Reconstructing the Causes of the American Civil War from Historiographical Perspectives

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Abstract:

This paper seeks to reconstruct the causes of the American Civil War (1861-1865) from three perspectives pertaining to historiographical controversies. It attempts to ascertain some plausible understanding of this war by contrasting these accounts reflecting rival positions towards it (namely, an official American Administration version, an economic account, and a Southern perspective). The rationale behind such an enterprise is to relativize them and lay bare their authors' biases reconstructed from their vantage points. This enterprise has been investigated through postmodern key concepts denoting an inter-disciplinarity between historiography and linguistics. To this effect, a historiographical synthesis is made of the theoretical frameworks of White (1978, 1987) and MucCullagh (1998) leading to an analytic checklist. Textual data are analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, focusing on causality. It has been found that the three accounts are not neutral, and that the abolition of slavery was a main but not the sole cause behind the war.

Keywords: **historiographical debate, constructs, ideology, perspectives, goal-orientation**

Background of the Study

The causes of the American Civil War (ACW) have been a matter of historiographical debate as to the roots of what is conventionally taught in academic history: namely, the claim that the abolition of slavery was the ultimate cause behind the ACW. Johnson (1966, p. 176) accounted for this war as "a sectional struggle with roots in such a complex of political, economic and social differences that no single basic cause can be specified". The complexity of the causes of ACW led one to further readings as Tulloch (1999) and Kennedy and Benson (2007) who labeled it as "The War for Southern Independence". For this, this article's focus is limited to the study of secondary sources making up three lines of research.

The first account is 'Sectional Conflict', the sixth chapter of *Outline of American History*. It represents the political version claiming that racial question to be the real cause leading to the war. The second account includes two chapters: chapter 19 entitled 'Why the Civil War came' and chapter 20 entitled 'The Crisis in the Chattel Slave System' in *Social Forces in American History*. This account represents the Southern perspective; it pertains to an economic version reflected through a description of a discrepancy between the North and the South. It includes two parts: the 'Preface' and the second chapter entitled 'Marx, Engels and Lincoln'. It tackles the issue from a geographical perspective. These causes are going to be investigated by studying causality.

Literature Review

This review is aimed to present the general theoretical framework, the main theories and the various concepts relevant to the analysis of the chosen corpus. This part involves the sources of materials and the concepts of scholars interested in history writing. These are White (1978, 1987) and McCullagh (1998), two divergent lines of thought represented in this study.

History/Historiography Definitions

Studying history enables readers to 'visit' the past, through the study of historical documents. Tulloch (1999) contends that history is strongly determined by the dictates of the present and contemporaries of any society. For Murphey (2009, p.1), "[h]istory is an account of what existed and happened in the past and why it happened". Jenkins (1991, p. 26) has a different view: "History is a shifting problematic discourse, ostensibly about an aspect of the world, the past that is produced by a group of present-minded in mutually recognizable ways that are epistemologically, methodologically, ideologically and practically positioned".

Defining historiography, White (1987, p. 4) conceives of historiography in relation to narration: "Historiography is an especially good ground on which to consider the nature of narration and narrativity because it is here that our desire for the imaginary, the possible, must contest with the imperatives of the real". Furay and Salevouris (1988, p. 223) define historiography as "the study of the way history has been and is written – the history of historical writing".

These definitions lead one to speak about the methods followed by scholars in historiography.

Methods of history writing

Methods pertain to "the objective analysis of sources into their component parts to distinguish which are the most trustworthy" (Collingwood, 1994 cited in Munslow, 1997, p. 65). They are used by historians to interpret the past in an attempt to produce a form of knowledge disseminated through accounts. Two methods, relevant to this paper focus, have been shed light on Reconstruction and Deconstruction.

Reconstruction

At the beginning of the 20th century, the empiricist scientific vision of history as an "empirical enterprise" (Ranke, 2011, Introduction), was inherited by Reconstructionists[1] who believe that the reconstruction of history can be realized through objective methodology as an "anti-hypothetical" and "value- neutral" empirical method. This requires conformity to accuracy and truthfulness to reconstruct the past as it really happened. Reconstruction adopts major principles from empiricism, these are:

> ➤ The past is real. Facts are discovered in evidence.
> ➤ Facts precede interpretation.
> ➤ Truth is not "perspectival".

These principles provide historians a framework of "commitment to an evidence-based methodology" giving way to "interpretations that allow the reconstruction/construction of the past" (Munslow, 1997, p. 36). Within a movement for change, reconstruction dealt with the analysis of structures more than narration. This method was followed by deconstruction.

Deconstruction/ Post –structuralism

It came into existence in the second half of the 20th century in the framework of the post-structuralist challenge to the traditional assumptions of Empiricism and Reconstruction (Munslow, 1997). Deconstruction shifted from certainties of historical truth to a focus on the historical text. White (1978, 87) and Jenkins (1991) have challenged the belief that historians can be objective in favor of the assumption that our knowledge of the past is one-sided. They focused on the historian's involvement in history representation through the conscious use of language. Jenkins assumes that historians inevitably impose a "textualized" shape on the past because the historian "emplots the data" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 59). Different emplotments lead to different versions of the same event.

Apart from methods, sources are at the origin of historiographical debate between scholars. This is the content of the following subsection.

Sources

Sources are the references that historical scholars rely on in an "attempt to re-create the significant features of the past" (Marwick, 1981, p. 136). Marwick distinguishes two types of sources: primary and secondary. How reliable, innocent, objective are they?

Primary sources

Marwick (1981, p. 137) defines the primary source as "the raw material, more meaningful to the expert historian than to the layman". In the same vein, Woodworth (1996, p. 59) argues

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[1] Reconstructionists are mainstream reconstructionalist philosophers of history as C. Behan McCullagh, who claim the objective reconstruction of the past through accuracy of observation of evidence and adequacy of inferences, the way to certainties of historical truth (Munslow, 1998).

that primary sources generally take the form of "memoirs, diaries, and letters"; they are "unfiltered" and reliable sources that resist, to a certain extent, the mediation of the historian. They include data before they are interpreted by academics.

Regarding reliability, Lowe (2007, p. 130) envisions that because they are "original sets of data", primary sources "have less of the element of commentary to them"; for this, they "are usually more reliable and less influenced by opinion". Accordingly, the reference to primary sources in history representation opens to question the historian's subjectivity.

Secondary sources

These sources take the form of books and articles written by historians who account for the past from their respective theoretical orientations. "The secondary source is the coherent work of history, article, dissertation or book, in which both the intelligent layman and the historian who is venturing upon a new research topic, or keeping in touch with new discoveries in his chosen field" (Marwick, 1981, p. 137).

As for reliability, secondary sources do not pertain to a direct access to reality as they rely on the works of predecessors including interpretations of the past and findings particularly personal to them. In this context, La Capra (1985, p. 11) assumes that these sources are "texts that supplement or "rework" reality and not mere sources that divulge facts about reality"

Key concepts of historiography

Historians present different accounts to what really happened (Munslow, 1998) due to various key concepts they adapt to write about history. These concepts are neutrality, causality, point of view, interpretation and style (White, 1987)

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Neutrality

Neutrality is the bone of contention in historiography; the strife for neutrality has been the scope of historiographical debate between scholars for several decades. McCullagh (1998) argues for the neutrality and detachment of the historian for the sake of objectivity. Contrary to postmodern historical scholars 'skepticism about the possibility of writing accurate descriptions of the past, McCullagh believes that history can pertain to a true and objective account of it; therefore, it limits the doubt cast on the significance of what historians write. Interestingly, the inconsistencies resulting from scholars' preconceptions do not deny the existence of "minimum standards of truth and adequacy which historians' accounts are expected to meet" (McCullagh, 1998, p. 35). He views that the exact correspondence of historical descriptions to events described, which historians consider as a "naïve" assumption, possible. Burke (1991, p. 6) views that historians cannot avoid retelling the past from a particular angle; for this, they give different versions to the same event. Thus, it could be assumed that presuppositions enhance opposite viewpoints. For this, claiming that history is objective, an ideal distinguishing the traditional paradigm, is today considered to be unrealistic. So, the existence of a plurality of versions raises questions of conformity to transparency.

Causality

The notion of causality carries out a view of how history works; it is defined as "the relation between a cause and its effect"*(Longman dictionary of the English Language,* p. 230).Causality is what White (1978, p. 8) calls "Emplotment" to refer to the historian's conceptualization of the structure s/he gives to the sequencing ofevents. "Emplotment" is "the encodation of the facts contained in the chronicle". The relevance of this concept to my discussion is that historians 'weave' the causes to results the way that matches their conceptualizations and assumptions. Thus, causality reveals that history is about the relationship between events as conceived by the historian. Events can be emplotted differently through narrative means of "encodation"; for this, writing about history does not account for the events exclusively but also for the nature of the relationships between the events, which is not intrinsic. According to this view, history is not only about events but also about the sets of relationships that those events have and which are represented by the historian. In a different vein, McCullagh (1998, p. 173) assumes that history is largely about human actions which are explained in terms of the reasons for which they were done. For this, historians not only refer to interpretation or description but also explanations that are causal: "They tell a story of how an event came about; beginning with the cause which first increased the probability of the effect significantly" (ibid).

Point of view/Subjectivity

Jenkins (19925, p. 12) asserts that the historian's view affects his/her choice of historical materials: "the historian's viewpoint and predilections still shape the choice of historical materials, and our own personal constructs determine what we make of them". However objective the historian tries to be in his assessment of evidence, his account remains subjective as s/he cannot flee from his assumptions that shape his/her views of the world. Accordingly, the historian's viewpoint contributes to the existence of a plurality of historical accounts.In the same vein, White argues that the historian cannot flee from his/her involvement in the narrative discourse. "The 'subjectivity' of the discourse is given by the presence, explicit or implicit, of an 'ego' that can be defined only as the person who maintains the discourse" (White, 1987, p. 3). He stresses that the historian's involvement in his/her narrative is inescapable however committed, objective and detached the historical scholar tries to be.

Interpretation

 In terms of White's (1978) outlook, narratives are basically interpretations and not writings about "sacred facts". He defines interpretation in history as "the provisions of a plot structure for a sequence of events so that their nature as a comprehensible process is revealed by their figuration as *a story of a particular kind*" (White, 1978, p. 58). He considers the element of interpretation in history representation, "inexpungeable" as the historian interprets the materials at his disposal in order to mirror a given segment of the historical process in narrative accounts in order to provide something like an "explanation" of it" (ibid, p. 57). In the same line of thought, Jenkins (1992, p. 25) believes that "history is inescapably interpretive". Historians interpret past events in the light of their presuppositions. Therefore, interpretation is not submitted to the commitments of detachment; it is a subjective performance that stands behind overlapping approaches in historiography.

In a different vein, McCullagh (1998) assumes that history is largely about human actions which are explained in terms of the reasons for which they were done. Historians not only refer to interpretation or description but also to causal explanations. He states: "They (explanations) tell a story of how an event came about; beginning with the cause which first increased the probability of the effect significantly" (ibid, p. 173).

Ideology

Ideology refers to the ideas determining the degree of thoughts and awareness of an individual or a group. Munslow (1997, p. 184) defines ideology as a "coherent set of socially produced ideas that lend or create a group consciousness". Ideology in historical narrative is disassociated in the dynamics of the discourse the former conveys. White (1987, p. ix) believes that the historical discourse is not neutral but loaded; for this, he accords much importance to focusing on the scholar's ideology back-grounded in his/her narrative when studying the historical discourse. He envisions that "narrative is not merely a neutral discursive form…but rather entails ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and even specifically political implications"(White, 1987, p. ix). These choices reflect the ideological commitments of the historian that drive the historical discourse to be ideological. Such an assumption leads to the understanding that ideology is a mind style that constructs the historian's perception of history as well as the world. This style is manifested in the interpretation of the past in the light of an agenda detected through the strategic and emotive use of language. Writing about history is highly associated with ideology since "in history every representation of the past has specifiable ideological implications" (White, 1978, p. 69). The historian's mediation of the past through reflection on events carried out in interpretation and explanation. Such reflection has ideological implications that can lead to the understanding that history is a deliberate linguistic construct. The historical narrative is a construct in which the historian engrains his personal ideological orientations so as to work effectively. In this respect, Fairclough (1989, p. 85) assumes that "ideology is most affective when its workings are less visible". Therefore, ideology makes the historical discourse deviational from the path of fairness and conformity to objectivity. Ideological arguments reflect "any manipulation of the evidence" that can be detected from the investigation of the choices of the historian to consecrate his/her assumptions (White, 1987, p. 76).

One is entitled to presuppose that history writing is not ideology-free. Interpretation patterns and envisaged methodologies bear political, economic as well as cultural ideological claims that lie behind conflicting opinions of historical scholars serving powerful and ruling classes. Jenkins (1991, p. 17) reaffirms his conviction that history is "an ideological construct" that is differently represented by scholars who have different social, geographical and economic belongings. History is "constantly being re-worked and re-ordered by all those who are variously affected by power relationships" (Jenkins, 199, p. 17).

To wrap up, the ideology of the historical scholar determines his/her view of the past and its representation; this triggers out controversial perspectives, which makes this section central to the research topic at hand and the problem stated

Methodology

This part presents the methodological guidelines followed to conduct the research at hand. These are: Corpus description, research framework and research methods respectively.

Corpus Description

The corpus at hand involves three sub-corpora having differently-held positions towards the causes of the ACW. The accounts are: the Political account, the Economic account and the Geographic account, respectively.

The political/ official account

This account is extracted from *Outline of American History*, written by the Bureau of International Information programs, U.S. Department of State. It is the sixth chapter of this book, entitled "Sectional Conflict" and comprises 4440 words written in 10 pages (p. 130-139 of the original work). The choice of this chapter is motivated by the fact that it provides readers with a chronological account of the ACW causes. It represents the official/ political perspective propagating the abolition of slavery in the South as the real cause behind the war.

The economic/ Marxist account

It is taken from *Social forces in American history* (1911) written by Simons. It includes two chapters: chapter 19 entitled "Why the Civil War came" (p 216- 221) and chapter 20 entitled "The Crisis in the Chattel Slave System" (p. 222-237). It comprises 6306 words written in 22 pages. This account offers an economic interpretation to the causes of the ACW: a perpetual sectional antagonism due to two rival economic systems: capitalism in the North and "chattel slavery" in the South. The flourishing North is depicted the master over the staggering South. Such clash of interests prepared the ground for the sections "to move in opposite directions" (p 219).

The geographic/southern account

This account is extracted from *Red Republicans and Lincoln's Marxists: Marxism in the Civil War* (2007), it includes two separate parts: the first is the 'Preface' including 5 pages (p. vii-xi) and the second chapter entitled "Marx, Engels and Lincoln" involves 18 pages (p. 27-44). These parts are written by Kennedy, a Southerner, and Benson, a "Northerner with Southern sympathies" (Cover page). They trace the cause of the ACW to the engagement of "Forty-Eighters" (European trends) in the Union Army (p. x). The South's secession was a break up with the "indivisible republic" (p. 32), which led the North to wage the war on the South to keep the Union.

Criteria of Selection

This study investigates the problems of representation in history through the study of three accounts approaching the causes of the ACW differently. This section clarifies the selection criteria behind the choice of the corpus. These criteria are relied upon to conduct a critical analysis of the three accounts under investigation.

The number of accounts

The number of accounts is determined in terms of feasibility and fitness for the focus and the research objectives stated beforehand. For these considerations, I selected three accounts pertaining to three lines of research to the case under study. The political, the economic and

the geographic accounts feature controversial perspectives which are significant dimensions in the study of history, in general, and the causes of the ACW, in particular.

Assumptions' detection

The accounts under study call for an investigation on the three versions as controversial perspectives, in an attempt to uncover the underlying assumptions, the biases, the propagated ideologies and the oriented goals of the scholars. Therefore, detecting ideologies is a significant process towards unveiling whose interests are served and whose are damaged when history is written from these very angles. This article aims to uncover historians' reflections on historiography, which may enhance readers to deal with history with a critical mind.

Search for a common thread

The choice of these particular accounts explains the search for a possibility of a common thread between these three versions. Taking into account that the economic account was written in 1911, the focus will be to look out for any continuity in the timeline between this account and the political one written in 2005 in terms of thought and theoretical orientation. Another motive may be to ascertain whether geography could be seen as a common thread between the accounts under focus. This is going to be investigated throughout this article.

Finding comprehensiveness

This corpus presents a fertile ground which exemplifies how historiographical controversies can be a fruitful debate in approaching history through displaying the scholars' worldviews. Therefore, building a comprehensive view as a synthesis between the three angles would demonstrate the narrow scope of the conventional historical knowledge claiming that the abolition of slavery was the main and the only cause behind the war.

The Research framework

The framework applied to investigate the corpus at hand comprises two elements: Analytic angles and linguistic tools adapted from White (1978, 87) and MacCullah (1998). The focus is limited to the linguistic tool of causality.

Table 1 below presents a synthesis of the qualitative toolkit applied to the study.

Qualitative toolkit			
Analytic Angles			Linguistic Tools
White's Checklist	McCullagh's Checklist	Corresponding tools	Linguistic realization of the tools
-Point of View -Interpretation	-Subjectivity -Causal Explanations	Causality	-Linkers
			-Prepositions
			-Denotation

Table 1: The Research Framework. Source: Adapted from Zghal (2012)

Analytic Methods

The analytical methods are used to structure the current research writing and reach its findings through a critical analysis of the corpus. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods will be opted for, throughout the research, to achieve the objectives stated beforehand.

Qualitative research paradigm

Holliday (2002, pp. 1-5) maintains that "qualitative research represents a statement about reality and social life that has to be continually argued and reaffirmed" because it shapes our views of the world. Qualitative research helps to uncover the deeply-monitored ideological complexities and the refined concepts embedded in linguistic tools to enforce the historical discourse and its propagation. Holliday (2002, p. 15) points out that "qualitative research must recognize the ideology which is embedded in its *own* discourse, method and theories". Detecting ideology in history requires the application of qualitative tools.

Text analysis figures a considerable qualitative instrument to highlight what linguistic choices have been made in the three texts. The analysis of the texts is carried out through the interpretation of the frequency of the most recurrent categories and their main implications in each text would help unearth the position, the tacit ideology and more importantly the goal orientation of the historians that they embed in the text.

Quantitative research paradigm

It explores numerical data through the application of technical tools to interpret the linguistic tools that the texts under focus entail. "Quantitative research is empirical research where the data are in the form of numbers" (Punch, 2000, p. 3). To make this application feasible, quantitative instruments are used.

The main quantitative instruments applied to the corpus study are adopted from Quantitative linguistics that analyses textual data quantitatively in order to attain findings that answer this paper's questions. "Quantitative linguistics is concerned with the application of statistical analysis to the study of language." (Triki&Sellami-Baklouti, 2002, p. 37). The quantitative instruments selected to conduct investigation are sampling techniques, electronic texts, search categories, frequency distribution and statistics. Their use is carried out through the use of the computer.

As for sampling techniques, 'Random Sampling' is adopted as a convenient sampling technique to conduct this study. The three accounts are relatively short but rich with linguistic cues to be exploited in the analysis part of this study through the application of analytic tools. Accordingly, the quantitative analysis is going to be carried out over the first ten pages of each account for the sake of consistency and ease of performance.

The second instrument used is the reference to electronic texts that are substantial for the aim of applying the quantitative research to these texts. Numerical supports are helpful instruments that provide the researcher with numerical data that lend themselves to any quantification of textual data. For instance, electronic texts are highly required as a practical framework enabling the researcher to carry out search categories and frequency counts for their subsequent interpretation.

Search categories, the forth instrument applied to the textual processing of the corpus through conducting a quantitative analysis of the main linguistic units pertaining to the focus of the current dissertation. This is carried out through the search for the most recurrent categories in the three texts under investigation. These categories are linguistic terms having grammatical implications, namely nouns, adverbs and linkers. The analysis of their recurrence results into the detection of the overt/covert point of view encapsulated in C1, C2 and C3 respectively.

The fifth instrument is the frequency distribution that concerns the count of the frequency of occurrence of linguistic units under focus. This will be conducted through opting for a simple software program: 'Microsoft Office Word 2007 Search' to work on C2 and C3, and 'Adobe Reader Search' to work on C1 as it is a 'PDF' text. I got access to these programs from the computer program 'Microsoft Office Word 2007'. These programs have been used because of their feasibility, ease of use and application.

Interpretation of the Analysis and Findings

The analysis of the corpus under research has been conducted to study causality across the corpus. The notion of causality carries out a view of how history works; a concept manifested in the past representation. Causality defined as "the relation between a cause and its effect" *(Longman Dictionary of the English Language, 1984,* p. 230) is differently-conceived in the views of White (1978) and McCullagh (1998). The study of causality has been carried out through the analysis of linkers, prepositions and denotation. What findings have been attained following the study of these linguistic tools?

The tables below present the most frequent instances of causality in C1, C2 and C3.

Angle	Realization	Instances	Frequency of Occurrence
Causality	1. Linkers	-As -Because	32 4
Causality	2. Prepositions	-To -For	99 35
Causality	3. Denotation	-Cause	3

Table 2: Frequency of linkers, prepositions and denotation in C1
The following table presents causality in C2.

Angle	Realization	Instances	Frequency of Occurrence
Causality	1.Linkers	-Because -As	5 10
	2.Prepositions	-To -For	61 18
	3. Denotation	-cause -"time" - "why" -"when"	6 7 7 7

Table 3: Frequency of linkers, prepositions and denotation in C2

The table below presents the tools expressing causality in C3.

Angle	Realization	Instances	Frequency of occurrence
	1. Linkers	As -Because	31 3
	2. Prepositions	- To -For	108 48
	3. Denotation	-Cause	8

Table 4: Frequency of linkers, prepositions and denotation in C2

The investigation of the linguistic tools of linkers, prepositions and denotation expressing causality across the corpus has led one to draw the following conclusions.

Linkers

A linker is a grammatical device that serves as "connecting element"[2] between sentence parts. The investigation of linkers has resulted in the non-innocent recourse to them to account for history. The most frequent causal linkers in C1 are "as" and "because with a disproportionate frequency: 32 to 4 respectively. The author makes more recourse to the linker "as" than "because" to account for causal relations between events. The former is used to present a cause that is supposed to be known and so taken for granted. The example that follows "as they fought the weight of Northern opinion" (C1, p. 132) implies that fighting for the weight of Northern opinion is taken for granted and intended to be so in the mind of the reader. Presenting causes as a given conveys a strategy of assumptions' consecration in terms of causality through the heavy density of 'as' in the text. Using "because" only 4 times, pertains to the finding that the author does not tend for explicitness; he is inclined to bring something new to the reader: "Texas remained an independent republic, largely because its annexation as

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[2]*Longman Dictionary of the English Language* (1984), P. 854

a huge new slave state would disrupt tthe increasingly precarious balance of political power in the United States" (C1, p. 134). Such A tendency for implicitness in some cases and straightforwardness in others reflects the entrenchment of the author to manipulate and direct readership to a pattern of causality pre-established in his/her mind.

In C2, the frequency of "as" and "because" are 10 and 5 respectively. The author opts for "as" to argue for the role of capitalism in political change: "As Northern capitalism grew stronger, wider in its scope, more definite in its objects, more united in its interests, more in need of national action to protect these interests both at home and abroad, it developed a political party to express those interests" (C2, p. 221). Nevertheless, the use of "because" in the following examples pertain to a different finding: "Because the slave represents a permanent investment on the part of the master, it is essential that employment be steady" and "because those engaged in the production of cotton in this comparatively small portion of the soil were the industrial, political, and social rulers of the South, it is the portion which is commonly referred to when the antebellum South is named" (C2, pp. 223-222). The author highlights the cause of the steadiness of the employment of slaves and the labeling of the South using 'because'. This explicitness is emotive about the firmness of the sense of causality in the mind of the author, which is determined by the significance of economic forces in social and political change.

 In terms of C3, the linkers "as" and "because" are disproportionately used (frequency: 31 to 3) to approach causality from a Southern perspective. "Just as slavery existed and was a point of contention between the colonies and Great Britain before and during the war for American Independence, the legacy of slavery, is a prominent fact of American history" (C3, p. 31). The authors recognize the centrality of the issue of slavery, presenting it as a given, a fact in American history.

Prepositions

A preposition is "a word or word group that combines with a noun, pronoun, or noun equivalent to form a phrase"[3]. The most frequent prepositions are "to" and "for". Although in the three accounts the proposition 'to' is more frequent than 'for', they are both used to convey the existence of a goal, a receiver and a goal: an entity that benefits from the action. The analysis of propositions proceeds to the following findings: In C1, the most frequent prepositions are 'to' and 'for' (Frequency: 99 and 35); they are used to find causal relations to events. The use of 'to' indicates the existence of a receiver that has been affected by the action as in "the abolitionist was insistent upon an immediate end to slavery" and "Northerners demanded that all the new regions be closed to slavery" (C1, p-p. 133-6). In this example, slavery is the target and the patient, while the abolitionist movement and Northerners serve as the actor. Thus, the choice unveils the author's bias in conceiving causality, in terms of participants. Regarding processes, 'to' in "Southern repression of free speech allowed the abolitionists to link the slavery issue with the cause of civil liberties for whites" and in "Many Americans claimed that the United States had a "manifest destiny" to expand westward" (C1, pp. 134-5) indicates the transitivity of the causative dynamic verbs through the processes of linking and expanding, described. Thus, "the abolitionists" and "the United States" are not assigned any direct agentivity. This, again, confirms the author's manipulation strategy.

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[3]*Longman Dictionary of the English Language* (1984), P. 1164

The same findings apply to C2 in the light of prepositions used to highlight the economic system in the North as the doer and the beneficiary, and, the slavery system in the South as the target and the patient. The most frequent prepositions are 'to' and 'for' (Frequency: 61 and 18). The preposition 'for' figures in "there was a brief struggle between these two systems for supremacy" (C2, p. 222). It presents "supremacy" as a goal of the struggle between both systems. The formulation of this cause/result relationship's logic is expressed through 'for'. In "small freeholds and distributed to settlers in the form of homesteads" (C2, p. 220), "settlers" is the target and the beneficiary. In both examples, conceiving of entities as a goal or a beneficiary is illuminating about the pattern of causality pre-established in the author's mind to defend his thesis through accounting for history from an economic perspective. Dealing with the analysis of the use of prepositions 'to' and 'for' in C3 (frequency: 108 and 48), the same findings of thesis' defense have been attained. In the following instance "he and Fredrick Engels were contributors to several European newspapers" (C3, p. 27), "several European newspapers" is the 'receptive' and the 'beneficiary'. However, in "an end to the slave trade" (C3, p. 29), "the slave trade" is not the beneficiary but a patient to refute the prevailing claim about slavery perpetuation in the South. Importantly, 'for' is frequently used to envisage the objective behind the cause as in "War for Independence", to present "independence" as 'the goal' behind the war.

Denotation

Denotation refers to "a direct specific meaning as distinct from a suggested or implied meaning"[4]. The lexical terms in focus are those that entail the meaning of causality. Denotation analysis has led to the results that term 'cause' is not frequently referred to, with some variation, across the corpus. Such a finding implies that causality is inferred from the connotation more than denotation, which reflects the authors' tendency for implicitness more than straightforwardness.

In C1, the term 'cause' figures to convey the cause behind the war, as conceived by the North, is revealed by 3 cases: "cause of civil liberties for whites", "enthusiasm for the anti-slavery cause" "Anti-slavery activists generally hailed Brown as a martyr to a great cause" (C1, pp. 134-137-139). The term 'cause' in these cases pertains to legal dimensions. The author wants to highlight the abolition of slavery as 'a right' for the North. Locating the denotation of cause to the Northern claim confirms this research's claim that this account is biased.

 In accounting for struggles in history in C2, the frequency of 'cause' (6) accounts for the author's explicit recognition of assigning causes more importance than facts or individuals that were forced to the forefront of struggles in history: "An inquiry into causes is manifestly a greater task than the recording of accomplished facts" Simons (1911: p. viii). This wording is informative about the author's perspectival view of history in terms of causality: "We find the cause of this in the fact that the value of the cotton crop raised by slave labor was increasing" (C2, p. 219). According to this example, it is not a coincidence that 'cause' and 'time' have the same frequency in this text; they are two bases in Simons' concept of causality in history whereby events are causes. In this framework, the WH question words

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[4]*Longman Dictionary of the English Language* (1984), p. 389.

'why' and 'when' (frequency: 7) come to confirm the intertwined relationship between 'time' and 'cause' in approaching history in this account.

In C3, the term under focus is used in 8 cases to refer to two major causes in the account: the Southern independence that the author defends and the abolition of slavery that he subverts. These two 'rival' causes reveal the author's account for one in reply to another claimed by Lincoln and Marx. In "Marx and Engels participated in the "Civil War" by serving as propaganda agents for the Northern cause in Europe" and "the causes of that war" (C3, p. 27-ix), the term 'cause' refers to the Northern claim that the authors challenge. This term is used to convey a sense of alienation on the part of the authors, implied through the use of "that war". The cause of "the war for Southern Independence" presents the thesis that the authors defend: independence was the cause behind the war.

Studying causality in history has led to the understanding that accounting for causality in history writing is part and parcel of understanding and deciphering the physical world.

Discussion

The section discusses the main findings attained that would confirm or disconfirm the research claims. What follows is a discussion of authors' vantage points by reference to sources, methods and key concepts.

Sources

As already mentioned in the literature review, the reference to sources presents the main origin of controversies. The three accounts display reliance on primary and secondary sources.

In C1, the author refers to primary and secondary sources to apprehend reality: *Uncle Tom's Bin* (1859) and *Democracy in America* (1835). These works fit into the author's conception of the cause of the ACW. The first work depicts the suffrage of slaves and the cruelty of owners (C1, p. 137); this witness has its traces in the author's propagation of the abolition of slavery. The second source, which marvels the democracy of the country, consecrates a well-painted picture of the United States claimed to be the land of freedom. Also, Lincoln's speech delivered in 1860 was purposefully chosen to "awaken" readers to the evil of slavery. These sources hold their owners' views and the political stance that they defend.

C2 comes in the same framework of stance empowerment to serve the economic agenda of the ruling class. Such a pattern of dominance is carried out through the withholding of source materials. Primary sources are *The poor Whites of the South* (1856), *Historical Sketch of Slavery* (1858), *The lost Cause* (1860) and *Southern Wealth and Northern Profits* (1860). These references highlight the economic differences between the sections through the depiction of slaveholding in the South. This is stressed in secondary sources in the form of articles as "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina" (1900) and "Origin and Growth of the Southern Black Belts" (1906). Accordingly, materials' selection unveils the emotive choice that fits into the author's argument.

Contrary to C1 and C2, C3 accounts for the past through reference to primary sources: The U.S. Constitution, The Declaration of Independence and The Emancipation Proclamation, to refute the Northern cause: the abolition of slavery, and defend theirs: the war for Southern independence. Opting for this undeniable and unfiltered ground, fits the authors' arguments and reveals their intentional strategy of stance-empowerment. Constitutional documents are devised to give much credit to their positions of enhancing a collective view of the South. Nevertheless, resorting to primary sources is not devoid of bias as far as it is subject to conscious choice and arbitrariness. This could entitle one to claim that C3 is a constructed interpretation of the past. How can methods contribute to divergent readings of history?

Methods

The analysis of the corpus has revealed the authors' option for different methods to conduct their arguments in order to validate their accounts. These methods differ in data collection, data selection and data evaluation.

In the political and economic accounts, reality is apprehended in an attempt to 'construct' the past. The authors do not 'discover' but 'impose' relationships between events. There is a tendency to apply to the method of reconstruction adopted by the Marxist School of Historiography. This method requires narrating past events chronologically as it is the case of C1 and C2 where events are presented in a chronicle. However, the use of this method has not pertained to objectivity, as required by reconstruction, but to involvement and bias.

On a different ground, in C3, there is a different methodological approach that matches the perceptions and the world views of the authors. Deconstruction of the past is the method adopted by the authors in order to be represented in the light of the authors' conceptualizations of causality in history. The authors defend the Southern perspective through advocating the claim that independence was the real cause behind the war.

Accordingly, methodological differences have led to a limited agreement as to the fundamental cause of the ACW. The aim behind the use of these methods is to attempt to make historical knowledge correspond to the realities being studied. In the three texts, the past is made accessible as a textual representation reflecting shifting emphases in apprehending reality. This does not relate only to sources and methods but also extends to concepts.

Concepts

Concepts are at the core of representation problems in history. The interpretation of the findings attained concerning narrativity, causality, interpretation, point of view, objectivity, ideology and goal orientation proceeds as follows.

Point of view

The linguistic analysis of the corpus has led to the result that the three perspectives hold their authors' views.

Regarding C1, the attitude of the author consecrates the official view as this account is written by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. The author is involved in the chronicle through the choice of source materials. Jenkins (1992, p. 12) envisions that the point of view of the historian determines his/her writing: "The past that we 'know' is always contingent upon our own views". This gives confirmation to White's view that the view point of the historian is inevitable in the historical discourse.

The economic perspective in C2 is designed to develop a Marxist approach to history through the point of view of the author that he, strategically, encapsulates in the account. The author's against-slavery-held position reflects his presuppositions about economic determinism, which is, in reality, the stand of the Marxist school of thought embraced by the author. The latter intends to make of the historical facts, he processes, common knowledge through his embedded point of view towards the causes of the ACW.

In C3, the authors declared "Indeed the South was right!" (C3, p. vii). This alignment with the South is accompanied with an overt stronger positioning against Marx and his associates expressed in: "The embattled South should take pride in having such men as enemies; likewise, the Republicans and the North should be embarrassed at having socialists and communists as friends and allies!" (C3, p. xvii). The authors' stands explicitly cover the whole text, which shows that they have a thesis to defend (the war for independence) and another to subvert (the war for the perpetuation and the extension of slavery).

Interpretation

'Facts' versus 'interpretation' form the bone of contention in this thesis. Facts form only a part of the historical narrative, while interpretation is what historians transform of events to patterns of meaning through accounting for what, why and how events happened. Interpretation is "inevitable" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 33). The authors are not concerned with checking the truth of past events but relativizing them to their claims.

As far as the official perspective is concerned (C1), the author's political assumptions of the union are covertly encapsulated in the interpretation of the events to direct the reader to the constructed claims defended in the account. The same findings apply to C2 where the assumptions about economic determinism in social change and class struggle are consecrated in the interpretation of the cause of the ACW. Similarly, the Southern perspective falls within the same framework of involvement in interpretation. This account provides the reader with an interpretive reading derived from the authors' held positions against 'Red Republicans and Lincoln's Marxists'. The authors interpret the past differently in favor of their claims for independence and not as it was propagated by Marx and Lincoln. So, the different accounts do not present objective but biased interpretations of the past, which gives weight to White's concept of the inevitability of interpretation in history writing.

Ideology

The scholars' outlooks have ideological orientations that have been unearthed through investigation.

Concerning C1, as the position of the authors presents the official stance, there is an ideological legitimatization of the political claim of the abolition of slavery in order to preserve the federal union. Foley (2007, p. 482) contends that "the main challenge to this organic conception of federal unity came with the Civil War (1861-1865)". He affirms that the federal government served as a national community used "to support the idea of national growth and the central development of a continental economy". Politically, "the ideology of union" is a foreground hiding the "subjugation" of the South and the denial of its claims to independence as "Lincoln never recognized the constitutionality of secession" (Tulloch,1999, p. 104). This partly political, partly economic argument confirms what Jenkins (1992, p. 17) envisions: "History is an ideological construct".

Likewise, the economic divergence between the North and the South is ideologically highlighted in C2. The mismatch between capitalism and slavery unveils the ideological claim for its abolition and accounts for the dismissal of the economic dimension to the idea of union. The author's ideological presuppositions are overt from the very beginning of the account: "There are definite reasons why the Civil War came at the exact time it did" (C2, p. 216, emphasis added). The term "definite" reflects the Marxist ideology embraced by the author to account for the case under study from a purely economic perspective. In this respect, Fairclough (1989, p. 85) assumes that "ideology is most affective when its workings are less visible".

These findings pertain to the same ideological constructions veiled by C1. Taking into consideration that C2 was written in 1911 and C1 in 2005, there is continuity in timeline between the two accounts in terms of ideological orientations based on economic assumptions in both accounts. C1 propagates political claims hiding economic ones as slavery does not serve the interests of a developing capitalist system. This continuity in the line of time confirms the claim that political power is largely dependent on the economic one. In this respect, Stromberg maintains "Unsurprisingly, this ideology of union Forever was connected with a complex of concrete political and material interests" (Stromberg, 1977, p. 32, emphasis in the original).

In C3, the authors claim that the Southern independence as the real cause behind the war. They deny responsibility to the South in terms of the perpetuation of slavery, giving evidence from history that "no one suggested at the signing of the Declaration of Independence that all slaves have to be freed. Every delegate who signed the Declaration of Independence represented a slaveholding colony" (Kennedy and Benson, 2007, p. 4). This argument refutes, according to C3, the Northern claim for slavery abolition. Importantly, the South's feeling of separateness led Southerners to consider the Civil War, a "fighting for the concept of a small government" to form the Confederacy as conformity to what is stated in the Declaration of Independence about "life, liberties and pursuit of happiness". In this framework, Lothrop (1861, p. 15) subverts this claiming that "the constitution which they (the Founding Fathers) offered, talked not of sovereign states- spoke not the word confederacy". The claim to the

Confederacy reflects the ideological perspective of the authors who defend the collective view of the South. Brock (1973, p. 187) maintains: "Secession was and always had been a constitutional right".

The common thread between the three lines of research consists in one of articulating history academically through dominant orientations to defend the authors' theses. Even though these positions are seemingly derived from facts, they have been deconstructed through investigation. Behind ideologies, historians have different goal orientations corresponding to their vantage points. What are these inclinations? And what purposes do they serve and preserve?

Goal orientation

The goal orientations of the accounts answer the key questions in historiography: 'What/who are the intended audience/readers?', 'Why?' and 'For what purpose was the account written?'C1 is oriented towards the common world for persuasive purposes. The abolition of slavery was intended to evoke a view of history to influence the world's historical knowledge, in general, and academic history, in particular. It can be claimed that the Northern claim to the abolition of slavery is no more than propaganda version of the mid-20th century against the rise of Communism characterizing the URSS. This version was strategically oriented to the newly-independent African countries that would support the USA rather than the URSS. This credits Jenkins' (1992, p.17) claim that "History is never for itself; it is always for someone".

Taking into account the common thread between the political and the economic perspectives, C2 is oriented to "the masses of capitalist countries"[5]namely the United States where capitalism was developing. The author defends this orientation: "The attempt has been made in this work to trace the various interests that have arisen and struggled in each social stage and to determine the influence exercised by these contending interests in the creation of social institutions" (C2, p. vii). This ideology oriented to the US was a failure of Marxist goals theory in America as "it is in the United States that Marxism has been least successful"[6].

As regards the third sub-corpus under stress, C3, it is oriented:

- ➢ First, to the whole world to challenge what is conventionally known about the cause of the ACW: the abolition of slavery. It propagates the Southern perspective: "the War for Southern Independence".
- ➢ Second, to call for a fair reconsideration of the revolution of the Confederate States of America (henceforth CSA), as "the more libertarian option"[7].
- ➢ Third, to Marxists, through a strong denial of Lincoln's and Marx's claims of the secession of the South for "the extension and perpetuation of slavery" and a stress on the historical precedence of the American South in the abolition of slavery.

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[5]William A. Glaser, "Algie Martin Simons and Marxism in America", p419 by, *The Mississippi Valley American Review*, Vol 41, N3, December 1954

[6] ibid

[7]Joseph R. Stomberg "The War for Southern Independence: A Radical Libertarian Perspective", p 32, *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*, Vol 3, N3, 1977.

➢ Fourth, to the American Government, to remind the politicians that the Southern Independence is not a break up with but conformity to the main articles in the U.S. Constitution about equality and freedom.

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Conclusion

The ACW has been extensively written on, pertaining to controversial visions as to the underlying causes or the chief cause behind the war. While the official version has stressed the racial question from a political perspective, the economic account has upgraded the socio-economic angles. The Southern version is a totally different argument that has promoted the Southern claim for independence. The critical analysis of the corpus has led to the finding that ideological constructs are implicitly and explicitly propagated in history out of perspectival readings and interpretations of the past. This study has pertained to the conclusion that the abolition of slavery was not the only cause but other causes have been foregrounded. Studying historiographical contests about the case under study has deciphered the theoretical inclinations and the goal orientations of historians who conceptualize the past differently, leaving their fingerprints in their wordings. This paper is intended to be a step for further research that deals with the implications of the cause of the ACW in the present practices and future ones as similar issues may reverberate in the present or even later. "The age of the Civil War, finally, is the period of our past most relevant to the contemporary concerns of American society" (Foner, 1980, p. 11).

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