

The Penn Program on

**Democracy, Citizenship and  
Constitutionalism**

**Graduate Workshop**

**“The tutelary Empire: State- and Nation-Building in the 19<sup>th</sup>  
Century U.S.”**

*Stefan Heumann*

(Political Science, University of Pennsylvania)

Thursday, September 18, 2008, 4:30 pm  
205 College Hall

## 1. Introduction

The format of this paper is a little bit unusual. Instead of presenting a research paper or a substantive dissertation chapter, the paper below constitutes a first draft of the introductory chapter of my dissertation. (This also explains why the paper carries the same title as my dissertation.) A draft of this chapter has been long overdue. My research has progressed so far that it is time to rethink and sharpen its theoretical premises. This is especially important at a point when I am about to apply for academic jobs. The work on this introductory chapter has forced me to reflect on the overall theme of the dissertation and to put it in the context of existing literatures. Introductions also require a short and concise description of the dissertation's overall argument. This exercise is especially useful at a time, when I am struggling to sum up my dissertation's argument and relevance in a few lines for cover letters. The deadline of the DCC workshop has been a real "blessing," forcing me to do all this in a timely manner.

An introductory chapter should be self-explanatory and thus not require much of an introduction. Only a few caveats! The paper is not trying to argue that the United States was an empire. Its main concern is to point out the need and the intellectual payoffs of relating imperial expansion and governance to state and nation-building. However, the paper still begins with an argument why the 19<sup>th</sup> Century United States was an empire because American political scientists have rarely used the term to describe their own country. The paper presents bold and sweeping arguments on American political development from the founding until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I have tried to cite some key references, but the empirical evidence is presented in the chapters.<sup>1</sup> This is the drawback of presenting an introductory chapter. While there is an abundance of bold and sweeping arguments, evidence will be sparse. Nevertheless, I hope that

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<sup>1</sup> For those who remain unconvinced or simply want to read more, chapter drafts can be made available upon request.

this introduction will induce reflections and hopefully a lively discussion on the larger contours of American political development (or as I prefer to call it: state- and nation-building) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## *2. The Case for Empire*

The concept of empire is essential to understanding critical aspects of American political development. As revolutionary leaders sought to construct governing institutions for their new nation, they had to come to terms with the imperial legacy, left by more than a century of British rule.<sup>2</sup> Britain had provided not only military and administrative support, but also the ideological rationales, justifying the dispossession of land from indigenous peoples as American colonists pushed inland. Recent attempts by the British government to gain more control over western expansion and to restrain the unauthorized incursion of American colonists into lands guaranteed to Indians by treaty had contributed to the growing secessionist fervor in its North American colonies.<sup>3</sup> The expulsion of British Crown officials did not spell the end of empire, but the beginning of a new era. Americans had finally become free to devise and implement their own imperial policies. The settlement of the western frontier and the relations to the indigenous

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<sup>2</sup> The debate on the division of governing authority between federal government and individual States emerged out of the context of a long struggle over the distribution of governing authority between the British government and the North American colonies. Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and center : constitutional development in the extended polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607-1788*, The Richard B. Russell lectures ; no. 2 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986). In addition, British imperial policies in North America also served as model for American empire builders. In the case of Indian Policy, see Francis Paul Prucha, *The great father : the United States government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), Vol. I, pp. 5-28; for the origins of the territorial system in British colonial policy, see Jack Ericson Eblen, *The first and second United States empires; governors and territorial government, 1784-1912* ([Pittsburgh]: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968).

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Perkins Abernethy, *Western lands and the American Revolution* (New York,: Russell & Russell, 1959). J. Russell Snapp, *John Stuart and the struggle for empire on the southern frontier* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), Jennings C. Wise and Vine Deloria, *The red man in the new world drama; a politico-legal study with a pageantry of American Indian history* (New York,: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 121-2

nations were among the most important issues which political leaders confronted during the construction of a new, independent government in the 1780s.

The problem of empire-building was far more complex than organizing and justifying the conquest and settlement of western lands. Territorial expansion was inextricably linked to state- and nation-building. The cessions of individual States' claims to western land to the national government created the basis for the development of federal capacities to acquire, administer, govern, and incorporate western territory. In addition, western expansion required nation-building. As the federal government extended its governing authority westward, it had to determine how frontier populations were to be governed, who would be integrated into the American polity, who would be excluded and why. Driven by imperial ambitions, the newly found government tackled both challenges head on. The so-called federalists devised a powerful national government that assumed exclusive jurisdiction over western expansion. Indian affairs, the governance of western settlements and the administration of the public domain were not only crucial to western expansion, but also important sites of antebellum state- and nation-building.

Even though the 19<sup>th</sup> century American Empire was rooted in westward territorial expansion, it was not restricted to it. The Civil War shifted the focus of federal nation-building from the West to the South. As advancing Union troops defeated the secessionist Confederacy, the federal government had to determine the status of the southern population in the American polity. White Confederate loyalists, after being briefly subjected to imperial rule under military governments, were quickly reintegrated into the American nation. But the project of radical Republicans to integrate freedmen as equal citizens met defeat. In fact, the conciliation of the North with confederate loyalists in the South came at the expense of shifting toward the permanent exclusion of African Americans from equal citizenship. The subsequent extension of U.S.

imperial rule overseas constitutes an important linkage between U.S. state- and nation-building in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the U.S.'s emergence as great power of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Though deeply rooted in more than a century of experiences in imperial policies towards dependent populations, America's colonial governance of the Philippines also marks a point of departure. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States began to impose its institutions on a global scale. Embracing the imperial mission in the Philippines, the U.S. government sought to demonstrate the superiority of its own "tutelary" colonialism over the "exploitative" imperialism of European competitors such as Germany, Spain and France.<sup>4</sup>

### *3. The theoretical framework*

This exploration of the relationship between empire and U.S. state- and nation-building is situated within the field of American political development. American political development has two meanings. First, it stands for a research program (abbreviated as APD) within political science. Second, political scientists use the term as a theoretical concept which emphasizes the historical construction (or development) of America's political institutions. Recently, Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek have given a more precise meaning to the term, defining political development as "durable shift in governing authority."<sup>5</sup> While their definition emphasizes change, Orren and Skowronek point out that the non-occurrence of shifts in governing authority, especially when one would expect them, is an equally legitimate inquiry within the bounds of their definition. The definition is broad enough to include a wide range of diverse scholarship. At the same time the definition designates a distinct research program with a focus on the state as

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<sup>4</sup> On Americans' firm belief that they either did not pursue empire or, if they did, that it had benign intentions, see Mary Ann Heiss, "Bernath Lecture: The Evolution of the Imperial Idea and U.S. National Identity," *Diplomatic History* 26, no. 4 (2002): 511-540.

<sup>5</sup> Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The search for American political development* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.

the prime site for the exercise of governing authority. This study falls within the parameters of APD scholarship, contributing to the understanding of 19<sup>th</sup> century national governing authority. But while Orren and Skowronek's definition is useful, giving a precise meaning to a widely used concept, the term American political development also has its drawbacks, most notably, that it is barely employed outside the intellectual field of APD.<sup>6</sup> The construction of governing authority over peripheral territories and the governance of populations residing in them become central to American political development, once the notion of the U.S. being an empire is taken seriously. So far APD scholarship has missed the linkage between imperial forms of rule and the construction and exercise of governing authority. This does not mean that the nexus of territoriality, state-building and construction of nationhood has not been widely studied. However, the vast historical-comparative scholarship does not address these problems as political development, but as processes of nation-state formation.<sup>7</sup> Thus the conscious choice of the terms state- and nation-building situates U.S. political development within a broader field of comparable cases, defying the notion that there is anything exceptional about the development of the American nation-state in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup>

While the American case remains the focus of this study, it is inspired by literatures which have examined nation-state formation as projects of political elites who sought to increase state

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<sup>6</sup> My critique of Orren and Skowronek's construction of APD as a distinct research tradition and field of analytical inquiry within political science can be found in Stefan Heumann, "Why Empire matters to APD: 19th Century U.S. State- and Nation Building in Comparative Perspective," in Annual Graduate Student Colloquium, Department of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: 2008). Paper can be requested from the author.

<sup>7</sup> Comparativists closely associate the concept of political development with modernization theory, a theory that many scholars have discarded because of its inherent teleology and western ethno-centrism.

<sup>8</sup> On American exceptionalism, see Seymour Martin Lipset, *American exceptionalism : a double-edged sword* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), Deborah L. Madsen, *American exceptionalism* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), Russel B. Nye, *This almost chosen people; essays in the history of American ideas* ([East Lansing],: Michigan State University Press, 1966).

power by a closer integration of peripheral territories and populations.<sup>9</sup> The literature on state- and nation-building has grown so tremendously over the past decades that the meaning of the terms state-building and nation-building has become fuzzy to the degree that they have been used interchangeably.<sup>10</sup> However, the distinction between state- and nation-building is central to the theoretical framework which guides this study. A brief outline of key concepts and their theoretical relationship is not only necessary to comprehend how empire matters to American political development, but also provides the basis for my review of different sets of literatures that have recognized the centrality of empire to 19<sup>th</sup> century U.S. politics.

State-building is a central concept in political science. In the classical, Weberian sense, many comparativists understand state-building as the establishment of the state's monopoly on the exercise of violence.<sup>11</sup> The centralization of coercive authority in the hands of government officials is the first step towards the construction of a functioning state. The exclusive exercise of violence by the state is a premise for what Orren and Skowronek call governing authority.<sup>12</sup> Governing authority can be exercised by different branches of government such as courts, the legislature, or the executive. Effective exercise of governing authority always presumes that the government has sufficient control over the territory and its population to enforce its will. But

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<sup>9</sup> Michael Hechter, *Internal colonialism : the Celtic fringe in British national development, 1536-1966* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen : the modernization of rural France, 1870-1914* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977).

<sup>10</sup> The recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have greatly contributed to the confusion regarding the precise meaning of these terms. While in regard to the military, humanitarian, political and economic interventions in both countries western political leaders usually use the term nation-building, their stated goal is rather the construction of functioning state structures. The two terms have even become blurred in scholarly literature, see Jason Brownlee, "Can American Nation-Build?," *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (2007): 314-40.

<sup>11</sup> Need citations

<sup>12</sup> Their definition of American political development as "durable shifts in governing authority" presumes that governing authority has already been established. Skowronek's seminal study defines state-building as "reconstructing an already established organization of state power" and focuses on the expansion of national administrative capacities as response to a set of forces generated by industrialization. This conceptualization of state-building also assumes that state structures already exist. Stephen Skowronek, *Building a new American state : the expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), ix

especially in the case of territorial expansion, state-building, defined as the construction of this governing authority over territory and the people residing in it, cannot be taken for granted, but demands explanation. Imperial projects often fail because of the imperial power's insufficient capacity to enforce its self-proclaimed authority. However, the establishment of governing authority does not imply that governmental directives are always immediately implemented and perfectly executed. The threshold for the effective establishment of governing authority should rather be seen as the ability to repress any organized challenge to the claim of sovereign rule over respective territories and populations.

I define nation-building as the state's management of inclusion into or exclusion from membership in the core polity. This definition rests on the theoretical premise that national polities do not organically emerge. Instead national polities are seen as constructed by cultural elites, most notably government officials.<sup>13</sup> State authority is crucial to the enforcement of constructions of nationhood. The state implements policies in line with prevalent conceptions of nationhood, designed to incorporate certain populations into the nation, while excluding others. Policies of nation-building range from definitions of citizenship criteria, national education programs and immigration control to the regulation of access to economic and cultural resources. From the perspective of nationhood as a cultural and political construct whose boundaries are enforced by state power, state-building is the premise for effective nation-building. In practice both processes usually go hand in hand. The state creates a more homogenous core polity

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<sup>13</sup> The most common definition of nation is "an imagined political community." Cultural elites play a crucial role in the "imagining of communities." Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined communities : reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). Nationalism is usually understood as the driving force behind the processes of inclusion and exclusion in national polities. Ernst Gellner defines nationalism as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent." Ernest Gellner, *Nations and nationalism, New perspectives on the past* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983)., p. 1 The perspective is this paper is compatible with Tilly's notion of state-led nationalism which he distinguishes from state-seeking nationalism. Charles Tilly, "States and Nationalism in Europe 1492-1992," *Theory and Society* 23, no. 1 (1994): 131-46.



through nation-building. In turn, a more homogenous core polity will more easily identify with the state, increasing its legitimacy and power.

Territorial expansion required state-building. But state-building did not occur in an unpopulated vacuum. The extension of governing authority subjected the populations inhabiting the western domain to the sovereignty of the national government. America's western frontiers were not only settled by pioneers from eastern states, but were also populated by Native Americans and foreign settlers, such as the French in the Northwest and Louisiana and the Spanish in the South and Southwest. As the U.S. government extended governing authority over these populations, it had to decide their future status in the American polity. The imperial approach of the U.S. government towards these populations can best be captured by the concept of tutelage. Westerners, no matter of their ethnic background, were first and foremost imperial subjects as soon as the U.S. government exercised sovereignty over them. Since political participation and full citizenship were tied to residency in one of the States of the Union, even white, male Anglo-American settlers who had formerly enjoyed all privileges of U.S. citizenship lost these privileges, when they moved into western territories. Once they had taken residency in one of the western territories, they were subjected to the governing authority of state officials they no longer took part in electing. This is a core characteristic of dependent populations in an empire.<sup>14</sup> The imperial center imposes political rule over the imperial subjects in the periphery, excluding them from the rights and privileges enjoyed by the members of the dominant core

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<sup>14</sup> There is an abundance of literature on empire and little agreement on its meaning. My understanding of the genealogy of the term "empire" and the large literature which explores the phenomenon has great benefited from Zenonas Norkus, "The Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Retrospective of Comparative Historical Sociology of Empires," *World Political Science Review* 3, no. 4 (2007): Article 4, 1-43.

polity.<sup>15</sup> Tutelage emphasizes the dependent, subordinate position of imperial subjects vis-à-vis the national government.

However, the relationship between guardian and ward, characterized by the term tutelage, means more than simply dependence and subordination. Tutelage also refers to the relationship between master and student, a form of apprenticeship. It implies that students can learn and improve under the tutelage of the master and, under certain circumstance, overcome their dependency. U.S. government officials frequently justified imperial domination in tutelary terms, claiming that certain populations were not yet fit for self-government. In the case of American settlers a period of federal tutelage was claimed to be necessary to protect and govern them until their settlements gained strength and maturity to join the Union on equal terms. The territorial system was the institutional heart of American tutelary nation-building, subjecting western settlers to temporary imperial rule until the creation and admission of new State made them full and equal citizens. Tutelary nation-building infused imperial rule with missionary republican ideology and the promise of future political incorporation. In the case of white western settlers, it meant that, after a period of imperial tutelage, western territories would eventually be integrated into the Union as new States on an equal footing with the original States. Since citizenship was tied to residence in a State of the Union, admission to statehood meant that western settlers would become equal members of the American polity and fully participate in its republican government.

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<sup>15</sup> Even though the term is used widely, good definitions of empire are rare. Michael Doyle's influential definition of empire as "relationships of political control imposed by some political societies over the effective sovereignty of other political societies" has served me well as a starting point for my own reflections. I would like to add that empires establish and maintain relationships of political control by force. Otherwise they could be easily conflated with federations. In the case of the U.S. and other federations, the historical boundaries between empire and federation have been fluid. Michael W. Doyle, *Empires*, Cornell studies in comparative history (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 19

U.S. government officials adapted institutions of “tutelary Empire” to changing circumstances over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The territorial system, which the U.S. created along with its new republican government, defined the main features of tutelary settler colonialism in the west. It rested on the premise that western territories would be mainly settled by migrants from eastern States, making their eventual political incorporation after a period of imperial control and oversight unproblematic. Tutelage of Native Americans was also infused with republican ideology of cultural assimilation and preparation for participation in self-government. However, resistance of indigenous peoples against U.S. imperialism and the reluctance of white settlers to respect their rights undermined scant attempts to integrate them into the nation. While notions of tutelage shaped civilizing policies of the federal government, it never led to integrative nation-building that characterized imperial policies regarding western settlers. Racial difference remained an obstacle to imperial political integration throughout, but especially during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The tutelary discourse regarding the treatment of Native Americans, Mexicans, African Americans and imperial subjects overseas emphasized the inability of these populations to govern themselves, justifying the imposition of U.S. domination over them. Imperial tutelage became closely linked to discourses of “racial uplift.” But unlike white settlers in western territories, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century U.S. government officials viewed the prospects of the eventual full integration of non-white imperial subjects into the American polity with great pessimism or outright rejected its feasibility.

#### *4. A few notes on method*

The dissertation primarily examines how empire affected state structures and policies. The central task is to flesh out how imperial challenges were perceived by state officials and how they responded to them. The focus on state-building will bias the dissertation towards the

perspective of government officials. The effects of these policies on peripheral populations and their responses, resistance and coping strategies are only important in so far as they induced further responses from government officials. However, the bias towards government officials is driven by the theoretical approach, not by normative considerations. During the past decades the flourishing of social history with its focus on “ordinary people” and cultural history has led to the neglect of the state and political elites. This dissertation fills a research gap, combining political and imperial history. It does not seek to question the relevance of bottom-up or cultural approaches to the study of empire. In fact, cultural and social histories constitute important sources that have informed this project. This dissertation merely seeks to draw the attention of political scientists and political historians to the importance of empire to U.S. state- and nation-building.

This project’s research questions require an historical approach. The dissertation will identify historical sites of state-building that were directly linked to imperial endeavors and trace their development over time. Starting point will be an analysis of how Americans constructed a government that could assume the imperial functions formerly exercised by Britain. It will then explore how federal government officials developed policies and state capacities to extend governing authority over far flung territories and populations. Numerous wars with the Native populations and neighboring powers increased state capacities. This study follows the well-established notion that the Civil War triggered a dramatic expansion of federal authority and capacity. But state- capacities did not increase steadily. Instead, periods of expansion and contraction of federal capacities affected its imperial state- and nation-building projects.

U.S. government officials were not only concerned about state-building. They also had to determine the current and future status of the population inhabiting the periphery of the

American state. For each case of imperial nation-building, there is a wealth of historical scholarship that can be used to trace major plans of nation-building and the related debates. In those cases where the historical literature is sparse or does not address the questions of this study, primary sources will be examined. Particular attention will be paid to the following questions. How was imperial governance organized and structured, how was it justified, and how did government officials address questions of political inclusion and exclusion? As research on the case studies progresses, the explanation of continuities and discontinuities and of parallels and differences across cases becomes central. The identification of patterns and institutional legacies forms the basis on which the notion that imperial state- and nation-building only occurs at exceptional moments can be questioned and, possibly, refuted. The larger goal of this study is to emphasize linkages between cases that have rarely been combined into one comprehensive study.

### *5. APD Scholarship, territorial expansion and state-building*

The linkage of Empire, state- and nation-building makes an important contribution to APD scholarship. The significance of territorial expansion to American state-building during the antebellum era has neither been adequately scrutinized by scholars of American political development nor by scholars who work comparatively on the historical formation of the modern nation-state. APD scholarship has concentrated on the Civil War and the Progressive Era as the foundational periods for the formation of important national state capacities.<sup>16</sup> Prior to the Civil

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<sup>16</sup> On the Civil War, see Richard Franklin Bense, *Yankee Leviathan: the origins of central state authority in America, 1859-1877* (Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990). On the progressive era, see Daniel P. Carpenter, *The forging of bureaucratic autonomy: reputations, networks, and policy innovation in executive agencies, 1862-1928* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), Scott Curtis James, *Presidents, parties, and the state: a party system perspective on Democratic regulatory choice, 1884-1936* (Cambridge, UK ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000), M. Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of reform: farmers, workers, and*

War Skowronek's catchphrase of a "state of courts and parties" has become an authoritative description for a period supposedly marked by a "sense of statelessness."<sup>17</sup> While Skowronek's thesis that the antebellum national state is best characterized by its perceived absence has been criticized, revisionist studies, focusing only on single policies and particular federal bureaucracies, have not been able to repudiate the general notion that prior to Civil War the American state was relatively and comparatively small and insignificant.<sup>18</sup> To this day we still lack a broad reassessment of the antebellum state that would allow us to confidently reject (or reaffirm) the claim that national state power was not developed on a large scale, until the Civil War plunged the United States into a massive military conflict, dramatically expanding the authority and scope of state functions.

The comparative-historical literature on state-formation in Europe has developed important insights regarding the linkage between territory and state-building. Their theorizing is driven by the need to explain the consolidation of the messy medieval map of European kingdoms, independent cities, and uncountable principalities into a few cohesive nation-states by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Reduced to its bare bones the most prevalent theory on state formation in

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the American state, 1877-1917, *American politics and political economy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), Skowronek, *Building a new American state : the expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920*.

<sup>17</sup> Skowronek, *Building a new American state : the expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920*.

<sup>18</sup> Revolutionary War Pensions, the Postal Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs have been identified as important antebellum areas of state-building. While these studies challenge Skowronek's thesis, it remains unclear, if they are part of a larger pattern or just individual deviations from the general notion of a "state of courts and parties." Laura Jensen, *Patriots, settlers, and the origins of American social policy* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Richard R. John, *Spreading the news : the American postal system from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), Stephen J. Rockwell, "Building the Old American State: Indian Affairs, Politics and Administration from the Early Republic to the New Deal" (Dissertation, Brandeis University 2001). For a review of studies on economic policies that challenge Skowronek, see Richard R. John, "Ruling Passions: Political Economy in Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of Policy History* 18, no. 1 (2006): 1-20. The most recent attack on notions of the American state's exceptional weakness during the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been formulated by William Novak William J. Novak, "The Myth of the "Weak" American State," *American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (2008): 752-72.

Europe claims that states made war and states were made by war.<sup>19</sup> Beginning in the late medieval period, the need to finance large armies in order to survive in a war prone international environment, drove European rulers to centralize power and expand administrative capacities. The first large scale bureaucracies were created to tax populations and to use the revenue to organize increasingly complex and large militaries. Rulers had to centralize authority over their population and territory in order to gain the capacity to defeat their competitors in war. Those kingdoms, cities, and principalities that were unable to build and sustain effective bureaucracies fell prey to stronger neighbors. The number of independent political entities was quickly reduced in this competitive international environment as powerful states swallowed up weaker ones. Only those states that developed strong administrative capacities to extract sufficient resources from their populations to build powerful armies were able to survive this selection process.

Tilly and others have provided a powerful analytical framework that helps us to understand the forces behind the radical transformation of the international system in Europe from the medieval ages to modernity and the emergence of centralized, homogenous states with effective, administrative machinery. Considering a few limitations and criticisms of this framework prepares the ground for an application of this model to the American case. The modern Weberian state, characterized by a monopoly on the legitimate use of force within its boundaries, strong administrative control of its territory and population, and a rationalized bureaucratic machinery at the hands of the state's government, marks the endpoint of the historical developments that Tilly examines. But instead of assuming a rigid dichotomy between feudal and modern states, the

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<sup>19</sup> Charles Tilly, *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990-1990*, Studies in social discontinuity (Cambridge, Mass., USA: B. Blackwell, 1990). My discussion of the state-formation literature on Europe will focus on Tilly's work, but others have presented similar arguments. Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the leviathan : building states and regimes in medieval and early modern Europe* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Hendrik Spruyt, *The sovereign state and its competitors : an analysis of systems change*, Princeton studies in international history and politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994).

process of state-building should rather be understood as a gradual transformation of feudal institutions. In the case of Britain the extension of national central authority to distant peripheries was achieved by cooptation of local elites whose personalistic local authority was still embedded in feudal institutions.<sup>20</sup>

While in the U.S. the cooptation of feudal institutions was not an option, it is important to point out that national authority was generally exercised through networks and institutions that linked state personal at the periphery to the center. In the United States territorial officials were in an analogous position to centrally appointed personnel at the periphery of the British state as both groups of officials had to negotiate between the interests and directions from the distant central state and more immediate local demands and pressures.<sup>21</sup> It is thus not useful to rigidly apply the Weberian ideal-type of the modern, central bureaucratic state to determine stateness as even in Europe itself, where the empirical reality came to conform most closely to Weber's ideal type, the extension of central authority was a gradual process of negotiations between central power and local institutions of authority.

The scholarship on state formation in Europe has also neglected cases that do not neatly conform to its model of administrative centralization and the establishment of coherent rule over clearly defined territories. As Joon Suk Kim shows, the focus on monopolized central state authority has diverted attention from federal states that successfully managed the transition to modern statehood.<sup>22</sup> Based on case studies of the German Roman Empire, the Swiss

Confederation, and the Dutch Republic, he argues that power sharing of partially sovereign

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<sup>20</sup> Rhys Jones, *People/states/territories : the political geographies of British state transformation*, RGS-IBG book series (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2007).

<sup>21</sup> This applies to the relationship between imperial center and distant colonies as well. Jack P. Greene, "Negotiated Authorities: The Problem of Governance in the Extended Polities of the Early Modern Atlantic World," in *Negotiated Authorities: Essays in Colonial Political and Constitutional History*, ed. Jack P. Greene (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 1-24.

<sup>22</sup> Joon Suk Kim, "Making States federatively: Alternative Routes of State Formation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe" (Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2005).



entities is not an insurmountable impediment to building effective state capacity. Federations were formed in response to geopolitical competition. Particularly the cases of the Dutch Republic and the Swiss Confederation demonstrate that confederations were able to develop effective state capacity. Both countries built strong military organizations and developed extractive capacities to finance them. Kim argues that the differences between centralized and federative states have been overstated in the literature. Rulers of centralized states also had to negotiate and strike bargains with peripheral centers of power – though not through the kind of formalized institutions that characterize federative states. Kim’s argument that the literature on state formation has neglected federative paths of state-building has important implications for the U.S. The American colonies formed a confederation to pool their resources in the war against Britain. And the antebellum American state, characterized as insignificant and fragmented in part because of its federative structure, nevertheless built highly effective administrative capacities at the national level to organize its rapid territorial expansion across the North American continent. However, the federative structure of the American polity has biased many scholars against the possibility of effective stateness in antebellum America. In fact American political development is often understood as a struggle to overcome the constraints which American federalism put on the exercise of national authority.<sup>23</sup>

In the light of theories on state-building in Europe, important question about the U.S. case arise. In Europe, frequent wars functioned as a selection process, weeding out those countries which failed to build strong state capacities. Lacking such a highly war-prone international environment, antebellum American state-building requires a different explanation. Two factors stand out. First, when American revolutionaries broke free from the British Empire, they did not

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<sup>23</sup> Skowronek, *Building a new American state : the expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920.*, pp. 20-3

repudiate some important institutional legacies of the British state. Quite to the contrary, the U.S. Constitution created a strong federal government that assumed core governing functions formerly exercised by the imperial center in London.<sup>24</sup> Second, territorial expansion had a similar impact on state-building in the U.S. as major interstate wars had on state-building in Europe. The federal government effectively increased its power and authority to meet the administrative and military challenges of territorial expansion. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the U.S. grew from 13 former colonies at the East Coast to a large territorial state, stretching 3000 miles across the North American continent. Territorial expansion was the engine, driving the build-up of significant administrative capacities at the national level. Rather than an anti-imperial struggle the American Revolution should be seen as America's struggle for its own empire, free of British constraints and control.<sup>25</sup> Getting rid of the British meant that the new federal government would have to resume the imperial functions formerly provided by the British state.

### *6. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century U.S. Empire from the historians' perspective*

While APD scholars have neglected the importance of Empire and territorial expansion to state-building, historians have written extensively about these issues. Diplomatic historians, most notably those from the Wisconsin School, have deeply probed the imperial features of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> They argue that American democracy and prosperity have always been closely

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<sup>24</sup> Max M. Edling, *A revolution in favor of government : origins of the U.S. Constitution and the making of the American state* (Oxford [England] ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>25</sup> Gareth Stedman Jones, "The History of U.S. Imperialism," in *Ideology in Social Science: Readings in Critical Social Theory*, ed. Robin Blackburn (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 207-37.

<sup>26</sup> Lloyd C. Gardner, Walter LaFeber, and Thomas J. McCormick, *Creation of the American empire: U.S. diplomatic history* (Chicago,: Rand McNally, 1973), William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a way of life : an essay on the causes and character of America's present predicament, along with a few thoughts about an alternative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), William Appleman Williams, *The tragedy of American diplomacy*, 2d rev. and enl. ed. (New York,: Dell Pub. Co., 1972), William Appleman Williams, ed., *From colony to empire; essays in the history of American foreign relations* (New York,: J. Wiley, 1972). For a general appraisal of empire as an interpretative theme in diplomatic history, see Edward P. Crapol, "Coming to Terms with Empire: The

linked to expansion. Commercial opportunities, quest for land and the firm believe in America's Manifest Destiny are identified as the main sources of an aggressive foreign policy which constantly pushed American boundaries westward. Their accounts treat the 1890s as an important rupture when Americans moved from continental expansion to the acquisition of colonial dependencies overseas. Driven by desires to open new markets, the U.S. government briefly adopted policies of direct (colonial governance in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.) imperialism, but shifted to indirect (open door policy in China and Latin America) imperialism in the long run. The Wisconsin School has put the history of American foreign relations into a framework of imperial expansion. It offers materialist and ideological explanations for the U.S. government's imperial ambitions, but it has little to say about the effects of U.S. foreign policy in regard to state- and nation-building. Even though a call has been recently made to recognize the close linkage between diplomatic history and policy history in general, the boundaries between foreign and domestic policy are still too rarely crossed.<sup>27</sup>

However, younger scholars, critical of their field's long neglect of issues of race and gender have pointed out the close connection between empire and nation-building. They find that opposition to the acquisition of new territory based on racial anxieties put severe constraints on imperial ambitions. Projects of territorial expansion, whether on the North American continent, in the Caribbean or overseas, were fiercely rejected by those who believed that U.S. government should remain restricted to a white Anglo American population.<sup>28</sup>

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Historiography of Late-Nineteenth-Century American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 4 (1992): 573-597. For a more recent version of similar arguments, see also Paul A. Varg, *America, from client state to world power : six major transitions in United States foreign relations*, 1st ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990).

<sup>27</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "Diplomatic History and Policy History: Finding Common Ground," *Journal of Policy History* 17, no. 1 (2005): 93-109.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest design : American exceptionalism and empire*, Rev. ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003), Eric Tyrone Lowery Love, *Race over empire : racism and U.S. imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

While diplomatic history has dealt with territorial expansion mostly from a foreign policy perspective, paying, with few exceptions, only little attention to its implications for state- and nation-building, the historiography on the American West has made important contributions to the nexus of empire, state- and nation-building. Especially the works of the New Western History that pay particular attention to the role of government in the conquest, settlement, administration and incorporation of the West offer important insights in regard to the relationship between territorial expansion and state- and nation-building. Before this literature is discussed, a note on terminology is necessary. U.S. historians have struggled to find a consensus regarding the meaning of the term 'West'.<sup>29</sup> I use the term not to describe a fixed geographical space, but as a historical construct, used by U.S. government officials. The meaning of the West changes over time as the official boundaries move westward. To 19<sup>th</sup> century government officials the West included all the space west of the western boundaries of the most western States in the Union that they ultimately sought to incorporate into the Union. Thus the West was not limited to territory under U.S. jurisdiction. It consisted of already established territories as well as frontiers barely known to a few American pioneers. How far west the West would stretch was a matter of political debate and ultimately determined by American state power. Thus in the 1780s the Ohio Valley and the land just beyond the Appalachian Mountains constituted the West. The admission of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee to statehood and the Louisiana Purchase shifted notions of the West beyond the Mississippi. During the 1830s and 1840s U.S. visions of the West became continental, stretching all the way to the Pacific coast. The New Western Historiography is relevant to this research project in so far as it relates the 19<sup>th</sup> century West to state- and nation-building.

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<sup>29</sup> Stephen Aron, "Lessons in Conquest: Towards a Greater Western History," *Pacific Historical Review* 63, no. 2 (1994): 125-47.

Debunking the myth of the West being shaped by the experiences of an isolated frontier society, Patricia Limerick's seminal book *Legacy of Conquest* emphasizes the importance of the federal government to the settlement, economic development and political incorporation of the West.<sup>30</sup> State agencies such as the Army, the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the General Land Office play prominent roles in her account of western expansion. According to Richard White, the federal government did not only shape the conquest and development of western territories, but in return the activities of the federal government in the West contributed to the growth and shape of the American state.<sup>31</sup> Both White and Limerick offer elaborate surveys of the rich literature on the American West, emphasizing the entanglement of the West in national affairs. However, even though federal government officials are central to their arguments, historiography on the West, like the field of history in general, has been deeply influenced by the latest trends in cultural and social history, lacking engagement with political history and APD scholarship. And in turn, as I have argued above, "histories of the American state have as yet had nothing to say about how territorial expansion and administration helped shape the American state."<sup>32</sup> Taking notice of the new institutionalist approaches in American political history since the 1980s, most notably the work of Skocpol and Skowronek, Karen Merrill criticizes western historians for paying too little attention to the nature and development of the American state, even though the policing and administration of territory, one of the core properties of the modern state, are important themes in their scholarship.<sup>33</sup> This study seeks to remedy this shortcoming, advancing

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<sup>30</sup> Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The legacy of conquest : the unbroken past of the American West*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1987).

<sup>31</sup> "While the federal government shaped the West, however, the West itself served as the kindergarden of the American state." Richard White, *"It's your misfortune and none of my own" : a history of the American West*, 1st ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991)., p. 58

<sup>32</sup> Karen R. Merrill, "In Search of the "Federal Presence" in the American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (1999): 449-473.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 452

a systematic exploration of the relationship between territorial expansion and federal state-building.

Even though historians have acknowledged the importance of empire to the founding and development of the American nation, the literature lacks a systematic treatment of the relationship between imperial governance and nation-building. Jefferson's vision of an expansive republican empire and Madison's argument of Federalist No. 10 that empire was beneficial to republicanism because large size would dilute the influence of factions are generally discussed as core features of America's "Empire of Liberty."<sup>34</sup> Westward expansion of an agrarian empire would protect Americans' republican virtues against the vices of commerce and the economic dependence of wage labor.<sup>35</sup> While I agree with historians who emphasize the close entanglement of empire and liberty in the expansionist ideology of the Early Republic, I find the use of the term "Empire of Liberty" not sufficiently applicable - not because of what it stands for, but rather because of what it leaves out. Western settlers eventually gained liberty, but only after having been subjected to a period of federal tutelage. The imperial features of the territorial system deprived western settlers of basic liberties until admission to statehood gave them the liberties associated with U.S. citizenship. Liberty was not the natural companion of western expansion. Instead, federal tutelage imposed by the territorial system defined early stages of settlement on the western frontier. And as historians well know, though the term "empire of liberty" tends to obscure it, imperial nation-building brought liberty only to white, male settlers.

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<sup>34</sup> Reginald Horsman, "The Dimensions of an "Empire for Liberty": Expansion and Republicanism, 1775-1825," *Journal of the Early Republic* 9, no. 1 (1989): 1-20, Lawrence S. Kaplan, *Thomas Jefferson : westward the course of empire, Biographies in American foreign policy ; [no. 1]* (Wilmington, Del.: SR Books, 1999), Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's empire : the language of American nationhood, Jeffersonian America* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *Empire of liberty : the statecraft of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

<sup>35</sup> Drew R. McCoy, *The elusive Republic : political economy in Jeffersonian America* (New York: Norton, 1982).

The theme of empire plays a major role in American historiography on the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Especially historians of western expansion and Indian affairs have emphasized the imperial features of the 19<sup>th</sup> century state. However, what is lacking is a more systematic analysis of the relationship between imperial policies and state- and nation-building. Most histories are narrowly confined in space and time and rarely relate and compare their findings to other instances of imperial state- and nation-building. Scholars have noted that the experiences with Native Americans in the West shaped how colonial administrator viewed the Filipino population.<sup>36</sup> This approach seeks to build on such attempts, advancing a theoretical framework that makes the systematic exploration and comparisons of U.S. imperial policies across populations and time possible. It seeks to write imperial political history, examining the interplay between imperial policies and state- and nation-building.

Such an approach is not without precedent. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century American historians searched the past to find models for colonial administration that could inform and justify U.S. colonial governance in the Philippines. In 1901, in the preface to *The Foundations of American Foreign Policy* Albert Bushnell Hart explained that the purpose of his book was to show that “our grandfathers had problems similar to our own; and to explain how they thought that they had solved those problems.”<sup>37</sup> The problem was, of course, the problem of empire. His survey of precedents for U.S. imperial rule began with the creation of the territorial system, but also included discussions of Native Americans, the colonization of freedmen in Liberia, reconstruction of the Confederate South, the suppression of the Mormon’s Church power in Utah

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<sup>36</sup> Paul A. Kramer, *The blood of government : race, empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), Walter L. Williams, "United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation: Implications for the Origins of American Imperialism," *The Journal of American History* 66, no. 4 (1980): 810-831.

<sup>37</sup> Albert Bushnell Hart, *The foundations of American foreign policy : with a working bibliography* (New York: The Macmillan Company 1901)., p. v

and finally ended with post-Civil War cases of overseas imperialism.<sup>38</sup> Supporting Hart's call for the establishment of a Colonial Department, Alpheus H. Snow also began his study of imperial governance with the founding fathers. "The whole inquiry thus became a study of the evolution of the Federal Empire – a form of political organism which, through commonly believed to be of modern origin, was in fact more clearly understood by our Revolutionary leaders than by any other statesmen before or since their time, and which was recognized by them as being not only necessary and proper, but also beneficent in its operation, and hence desirable, for America as well as for other States."<sup>39</sup> While I do not share Hart's and Snow's enthusiastic support for U.S. imperial rule, their dated work still offers glimpses on how a systematic analysis of imperial governance may be done.<sup>40</sup>

### *7. Application of the theoretical framework to the cases*

The research project is based on the premise that 19<sup>th</sup> century national state-building was rooted in imperial ambitions to expand across the North American continent. The foundations of imperial state capacities were laid during the transition from British colonialism to American self-rule. The revolution's political leaders reverted to their experiences under the British colonial system to create policies and institutions, apt to serve the new republic's imperial agenda in the West. The Constitution provided the federal government with extensive authority in the realms of foreign affairs, defense, trade, taxation, and Indian Affairs. The Constitution also

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 134-67

<sup>39</sup> Alpheus Henry Snow, *The administration of dependencies; a study of the evolution of the federal empire, with special reference to American colonial problems* (New York, London,: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1902)., p. iv

<sup>40</sup> Even more valuable in this regard is Whitney T. Perkins' more recent – though still dated - *Denial of Empire* which compares U.S. governance in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Philippines and the Pacific Islands. However, Perkins reduces his treatment of continental precedents for the governance of dependencies to a cursory discussion of the territorial system, ignoring Native Americans, reconstruction and the controversies regarding the political incorporation of Mexicans and Mormons through the territorial system. Whitney T. Perkins, *Denial of empire : the United States and its dependencies* (Leyden: A.W. Sythoff, 1962).



gave the federal government exclusive authority over the western domain. The Northwest Ordinance, modeled after the British colonial system and crafted at the same time as the constitutional convention met in Philadelphia, further specified the authority of the federal government over western territories. Chapter 2 of the dissertation will discuss the transfer of governing authority and state capacity from the British Empire to the newly formed American state. Chapter 3 will explore the linkage between territorial expansion and state-building. It emphasizes the importance of federal expenditures related to territorial expansion. Further, the chapter discusses key state agencies that grew and professionalized with the acquisition and incorporation of large western territories: the Army, the Indian Office, the Department of Treasury and the General Land Office.

The theoretical framework discussed in section 3 will guide the examination of imperial nation-building. First, appropriate cases have to be identified in accordance with my proposed definition of empire. Governance becomes imperial when it is established and maintained without the consent of the governed. The territorial system meets this definition. Chapter 4 discusses the context of its creation. Territories were created and, during the first stage, governed without the consent of western settlers already residing or moving into it. In the case of Native Americans the establishment of imperial governance was a much more messy process. Immediately after the War of Independence, Americans claimed the indigenous nations to be “conquered peoples” which, through their alliance with the defeated British, had come under U.S. dominion. However, the limited military capacity of the early American state drove its leaders to acknowledge Indian sovereignty and to conclude treaties with them. Thus claims to imperial control coexisted with formal recognition of Indian sovereignty. Chief Justice Marshall coined the expression “domestic dependent nations” to characterize this curious condition. Forms

of imperial governance increased over time as the U.S. government exerted more authority and control over Indian nations, expelling them from their homelands, coercing them into the adoption of American culture and institutions and ultimately confining them to reservations.

White settlers (chapter 5) and Native Americans (chapter 6) were the two major sets of populations that were subjected to imperial governance during the antebellum period. A closer examination of the institutions of imperial governance and the discourses justifying them reveals two distinct federal projects of tutelary nation-building. The territorial system, created by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, defined the federal government's approach towards tutelary nation-building in western territories. The Ordinance imposed imperial governance, but with the strong emphasis that western settlers would eventually become equal members of the U.S. polity. In fact, only their geographical location at the periphery of the American state determined their status as imperial subjects. Relocation to one of the eastern states would allow western settlers to elude the despotic rule of territorial officials and to regain their full civil and political liberties. Native Americans could only escape imperial governance, retreating to areas that U.S. governing authority did not reach. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century Indian nations frequently sought to elude the growing power of the American state, relocating to territory further west. However, as the U.S. government acquired and opened more and more lands for settlement, Native Americans increasingly became dependent on the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the federal government in general. U.S. government officials eagerly sought to expand their authority over Native Americans and subjected them to increasingly coercive, tutelary institutions.

The presence of indigenous nations on the periphery of the American state posed tough questions for U.S. government officials. It forced them to define the ethnic and racial boundaries of the American republic. Indian policy, torn between calls for civilizing tutelage and popular

demands for more land, was neither coherent nor ideologically consistent. Even though Indian policy was frequently the center of heated debates about their place in and eventual relation to the American polity, the large contours of the treatment of Native Americans by the U.S. government show that, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they remained outside the bounds of American nationhood.

The Civil War and reconstruction drastically increased national state capacities. (Chapter 7) Both, the Union and the Confederacy, expanded the authority of their central governments to organize and conduct a large-scale war with mass conscription armies.<sup>41</sup> After the war the Republican Party abolished slavery and transformed constitutional law, giving the federal government an important role in the protection of civil rights. The military occupation of the defeated South, the transformation of the southern economy and the federal assistance offered to freedmen attested to the massive expansion of national state capacities during the Civil War era. The victory of the North also had important ramifications for the territorial system. The interpretation of the Republicans that the federal government exercised great authority over western territories won over the Democratic Party's doctrine that constitutional rights and popular will limited federal authority. The expansion of federal authority and national state capacities did not last. After the war the military was quickly demobilized. Sectional compromise between North and South led to the gradual abandonment of federal reconstruction. During the 1870s and 1880s the Democratic Party regained its hegemony in southern politics and returned to its pre-war conceptions of strong state rights.

For a brief period, the Civil War turned the focus of federal tutelary nation-building from the West to the South. President Lincoln and Congress had to confront the question of how to govern and reintegrate southern rebel states. (Chapter 8) Radical Republicans, seeking broad federal

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<sup>41</sup> Bense, *Yankee Leviathan: the origins of central state authority in America, 1859-1877*.

authority to abolish slavery and to transform race relations, argued that southerners' declaration of secession had voided their constitutional state governments. The support for the so-called territorialization doctrine reflected radical Republicans' objective to use institutions of imperial tutelary nation-building to reintegrate southern rebels on terms to be defined by the federal government. Fearing that such radical measures would drive the Border States into the camp of the Confederacy, Lincoln and moderate Republicans in Congress rejected territorialization. They emphasized the indestructibility of the Union, declaring the secession of 11 southern states as not only illegal, but also void. Instead of reducing southern states to territorial status, Lincoln's reconstruction policy focused on the quick restoration of loyal southern state government. The defeat of territorialization had important ramifications for federal nation-building, limiting the ability of the national government to impose and enforce a more radical reconstruction agenda through imperial governance. Thus an opportunity was lost to link the restoration of southern state governments to the effective enforcement of Congress' civil rights agenda.

The Civil War did not only split the American nation, it also raised the question of the future status of freedmen in the American polity. (Chapter 9) Before the war the status of slaves and free blacks had been mainly regulated and policed by local and state institutions.<sup>42</sup>

Advancing Union troops and revolting slaves had led to the collapse of slavery. Federal nation-building did not only have to address questions regarding the reintegration of the South, but also had to determine the legal status of the over four million ex-slaves who had been emancipated during the war. The geographic dispersion of African Americans and white southerners' fervent resistance to their integration as equal citizens intrinsically tied both nation-building projects.

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<sup>42</sup> Ira Berlin, *Slaves without masters : the free Negro in the antebellum South* (New York: New Press, 1992), Donald L. Robinson, *Slavery in the structure of American politics, 1765-1820* (New York: Norton, 1979), Kenneth M. Stampp, *The peculiar institution: slavery in the ante-bellum South*, [1st ed. (New York,: Knopf, 1956), Richard C. Wade, *Slavery in the cities; the South, 1820-1860* (New York,: Oxford University Press, 1964).

Initially Republicans sought to enforce the political integration and the economic and social uplift of southern blacks against the resistance of white southerners. However, the waning influence of radical Republicans in Congress, fervent resistance against federal reconstruction and the restoration of state governments helped southern whites to regain control over race-relations. Resisting federal tutelage, premised on the use of national state power to fully integrate African Americans into the polity, southern whites adopted and transformed the language of tutelary nation-building to justify white supremacy and racial control.

The expansion of national authority and state building capacities in the wake of the Civil War reinvigorated federal nation-building in the West. (Chapter 10) The continuing encroachment of white settlers upon Indian lands had pushed the federal government to adopt a policy centered on the construction of reservations. Reservations allowed U.S. government officials to confine Native Americans on specifically demarcated land and to use their growing economic dependency to coerce them into acceptance of civilizing policies. However, critics of the reservation system claimed that the only solution to the “Indian problem” was the destruction of tribal sovereignty and their assimilation into Anglo-American culture and institutions. Imperial control and tutelary policies were supposed to end the distinct status of Native Americans in American polity. Many among the eastern elites supported assimilation policies out of humanistic concerns for Indians, while westerners found them an attractive means to dispossess Indians of their land.

The federal government also confronted new challenges of nation-building in the west. The presence of large Mexican populations in Arizona and New Mexico retarded the admission of these territories to statehood. While the federal government had abstained from using the territorial system to exert its authority against white southerners who resisted reconstruction, the

case of Utah demonstrates how local opposition against federal nation-building could be crushed. The federal government effectively combined its authority to appoint local officials and to legislate for the territory with reconstruction measures such as the supervision of elections and the disenfranchisement of polygamists to crush the political power of the Mormon Church in Utah.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century growing racial anxieties set tight boundaries for imperial nation-building. While opponents of the annexation of Texas, New Mexico, and California had been reassured that these territories would be quickly dominated by white Americans, the emancipation of more than four million slaves and immigration from East Asia and Southern and Eastern Europe raised new fears about the presence of a significant proportion of racial and ethnic others within the American nation. At a time when America was becoming racially more diverse, sectional compromise between North and South culminated in the celebration of an exclusively white nation. In the past, conquest and imperial governance had been closely associated with nation-building. The debates on the acquisition of Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Philippines underscore the legacy of a more than a century of imperial nation-building and constitute a new departure at the same time. (Chapter 11) Proponents of overseas empire argued that the governance of dependent populations was not a break with America's past. At the same time they engineered innovations within the territorial system that would completely rid it of its integrative nation-building potential, allowing the U.S. government to hold imperial subjects overseas indefinitely in territorial status.

## ***8. Conclusion***

Examining American political development through the lens of empire is long overdue. The perspective of empire begs questions about the power and nature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century American

state. There is ample evidence that the federal government expanded its authority and administrative capacities to meet the challenges of constructing, implementing and administrating imperial policies. This research project explores the relationship between empire and state- and nation-building and traces its development across time. Its findings will show the deep historical entanglement between empire, the expansion of national state capacities and the construction of the American polity.

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