in the West Indies, as the Greek cause has done in this country.”<sup>87</sup>

If much of the transatlantic world shared a core set of political axioms—rather than an there being an exceptionally American set of ideologies, public audiences, and discursive terms—Americans were also deeply anxious about the unregulated circulation of ideas in this space, and the dangerous implications these would have vis-à-vis their local commitments.<sup>88</sup> The slave population of the West Indies, as Americans frequently remarked, “is in the immediate neighbourhood of our own. They speak the same language. The intercourse is easy, constant, and unavoidable.”<sup>89</sup> Southern planters anxiously anticipated that were resolutions for the abolition of slavery carried “into effect in the West Indies,. . . in six months I shall see the effect on my slaves.”<sup>90</sup> South Carolina and Georgia sought to regulate these Caribbean and transatlantic intercourses by “quarantining” free black sailors, prompting a sustained diplomatic and federal crisis. These laws were defended as “protect[ing] ourselves against an evil, which not we, but the people of Britain, brought upon us. . . . Is it wrong for us to prevent the meddling intrigues of fanatic fools or designing agents?”<sup>91</sup>

But it was not simply the social intercourse between slaves and between free and enslaved blacks that was threatening. It was the ideas themselves, coursing through the transatlantic circuits and given material form by the facts of emancipation in South America and in the West Indies, which posed the danger. They were “weapons” of “revolution and conquest,” and as sure as the “French convention made use of their weapons of liberte, egalite, and fraternite,” so too would the abolitionists use their principles—“that all men are born free and equal”—to provoke the extermination of the white race in slave societies.<sup>92</sup> Europe’s “philosophy,” Americans frequently bemoaned, “ha[d] crossed the Atlantic.”<sup>93</sup> The consequences were obvious to students of political science. “The battle of thundering arms,” argued one representative, would “follow[]

the anterior battle of ideas, as the consequence follows the cause.”<sup>94</sup>

As the above quotes suggest, the ‘idea-weapons’ mapped onto a set of geopolitical anxieties, perhaps best evidenced by the popular acclamation that followed the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>95</sup> The English, it was claimed, had proven themselves in 1812 intent on undermining the American republic, and would stop at no ends, including giving manifestation to the idea of immediate abolition, and its seeming disregard of either the well-being of the West Indian colonies or the principles of political science. An English author, concerned with the spread of pro-slavery ideas in Germany (itself subsidized by the American and Brazilian governments), set out to refute a common argument that Britain had “emancipated our colonies, with the view of endangering the safety of our continental cousins. . . that we knew emancipation to the slave would be destruction to the planter, but that we voluntarily submitted to amputation of a limb, under a certainty that our example would cost our hated rival his life.”<sup>96</sup>

The idea of abolition posed a threat, but it could be and was ridiculed, its feasibility rejected given prevailing political theories, its purported philanthropic motives denied by making clear the necessarily sanguinary consequences. By bringing the idea into reality, immediate abolition in the West Indies was seen as a deliberate attempt to render its feasibility manifest in order to provoke the destruction of the American Union, and with it, the cause of liberty.<sup>97</sup> It was commonplace among English Radical that the United States had “already done the most essential service to the cause of freedom. . . by her mere existence. . . thus affording a splendid illustration, and irrefragable proof” of the possibility of democratic government.<sup>98</sup> Similarly, abolitionists would regularly appeal to recent history for proof of the feasibility of immediate emancipation of slaves as a class, while slavery’s defenders would look on these developments as a deliberate provocation.<sup>99</sup>

### 3.1 AMALGAMATION IN AMERICA

This was the context in which radical abolitionism—radical because immediate, because unpaired with expulsion, and because more often than not explicitly insistent on equal political and civil rights—would be received in the United States: as a foreign threat, a deliberate provocation,

and as inevitably tending to support the amalgamation of the races.

A speaker to an ACS meeting denounced the Anti-Slavery Society for undermining the work of colonization, and stressed to his audience that they were “a society of foreign origin, and let me caution you my friends to beware of foreign agents, and foreign agency.”<sup>100</sup> The Mississippi Legislature, in explaining its support for the annexation of Texas, stressed that it would help counteract the “unholy crusade” waged by “a putent band of moral agitator in our own country” who were “encouraged and stimulated to action by a hypocritical fraternity of polar philanthropists across the Atlantic.”<sup>101</sup> Slavery might be a “cancer,” John Randolph conceded. But it was a cancer that “must not be tampered with by quacks, who never saw the disease or the patient, and prescribe across the Atlantic.”<sup>102</sup> Abolitionists’ “principles and efforts were of foreign growth. . . imported from England and Scotland.”<sup>103</sup> The sentiment reportedly expressed by one British officer that “in case of a revolt in the Island of Jamaica, he should feel himself compelled to take part with the blacks, as the oppressed party,” was widely believed to have become general “throughout old England,” and threatened to gain adherents in New England as well.<sup>104</sup> Even a private attempt at “amalgamation”—namely the attempt of a white man and black woman to get married, an incident that scandalized Boston—was blamed on the foreigner who presided over the ceremony.<sup>105</sup>

The effort to tar abolitionists as either the dupes or the treasonous comrades of a foreign power was cultivated at the highest levels. As noted by a biographer of President Tyler, the President sought to counteract abolitionism by appealing to “Anglophobia.” British anti-slavery emissaries were attacked for “meddling in purely American domestic affairs,” while the President instructed one member of Congress to raise doubts about American anti-slavery activists patriotism and to accuse them of being “paid foreign agents” whose “entire antislavery enterprise, financed and directed by Great Britain, was a subversive scheme aimed at undermining the American Union.”<sup>106</sup> After the rise of radical abolitionism in England, Americans would regularly denounce the movement in America and abroad as seeking to encourage amalgamation. Reporting on elections in Jamaica, a southern newspaper remarked that “the abolition fanatics have succeeded in choosing several of the Fanny Wright Radicals in various parishes. These

are birds of the same kidney. Agrarians and Abolitionists, are for promiscuous amalgamation of forms, colors, property, &c.”<sup>107</sup> Dr. Channing’s best-selling book *Slavery* was accused of promulgating “amalgamation doctrines,” and prompted numerous American rebuttals.<sup>108</sup> While some recognized that not all abolitionists believe amalgamation to be a necessary corollary to emancipation, it was also stressed that an important part of the movement did “think, as a means of effecting that object, the best plan is to put black and white men and black and white ladies upon an equal footing in the intercourse of social feelings.” These were “termed ultras, when on the other side of the water” in England.<sup>109</sup> And with the seeming rise of the ‘ultras’ in England, it was this strand of abolitionism that pro-slavery writers argued was most influential. “This doctrine of amalgamation,” argued the *Raleigh Standard*, “at this time, is the very essence of abolition.”<sup>110</sup>

The claim that the Anti-Slavery Society supported amalgamation was a logical inference given prevailing political theory; and it was a reasonable one given the Society’s close association with the English abolition movement, who were often treated with near-adulation by anti-slavery activists. That a more radical vision of amalgamation—one that would occur in the near-term and be encouraged by government policies regulating the spaces for social interaction—was increasingly evident in official policy in the English colonies helped give the charge that American abolitionists were “amalgamationists” a grounding in reality.

So too did the efforts by English abolitionists to demonstrate that social intercourse could transpire without distinction of color. American editors and apologists for slavery were quick to report on instance of blacks and upper or middle class whites mingling in public was reported—in the U.K., in the West Indies, in America, or in transatlantic transit—and to suggest this as part of a deliberate provocation. On the recent visit of Frederick Douglass to England, the *New York Express* commented that

“the negro excitement in England just now presents a dull aspect to our transatlantic vision; and first comes a layer of black, then of white, then of black again, striping the whole into a laughable amalgamation. . . . These haughty dames not only received him [Douglass] in their mansions and sat with him at the same table, but appeared with him side by side in the public drives. . . . Among these high born women, we are told, was Lady Byron—she after driving the greatest poet of this century mad with

her iron heartedness, subsided into a floor of gentle sympathies at the appearance of our Fred, and paraded London in an open carriage, with this negro side by side, on its silken cushions. . . . Directly the white lioness [Harriett Beecher Stowe] finds herself sandwiched between two blacks—and the ebony swan [Elizabeth Greenfield] ruffles her plumage.”<sup>111</sup>

This occasion of English ‘society’s’ seeming to embrace American free blacks was an expression of its “malice” toward the United States. Sir Lionel Smith, governor of Jamaica, was accused in the American press of deliberately encouraging amalgamation by his regular social intercourse with blacks.<sup>112</sup> British travel agents were denounced for ignoring the “feelings of the American travelling community” by placing white Americans in the same berths as free black Americans on transatlantic voyages, the Captains scolded for allowing them to “occupy a seat at the dinner table.”<sup>113</sup>

Similar complaints were made against Americans who seemed to perform the possibility of social intercourse. “Suppose a white man should walk down Broadway in arm with a negro wench,” asked the Evening Star, “would he not be mobbed, probably tarred and feathered? May not a person commit an outrage upon the decencies and the moral feelings of society, which shall be punished by the sovereign people on the spot? Do not such cases repeatedly happen in the northern states?”<sup>114</sup> Abolitionists who chose “to amalgamate themselves with the blacks, to admit them into their social circles, and to promenade the streets, the different sexes lovingly coupled together, a black and a white, as they have lately done in Philadelphia” merited condemnation for their fanaticism.<sup>115</sup>

It was bad enough that they might engage in such behavior in the North, but such acts—marriage, co-racial schooling, public walks or displays of intimacy and friendship—were understood as being deliberate provocations against the South. “Let the descendants of those who hung witches at Salem and Quakers at Boston” free their slaves, “educate them at colleges, and amalgamate and intermarry with them if they choose, but, for God’s sake, let them not carry their fire brands into the peaceful homes of the Southern planters.”<sup>116</sup> “Because some white fanatics of the north may have chosen to place the negro on an equality with their own wives and children, and to associate, amalgamate, or intermarry with them, have they the presumption to attempt to make this rule and law for the South?”<sup>117</sup> A southern Whig who had suggested that

the state's Indian population should not be expelled, but that state policy should be to "allow[] the white people to settle around and among them, intermarry, &c.," in order achieve homogeneity through amalgamation, was accused of abolitionism. After all, if the "spirit" of amalgamation was allowed then soon enough the abolitionists would say "it is the cheapest plan to get rid of the Indians and Free Negroes."<sup>118</sup> Recent insurrections in Mississippi, at Point Comfort, Virginia, in Jamaica, in Havana were only a harbinger, and would become more common "if the incendiaries of amalgamation are not arrested in their career." Already these had encouraged an "arrogant disobedience and presumptuous hostility" among blacks in Martinique, Trinidad and throughout the West Indies; in America, "the blacks, stimulated. . . by the busy indefatigable agents of the abolitionists, are intruding themselves everywhere, and carrying their perfumes into the very recesses of society."<sup>119</sup> In short, abolitionists were accused of encouraging blacks to demand the social equality and intercourse which standard political theory took to be an essential concomitant of free government.

The efforts of the American anti-slavery movement in the 1830s and 1840s to remove distinctions on the basis of color in civil and political rights were attacked as encouraging emancipation. When the Pennsylvania convention of 1837-38 debated black suffrage, the petition campaign organized in opposition denounced black political rights as an effort to force social intercourse and ultimately racial amalgamation on the state. Martin Van Buren was denounced by southerners as an amalgamationist for "vot[ing] to admit colored people to an equality with us in political privileges."<sup>120</sup> That his running mate was Richard Mentor Johnson only made the charge more credible. Campaigns such as these are often treated as a naked appeal to public prejudice; and they certainly were. But in the context of the period it was a charge that made sense, given fundamental axioms of political science and the seeming triumph of radical abolitionism in England.

### 3.2 CONSEQUENCES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

Neither the American Colonization Society nor the English radicals had broken with early 19<sup>th</sup> century political theory; rather they had each organized around a different but well-recognized solution to the problem of diversity. The continued existence of representative government de-

pendent on the quick re-establishment of the vaunted homogeneity of the “people,” either through mixture or expulsion. But the respective investments made by the ACS and the English radicals in their alternative solutions nonetheless shaped perceptions of the feasible alternatives in America.

Having achieved less success in the number of free blacks removed than they would have liked, ACS activists treated as their greatest success the change they had wrought in American public opinion. They claimed success in cementing the impossibility of amalgamation in the mind of the American public, and from this detailing the necessary consequences. In the twenty years since the founding of the ACS,

“a mighty truth which is the sure foundation of [the Society’s] ultimate success, has come to be universally conceded. Nearly all men now admit, that the two races white and colored. . . must ever be separate and distinct.—There can be no amalgamation—no social or political harmony even between them. If this was talked of even, five and twenty years ago, yet its consequences were rarely, if ever discussed. . . . But few, if any, in those days, looked boldly in the face, the great truth that, here, the races in question must ever be distinct, and fairly argued out the consequences.”

This was their signal contribution to American political thought, the regularization of a trope dating back at least to Jefferson whose central implication was that blacks in America must suffer either continued enslavement or expulsion. “Can’t Amalgamate” became as important a banner for slavery’s apologists as claims of natural inferiority, although the two claims could also be reinforcing.

Similar to the English Radicals, some early anti-slavery activists in America seemed to express support for amalgamation in the United States. The most famous was Fanny Wright, whose opposition to the “tyranny of the matrimonial law” was said to be motivated primarily in order to “actually effect an amalgamation of the whites and negroes.”<sup>121</sup> Wright had, in her Explanatory Notes regarding the Nashoba Community, argued that emancipation must progress “through the feelings; and through that medium, be finally complete and entire, involving at once political equality and the amalgamation of the races.”

“Has human nature (as slave apologists would tell us) drawn a Rubicon between the human varieties of physiognomy and complexion. . . ? Idle indeed is the assertion that the mixture of the races is not in Nature. . . . The only question is whether it shall

take place in good taste and good feeling, and be made at once the means of sealing the tranquility and of perfecting the liberty of the country, and of people it with a race more suited to its southern climate than the pure European. . . . The education of the race would doubtless make the amalgamation more rapid as well as more creditable. . . . To educate his children with white children, and thus approaching their minds, tastes, and occupations, to leave the affections of future generations to the dictates of free choice.”<sup>122</sup>

On this question, at least, Wright’s views were largely consonant with those of other British Radicals. Some of the early anti-slavery activists of the 1830s also seem to have believed that amalgamation was a necessary component to emancipation. Prudence Crandall’s efforts to establish a school for “young ladies and little misses of color” in Canterbury, CT, was characterized by the otherwise sympathetic *New Hampshire Gazette* as being an overzealous effort to carry into effect the principles of “Mr. Garrison, Mr. Buffum and others of the Anti-Slavery Society” and encourage “the admission of blacks into society on terms of entire equality, the amalgamation of whites and blacks, by intermarriage.”<sup>123</sup> The *Colored American* scorned those who claimed amalgamation was impossible, detailing the stories of several successful free blacks who had ‘passed,’ “disappeared” and “drawn out from the ranks of their brethren.”<sup>124</sup>

But in general active support for amalgamation was an unpopular position in America. It was, perhaps, a strategy best suited to an imperial context, where the vested commitments of local residents in white supremacy might not hold as much weight in the formulation of policy. But whatever the reason, it was widely remarked upon by abolitionists that opposition to amalgamation was the principal basis for northern support of slavery. Why did the North censure abolitionists, asked Angelina E. Grimke? Not because she was not anti-slavery, she informed southern readers, but because “the North is most dreadfully afraid of Amalgamation. . . . Lest this consequence might flow from emancipation, she is determined to resist all efforts at emancipation without expatriation.” Grimke was ambiguous as to where she stood on the question, “leav[ing] you to judge whether amalgamation ought to induce men to oppose anti-slavery efforts, when they believe slavery to be sinful,” but insisted that the “prejudice against color” that induced northerners to so fear amalgamation was “the most powerful enemy we have to fight with at the North.”<sup>125</sup>

For the most part, the American anti-slavery movement did not outline a well-articulated political theory that could reconcile emancipation with the problem of diversity. Instead, they deflected and disclaimed, insisting that they were being unfairly tarnished with the charge of being amalgamationist. William Jay noted that there was no evidence of Anti-Slavery societies, in their “public meetings, deliver[ing] addresses in favour of intermarriages between whites and blacks,” of “auxiliaries pass[ing] resolutions approving of such marriages.” It was “one of the designs falsely imputed to [anti-slavery societies]” that they intended to bring “about an amalgamation of colors by intermarriages. In vain have they again and again denied any such design; in vain have their writings been searched for any recommendation of such amalgamation.”<sup>126</sup> The Anti-Slavery Society of New York felt compelled to issue a “Disclaimer,” denying any intention to amalgamate the races. Members expected the sentiment to be the “almost unanimous voice of Abolitionists throughout the country”: “In all my intercourse with my friends, I have never heard, either in public or in private, one word expressed in favor of encouraging intermarriages between the white and colored races. . . . It is seldom introduced among us; and then only to complain of the injustice of attributing to us views, which we never held, but have always disavowed.”<sup>127</sup>

Supporters of a proposed college for free blacks worried that “the ridiculous pleas of the necessity of amalgamation” might scuttle the institution, and reassured their readers that anxieties over whether it would promote amalgamation were nothing more than a “fear of a shadow.”<sup>128</sup> One visitor to the post-emancipation West Indies, seeking to redeem the islands from claims that they were falling into disrepair and violence, also sought to assure Americans that “I see nothing of that bugbear of amalgamation, which frightens so many in this country.”<sup>129</sup> And a letter to the *Massachusetts Spy* remarked on an attempt by abolitionists to put anxieties over amalgamation into service for their own cause: “By universal emancipation, we want to stop amalgamation.”<sup>130</sup>

For the most part, however, the abolition movement before 1848 remained committed to political and civil equality and free blacks. Given prevailing political theories, this placed them in a bind: social intercourse and equality were necessary to cultivate social harmony, which was the foundation for free government. But while the ACS and the radical abolitionists had resolved the dilemma by staying within the constraints of existing political theory, American abolitionists

increasingly questioned its central precepts. Social equality, rather than being a core necessity for free institutions, and especially democratic institutions, was incidental, a matter of taste. William Jay stressed that,

“all [of us] know white men whose characters and habits render them repulsive to us, and whom no consideration would induce us to admit into our social circles; and can it be believed, that Abolitionists are willing to extend to negroes, merely on account of their color, courtesies and indulgences, which in innumerable instances, they withhold, and properly withhold, from their fellow white citizens. But who pretends that, because a man is so disagreeable in his manners and person that we refuse to associate with him, that therefore he ought to be denied the right of suffrage, the privilege of choosing his trade and profession, the opportunities of acquiring knowledge, and the liberty of pursuing his own happiness? . . . They have no right to associate with us against our will, but they have a right to participate in the blessings of education and political liberty.”<sup>131</sup>

Others asked why “the giving of one man the same civil privileges as another, [must] necessarily entitle him to claim his neighbor’s daughter in marriage? Are not citizens’ rights and family rights distinct things?”<sup>132</sup> Increasingly abolitionists in America stressed that amalgamation “is entirely foreign from the cause of abolition, and has no connection with it.”<sup>133</sup>

The attempt to separate social equality from political equality was ridiculed: “how absurd is the distinction. . . between political equality and social equality, granting the one and withholding the other! What is the end of political power except to secure social advantages? The first use of political predominance, will it not be to establish predominance in every thing?”<sup>134</sup> Yet over the next few decades it became an increasingly common trope among anti-slavery activists that social equality had little to do with political or civil equality. A supporter of black suffrage in 1840s Wisconsin noted that its opponents believed that equal suffrage had to be accompanied by inclusion into social equality, and vehemently denied that the two had any relation.<sup>135</sup> John Farnsworth would insist that these were distinct spheres, with status in the one having little connection to status in the other: “[Democrats] are throwing it up everywhere that the Republicans are in favor of the social and political equality of the negro. . . . If States permit colored men to vote, it is none of my business. . . . When it is said that we are in favor of social equality with negroes, it is false.”<sup>136</sup> On the question of whether the party favored social equality, a Republican member from Illinois answered, “No, we are not; not in the sense which you mean. I believe this:

that all men are created equal, and that every human being has an equal title to life, liberty, and the fruits of an honest toil. . . . But we do not hold that they are socially equal.”<sup>137</sup> By the late 1850s the separation of social from political and civil equality had become a central component of anti-slavery, and especially Republican, rhetoric.

Unlike the ACS and radical abolitionism, however, this was a profound departure in political thought, denying the relevance of social intimacy and intercourse for free government.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

The United States would ultimately not intervene in the Yucatán. While considering a proposal to do so from President Polk, news of an armistice arrived and the issue was set aside. But occupation was seriously debated, with the professed objectives of saving the white race and scuttling the transatlantic ambitions of England, not entirely unrelated purposes for many representatives. The debate, however, was slightly delayed while Congress adjourned to celebrate the elections of a new French National Assembly, by manhood suffrage, following its recent Revolution. The irony was not lost on some members: “we have,” noted Senator Niles,

“ . . . adopted a resolution expressing our concurrence with, and congratulations at, the rising of the lower classes of people. . . , and upon the success of their efforts in overthrowing the higher and aristocratic classes of their society. . . . The men in frocks, the sons of toil with their bronzed faces and hard hands accomplished the revolution, and we have expressed our approbation at the result of their efforts. . . . We are now about to pass a law making ourselves a party with the higher classes in another country to overthrow and even exterminate the lower classes or more degraded portion of the population. . . . All would admit, I think, that these two acts would not stand very well together.”<sup>138</sup>

Throughout the antebellum period American publics looked abroad, across the Atlantic as well as the Gulf of Mexico, for affirmation and validation, but perhaps more commonly, for gathering storms. And while it is beyond the scope of an already long paper to detail, English, French, Mexican, Liberian, Irish, and other publics were looking to the United States with their own mix of hope and worry. While many Americans looked warily at the “Exeter Hall enthusiasts,” whose seeming disregard for fundamental principles of political science had produced ruin in

Jamaica and Mexico as they had in St. Domingo—“like causes everywhere produce like effects,” noted the *New York Herald*—English abolitionists were “looking anxiously towards this country, praying for the final and speedy success of the holy cause.”<sup>139</sup>

By the late 1850s, the triumphant expectation of progress that accompanied English abolitionists’ successes in the 1830s and Radicals’ influence over colonial policy in the 1840s had been tempered. Many of the West Indian plantations had failed, and abolitionists—who had promised that the efficiency of free labor would compensate for emancipation—found themselves on the defensive. The former slaves, it seems, did not much care that maintaining both high production and a colonial aristocracy were deemed by the English government to be central to its geopolitical ambitions. Where the availability of land enabled them to leave the plantation behind, they did; where it did not, they were often able to extract higher wages, leaving less profit to sustain the islands’ aristocracy. In response, the English government began importing indentured servants from Asia and Africa.

While American slavery might in retrospect seem to have been under threat in the 1850s, from a transatlantic—indeed, global—perspective, “the principles that undergirded slavery were experiencing a major renaissance.”<sup>140</sup> In 1849, English author Thomas Carlyle published his “Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question,” encouraging the re-establishment of slavery on the grounds that the black man was inherently lazy, and must be made to work.<sup>141</sup> Its publication prompted a furious response by John Stuart Mill: no “doctrine more damnable” had ever been “propounded by a professed moral reformer. . . that one kind of human beings are born servants to another kind.” Mill’s response, however, was intended to intervene in a debate outside of England.

“There is, however, another place where that tyranny still flourishes, but now for the first time finds itself seriously in danger. At this crisis of American slavery, when the decisive conflict between right and iniquity seems about to commence, your contributor [Carlyle] steps in, and flings this missile, loaded with the weight of his reputation, into the abolitionist camp. The words of English writers of celebrity are words of power on the other side of the ocean: and the owners of human flesh. . . will welcome such an auxiliary. Circulated as his dissertation will probably be. . . from one end of the American Union to the other, I hardly know of an act by which one person could have done so much mischief as this may possibly do, and I hold that by

acting thus, he has made himself an instrument of . . . ‘a true work of the devil’.”<sup>142</sup>”

Carlyle’s text was indeed picked up by American newspapers and periodicals, who took it as evidence that “a powerful re-action has taken place in England in regard to the policy to be pursued in relation to the blacks.”<sup>143</sup> The annexation of Mexico was eagerly championed by pro-slavery Americans who argued that the country’s “white race will amalgamate readily with our own, and it looks to us to preserve it from extinction”: “the theories of Exeter Hall have been crushed out by the decay of the West Indies and the mutiny in Bengal, and their doom is sealed.”<sup>144</sup> The belief in the approaching triumph of slavery almost certainly underpinned the decision of state conventions to secede in early 1861, and informed the Confederacy’s belief that England would grant diplomatic recognition and support.

A few years later, the Civil War finally going well for the Union, an anonymous author published a pamphlet entitled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the White Man and Negro*. It was very quickly reprinted in London, and was cautiously praised—publicly and privately—by leading abolitionists and anti-slavery newspapers in both countries. “The question of miscegenetic reform should enter into the approaching presidential contest,” the author argued. “If the progressive party of this country have courage, have faith in humanity and in their own doctrines, they can solve the problem which has perplexed our statesmen since the establishment of this Government. That problem is, what to do with the black race.”<sup>145</sup>

The pamphlet was a hoax, the work of two Democratic editors seeking to embarrass the Republicans in time for the 1864 elections, but its reception in the American anti-slavery movement revealed lingering anxieties as well as radical commitments. Lucretia Mott noted in a private letter to the ostensible author, that “the abolitionists had ‘never thought it expedient to advocate such unions’ and had only sought ‘to remove all civil and social disabilities from this prescribed class, leaving nature and human affections to take care of themselves.’” But Mott stressed that this was because the abolitionists had “not yet deemed [it] expedient. . . to agitate the matrimonial question.” Angelina Grimke was less circumspect. She was “‘wholly at one’ with the author—‘We have tried the caste system long enough to learn. . . that our safety in future is equality.’” But she too was cautious: “Will not the subject of amalgamation, so detestable to many minds, if now

prominently advocated, have a tendency to retard the preparatory work of justice and equality which is so silently, but surely, opening the way for a full recognition of fraternity and miscegenation?" Parker Pillsbury was perhaps the boldest of those abolitionists who corresponded with the pamphlet's author, writing that "it may not be time to say this aloud; but it will yet be said, and I think not too soon. All the mysteries of the wonderful apocalypse now unfolding in our country, are not even dreamed of yet; and I hail your work as a true prophesy."<sup>146</sup> These thoughts were shared in confidence, constrained by the abolitionists' own anxieties about the consequences of their radical liberalism for the movement-party they had helped create.

*"Amalgamation! Remember this, the youngest of you, that on the 4th day of July, 1863, you heard a man say that in the light of all history, in virtue of every page he ever read, he was an amalgamationist to the utmost extent. I have no hope for the future, as this country has no past, and Europe has no past but in that sublime mingling of races which is God's own method of civilizing and elevating the world."*<sup>147</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>“Speech, Delivered in Cahawba, Alabama, at the request of the Citizens, on the 4th of July, 1820, by Jesse Beene.” *Cahawba Press and Alabama Intelligencer*, July 15 1820, p.1

<sup>2</sup>“Yucatan: More Annexation Brewing,” *Richmond Whig*, May 2, 1848, p.2

<sup>3</sup>“From the New Orleans Picayune of September 3,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., September 11, 1847, p.3

<sup>4</sup>See, for instance, “Yucatan: Distracted Condition or the Peninsula,” *Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, March 2, 1848 p.2; “Correspondence of the Courier,” *Charleston Courier*, *Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, April 29, 1848 p.2

<sup>5</sup>“Appendix to the Congressional Globe,” *Congressional Globe*, May 15, 1848, p.626

<sup>6</sup>The possibility of supplying arms to the whites floated as a moderate alternative. Most commentary on the war expressed strong sympathy with the whites, but at least some southerners rejected their claims to either sympathy or whiteness: “It strikes us as the very height of impudence. . . to ask the United States to interfere in behalf of a miserable cowardly minority [‘the degenerate Spanish race of the Mexican States’], who, because they are an imperceptible shade higher than the vast majority, think they are entitled to the aid of all civilized nations. . . . The race that can, without arms or resources, overrun the ‘work of 300 years of civilization,’ carry terror into the population of a civilized, cultivated people, and drive them to the ignoble recourse of calling in foreign aid, is no miserable horde of savages. If they are too strong for the white race, they are either so by their own inherent superiority of strength and numbers, or by the imbecility and degenerate cowardice of the white race. It is certainly the first occasion in which a civilized race has been compelled to seek foreign assistance against naked savages. . . . If the whites have not valor and firmness sufficient to hold the country, let them leave it.” From the New Orleans Delta, quoted in “Yucatan: More Annexation Brewing,” *Richmond Whig*, May 2, 1848, p.2

<sup>7</sup>“Yucatan: More Annexation Brewing,” *Richmond Whig*, May 2, 1848, p.2

<sup>8</sup>“Letter from Yucatan,” *The Southern Patriot*, Charleston SC, February 7, 1848, p.2

<sup>9</sup>The *Congressional Globe*, May 17, 1848, p.770

<sup>10</sup>“Correspondence of the Courier,” *Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, April 29, 1848, p.2

<sup>11</sup>“Correspondence of the Courier,” *Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, May 22, 1848, p.2. A few years earlier, when the Yucatán seemed likely to request annexation when the U.S. invaded Mexico, the region had been praised as “distinguished for its liberal notions,” exemplified by its having “formed an alliance with Texas, and co-operated with the Texan fleet. . . in waging war on Mexico.” “Yucatan: New-Orleans, August 20,” *Charleston Courier*, Charleston SC, August 26, 1845, p.2

<sup>12</sup>“Speech of Mr. Miller, of New Jersey, on the Proposed Occupation of the Yucatan,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 29, 1848, p.1

<sup>13</sup>“From Yucatan,” *The Southern Patriot*, Charleston SC, August 30, 1847, p.2

<sup>14</sup>“From Tampico,” *The Daily Picayune*, March 8, 1848, p.1

<sup>15</sup>“Correspondence of the Courier,” *Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, May 22, 1848, p.2

<sup>16</sup>Importantly, while Montesquieu had emphasized the dangers of diversity for republics, transatlantic thinkers believed the dangers of heterogeneity applied to all free governments, including England, post-1830s France, the responsible legislatures of the West Indian colonies, and anywhere the ‘people’ had an institutionalized role in the government.

<sup>17</sup>“Stability of American Institutions: Speech of Hon. L. E. Evans of Texas in the House of Representatives” *Daily Globe*, February 17, 1857, p.1

<sup>18</sup>Woodward, *Proceedings and Debates of the Convention of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, vol. 10, p.22.

<sup>19</sup>“Stability of American Institutions: Speech of Hon. L. E. Evans of Texas in the House of Representatives” *Daily Globe*, February 17, 1857, p.1

<sup>20</sup>“Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race,” *Commercial Advertiser*, New York, June 22, 1835, p.1

<sup>21</sup>John L. Carey, 1838. *Some Thoughts Concerning Domestic Slavery*, in a Letter to — — Esq., of Baltimore (Baltimore: Joseph N. Lewis), 34

<sup>22</sup>Carey, *Some Thoughts*, 36-37, 38-39.

<sup>23</sup>“Abolition versus Colonization, remarks of the Rev. Dr. Fisk, President of the Wesleyan University,” *The Evening Star* (NY), Tuesday May 19, 1835, p.2

<sup>24</sup>Carey, *Some Thoughts*, 39

<sup>25</sup>“Speech of Phelps,” in *Daily National Intelligencer*, February 16, 1848, p.2

<sup>26</sup>“Stability of American Institutions: Speech of Hon. L. E. Evans of Texas in the House of Representatives” *Daily Globe*, February 17, 1857, p.1

- <sup>27</sup>“Colonization Society: Hon. Henry Clay’s Speech, Delivered before the American Colonization Society, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, Washington City, on the 20th January, 1827,” *Kentucky Gazette*, Lexington KY, March 2, 1827, p.1.
- <sup>28</sup>“Abolition versus Colonization,” *The Evening Star* (NY), Tuesday May 19, 1835, p.2
- <sup>29</sup>Carey, *Some Thoughts*, 51.
- <sup>30</sup>Branagan, Thomas, 1805. *Serious Remonstrances*. (Philadelphia: Thomas T. Stiles), p.66
- <sup>31</sup>Hopkinson, *Proceedings. . . Pennsylvania* vol.10, (1838, 95).
- <sup>32</sup>“Mr. Randolph’s Motion,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., March 6, 1826, p.1
- <sup>33</sup>Russell, John Earl. 1823. *An essay on the history of the English government and constitution, from the reign of Henry VII. to the present time. Second Edition, Greatly Enlarged*. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown), p.9. The “legal equality of all ranks below the peerage” was assured, the “purchase of land held by knight-service was always open to all freemen” and while the “nobility of England formed no separate caste” (11-13). “Odious distinctions” between the rich and the poor had been avoided, supposedly, while “no imaginary distinction separated the country knight of ancient lineage from the city merchant of recent fortune” (15, 18). As a factual matter, this is, of course, absurd. But the political science of nineteenth century England had its own myths, as we have ours.
- <sup>34</sup>Russell, House of Commons, Hansard, May 10th, 1861, 3rd Series, vol.162, c.1867
- <sup>35</sup>John Lambton, Report on the affairs of British North America, from the Earl of Durham, Her Majesty’s High Commissioner. (London: J.W. Southgate, 1839), 8-9.
- <sup>36</sup>“Colonization,” *Alexandria (VA) Gazette*, January 31, 1851, p.2
- <sup>37</sup>“Speech of Phelps,” in *Daily National Intelligencer*, February 16, 1848, p.2
- <sup>38</sup>“The Acquisition of California,” *The Tri-Weekly [Columbus] Ohio Statesman*, August 28, 1846, p.2
- <sup>39</sup>The correspondent noted that the literature of Mexico must stand in relation to that of Spain, as that of America stands in relation to that of Great Britain. The “writings of all French authors of celebrity may be had in most of the private, and in many of the public libraries of the [Mexico] city. . . . The military library, at Chapultepec, I well remember, (for I was half a day in ransacking it,) contained many volumes of each of the classes I have mentioned.” “Correspondence of the Atlas Mexico, May, 1848: Literature of Mexico,” *The Boston Daily Atlas*, July 15, 1848, p.2
- <sup>40</sup>Despatch from Viscount Goderich to Major-General Sir Lewis Grant, 30 January 1832. In Trinidad. Memorial of the Committee of Inhabitants of Trinidad. *Parliamentary Papers* (1831-32, 31-32).
- <sup>41</sup>“In Senate. Speech of Mr. Clay, (of Kentucky,) On the Bill to reduce the price of certain of the Public Lands, April 11, 1838,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 21, 1838, p.2
- <sup>42</sup>Stability of American Institutions: Speech of Hon. L. E. Evans of Texas in the House of Representatives,” *Daily Globe*, February 17, 1857, p.1
- <sup>43</sup>Réne Millet, 1888. *La France Provinciale*. (Paris: Hachette)
- <sup>44</sup>Macaulay, Thomas, 1866 [1844]. “The State of Ireland: A Speech Delivered in the House of Commons on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1844.” *Speeches of Lord Macaulay, Corrected by Himself*. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co.), p.141.
- <sup>45</sup>Macaulay, House of Commons, Hansard, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1844, 3rd Series, vol.72, c.1172; Gladstone, House of Commons, Hansard, March 16th, 1868, 3rd Series, vol.190, c.1765; W. Cowper, House of Commons, Hansard, February 11th, 1848, 3rd Series, vol.96, cc.476-77
- <sup>46</sup>Ivanhoe begins by drawing out the oppressive consequences of racial diversity, and the necessity of its erasure for free government: “Four generations had not sufficed to blend the hostile blood of the Normans and Anglo-Saxons, or to unite, by common language and mutual interests, two hostile races. . . . The power had been completely placed in the hands of the Norman nobility, by the event of the battle of Hastings, and it had been used, as our histories assure us, with no moderate hand.” Scott, Walter 1820. *Ivanhoe, A Romance*.
- <sup>47</sup>“Foreign Newspapers in the United States - Unity of the American Republic,” *The Weekly Herald*, October 3, 1849, p.317
- <sup>48</sup>Those who suggested that “whites” were not amalgamating recognized that this was not true. “It is true, there seems to be an exception to the universality of this general law in persons of depraved appetite, or of mixed genealogy, who commonly prefer foreign blood and the most revolting contrast of colors. These, however, are cases not of love, but of licentiousness—the perversion of natural desire, not its normal manifestation.” “Stability of American Institutions: Speech of Hon. L. E. Evans of Texas in the House of Representatives” *Daily Globe*, February 17, 1857, p.1
- <sup>49</sup>“Colonization,” *Alexandria (VA) Gazette*, January 31, 1851, p.2
- <sup>50</sup>Carey, *Some Thoughts*, 52

- <sup>51</sup>“Speech of Cass, in the House of Representatives,” *The Daily Globe*, Washington, DC. January 28, 1857, p.49
- <sup>52</sup>Merivale, Herman 1841. *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies*, delivered before the University of Oxford (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans), p.179.
- <sup>53</sup>“The Acquisition of California,” *The Tri-Weekly Ohio Statesman*, August 28, 1846, p.2
- <sup>54</sup>“An Apology of Pharaoh,” from the *New York Observer*, 1827, cited in *The Emancipator*, June 21, 1838, p.31.
- <sup>55</sup>“Extracts from Gov. McDuffie’s Message,” *Richmond Whig*, Richmond VA, December 4, 1835, p.4. See also, “The Question of Slavery,” *Richmond Whig*, VA, September 18, 1853, p.4.
- <sup>56</sup>“Slavery in Kentucky,” *Scioto Gazette*, Chillicothe OH, February 8, 1838, p.1
- <sup>57</sup>Carey, *Some Thoughts*, 44
- <sup>58</sup>“Slavery in Kentucky, From the Ohio Repository,” *Portsmouth Journal and Rockingham Gazette*, February 6, 1830, p.1.
- <sup>59</sup>Alan Taylor, 2013. *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832*. (New York: W.W. Norton), p.77. Attempts to regulate the amalgamations underway in the South made frequent appearances in southern legislation.
- <sup>60</sup>The ACS’s claim that amalgamation was impossible was not novel. Its popularity owed undoubtedly to Jefferson’s Notes, and it had been expressed by some anti-slavery radicals in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See, for instance, Branagan, Thomas, *Serious Remonstrances*, 65-66.
- <sup>61</sup>“Colonization Society: Hon. Henry Clay’s Speech, Delivered before the American Colonization Society, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, Washington City, on the 20th January, 1827,” *Kentucky Gazette*, Lexington KY, March 2, 1827, p.1.
- <sup>62</sup>“Mr. Clay’s Speech,” *Alexandria Gazette*, January 22, 1848
- <sup>63</sup>“Address of the Board of Managers of the American Colonization Society,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, November 14, 1831, p.2; “Letter from Mr. Grimke,” *Hampshire Gazette*, Northampton MA, November 18, 1835, p.1. The letter from Mr. Grimke was intended to assure readers that his father—Thomas S. Grimke, a well-respected slaveholder in Charleston, SC and the brother of the Grimke sisters—had always opposed abolitionism, and believed colonization to be the only solution to the evil of slavery. According to Angelina Grimke, however, Thomas had told her in 1834 “although he favored the Colonization society, it was only as a temporary and collateral expedient for the elevation of the colored race, as he well knew that it never could remedy slavery; in fact, said he, ‘Emancipation must come in some form or other and amalgamation will be the salvation of our country.’” Sidney Kaplan, 1949. “The Miscegenation Issue in the Election of 1864,” *The Journal of Negro History*, 34(3): 274-343.
- <sup>64</sup>“Colonization Society: Hon. Henry Clay’s Speech, Delivered before the American Colonization Society, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, Washington City, on the 20th January, 1827,” *Kentucky Gazette*, Lexington KY, March 2, 1827, p.1.
- <sup>65</sup>“Extracts from Gov. McDuffie’s Message,” *Richmond Whig*, Richmond VA, December 4, 1835, p.4.
- <sup>66</sup>“Liberia, Excerpts from the *National Intelligencer*,” *The Emancipator*, August 16, 1838, p.63.
- <sup>67</sup>To be clear, as the ACS made explicit repeatedly, colonization aimed primarily at the removal of free blacks. It was this class that also posed the clearest threat—the most in congruous “heterogeneous mass”—to free government. In the political theories of the period, free blacks were presented as being sufficiently free to be embittered by their remaining exclusion, free enough to cause trouble among the enslaved.
- <sup>68</sup>For an excellent account of how “racial crossings” could be both a problem and set of solutions, “strategies of colonialism not challenges to it,” see Damon Ieremia Salesa, 2011. *Racial Crossings: Race, Intermarriage, and the Victorian British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.6.
- <sup>69</sup>Macaulay, Thomas, 1856. *The History of England, from the Accession of James the Second*. Volume I. (Butler’s Edition. Philadelphia: E.H. Butler & Co.), p.5. See also Milnes, House of Commons, Hansard, February 24th, 1841, 3rd Series, vol.56, cc.944-45
- <sup>70</sup>“The United Irishmen and the Repeal Agitation,” *Westminster Review*, August 1843, p.68. In reality, English policy was always a mix of the long-term objectives of liberal governments with the practical realities of sustaining a settler colony. Even Daniel O’Connell stressed the importance of amalgamation—which he argued had been the unfulfilled promise of the Act of Union—although he was also careful to insist that this amalgamation needed to include full political and social equality, but need not lead to the effacement of one culture or the other. “Mr. O’Connell’s Address to the People of Ireland,” *Commercial Advertiser* (NY), August 20, 1836, p.2. O’Connell also opposed the proposal to unite Lower and Upper Canada in order to effectuate a “racial amalgamation” between the French and the English, which he saw as an effort to “annihilate [the French ‘native population’] as a race.” Salesa, *Racial Crossings*, 40.
- <sup>71</sup>Salesa, *Racial Crossings*, 36.

<sup>72</sup>Peel, House of Commons, Hansard, June 3rd, 1833, 3rd Series, vol.18, c.342. William Burge, an MP representing the West Indian interest, appealed to the Liberal majority by emphasizing the progressive liberality of the Jamaican legislature for “removing the disabilities of the free people of colour, and giving them all the rights of white people.” William Burge, House of Commons, Hansard, May 24th, 1832, 3rd Series, vol.13, cc.91-93.

<sup>73</sup>Charles Francis Adams (ed.), 1876. *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, Comprising Portions of his Diary from 1795 to 1848, volume 8 (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co.), 269-270.

<sup>74</sup>Buckingham, House of Commons, Hansard, June 7th, 1833, vol.18, cc.479-80.

<sup>75</sup>See Peel’s speech of June 2, 1833. “Speech of Sir Robert Peel on the Colonial Slavery Question,” *Richmond Enquirer*, VA, July 30, 1833, p.2

<sup>76</sup>Earl of Lincoln, House of Commons, Hansard, February 14th, 1848, 3rd Series, vol.96, cc.584-85. Buckingham, House of Commons, Hansard, June 7th, 1833, 3rd Series, vol.18, cc.479-80.

<sup>77</sup>Even before emancipation the Whig colonial secretary insisted in his addresses to the West Indies colonies that slaves were included within the political community. He was “not ignorant that very serious objection has been made to the use... of language in which the slaves are recognized as ‘His Majesty’s subjects,’ and as forming part of the people at large,” but he denounced this as a sign of exclusiveness. Despatch from Viscount Goderich to Major-General Sir Lewis Grant, 30 January 1832. In *Trinidad. Memorial of the Committee of Inhabitants of Trinidad*. *Parliamentary Papers*, (212) XXXI.323 (1831-32, 31-32). Brougham, House of Lords, Hansard, July 28th, 1840, 3rd Series, vol.55, 1067.

<sup>78</sup>Catherine Hall, 2002. *Civilizing Subject: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), p.201. Lionel Smith to the Earl of Aberdeen, March 29th, 1835, Government House Barbados. H.E. Sharpe to the Lionel Smith, February 23rd, 1835. National Archives, CO/28/115/27,fs.189-199.

<sup>79</sup>Salesa, *Racial Crossings*, 28.

<sup>80</sup>Earl Grey, 1853. *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell’s Administration*, Volume II (London: Richard Bentley), 253.

<sup>81</sup>Merivale, *Lectures on Colonization*, p.180-81.

<sup>82</sup>John Montagu, Government Secretary, to Harry Smith, Governor Cape Colony, April 10th, 1848. Enclosure 3 in No. 1. Memorandum by H. Rivers, Treasurer-General, Enclosure 4 No. 1. Correspondence with the Attorney General, Executive Council, Chief Justice, &c., upon the subject of a Representative Assembly. July 29th, 1848; Correspondence with the Attorney General, Executive Council, Chief Justice, &c., upon the subject of a Representative Assembly. July 29th, 1848; Governor Harry Smith to Earl Grey, Letter of Private Secretary to the Executive Council, Judges, &c., enclosing the preamble of Governor’s Despatch to Earl Grey. Enclosure 2 in No. 1. Correspondence relative to the establishment of a representative assembly at the Cape of Good Hope. *Parliamentary Papers* (1850, 13, 16, 26)

<sup>83</sup>Reports prepared by different stipendiary magistrates in which they tracked the progress of amalgamation, in fact, would often be copied almost verbatim, suggesting that they were sharing material or had developed a template for what the ministry effectively wanted to hear.

<sup>84</sup>“Mr. Randolph’s Motion,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., March 6, 1826, p.1

<sup>85</sup>In France, matters were worse, as there “the alliance between political reform and religious infidelity is closer than in England.” Adams (ed.), *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, 269-270.

<sup>86</sup>Adams (ed.), *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, 269-270.

<sup>87</sup>S.F.D., “People of Colour,” *Christian Spectator*, March 1825, p.131.

<sup>88</sup>Joyce Appleby, among others, has argued that “the new nation shed its borrowed European ethos” in the 1790s, afterwards developing its own exceptional political culture. Joyce Appleby, 1984. *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York: New York University Press), p.53. For an excellent corrective to this interpretation, see Seth Cotlar, 2011. *Tom Paine’s America: The Rise and Fall of Transatlantic Radicalism in the Early Republic*.

<sup>89</sup>S.F.D., “People of Colour,” *Christian Spectator*, March 1825, p.130. Abolition was not the only threat in the transatlantic, and some Americans would even characterize nativism as a foreign import: “This demon of malice was not American in its birth or spirit,” but “owed its vile and wicked origin to a fell spirit of religious bigotry and intolerance which came across the ocean to defile and destroy. Transatlantic prejudice was the food which nursed its vampire life.” “Address of Robt. J. Brent, Esq.” *The Sun*, Baltimore MD, November 11, 1852, p.1.

<sup>90</sup>See Merton L. Dillon, *Slavery Attacked*, p.169. On several occasions in the 1820s the U.K. Parliament voted resolutions in favor of measures to ensure the eventual abolition of slavery. These were often carried by wide margins, precisely because they were either expressions of a long term objective without a timetable for action, or instructions to colonial legislatures to take measures to ameliorate the conditions of slaves with this view in mind. The legislatures were then caught in the delicate balance of trying to assure the imperial Parliament that they had

indeed taken such measures, while at the same time doing nothing that might threaten the stability of the slave system. When a series of revolts, preceding abolition, occurred in Jamaica and elsewhere, the planters blamed the limited efforts they had been required to undertake, notably allowing religious instruction and for removing some legal disabilities of the free black population.

<sup>91</sup>“False Views—Abroad!,” *Richmond Enquirer* (VA), September 16, 1825, p.3

<sup>92</sup>“Mr. Randolph’s Motion,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., March 6, 1826, p.1

<sup>93</sup>“Speech, Delivered in Cahawba, Alabama, at the request of the Citizens, on the 4th of July, 1820, by Jesse Beene.” *Cahawba Press and Alabama Intelligencer* July 15, 1820, p.1

<sup>94</sup>“Stability of American Institutions: Speech of Hon. L. E. Evans of Texas in the House of Representatives” *Daily Globe*, February 17, 1857, p.1

<sup>95</sup>See, for example, “England and America,” *The New-London (CT) Gazette, and General Advertiser*, March 24, 1824, p.2.

<sup>96</sup>E.S. Abdy, *American Whites and Blacks, in Reply to a German Orthodermist*. (London: Charles Gilpin, 1842), 10-11.

<sup>97</sup>It was a commonplace in antebellum American rhetoric that the cause of America was the cause of human liberty: “In the memorable words of Lafayette to the Mayor of St. Louis: ‘This ‘Union is so essential, not only to the fate of each member of the confederacy, but also to the general fate of mankind, that the last breath of it would be hailed with barbarian joy, by an universal warhoop [sic] of European aristocracy and despotism.’” “False Views—Abroad!,” *Richmond Enquirer* (VA), September 16, 1825, p.3. Naturally, it was also a central theme of Whig and Liberal thought in England, that the cause of England was the cause of civil and religious liberty all over the world. American and English exceptionalisms tended to simultaneously insist upon their uniquely holding the same exceptional qualities or mission.

<sup>98</sup>“England and America,” *The New-London (CT) Gazette, and General Advertiser*, March 24, 1824, p.2.

<sup>99</sup>See, for example, “Views: Of the Benevolent Society of Alexandria for Ameliorating and Improving the Condition of The People of Color,” *Alexandria Gazette*, July 4, 1827, p.1; Address of the New-York City Anti-Slavery Society to the People of the City of New-York (New-York: West & Trow, 1833), p.6-13; “Selected Articles: West India Mission and Emancipation,” *Philadelphia National Enquirer*, February 8, 1838, p.86. Arguments over the success or failure of emancipation in the West Indies were a crucial component of debates over slavery in this period. But while slavery had been abolished, it had not been accompanied by the expected disturbances. This, some granted, was a possible deviant case; but it was excused, on the grounds that insufficient time had elapsed for a “naturally indolent” race to become mobilized. But, they warned, “gradually there will arise a better class among the blacks, who will possess property; and along with it a sense of self-respect, and a consciousness of new rights. They will claim to have a part in the public affairs; they will demand an equal participation in the rights of suffrage and of legislation. Then the contest will begin. Who may not see the issue of it? It requires not any great amount of prophetic vision to discern that at some period, how distant we know not, the scenes of St. Domingo will be re-acted on the plains of Jamaica.” Carey, *Some Thoughts*, 79-80

<sup>100</sup>“For the Pennsylvania Freeman, Speech of James Latta,” *Philadelphia National Enquirer*, September 27, 1838, p.2.

<sup>101</sup>From the Legislature of Mississippi’s resolutions in favor of Texas annexation. “Speech by Mr. Adams, Debate in the House of Representatives, Tuesday, July 6, 1838,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, July 19, 1838, p.2.

<sup>102</sup>“Mr. Randolph’s Motion,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., March 6, 1826, p.1

<sup>103</sup>“For the Pennsylvania Freeman, Speech of James Latta,” *Philadelphia National Enquirer*, September 27, 1838, p.2.

<sup>104</sup>“Mr. Randolph’s Motion,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., March 6, 1826, p.1. England was not the only power accused of trying to subvert the cause of liberty through abolition. Louis Napoleon, it was claimed, “wishe[d] to try his hand in experiments on the amalgamation of races, preparatory to realizing his scheme of universal dominion.” “News of the Week, Europe, Etc.,” *The Weekly Herald*, New York. June 21, 1856, p.193.

<sup>105</sup>“Attempt to Amalgamate,” *Saturday Morning Transcript*, Boston MA., August 1, 1835, p.191

<sup>106</sup>Edward P. Crapol. *John Tyler: The Accidental President* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p.70-71

<sup>107</sup>“From Jamaica,” *Macon Weekly Telegraph*, November 28, 1837, p.2

<sup>108</sup>“From Jamaica,” *Macon Weekly Telegraph*, November 28, 1837, p.2

<sup>109</sup>Robert Wickliffe, Speech of Robert Wickliffe, in Reply to the Rev. R.J. Breckinridge, delivered in the Court House, in Lexington (Lexington: Observer & Reporter Print., 1840), p.41. Wickliffe, who had proposed extending slavery so as to diffuse the slaves, denied the charges that he was an amalgamationist despite having argued that diffusion would “in all human probability, in time efface the distinctive marks of color until the chain of slavery is

- worn out.” He insisted that he did not mean amalgamation—“the gentleman, I presume, knows the difference between time and copulation well”—and that by time he meant not intermarriage but a gradual convergence of complexion resulting from living in the same hemisphere. Wickliffe, Speech, p.26
- <sup>110</sup>“From the Raleigh Standard: General Dudley an Amalgamationist,” *North Carolina Sentinel*, Newbern NC, July 20, 1836, p.3
- <sup>111</sup>“Stoweism and Blackswanism, From the N.Y. Express,” *Alexandria Gazette*, VA. June 20, 1853, p.2.
- <sup>112</sup>“Amalgamation.—Sir Lionel Smith and the negroes,” *The Sun*, Baltimore MD., September 5, 1838, p.2
- <sup>113</sup>“Amalgamation by Steam—Mr. Pennington and the Great Western,” *Emancipator And Free American*, Boston, MA. August 31, 1843, p.71
- <sup>114</sup>“Abolition in all its Bearings,” *The Evening Star*, September 10, 1835, p.2
- <sup>115</sup>“Philadelphia,” quoted in *The Emancipator*, June 14, 1838, p.25
- <sup>116</sup>*Evening Star*, New York, October 1, 1835, p.2
- <sup>117</sup>“Abolition in all its Bearings,” *The Evening Star*, September 10, 1835, p.2
- <sup>118</sup>“General Dudley an Amalgamationist,” *North Carolina (Newbern) Sentinel*, July 20, 1836, p.1; “The Federal Whig Candidates,” *North Carolina Sentinel*, New Bern NC, July 6, 1836, p.3
- <sup>119</sup>“Progress of Amalgamation,” *Richmond Whig (VA)*, August 7, 1835, p.2
- <sup>120</sup>“State Right Meeting,” *Ohio State Journal and Columbus Gazette*, December 8, 1835, p.3
- <sup>121</sup>“Communications. Rise and Progress of Infidelity in America, No. 6,” *Trumpet and Universalist Magazine*, March 19, 1831, p.149
- <sup>122</sup>Frances Wright. Explanatory Notes, Respecting the Nature and Objects of the Institution of Nashoba, and of the Principles Upon Which It Is Founded, p.10-11.
- <sup>123</sup>“Miss Prudence Crandall,” *New Bedford Mercury*, April 19, 1833, p.1.
- <sup>124</sup>“Can’t Amalgamate,” *Colored American*, New York, July 29, 1837, p.2. The author regretted the loss to the community: “we tremble when we see a fair, accomplished colored daughter, who is an heiress, or a wealthy colored man. They are caught away from us, with as much voracity as the Alligator or the Tiger seizes upon his prey.”
- <sup>125</sup>Angelina E. Grimke, “Religious and Moral. Appeal to the Christian Women of the South,” *Philadelphia National Enquirer (Pennsylvania Freeman)*, October 29, 1836
- <sup>126</sup>William Jay, 1838. *Inquiry into the Character and Tendency of the American Colonization Society and American Anti-Slavery Societies* (New York: R.G. Williams), 16, 146.
- <sup>127</sup>“To the Editors of the Spy,” *Massachusetts Spy*, Worcester MA., July 23, 1834, p.3
- <sup>128</sup>“College for Colored Youth,” *Connecticut Journal*, New Haven. October 4, 1831, p.3.
- <sup>129</sup>“Selected Articles: West India Mission and Emancipation,” *Philadelphia National Enquirer*, February 8, 1838, p.86
- <sup>130</sup>“Letter from a Friend of the South: For the Evening Post,” *Evening Post*, New York, September 14, 1835, p.2.
- <sup>131</sup>William Jay, 1838. *Inquiry into the Character and Tendency of the American Colonization Society and American Anti-Slavery Societies* (New York: R.G. Williams), 147-48.
- <sup>132</sup>“Selected Articles: West India Mission and Emancipation,” *Philadelphia National Enquirer*, February 8, 1838, p.86.
- <sup>133</sup>“To the Editors of the Spy,” *Massachusetts Spy*, Worcester MA., July 23, 1834, p.3
- <sup>134</sup>Carey, Some Thoughts, 83
- <sup>135</sup>Gibson, in Quaife, *Convention of 1846*, p.217
- <sup>136</sup>*Congressional Globe*, 36th Congress, 1st Session, p.239
- <sup>137</sup>*Congressional Globe*, 36th Congress, 2nd Session, Appendix p.86-87.
- <sup>138</sup>“Speech of Mr. Niles of Connecticut on the Proposed Occupation of Yucatan,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 24, 1848, p.3
- <sup>139</sup>“To the Editors of the Spy,” *Massachusetts Spy*, Worcester MA., July 23, 1834, p.3; “The Situation of Mexico—Dissolution and Destiny,” *New York Herald*, January 20, 1858, p.4
- <sup>140</sup>Matthew Karp, “The World the Slaveholders Created: Proslavery Internationalism in the 1850s,” in *The World of the Revolutionary American Republic*, Andrew Shankman (ed), (New York: Routledge, 2014), 415.
- <sup>141</sup>Thomas Carlyle, “Occasional Discourses.”
- <sup>142</sup>John Stuart Mill, “The Negro Question
- <sup>143</sup>“Centralization,” in *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, 1850, p.302-304; Karp, *World Slaveholders Created*, p.419.
- <sup>144</sup>“The Situation of Mexico—Dissolution and Destiny,” *New York Herald*, January 20, 1858, p.4

<sup>145</sup>Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the White Man and Negro, Reprinted from the New York Edition (London: Trubner & Co., 1864), p.75.

<sup>146</sup>The quotes in this paragraph are from Sidney Kaplan, 1949. "The Miscegenation Issue in the Election of 1864," The Journal of Negro History, 34(3): 274-343.

<sup>147</sup>Wendell Phillips, quoted by Samuel S. Cox, 1864. Miscegenation or amalgamation; fate of the freedman : speech of Hon. Samuel S. Cox, of Ohio, delivered in the House of Representatives, February 17, 1864. (Washington, D.C.: The Constitutional Union), p.6