

states celebrated their centennials, these laudatory stories of pioneer settlement had creatively redrawn the region's "geography and memory, a recasting that emphasized the region as an American place of progress rather than a shared Native space" (p. 189). Most importantly, this celebration of pioneer progress became the nation's history.

As Buss states, "this narrative of statehood development may be convenient, but it is far from correct" (p. 226). He reminds us that the continued American Indian presence in the lower Great Lakes region, and their recent efforts to reclaim a shared history with non-Natives, illustrate the malleability of place stories. Yet this reminder begs us to consider that indigenous projects of historical memory have a longer provenance in states such as Indiana—these are not

simply recent efforts, and they predate the arrival of non-Natives. Moments of Native historicity appear in Buss's narrative, but a more inclusive account of indigenous ways of knowing and remembering the region's past would have exemplified more fully his primary argument about narrative malleability. Despite this missing perspective, Buss's excellent examination of the middle ground's erasure makes a compelling explanation for the emergence of a central yet inaccurate narrative structure of U.S. history.

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### *Devotion to the Adopted Country* *U.S. Immigrant Volunteers in the Mexican War* By Tyler V. Johnson

(Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2012. Pp. ix, 167. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00.)

The Mexican War took place during a period in which increasing numbers of Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany and the Second Great Awakening spurred a fiercely anti-Catholic nativist movement in the United States. In *Devotion to the Adopted Country*, Tyler V. Johnson considers how Catholic immigrants used

the war to demonstrate their loyalty to their newly adopted country.

Anti-Catholic nativists condemned Catholicism as inherently undemocratic and argued that Catholics' allegiance to the pope undermined their potential loyalty to the United States. The prospect of a war against a foreign foe seemed to offer a golden opportunity

to refute these arguments. In practical terms, the opportunity took the shape of calls for volunteer units, first to support America's imperiled regular army and then to invade Mexico. Recruiters assembled thousands of volunteers into companies from different American cities, towns, and counties, including many in Indiana. Johnson points out that among those thousands we can certainly identify hundreds of Catholic immigrants. As men enlisted alongside others whom they knew, companies from such disparate locations as New York City, Cincinnati, Savannah, and St. Louis—among many others—came to comprise Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany. The turnout of immigrants to fight in Mexico was by no means accidental. Although it is difficult to discern the motives of individual recruits, volunteering offered immigrants the kind of respect that they had been denied. Moreover, the immigrant and Catholic press immediately began to argue that the willingness of Catholic immigrants to serve showed their loyalty to the United States.

While Johnson describes the military contributions of immigrant volunteers, he remains rightly concerned with battles of a more discursive sort. Were they loyal and brave? Were they good soldiers, or disorderly drunks? Even as immigrants struggled against disease, distance, and of course Mexican soldiers, they faced anti-Catholicism and nativism from other American troops and a nativist press in the United States. Both nativist and

pro-immigrant newspapers published dozens of news and opinion pieces about the reported actions of the immigrant volunteers.

Johnson's most successful chapter analyzes a bloody brawl between a native-born company and Savannah's largely Irish Jasper Greens. Although it is difficult to pinpoint the origin of the enmity between units, Johnson shows how the immigrant and Catholic press defended the actions of the immigrant soldiers, and how the controversy played out in the United States press. Less successfully, he describes the recruitment and activity of two Jesuit chaplains sent to reassure Mexicans that the war was not an anti-Catholic one and to minister to the needs of American Catholic troops. Although well-researched, this chapter does not fit with the book's important focus on how the service of immigrant volunteers combated nativism in the United States. In the end, Johnson concludes that the service of immigrants, and its portrayal by their advocates, failed to head off increasing nativism in the United States, although it reflected a significant desire to adopt American cultural values. Overall, this study makes an important contribution to both our knowledge of the history of American immigration and the surprisingly scanty historiography of the Mexican War.

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