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A. Lincoln, Philosopher: Lincoln's Place in 19th-Century Intellectual History

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Abstract

The nineteenth century in Europe and America was an era of second thoughts. Those second thoughts were largely about the Enlightenment, which had been born in the mid-1600s as a scientific revolution and blossomed into the Age of Reason in the 1700s, when it seemed that no puzzle was beyond the grasp of scientific rationality. That blossom was snipped all too quickly by the French Revolution, which drowned rationality in human politics in a spray of Jacobin-terrorized blood, then by the revulsion of European art and music from the Enlightenment's canons of balance and symmetry in favor of the Romantic glorification of the sublime and the irrational, and finally by the rage and contempt that the Enlightenment's most rationalized offspring—its bourgeois capitalist entrepreneurs, inventors, and managers—inspired in the hearts of intellectuals and aristocrats alike. This does not mean that the Enlightenment was herded off the scene entirely by the Romantic reaction. The scientists had dug themselves firmly into a position from which they refused to be dislodged, and the bourgeoisie of France and England continued their relentless struggle to wrest control of their nations' politics from its nobles and emperors. So, there remained men and women of the nineteenth century who lashed themselves firmly to the mast of the Enlightenment, disregarding the sirens of Romantic passion in art and literature, as well as politics. And it is among the latter that we must classify Abraham Lincoln. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Abraham Lincoln, Civil War, Intellectual History

Disciplines

History | Intellectual History | Political History | United States History

A. Lincoln, Philosopher: Lincoln's Place in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History

Allen C. Guelzo

The nineteenth century in Europe and America was an era of second thoughts. Those second thoughts were largely about the Enlightenment, which had been born in the mid-1600s as a scientific revolution and blossomed into the Age of Reason in the 1700s, when it seemed that no puzzle was beyond the grasp of scientific rationality. That blossom was snipped all too quickly by the French Revolution, which drowned rationality in human politics in a spray of Jacobin-terrorized blood, then by the revulsion of European art and music from the Enlightenment's canons of balance and symmetry in favor of the Romantic glorification of the sublime and the irrational, and finally by the rage and contempt that the Enlightenment's most rationalized offspring—its bourgeois capitalist entrepreneurs, inventors, and managers—inspired in the hearts of intellectuals and aristocrats alike. This does not mean that the Enlightenment was herded off the scene entirely by the Romantic reaction. The scientists had dug themselves firmly into a position from which they refused to be dislodged, and the bourgeoisie of France and England continued their relentless struggle to wrest control of their nations' politics from its nobles and emperors. So, there remained men and women of the nineteenth century who lashed themselves firmly to the mast of the Enlightenment, disregarding the sirens of Romantic passion in art and literature, as well as politics. And it is among the latter that we must classify Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809, at almost the very end of what is sometimes called the "long Enlightenment" (from the publication of John Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* in 1690 until Waterloo and

the fall of the first Napoleon in 1815). On that day in 1809, Thomas Jefferson, that quintessential American man of Reason, was in the last weeks of his presidency; Tom Paine, that quintessential pamphleteer of American revolution and American deism, was (appropriately enough) living in Greenwich Village; and twelve of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, that quintessential document of Enlightenment political rationality, were still alive. The intellectual universe that these men inhabited had been shaped by the consequences of the scientific discoveries of Galileo and Isaac Newton, whose achievement, if it could be condensed into one sentence, would be that they taught Europeans to look upon the contents of the universe as things that *were moved*, rather than things that *moved* on their own. Physical objects—and for Galileo, this started with observations of the planets—did not possess occult forces within themselves that produced physical movement, nor were they creations obeying the invisible direction of God. They were simply inert material substances that lumbered into motion only because some other material substance caused them to, and whose motion was entirely governed by the laws of indifferent but calculable forces (for Newton, this meant *gravity*). If anyone wanted proof of this, he had only to watch Galileo's sensational public experiments in the 1630s or consult the mathematical proofs offered by Newton in his *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687). The scientific discoveries of Galileo and Newton forced Europeans to criticize every theory about the physical world they had inherited from the Christian or classical past. Everything, from politics to religion, was now open to criticism, reevaluation, and “enlightenment.”

The Enlightenment developed a series of convictions about what the future might hold for a suitably enlightened Europe, and we can organize those convictions around three basic topics: God and natural religion, man and natural society, and history and hope.

Christianity was the largest of the Enlightenment's targets: it asked for a belief in miracles and Divine Providence that ran completely counter to scientific discoveries that described the mechanism and uniformity of nature, and it asked for faith in personalities and events that no reasonable human being could ever expect to encounter in normal life. On the other hand, the Enlightenment did not rush to embrace atheism. Newton and Galileo could tell people *how* the world operated, but they could offer no clues as to *where* it had come from; in fact, Newton himself insisted repeatedly on the need for the creative activity of God as the cause of the universal system he was describing. What the Enlightenment wanted was to forge some kind of accommodation with Christianity, based on several shared, generic as-

sumptions about God that are based upon the operation of reason upon nature. This “natural religion” took classic form in the hands of another Enlightenment American, Benjamin Franklin, who thought he could distill the true essence of religion to a few, simple propositions:

That there is one God who made all things.
That he governs the World by his Providence.
That he ought to be worshiped by Adoration, Prayer & Thanksgiving.
But that the most acceptable Service of God is doing Good to Man.
That the Soul is immortal.
And that God will certainly reward Virtue and punish Vice either here or hereafter.¹

It became common very early on to label this thinly tailored brand of religion as *deism*, and its practical implication was that what people needed was not grace but an understanding of the moral laws God had hardwired into them. Stories from the Bible were useless for guiding human behavior; instead, one could safely and reasonably base ethics on self-love and the pursuit of happiness.

The pursuit of happiness, however, was a social, and not just a strictly personal and private, matter; and so the Enlightenment sought to transfer the neatness, simplicity, and rationality found in the natural sciences to the untidy and messy affairs of human government and society. The Enlightenment’s political philosophers believed that, like the physical universe, there were several constant forces in human behavior that could be organized toward a better society. One of these was self-love, the search for individual satisfaction and contentment. And the way to organize society so as to allow self-love its proper operation was to guarantee personal liberty and personal property, for how could anyone pursue self-love without property? This, in turn, threw the Enlightenment entirely against controlled economic systems and toward market capitalism, whose “hidden hand” seemed to function in exactly the same way gravity did in the physical world. “Commerce,” wrote Voltaire in his *Philosophical Letters* (1732), “which has brought wealth to the citizenry . . . has helped to make them free, and freedom has developed commerce in its turn.”²

If the physical universe was not a moral stage-play that God had written, then there could be no divine playwright either. Other, more rational causes had to be found to explain the historical past; hence, economics, geography, and psychology had to be called in to offer an entirely new set of clues for deciphering the historical record. Edward Gibbon dismissed the notion that the ancient Roman Empire had fallen because God had judged it for its

persecution of the early Christians, and in his massive *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (in six volumes, 1776–88), Gibbon explained the collapse of the Romans in entirely natural terms. The Enlightenment had no use for morality plays about struggle or sin. It looked at the vast improvements that the scientific discoveries of the 1600s had wrought and concluded that there was no reason why matters ought not to continue to improve and progress upwards. Even Gibbon (whose acquaintance with the barbarians ought to have taught him better) confidently predicted that human history was now to become a tale of ever-increasing progress, guided by reason, liberty, and wealth. We cannot be certain, he wrote, “to what height the human species may aspire in their advances toward perfection; but it may safely be assumed that no people, unless the face of nature is changed, will relapse into their original barbarism. . . . We may therefore acquiesce in the pleasing conclusion that every age of the world has increased, and still increases, the real wealth, the happiness, the knowledge, and perhaps the virtue of the human race.”³

The Romantics weighed in the balances the Enlightenment’s vast preoccupation with reason and order and found it wanting. Rather than the regularized dullness of classical symmetry, they were excited by passion and conflict, and they discussed in heated terms the contrast between the civilized and the authentic, between thought and feeling, between consciousness and spontaneity. In 1808 the Romantic poet and painter William Blake read over a copy of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s lectures on art, in which Reynolds (the president of the Royal Academy) had laid out a classical theory of art. Blake scribbled furious rebuttals into the margins, like “God forbid that Truth should be Confined to Mathematical Demonstration.” Where Reynolds declared that mere enthusiasm “will carry you but a little way,” Blake replied, “Meer Enthusiasm is the All in All.”⁴

The Romantics found in nature not order but grandeur; not sunny, well-manicured gardens and lawns, but terrible deep mountain chasms, the power of storms, and the beauty of the simplest of wild things. But the most obvious way in which Romanticism differed from the Enlightenment was in its preference for emotion, “heart, warmth, blood, humanity, life,” and the experience of the sublime, over against enlightened reason. Victor Hugo, the French Romantic, in his novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1831), which, like Scott’s *Ivanhoe*, glorified the Middle Ages, shocked and titillated the jaded classical tastes of France when he selected the grotesque, twisted

hunchback Quasimodo as a heroic figure. (Although deformed in body and a walking violation of classical forms of art, Quasimodo is nevertheless the only character in the novel with deep and authentic feelings, and it is for him that the reader winds up having the greatest sympathy.) And in politics, Romanticism declared that societies were not built on propositions but on experience. Joseph de Maistre argued in his *Study on Sovereignty*, “One of the greatest errors of this age is to believe that the political constitution of nations is the work of man alone and that a constitution can be made as a watchmaker makes a watch.” The natural political state of humanity, he claimed, was monarchy: “it can be said in general that all men are born for monarchy” and “even those nations destined to be republics have been constituted by kings.”⁵

If the Enlightenment had its American acolytes in Franklin, Jefferson, and Tom Paine, Romanticism had its American followers in the philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, the poets Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman, and the painters Thomas Cole and Frederick Edwin Church (by no means an exhaustive list). They shared in many ways Romanticism’s aversion to imposing human logic on nature. Religion and ethics, Emerson complained, usually end up degrading nature and suggesting its dependence on spirit. God refuses to be recorded in propositions; the happiest man is the one who learns from nature the lessons of worship. And in the hands of John C. Calhoun and George Fitzhugh, they invented a new political attitude that dismissed the universal equality of the entire human race in favor of a politics built around a *volkish* racial solidarity of whites—and the enslavement of blacks. It was a “great and Dangerous” error, wrote Calhoun in 1849, to have believed “that all men are born free and equal—than which nothing can be more unfounded and false.” And it is equally “great and dangerous” to believe that “all people are equally entitled to liberty,” especially those “too ignorant, degraded and vicious, to be capable either of appreciating or of enjoying it.” Every nation embodied some impalpable *gestalt*, which grew up, plantlike, in all its people and was neither universal nor transferable. Theorizing in the abstract about the logic of equality was, to Fitzhugh, of “little worth; for all government is the gradual accretion of Nature, time and circumstances,” not constitutions, declarations, and other ink-tracks on paper. Nations are built up over centuries, as a distinct national character is built up in the people of each nation, and not merely by signing-on to a collection of political propositions.⁶

And yet, it was in politics that Romanticism had its hardest struggle for dominance. (In art and literature, it won the day overwhelmingly; in science

and economics, it barely made a dent, although it has to be said that in both Marx and Darwin, some decidedly very Romantic impulses lurked beneath what was presented as a rigorously logical and scientific surface.) On the one hand, with the fall of Napoleon, a reactionary Romanticism, magnifying monarchy and nationality, asserted itself through the Congress of Vienna and the crushing of the revolutions of 1848 and the imperial coup d'état of Napoleon III. On the other hand, the politics of the Enlightenment, in the form of classical liberalism, found powerful and persuasive exponents (in Britain) in John Stuart Mill, John Ramsay McCulloch, and the "Manchester School," whose polestars were Richard Cobden and John Bright. In America, Henry Carey, Richard Hildreth, and Francis Wayland still hewed to liberalism's description of "civil government" strictly as a means to "the security of persons, property, and reputation." Aristocrats and other traditional forms of power could, and ought, to be swept aside. "Such a government, proceeds upon the principle that the people are the fountain of power, and are competent to govern themselves." They were also competent to govern their economic lives. Hildreth caustically attacked the "mystic moralists" who repudiate "the pursuit of mercantile wealth" as "a low, base, groveling occupation, fatal to the dignity and virtue of man" when it was really "an essential preliminary to the pursuit of the true, the beautiful, and the good" and had "a principal influence in determining the form and character of governments." People who professed a Romantic yearning for a return to medieval hierarchy, Hildreth snorted, were almost always "those children of good fortune whom some lucky accident of birth or position enables to pass a life of leisure in the gardens of Epicurus" or "amid the groves of the Academy."⁷

Abraham Lincoln is not usually given much of a place in the context of the nineteenth century's struggle of ideas—apart, of course, from having said some very eloquent things about democracy and a new birth of freedom. Lincoln neither looked like an intellectual (Henry Clay Whitney thought "he had the appearance of a rough intelligent farmer") nor did he encourage people to think of him that way. Lincoln "was said to be a very simple-minded man, devoid of the silences and ambitions in life." His favorite entertainment was "negro minstrelsy and [Lincoln] seemed to extract the greatest delight from the crude jokes and harmless fun of the black-faced and red-lipped performers." He never wrote a book (unless we count the edition of the debates he staged with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, and even that was assembled from newspaper cuttings). Lincoln was, by preference, a

politician, a profession not ordinarily esteemed among great thinkers; and the political persona he crafted for himself was humble Abraham Lincoln. “I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life,” he said in his first political appeal in 1832, and even his political views were “Short & Sweet Like an old womans dance.” He was, by vocation, a lawyer—but “purely and entirely a case lawyer, nothing more,” whose practice was mostly concentrated on property litigation. “I am not an accomplished lawyer,” he stated bluntly in the 1850s, and the distribution of his caseload bears this out: ordinary trespass and assumpsit cases accounted for 26 percent of his entire practice, with another 42 percent taken up with the humdrum proceedings of ejectment, debt, mortgage foreclosure, replevin, and divorce. His entire schooling amounted to no more than a year’s worth of on-again, off-again attendance in “A.B.C. schools” and some tutoring in elementary grammar; whatever else he needed, as a surveyor and then as a lawyer, he taught himself from the standard textbooks of the day. (Even at the end of his legal career, in 1860, Lincoln’s best advice for “obtaining a thorough knowledge of the law” was simply to “Begin with [Sir William] Blackstone’s Commentaries, and after reading it carefully through, say twice, take up [Joseph] Chitty’s Pleadings, [Simon] Greenleaf’s Evidence & [Justice Joseph] Story’s Equity &c. in succession.”) He did not attempt to conceal the limits of his education. The entry he wrote for a biographical dictionary of Congress in 1858 described his education as simply “defective.” If anything, he was remarkably forthcoming about those defects, when he had to be. “I have not a fine education,” Lincoln said at the beginning of the 1858 campaign against Douglas. “I am not capable of entering into a disquisition upon dialectics.” In his youth, “There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education,” and all he gleaned from attending school for less than “one year” was how to “read, write, and cipher to the Rule of Three.” But, like his jokes about his own homely looks, Lincoln did not belittle his education because he was indulging some populist fantasy; he simply felt it was wiser if *he* made fun of it, rather than others.⁸

All of this was true—as far as it goes. But it did not go very far.

The embarrassment with which Lincoln shrouded his meager education also contained a substantial amount of anger: *first*, because his prospects for education had been foreclosed against his will by a father who treated “education” with contempt; and *second*, because he was conscious of possessing more-than-average intellectual powers, which would have benefited mightily from the “education” that his father was unwilling to pay for. William Herndon, his third law partner, understood from years of partnership that

Lincoln “had great reason, pure and strong” and “was a persistent thinker, and a profound analyzer of the subject which engaged his attention.” John Todd Stuart, who was Lincoln’s first law partner and his mentor in lawyering from the time Lincoln was admitted to the bar, thought Lincoln had a “Mind of a metaphysical and philosophical order” who, by 1860, had “made Geology and other sciences a special study.” He had nothing to speak of in the way of “the languages”—the Greek and Latin that were still the staple of American collegiate curriculums—“but in other respects I consider [Lincoln] a man of very general and varied knowledge” who was “always studying into the nature of things.” But even then, recalled his longtime associate on the Eighth Judicial Circuit, David Davis, Lincoln tried to remedy his lack of classical learning by studying “the Latin grammar” in between cases “on the [court] circuit.” Nevertheless, Lincoln preferred the harder-edged precision of geometry and “the exact sciences,” and his basic intellectual instinct was “to arrive at moral and physical, mathematical demonstration of things.” Milton Hay, another law colleague of Lincoln’s in Springfield, remembered that Lincoln’s “mind ran to a mathematical exactness about things. Exactness in the statement of things was a peculiarity with him.”⁹

And instinct does seem to have played the major role in Lincoln’s self-education. Lincoln’s garrulous cousin, Dennis Hanks, told Herndon that by the time Lincoln was “12 years old,” he had become “a Constant and I may Say Stubborn reader, his father having Sometimes to slash him for neglecting his work by reading.” That reading included “Websters old Spelling Book—The life [of] Henry Clay. Robinson Crusoe—Weems Life of Washington—Esops fables—Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s progress.” Piecing together the reminiscences of others who knew the young Lincoln, his reading also embraced Asa Rhoads’s *An American Spelling Book, Designed for the Use of Our Common Schools* (1802), Nicholas Pike’s *A New and Complete System of Arithmetic, Composed for the Use of the Citizens of the United States* (1788), William Grimshaw’s *History of the United States* (1820), David Ramsay’s *Life of George Washington* (1807), *The Kentucky Preceptor, Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking* (1812), *The American Speaker* (1811), Caleb Bingham’s *The Columbian Orator* (1794), and William Scott’s *Lessons in Elocution; or, A Selection of Pieces in Prose and Verse* (1779). But more than just being “much Devoted to Reading,” Lincoln brought to his reading a near-photographic memory for what he read. He “had the Best memory of any man i Ever Knew,” recalled J. Rowan Herndon, “he Never forgot any thing he Read.” As a storekeeper in New Salem, Illinois, in the 1830s, Lincoln impressed his neighbors, not just with his books, but with how “He mastered them

rapidly. . . . He read very thoroughly, and had a most wonderful memory” and “Would distinctly remember almost every thing he read.” As he told Noah Brooks years later, “If I like a thing, it just sticks after once reading it or hearing it.” And when his lifelong friend Joshua Speed “once remarked to him that his mind was a wonder to me” because “impressions were easily made upon his mind and never effaced,” Lincoln gently corrected him. “I am slow to learn,” he insisted, but also “slow to forget that which I have learned—My mind is like a piece of steel, very hard to scratch any thing on it and almost impossible after you get it there to rub it out.”¹⁰

These instincts all turned to Lincoln’s advantage when he began reading law in the mid-1830s under John Todd Stuart’s tutelage, since most of his legal education consisted of little more than reading the basic legal source-books and observing Stuart in action. “Mr Lincoln turned his attention Exclusively to the law” and “read so much—was so studious—took so little physical exercise—was so laborious in his studies that he became Emaciated & his best friends were afraid that he would craze himself—make himself de-range from his habits of study which were incessant.” This did not, however, prevent him from undertaking at least some “miscellaneous reading,” on “surveying” in order to earn a living, and on “History—Biography & general newspaper reading.” He mastered surveying as he mastered everything else, by reading the standard textbooks, Abel Flint’s *A System of Geometry and Trigonometry: Together with a Treatise on Surveying* (1804), and Robert Gibson’s *The Theory and Practice of Surveying; Containing All the Instructions Requisite for the Skilful Practice of This Art* (1803). And he gave philosophy its due by working through “[Thomas] Browns Philosophy [*Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*] or [William] Paley.” But the real passion Lincoln developed was for “History and poetry.” Poetry meant “Burns & Shakespeare,” with a helping of “Byron [and] Milton.” Charles Maltby said that “it was usual for him, after reading and studying [Lindley] Murray [or, more likely, William Russell’s 1818 American “abridgement” of Murray’s *English Grammar*] or [Sir William] Blackstone for two or three hours, to take up Burns’ poems . . . his favorite selections being Tom O’Shanter, Address to the Dial, Highland Mary, Bonny Jeane and Dr. Hornbook.” All of this kept bobbing to the surface throughout the rest of Lincoln’s life, so “that people in his later life were amazed at his wonderful familiarity with books, even those so little known by the great mass of readers.”¹¹

Much as Lincoln loved Burns and Shakespeare and even tried his own hand at writing poetry, the most important intellectual influences on his develop-

ment came from history, political economy, and religion. History, for Lincoln, especially meant the history of the American Revolution. In 1861, he remembered that “away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of . . . ‘Weem’s Life of Washington,’” and it burned into his imagination “the battle fields and struggles for the liberties of the country. . . . I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for . . . something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come.” He claimed that he had “never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence,” and he praised the Founders of the Republic as “the pillars of the temple of liberty” and “a fortress of strength.” Out of all the Founders, though, it was Washington and Jefferson who set the most profound example to Lincoln. “Washington is the mightiest name of earth—long since mightiest in the cause of civil liberty; still mightiest in moral reformation,” Lincoln said in 1842. “To add brightness to the sun, or glory to the name of Washington, is alike impossible.” Likewise, he added in 1859, “The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society.” So it should be no surprise to find Lincoln’s own political rhetoric containing numerous echoes of Washington’s and Jefferson’s writings.¹²

It is said that every man has his portion of ambition. I may have mine, I suppose, as well as the rest, but if I know my own heart my ambition would not lead me into public life. My only ambition is to do my duty in this world as I am capable of performing it and to merit the good opinion of all men.—Washington to Benjamin Lincoln, October 26, 1788

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say for one that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow men.—Lincoln, Communication to the People of Sangamo County, 1832

I cannot omit the occasion to congratulate you and my country on the success of the experiment nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe . . . that his providential care may still be extended to the United States.—Washington, Eighth Annual Address, December 7, 1796

Our popular government has often been called an experiment.
—Lincoln, Message to Congress in Special Session, 1861

To take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn around the powers of Congress is to take possession of a boundless field of power.—Thomas Jefferson, “Opinion against the Constitutionality of a National Bank,” 1791

Would I not thus give up all footing upon constitution or law? Would I not thus be in the boundless field of absolutism?—Lincoln to Salmon Chase, 1863

Of course, adulation and even imitation of Washington and Jefferson were scarcely unique in Lincoln's time, nor did Lincoln restrict himself just to them (Lincoln cited Henry Clay, his "beau ideal of a statesman," over forty times). What gave Lincoln's thinking about the history of the Revolution its unique torque was his connection between the Revolution and the classical political economy of the Enlightenment. The underlying purpose Lincoln discerned in "the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army, who achieved . . . Independence" was not "the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother land; but something . . . which gave promise that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance." That something was equality; and the equality Lincoln saw in the Declaration was an equality of economic opportunity that encouraged social mobility and self-transformation for everyone. "We stand at once the wonder and admiration of the whole world," Lincoln said in 1856, because in the United States, "every man can make himself." There are neither artificial hierarchies based on status nor inherent national or racial discriminations within the promise of the Declaration, but a universal equality based upon natural rights. "Most governments have been based, practically, on the denial of equal rights of men" because "they said, some men are too ignorant, and vicious, to share in government. Possibly so, said we; and, by your system, you would always keep them ignorant, and vicious. We proposed to give all a chance; and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant, wiser; and all better, and happier together."¹³

So universal and foundational were these natural rights that, despite ignorance, nationality, or race, anyone who had not deliberately closed his eyes could see and understand them. "Perhaps half our people . . . are men who have come from Europe—German, Irish, French and Scandinavian—men that have come from Europe themselves, or whose ancestors have come hither and settled here." They have no Romantic "connection . . . by Blood" with the Revolutionary Founders; but "when they look through that old Declaration of Independence they find" a proposition, *that all men are created equal*, and based on that proposition, "they feel that that moral sentiment taught in that day evidences their relation to those men, that it is the father of all moral principle in them, and that they have a right to claim it as

though they were blood of the blood, and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote that Declaration.” In fact, what Lincoln admired most in Henry Clay was that Clay “loved his country” not just because “it was his own country” but for its purposeful determination to be “a free country.” Liberty was not a provincial cultural invention of white, English-speaking Americans; the liberty Clay advanced, as an American, was “the advancement, prosperity and glory, of human liberty, human right and human nature.” And if he “desired the prosperity of his countrymen,” it was “chiefly to show to the world that freemen could be prosperous.”¹⁴

The connections Lincoln made between natural rights and economic and social mobility aligned him perfectly with Clay’s Whig Party in the 1830s and 1840s. It also made Lincoln a natural enemy of slavery, since the two fundamental facts that characterized slavery in John Calhoun’s South were its identification with race and its absolute annihilation of mobility, not only for the enslaved, but even for free whites who were encouraged to see their society as a *herrenvolk* democracy in which thousand-bale planters and white yeomen would accept economic stasis in the interest of promoting racial solidarity. His enmity against slavery was reinforced by his ambitious program of reading in political economy, all of which was a choir in praise of bourgeois capitalism: “Mill’s political economy, Carey’s political economy, social science. McCullough’s [McCulloch’s] political economy.” Lincoln “liked political economy, the study of it,” Herndon remembered, and Shelby Cullom was even more emphatic: “Theoretically, Mr. Lincoln was strong on financial questions. On political economy he was great.” But of them all, it was Francis Wayland’s *Elements of Political Economy* (1837) that Lincoln liked best. “Lincoln ate up, digested, and assimilated Wayland’s little work.” And as with Washington and Jefferson, scraps of Wayland’s writings, great and small, frequently embedded themselves in Lincoln’s writings.¹⁵

The competition which exists in a free country, is all that is necessary to bring wages to their proper level. Hence, combinations among capitalists or laborers are not only useless, but expensive, and unjust.—Wayland, Elements of Political Economy, 303

If the gentleman from Fulton thought that he was paying too high for his bread and meat, let him go home and invite his constituents to come over and set up a competition in this line of business. This was a matter that would always regulate itself.—Lincoln, “Speech in Illinois Legislature on Bill to Provide Payment for Work on State House,” 1841

Internal improvements, such as roads, canals, railroads, &c., may, in general, be safely left to individual enterprise. . . . The only case in which a government should

assume such works, is that in which their magnitude is too great for individual enterprise, or that in which the power they confer, is too great to be entrusted to private corporations.—Wayland, Elements of Political Economy, 405

The legitimate object of government, is to do for a community of people, whatever they need to have done, but can not do, at all, or can not, so well do, for themselves—in their separate, and individual capacities.—Lincoln, “Fragment on Government,” 1854

[I]f A, on the ground of intellectual superiority, have a right to improve his own means of happiness, by diminishing those which the Creator has given to B, B would have the same right over A, on the ground of superior muscular strength; while C would have a correspondent right over them both, on the ground of superiority of wealth; and so on indefinitely.—Wayland, Elements of Moral Science, 191

If A. can prove, however conclusively, that he may, of right, enslave B. why may not B. snatch the same argument, and prove equally, that he may enslave A?—

You say A. is white, and B. is black. It is color, then; the lighter, having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with a fairer skin than your own.

You do not mean color exactly? You mean the whites are intellectually the superiors of the blacks, and, therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with an intellect superior to your own.

But, say you, it is a question of interest; and, if you can make it your interest, you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest, he has the right to enslave you.—Lincoln, “Fragment on Slavery,” 1854

[I]f a thing need to be done today, we have no means which shall enable us to estimate the loss that may ensue, by putting it off until tomorrow.—Wayland, Elements of Political Economy, 377

The leading rule for the lawyer, as for the man of every other calling, is diligence. Leave nothing for tomorrow which can be done today.—Lincoln, “Fragment: Notes for a Law Lecture,” 1850

Lincoln was (in a phrase) a classical liberal democrat—an enemy of artificial hierarchy, a friend to trade and business as ennobling and enabling, and an American counterpart to Mill, Cobden, and Bright (whose portrait Lincoln hung in his White House office).¹⁶

There was, at the end of the day, almost nothing about Lincoln that anyone could decisively pinpoint as Romantic. He glorified the operation of reason and shunned appeals to passion. He was repelled by “the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober

judgement of Courts” and suspected that it was tyrants, not lovers of liberty, who “naturally seek the gratification of their ruling passion,” which is the lust for power. “Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason” was the best material for creating “general intelligence, [sound] morality and, in particular, a reverence for the constitution and laws.” His taste in philosophy ran in the path of Enlightenment logic—toward Joseph Butler’s *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Nature* (1736), for instance, or Jeremy Bentham’s Utilitarianism—rather than Chateaubriand or Schleiermacher. Noah Brooks learned that Lincoln “was a lover of many philosophical books, and particularly liked Butler’s *Analogy of Religion* [and] *Stuart Mill on Liberty*.” He “never read Novels,” apart from having once tried to penetrate Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* (another Romantic celebration, like *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, of medieval chivalry) “but never finished it.” He was more curious about geology, even to the point of reading through Sir Charles Lyell’s epochal *Principles of Geology* (1830–33) and Robert Chambers’s *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (1844). But he had no interest in finding the sublime in a

deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e’er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!

When Lincoln returned from Congress by way of Niagara Falls in 1849, Herndon eagerly quizzed him about his thoughts “in the presence of the great natural wonder?” Lincoln, partly to tease the overeager Herndon, but also in truth, said, “The thing that struck me most forcibly when I saw the Falls, was, where in the world did all that water come from?” Lincoln simply had no eye “for the magnificence and grandeur of the scene, for the rapids, the mist, the angry waters, and the roar of the whirlpool. . . . It was in this light he viewed every question.” Shortly thereafter, the Great Lakes steamer Lincoln was traveling upon ran aground on a sandbar, and Lincoln’s first reaction was what might have been expected from Benjamin Franklin rather than Samuel Taylor Coleridge: “Mr. Lincoln was very attentive in watching the movements of the hands and the effect of what they did; he occasionally made suggestions that profited the commander.” Eventually, he even developed a device for floating “stranded boats,” which he patented.¹⁷

But at no point did Lincoln depart further from the Romantic sensibility than in his firm refusal to be drawn into the vortex of American Protestant evangelicalism. The Founders of the Republic might have been men of the

Enlightenment, and they wrote the American Constitution with a view toward zoning the unpredictable energies of religion off the public square; but in the two decades after Lincoln's birth, a renascent evangelicalism reconquered large stretches of American culture, and it did so, in large measure, through cultivating the most passionate commitments of "the religious affections" in revival meetings and "disinterested benevolence" in various reform societies. The conservative Old School Calvinism, "which did very well in the days of our fathers," complained Princeton's Albert Baldwin Dod, "will not answer now. . . . This is an age of great excitement," and "we must have something more exciting," something "grand. Terrible, &c." which "will fever the blood, quicken the pulse, blanch the cheek, and agitate the whole frame." Lincoln had grown up with this on the frontier and wanted no part of it. His parents' church, the Separate Baptists, repudiated revivals and "excitement" in favor of an absolute Calvinist predestination, but Lincoln rejected that, too. As an adolescent, Lincoln "had no particular religion—didn't think of that question at that time, if he ever did—He never talked about it." And as much as his head was drilled full of memorized Scripture, his preferred reading on religion was in the two most popular religious skeptics of the Enlightenment, "Tom Pain[e] & [Constantin] Volney." When Lincoln moved to Springfield in 1837 to practice law under John Todd Stuart, Stuart thought "he was an avowed and open Infidel" who "Sometimes bordered on atheism" and "went further against Christian beliefs—& doctrines & principles than any man I ever heard."¹⁸

Lincoln soon enough discovered that a reputation for "infidelity" was not going to win him many votes among the faithful of central Illinois, and the "whispering . . . levied a tax of considerable per cent" on his electability. He issued a number of ambiguous statements about religion, admitting what he could not deny, but denying that this created any crisis for voters' confidence. "That I am not a member of any Christian Church, is true; but I have never denied the truth of the Scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination of Christians in particular." Herndon suspected that, "to avoid the disgrace, odium, and unpopularity" that "infidelity" would bring down on him, Lincoln advertised himself "openly to the world as a seeker." If so, the seeking was not very energetic. "I never heard of his entering a place where God is worshipped, and I have never yet found a person who could give me any evidence that he ever went to a [religious] meeting in the town," complained one Springfield minister. "He often goes to the railroad shop and spends the Sabbath in reading Newspapers, and telling stories to the workmen, but not

to the house of God.” And yet, Lincoln *did* consider himself to be at least some parts of a seeker. To Aminda Rogers Rankin, he candidly confessed his “shadows and questionings”; but he had been schooled in the hard logic of Calvinist predestination, and if God did exist, he was a God who did the choosing of people by his own will, not the other way round. “I am a fatalist,” Lincoln admitted, and until God chose to enlighten him, Lincoln thought “it was my lot to go on in a twilight, feeling and reasoning my way through life, as questioning, doubting Thomas did.”¹⁹

He did not consider himself an optimist. All human beings, Lincoln believed, behave according to self-interest; provide them with a set of “motives” that appeal to that self-interest, and they will respond predictably. To Herndon, he “contended that motives moved the man to every voluntary act of his life. . . . Man is compelled to feel, think, will, and to act subject to the influences of these conditions.” Nor did he exempt himself from that rule. “I claim not to have controlled events,” he declared to Albert G. Hodges, “but confess plainly that events have controlled me.” Reflecting on the series of splits, twists, and maneuvers that had led to his dark-horse nomination and election to the presidency, Lincoln concluded “from the fact of his having made a race for the Senate of the United States with Judge Douglas in the state of Illinois, his name became prominent, and he was accidentally selected and elected afterwards as president of the United States.” Fundamentally, Lincoln was conscious that his “melancholy” was a temperamental characteristic. “You flaxen men with broad faces are born with cheer and don’t know a cloud from a star,” Lincoln remarked to Iowa congressman Josiah Grinnell. “I am of another temperament.” The Civil War only deepened that melancholy. “When I think of the sacrifices of life yet to be offered and the hearts and homes yet to be made desolate before this dreadful war is over,” he said to a military staffer on the way to the Gettysburg Soldiers’ Cemetery dedication in November 1863, “my heart is like lead within me, and I feel, at times, like hiding in deep darkness.”²⁰

And yet, for all the certainty with which Lincoln spoke of feeling certain that “I should meet with some terrible end,” in the *longue durée* of human progress toward liberty, he was as much a man of hope as Gibbon. “The struggle of today,” he wrote to Congress in his first annual presidential message in December 1861, was “for a vast future also.” As burdened as he was by the struggles of the war, “the great republic” and “the principle it lives by” were the guarantee “for man’s vast future.” He described emancipation as a “motive” for rallying black enlistment, since “negroes, like other people, act upon motives.” But once they were enlisted, Lincoln was also certain, black

soldiers would “with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet” be instrumental in helping “mankind on to this great consummation.” Even after four years of civil bloodletting, “the national resources, then, are unexhausted, and, as we believe, inexhaustible.” Provide only an “increased devotion to that cause for which” the Union’s dead had given “the last full measure of devotion,” and “this nation” will enjoy “a new birth of freedom.” And more than just *this nation*, the principle of “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”²¹

Helen Nicolay wrote about the man her father had served as principal White House secretary that “the truth is that Lincoln was no prophet of a distant day. . . . His early life was essentially of the old era.” Intellectually, he belonged much more to the world of Washington and Franklin—and Paine and Volney—than to the soon-dawning era of William James. It has been difficult to appreciate the importance of that world because the one that succeeded it—the intellectual world of James’s pragmatism—represented such a stark intellectual break with Lincoln’s. Richard Hofstadter once wrote that “had [Lincoln] lived to seventy, he would have seen the generation brought up on self-help come into its own, build oppressive business corporations, and begin to close off those treasured opportunities for the little man.” It was actually worse than that, because Hofstadter saw Lincoln only through the lens of an American evasion of class struggle; what would have been just as painful would be an intellectual world in which questions of truth and validity could be settled only by an appeal to practice and experience, which sounds oddly similar to Stephen A. Douglas’s doctrine of “popular sovereignty.” The hallmark of Enlightenment thought was its confidence that whatever questions there are in the universe, precise answers exist somewhere for them, and that they are all part of a single natural system. The aesthetic of Romanticism was built around the suspicion that there were no such answers, but that passion might supply a satisfactory substitute. Even granting that Lincoln was not an intellectual but a politician, it is hard to believe that, even as a politician, he would be comfortable living with that.²²

Notes

1. Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography and Other Writings*, ed. L. Jesse Lemisch (New York: New American Library, 1961), 106.
2. Voltaire, *Philosophical Letters*, ed. Ernest Dilworth (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1961), 39; Daniel Defoe, “The Complete English Tradesman” (1727), in *Commerce, Culture, and Liberty: Readings on Capitalism before Adam Smith*, ed. H. C. Clark (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2003), 242.

3. Gibbon quoted in Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), 187.

4. Blake quoted in Kenneth Clark, *The Romantic Rebellion: Romantic versus Classical Art* (New York: Scribner's, 1973), 45.

5. Joseph de Maistre, "Study on Sovereignty," in *The Works of Joseph de Maistre*, ed. Jack Lively (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 103, 107, 113; Paul Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern: World Society, 1815–1830* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 142–51; Richard Wolin, *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism from Nietzsche to Postmodernism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), 115.

6. John C. Calhoun, "Disquisition on Government," in *Union and Liberty: The Political Philosophy of John C. Calhoun*, ed. R. M. Lence (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1992), 42, 44; George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! or, Slaves without Masters*, ed. C. Vann Woodward (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 246; Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, ed. Henry Hardy (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 61; Eugene Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southerners' Worldview* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 62–68.

7. Francis Wayland, *Elements of Political Economy* (Boston, 1837), 391; Richard Hildreth, "Theory of Wealth," in *An American Utilitarian: Richard Hildreth as a Philosopher*, ed. M. M. Pingel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 45, 48, 49.

8. Statement of Henry Clay Whitney (1887), and letter of James Herndon (May 29, 1865), in *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 16, 648; Jesse Weik, *The Real Lincoln: A Portrait* (1922), ed. Michael Burlingame (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 75; Herndon to Jesse Weik (November 24, 1882), and Herndon's essay "Lincoln the Lawyer," in Emmanuel Hertz, *The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon* (New York: Viking, 1938), 88, 427; *Lincoln Legal Briefs*, no. 41 (January–March 1997) and no. 44 (October–December 1997); Abraham Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County" (March 9, 1832), "Fragment: Notes for a Law Lecture" (July 1, 1850), "Brief Autobiography" (June 15, 1858), "Speech at Chicago, Illinois" (July 10, 1858), "To Jesse W. Fell, Enclosing Autobiography" (December 20, 1859), and "Autobiography Written for John L. Scripps" (June 1860), in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, 9 vols., hereafter referred to as *Collected Works* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953–55), 1:8–9, 2:81, 459, 491, 3:511, 4:62; Mark Steiner, *An Honest Calling: The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006), 52–53.

9. Michael Burlingame, *The Inner World of Abraham Lincoln* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 39; Herndon to C.O. Poole (January 5, 1886) and David Davis to Herndon, in Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 120, 426; Stuart, in *The Lincoln Papers*, ed. David C. Mearns (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1948),

159; Hay, in *An Oral History of Abraham Lincoln: John G. Nicolay's Interviews and Essays*, ed. Michael Burlingame (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 26.

10. Letters of J. Rowan Herndon (May 26, 1865), William H. Greene (May 30, 1865), Dennis F. Hanks (June 13 and September 8, 1865), N. W. Branson (August 3, 1865), and Joshua Speed (December 6, 1866) to William Herndon, in Wilson and Davis, *Herndon's Informants*, 7, 18, 41, 90, 105, 499; Josiah G. Holland, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Mass.: Gurdon Bill, 1866), 31–32; Michael Lind, *What Lincoln Believed: The Values and Convictions of America's Greatest President* (New York: Random House, 2004), 44–45, 47; Louis A. Warren, *Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years, Seven to Twenty-three, 1816–1830* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1991), 76–79, 87, 103–11; Stewart Winger, *Lincoln, Religion, and Romantic Cultural Politics* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), 202–3; Noah Brooks, quoting Lincoln, in *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Don Fehrenbacher and Virginia Fehrenbacher (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996), 54.

11. Letters of Mentor Graham (May 29, 1865), Henry McHenry (May 29, 1865), and Joshua Speed (December 6, 1866) to Herndon, in Wilson and Davis, *Herndon's Informants*, 10, 14, 499; William G. Green, in Mearns, *Lincoln Papers*, 154; Charles Maltby, *The Life and Public Services of Abraham Lincoln* (Los Angeles: Daily Independent Steam Power Print, 1884), 31–32; Elihu Washburne, in *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of His Time*, ed. Allen Thorndike Rice (New York: North American Press, 1886), 7.

12. Lincoln, “Communication to the People of Sangamo County” (March 9, 1832), “Address before the Young Men’s Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois” (January 27, 1838), “An Address, Delivered before the Springfield Washington Temperance Society” (February 22, 1842), “Farewell Address at Springfield, Illinois” (February 11, 1861), “Address to the New Jersey Senate at Trenton, New Jersey” (February 21, 1861), “Speech in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania” (February 22, 1861), “Message to Congress in Special Session” (July 4, 1861), and “To Salmon P. Chase” (September 2, 1863), in *Collected Works*, 1:8, 115, 279, 4:190, 235, 240, 439, 6:429; Willard Sterne Randall, *George Washington: A Life* (New York: Owl Books, 1997), 437, 468; George Washington, “Eighth Annual Address” (December 7, 1796), in *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897*, ed. James D. Richardson (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), 1:204; Thomas Jefferson, “Opinion against the Constitutionality of a National Bank” (February 15, 1791), in *The Complete Jefferson: Containing His Major Writings, Published and Unpublished, except His Letters*, ed. Saul K. Padover (New York: Buell, Sloan and Pierce, 1943), 342; Warren, *Lincoln's Youth*, 162–64.

13. Lincoln, “Fragment on Slavery” (July 1, 1854), “Speech at Kalamazoo, Michigan” (August 27, 1856), and “Speech in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania” (February 22, 1861), in *Collected Works*, 2:222, 364, 4:240; Edgar DeWitt Jones, *The Influence of Henry Clay upon Abraham Lincoln* (Lexington, Ky.: Henry Clay Memorial Foundation, 1952), 19.

14. Lincoln, "Eulogy on Henry Clay" (July 6, 1852), and "Speech at Chicago, Illinois" (July 10, 1858), in *Collected Works*, 2:126, 499–500; J. David Greenstone, *The Lincoln Persuasion: Remaking American Liberalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 250.

15. Herndon to Jesse Weik (January 1, 1886), in Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 117; Cullom, in Walter B. Stevens, *A Reporter's Lincoln*, ed. Michael Burlingame (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 154; Lincoln, "Speech in Illinois Legislature on Bill to Provide Payment for Work on State House" (January 25, 1841), "Fragment: Notes for a Law Lecture" (July 1, 1850), "Fragment on Government" (July 1, 1854), and "Fragment on Slavery" (July 1, 1854), in *Collected Works*, 1:230, 2:220, 222–23; Wayland, *Elements of Political Economy*, 303, 377, 405; Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1851), 191; William Lee Miller, *Lincoln's Virtues: An Ethical Biography* (New York: Knopf, 2002), 278.

16. The single major exception to Lincoln's adherence to the political economy of the Manchester liberals concerned free trade, since Lincoln (like the rest of the Whig Party) was an ardent apostle of protection and tariffs; the difference, however, lay largely in the relative positions of the American and British economies, with American industry still requiring some form of shelter while it grew to proportions capable of competing in world markets with British goods. Wayland, however, frankly sympathized with free trade and endorsed the Anti-Corn Law League (see Wayland, *Elements of Political Economy*, 343; and Lind, *What Lincoln Believed*, 92–94).

17. Lincoln, "Address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois" (January 27, 1838), and "Speech to the Jury in the Rock Island Bridge Case, Chicago, Illinois" (September 22, 1857), in *Collected Works*, 1:109, 113, 115, 2:418; Francis B. Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), 115; Noah Brooks, "Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln," in *Lincoln Observed: Civil War Dispatches of Noah Brooks*, ed. Michael Burlingame (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 219; William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 187–88; Herndon, "Lincoln's Boat," in Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 397. The verses are from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*.

18. Albert Baldwin Dod, "On Revivals of Religion," in *Essays, Theological and Miscellaneous, Reprinted from the Princeton Review* (New York, 1847), 118, 133; interview with Sarah Bush Lincoln (September 8, 1865), letter of Abner Ellis (January 6, 1866), and interview with John Todd Stuart (March 2, 1870), in Wilson and Davis, *Herndon's Informants*, 107, 179, 576.

19. Herndon and Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln*, 213; Lincoln, "Handbill Replying to Charges of Infidelity" (July 31, 1846), and "To Allen N. Ford" (August 11, 1846), in *Collected Works*, 1:382, 383; G. W. Pendleton, quoted in Burlingame, *Oral History*, 155; Rankin, quoting Lincoln, in Fehrenbacher and Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words*, 373.

20. Lincoln, "To Albert G. Hodges" (April 4, 1864), in *Collected Works*, 5:35; Lind, *What Lincoln Believed*, 59; Charles Morehead and Josiah Grinnell, quoted in Fehrenbacher and Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words*, 186, 334; E. W. Andrews in Thorndike, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, 511; Herndon to Jesse Weik (November 14, 1885, and February 25, 1887), in Hertz, *Hidden Lincoln*, 103, 180; Winger, *Lincoln, Religion, and Romantic Cultural Politics*, 78.

21. "Annual Message to Congress" (December 3, 1861), "To James C. Conkling" (August 26, 1863), "Gettysburg Address" (November 19, 1863), and "Annual Message to Congress" (December 6, 1864), in *Collected Works*, 6:410, 7:23, 281, 8:151.

22. Helen Nicolay, *Personal Traits of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Century, 1912), 381–82; Richard Hofstadter, "Abraham Lincoln and the Self-Made Myth," in *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (1948; reprint, New York: Knopf, 1973), 105; Berlin, *Roots of Romanticism*, 21–22.