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**Martin Robison Delany's Black nationalism in the Postbellum period:  
The influence of Martin Robison Delany's relationship with the  
Republican Party on his stance on Black nationalism**

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# Martin Robison Delany's Black nationalism in the Postbellum period

The influence of Martin Robison Delany's relationship with the Republican Party on his  
stance on Black nationalism

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## Introduction

“Then, to be successful, our attention must be turned in a direction towards those places where the black and colored man comprise, by population, and constitute by necessity of numbers, the ruling element of the body politic.”<sup>1</sup>

Martin R. Delany, also known as the ‘Father of Black Nationalism’, was born a free black man in West Virginia. Delany was an intelligent individual and accomplished quite a lot in his life and career. It started from a young age, when Delany became one of the first black Americans that attended Harvard. Unfortunately for Delany, he and a number of other black American students were sent away from Harvard after white students protested against Harvard teaching black students. Nonetheless, Delany's intelligence could not be ignored and soon Delany found himself at the side of Frederick Douglass, working on the newspaper *The New Era*. During this period, Delany would develop into an intellectual interested in black nationalism. Black nationalism is a form of nationalism that places significant importance on the empowerment and emancipation of black Americans. Black nationalism consists out of two different forms: community nationalism, also known as ‘integrationism’, and separatist nationalism, also known as ‘emigrationism’.<sup>2</sup> The advocates of separatist nationalism sought the freedom of black Americans by emigration. The ideal was to create an own country for the black Americans, away from racism and slavery. ‘Integrationists’, at the other hand, did not want to emigrate and sought equality in the United States itself. Like Douglass, Delany was an integrationist during the 1840's.<sup>3</sup> In the 1850's, Delany's perspective changed. Delany started to believe that the only way through which the emancipation and elevation of black Americans could be achieved was by emigration. By leaving the United States, black Americans could start an own province or country away from racism and slavery. It would give black Americans the room to emancipate and educate themselves.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Robison Delany, ‘Political destiny of the colored race on the American Continent’, in *Life and public services of Martin R. Delany: Sub-assistant commissioner Bureau Relief of Refugees, Freedmen, and of Abandoned Lands, and late Major 104th U.S. colored troops*, ed. Frank A. Rollin (Boston; Lee and Shepard, 1883) 327-367.

<sup>2</sup> Robert A. Brown and Todd C. Shaw, ‘Separate nations: two attitudinal dimensions of black nationalism’, *The journal of politics*, 64(1) (2002) p. 25-27.

<sup>3</sup> Tunde Adeleke, *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany* (Mississippi; University Press of Mississippi, 2004) 40.

<sup>4</sup> Adeleke, *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany*, 70.

The 1850's also was the decade in which the Republican Party was founded. Although lacking any real influence in its initial years, by winning the Presidential election of 1860 the Republican Party became the most powerful party of the United States. The growing power of the Republican Party coincided with the Civil War. During the Civil War, Delany supported the Republican Party and remained sympathetic towards the Republican goal for more than a decade. The Civil War gave Delany hope as he observed how white Americans would fight for the abolishment of slavery. The rise of the Republican Party and their involvement in the Civil War led to Delany abandoning his 'emigrationist' stance and taking an 'integrationist' stance again. Yet, after a decade in which the Republican Party ratified the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendment to secure the equality, rights and enfranchisement of black Americans, Delany left the Republican Party and joined the Democratic Party. This period in the Democratic Party eventually resulted in Delany losing faith in politics and once again having an 'emigrationist' stance. The relationship Delany had with the Republican Party seemed to influence his black nationalistic stance regarding the 'emigrationist' or the 'integrationist' stance during Civil War and Reconstruction. This leads into the research question:

How and why did Martin Robison Delany's relationship with the Republican Party influence his perspective on 'emigrationism' and 'integrationism'?

Harold Cruse<sup>5</sup> argues that Delany was a separatist nationalist, calling for the emigration to Africa. Robert S. Levine argues that this perspective is too simple and states that separatist and integrationist ideals can be interchangeable.<sup>6</sup> Levine states that, although Delany indeed was a separatist during a certain period of his live, Delany also involved himself in the integrationist side of black nationalism.<sup>7</sup>

Robert M. Kahn argues that Delany is a separatist and states that his change from emigration to integration is an extension of his separatist past.<sup>8</sup> According to Kahn, Delany believed that if black Americans desired to obtain equality, they had to hold office. During the Antebellum period, it was almost impossible for black Americans to hold office. Because of this inability to gain a political position, Delany believed that only emigration would give black Americans political influence and freedom.<sup>9</sup> As the end of the civil war hailed in the beginning of a new

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<sup>5</sup> Harold Cruse, *The crisis of the negro intellectual* (New York; William Morrow, 1967) 341-344.

<sup>6</sup> Robert S. Levine, *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass, and the politics of representative identity* (North Carolina; The University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 5.

<sup>7</sup> Levine, *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass, and the politics of representative identity*, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Robert M. Kahn, 'The political ideology of Martin Delany', *Journal of Black Studies*, 14(4) (1984) p. 437.

<sup>9</sup> Kahn, 'The political ideology of Martin Delany', 437.

era, it became more apparent and possible for black Americans to hold office. Delany had no more reason to argue that black men could not hold office. Because of this change in society, Delany did not anymore deem emigration as integral for the fight for equality.<sup>10</sup> Another reason for Delany to promote the emigration was the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Yet, with the removal of slavery, the law of 1850 had no more impact on society. Delany could not anymore argue that the Fugitive Slave Law made it impossible for black Americans to integrate.<sup>11</sup>

In response to Kahn, Tunde Adeleke states that “This reasoning is seriously flawed”.<sup>12</sup> The holding of office and the gaining of citizenship would mean nothing for blacks if they cannot effectively implement these rights. According to Adeleke, Delany's integrationist position was not an extension of his separatist past, but a completely different period that was influenced by events in the United States.<sup>13</sup> Adeleke shows how Delany continuedly changed his perspective on black nationalism. While starting with moral suasion and integration in the 1840's, the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 changed his perspective and Delany became a separatist in the 1850's. Yet, as the Civil War ended, Delany once again had hope that the equality of black Americans could be accomplished in the United States itself, instead of emigrating. During the 1860's and 1870's, Delany once again had an integrationist position. This changed yet again in his last years, when he for one last time tried to set up an emigration to Africa.<sup>14</sup>

Within the historiographical debate, the subject of Delany's relationship with the Republican Party is scarcely written about. As Adeleke argues in 2021: “Unfortunately, with the exception of an article published in 1984 by Robert Khan, and a more recent article by Tommie Shelby, there has not been much scholarly interrogation of the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of the political eccentricities he displayed during his brief stint as a “politician” in late Reconstruction South Carolina.”<sup>15</sup> Tunde Adeleke can be considered a leading expert on the topic of Martin R. Delany. By using the words of Adeleke, this research aims to legitimize its existence by showing that research surrounding this topic is minimal. The article by Robert Khan mainly discusses the political ideals of Delany during antebellum, while Khan's analyses

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<sup>10</sup> Kahn, 'The political ideology of Martin Delany', 437-438.

<sup>11</sup> Kahn, 'The political ideology of Martin Delany', 438.

<sup>12</sup> Tunde Adeleke, 'Black Biography in the Service of a Revolution: Martin R. Delany in Afro-American Historiography', *Biography* (Honolulu), 17(3) (1994) p. 257.

<sup>13</sup> Adeleke, 'Black Biography in the Service of a Revolution: Martin R. Delany in Afro-American Historiography', 257-258.

<sup>14</sup> Tunde Adeleke, *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany* (Mississippi; University Press of Mississippi, 2004) xix-xxxiii.

<sup>15</sup> Tunde Adeleke, *In the service of god and humanity conscience, reason, and the mind of Martin R. Delany* (South Carolina; University of South Carolina Press, 2021) 105.

of Delany's postbellum politics is already discussed in this research. Tommie Shelby only talks about Delany's ideas and mostly ignores the postbellum period.<sup>16</sup> Another author that researched Delany's political career during the postbellum period is Victor Ullman. Ullman, although extensively discussing Delany's life and career, does not go in detail regarding Delany's relationship with the Republican Party and its influence on Delany's black nationalism.<sup>17</sup>

In his book *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany* Adeleke discusses the different periods in which Delany altered between the 'integrationist' and 'emigrationist' stances of black nationalism.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, Adeleke scrutinizes Delany's political career. This research differs with Adeleke's book in regard to the specificity of the subject. The influence Delany's relationship with the Republican Party had on Delany's perspective on black nationalism is a subject Adeleke did not specifically investigate. Furthermore, this research could add to the understanding of Delany's political and black nationalistic perspective because of the extensive use of Delany's primary sources.

Chapter 1 will be focused on Delany's relation with the Republican Party during the Civil War and the early years of Reconstruction, 1862-1867. The start of the Civil War changed Delany's perspective significantly from believing in emigration being the true road to freedom for black Americans to believing that equality is still possible within the United States. Delany broke with his 'emigrationist' past and dove into the realm of integration. During the Civil War, Delany took the position of Major, with the objective of creating a black regiment that could fight for the Union Army in the war. After the war, Delany would become a worker of the so-called Freedmen's Bureau, an organisation which had as goal the helping of freed slaves with housing and land.

Chapter 2 discusses Delany's start as a politician for the Republican Party. With the Freedmen's Bureau decline and eventual stop, Delany began to take course towards politics. In this chapter, it becomes clear how Delany placed importance on racial issues while the Republican Party claims to be 'colour blind' in this matter. Between 1867-1874, Delany slowly drifted away from the Republican Party because he did not believe that the Republican Party was doing enough for black Americans during Reconstruction. Chapter 3 shows how Delany removed

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<sup>16</sup> Tommie Shelby, 'Two Conceptions of Black Nationalism: Martin Delany on the Meaning of Black Political Solidarity', *Political theory*, 31(5) (2003) p. 664-692.

<sup>17</sup> Victor Ullman, *Martin R. Delany: the beginnings of black nationalism* (Boston; Beacon Press, 1971).

<sup>18</sup> Adeleke, *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany*, xix-xxxiii.

himself from the Radicals by joining the Independent Republicans. As a result of a failed election, Delany's disappointment in the Republican Party grew, which eventually resulted in Delany deciding to leave the Independent Republican Party and joining the Democratic Party, supporting Wade Hampton III. Delany would rather quickly leave the Democratic Party and would eventually return to supporting the emigration of black Americans to Africa in his final years.

The primary sources that are investigated in this research come from a number of primary source bundles. Frank A. Rollin<sup>19</sup>, Robert S. Levine<sup>20</sup> and Tunde Adeleke<sup>21</sup> have all created their own primary source bundle in regard to Delany. Although quite some overlap exists between these bundles, each bundle has specific primary sources others do not use. Even though this makes each bundle worth exploring, it also lays bare the character of the bundles. When authors can choose which primary sources to present, they could choose only primary sources that fit into their perspective of Delany. These bundles can be biased. By using three separate bundles, the negative effect of this would be lessened somewhat, but not entirely. Furthermore, there is a clear lack of available primary sources from Delany during the postbellum period. An absence of a sufficient quantity of primary sources outside of these bundles makes the use of these primary source bundles all the more necessary. At the one hand, this does mean there is an abundance of primary sources regarding Delany that can be used. On the other hand, it leads to using primary sources picked by other historians. Every primary source bundle is around 300 pages long, but because of this earlier mentioned overlaps a lot of primary sources are the same. It is possible to completely read these bundles, which has been done for this research. Specific attention has been given to letters or articles that mentioned and portrayed Delany's relationship with the Republican Party. The lack of primary sources also translates into a small number of secondary sources in regard to Delany's postbellum period. This means that this research has to rely on a small group of authors to dive deeper into the primary sources written by Delany.

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<sup>19</sup> Rollin, *Life and public services of Martin R. Delany*.

<sup>20</sup> Robert S. Levine, *Martin R. Delany: a documentary reader* (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

<sup>21</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*.

## Chapter 1: Civil War and Early Reconstruction, 1861-1867

“The odious infamous fugitive slave law, will then be in full force with all of its terrors; and we have no doubt that fully in anticipation of this event, was the despicable law created.”<sup>22</sup>

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 hailed in a new era for Delany. While in the 1840's Delany believed in 'integrationism', the 1850's showed a new Delany. With the Fugitive Slave Law Southern States were able to return runaway slaves from Northern States. This law was part of the Compromise, an act that divided slave and non-slave states over the new territories gained after the Mexican War of 1846-1848. Yet besides being able to return runaway slaves, Southern slaveholders could capture free black men and women and claimed that they were his or her runaway slaves. For Delany it felt like the sword of Damocles hang above every free black American. As a result of the Fugitive Slave Law, Delany had no more faith in moral suasion and believed that black Americans had to find another way to gain freedom: emigration.<sup>23</sup> Delany's life during the 1850's was dominated by the emigration of black Americans towards a multitude of destinations, to create their own society removed from slavery and racism. Delany believed this to be necessary because of the character of the United States. Delany called it the 'national compact'. It worked like a contract, in which the independence and the rights of white Americans could only be preserved by stripping black Americans of their privileges and freedom.<sup>24</sup> Delany wrote a number of books and essays discussing the matter of emigration, believing the future of the black Americans lay in the lands beyond the borders of the United States. In this chapter it will be researched how Delany's stance on black nationalism changed after the beginning of the Civil War and how this new stance became solidified during the Civil War and the early years of Reconstruction. The argument put forward in this chapter is that Delany's relationship with the Republican Party and the possibilities Delany saw in this new cooperation changed Delany's stance on black nationalism.

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<sup>22</sup> Martin R. Delany, *The condition, elevation, emigration and destiny of the colored people in the United States* (1852) 175.

<sup>23</sup> Adeleke, *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany*, 70.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, 70-71.

The 1850's was also a period of political turbulence. The Whig Party, which was the main opposition against the Democrats, fell apart and dissolved. The subject of slavery became a conflict-filled discussion within the ranks of the Whig Party. The division within the Whig Party grew, insofar that it became the downfall of the party.<sup>25</sup> The opposing political party, the Democratic Party, had issues themselves. As a result of the Kansas-Nebraska act, an act in which these particular states had the opportunity to vote for the remaining or removal of slavery from their state, the Democratic Party lost northern anti-slavery voters. An admixture of the Northern Whigs, Free-Soil Party and the northern anti-slavery voters resulted in the founding of the Republican Party in 1854.<sup>26</sup> The Republican Party strove to stop the dissemination of slavery into new territories, wanted to remove slavery and to substitute it with 'free labor'.<sup>27</sup> With 'free labor', the owner of the land was not allowed to punish his or her workers, an aspect that was allowed with slavery. From the offset of the Republican Party until the beginning of the Civil War, the Republican Party was best described as "The party of freedom, seeking power".<sup>28</sup> This led into a reasonable amount of support during their first Presidential election of 1856.

The Presidential election of 1860 commenced a new period for the Republican Party, a period in which the Republican Party was the leading party of the United States. For the Presidential election of 1860, the Republican Party sought a Presidential candidate that would appease to the different groups residing within the Republican Party. This strategy resulted in picking Abraham Lincoln as Presidential candidate for the election of 1860.<sup>29</sup> With Lincoln winning the election, the Republicans gained a power position and could use this power to maintain the Union and fight for the freedom of slaves. The relationship that existed between freedom and power within the Republican Party during the antebellum period changed. It was no more a party for freedom without power to make changes. Now that the Republican Party had power, they wanted to fight for the freedom of the slaves. Before the Republican Party was able to push a number of acts making this freedom reality, the third and last aspect of importance, beside power and freedom, reared its head: union.

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<sup>25</sup> Michael Green, *Freedom, union, and power: Lincoln and his party in the Civil War* (New York; Fordham University Press, 2004) 13.

<sup>26</sup> Green, *Freedom, union, and power: Lincoln and his party in the Civil War*, 13.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, 13.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, 25.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.

Before the Civil War, the maintaining of the union between the North and South was a subject that bore significance. The United States was at the brink of Civil War and the United States government tried a number of acts, like the Compromise, to relieve the tensions apparent in the United States. Because of the lack of power the Republican Party had, the union became less important than their fight for freedom. This changed less than a year after the inauguration of Lincoln, when the United States was thrown into a bloody conflict. Republicans, although finding importance in all three aspects of power, freedom and union, had to choose what was most crucial. For Lincoln, the maintaining of the Union became the most important goal during the Civil War. The objective of freedom decreased in significance.<sup>30</sup> Although the Republican Party still pushed for the abolishment of slavery, freedom was not the only reason why anymore. Slavery was portrayed, by the Republican Party, as a disease that could kill the Republic, which could cause the collapse of the Union and with it hurting white Americans living in the United States. Furthermore, the change from slavery to 'free-labor' was mainly practical for the white Americans, because slavery affected the job security and job possibility of white workers.<sup>31</sup>

As the Civil War broke the country in two, the relationship between the North and the South of the United States vastly deteriorated. Yet with the abolishment of slavery in the North, the war reinforced racial friendships. Delany peered into the American society of the 1860's and to his relief witnessed a change. The war made it possible for black Americans to find equality in the United States, there was no more need for emigration. Before the war, Delany was sceptical of the development of the racial relations between white and black Americans. Delany was convinced that all white Americans were slowly working towards the further strengthening of slavery. Yet, with the war showing the aversion of northern white Americans against slavery, Delany's perspective changed. Race and ethnicity became of less importance for Delany. Delany's change of heart required a different approach than his previous black nationalistic strategies. Cooperation with white Americans was necessary and Delany was glad to use it. Delany perceived the Civil War as a once in a life chance to elevate black Americans and did not waste any time setting up plans.<sup>32</sup> Delany committed himself to the cause of the Union and became a recruiting agent for the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> regiment, a regiment consisting of only black Americans.

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<sup>30</sup> Green, *Freedom, union, and power: Lincoln and his party in the Civil War*, 16.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, 17.

<sup>32</sup> Tunde Adeleke, 'Race and ethnicity in Martin R. Delany's struggle'. *Journal of thought*, 29(1) (1994) 19-49.

Before the Civil War, Delany believed that violence was only acceptable when one needed to defend himself or herself. Delany was against violent acts by groups against other groups, with one exception: to cooperate with the white Americans and use violence to reach the common goal they had. In this case, violence in cooperation with white Republicans against Democrats could achieve freedom for slaves.<sup>33</sup> On the 15 December 1863, Delany wrote down his idealised use of violence to obtain freedom and send this letter to the Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton.<sup>34</sup> In this letter, Delany argued that only black Americans should recruit black soldiers. Through this, Delany posited himself as a potential recruiter for a black regiment or brigade. Delany believed that making black Americans recruit black soldiers “is one of the measures in which the claims of the Black Man may be officially recognised, without seemingly infringing upon those of other citizens.”<sup>35</sup> The separate character of the black army, removed from the white American regiments, made it possible, according to Delany, for black Americans to fight for their freedom without interfering with the white regiments. By staying on the good side of the white Republicans, black Americans had more chance to gain equality and to free the slaves, a goal in common with the white Republicans.

After his letter, Delany seemed to have gotten in touch with the President. Although unknown how, Delany managed to garner a meeting with President Lincoln on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 1865. No actual documents from this conversation are available. The only existing source of what the conversation between President Lincoln and Delany was hailed from Delany himself. To his biographer, Frances A. Rollin, Delany told the story of him meeting President Lincoln. Although the content of the meeting might be altered by Delany, the meeting did give some interesting insight into Delany's relation with the Republican Party.

Delany stated to Lincoln that white Americans do not allow black Americans to be their superior in the army. This halted the promotion of many black Americans, which could potentially make them run south and join the Confederacy army. Delany proposed to prevent black Americans from joining the south by allowing promotion of black Americans based on merit.<sup>36</sup> According to Delany, Lincoln responded by asking how to stop the racism of white soldiers against black officers. Delany answered by declaring that “*I propose, sir, an army of*

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<sup>33</sup> Adeleke, *In the service of god and humanity conscience, reason, and the mind of Martin R. Delany*, 72.

<sup>34</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Letter to Edwin M. Stanton’, 15 December 1863, in *Martin R. Delany’s Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed., Tunde Adeleke, 30.

<sup>35</sup> Delany, ‘Letter to Edwin M. Stanton’, 30.

<sup>36</sup> Rollin, *Life and public services of Martin R. Delany*, 166-168.

*blacks, commanded entirely by black officers, except such whites as may volunteer to serve*".<sup>37</sup> This black army would penetrate the centre of the south "*with the banner of Emancipation unfurled, proclaiming freedom as they go*", releasing every slave and allowing them to join their army.<sup>38</sup>

Lincoln was supposedly ecstatic to hear this plan, because it was just what Lincoln was waiting for. Lincoln already was brewing on this idea, but no one had yet proposed it. The President wanted Delany to become the leader of this army, which Delany would accept in 1865, becoming the first black Major of the American army.<sup>39</sup> It portrayed how the relationship between Delany and the Republican Party was based on this fight for freedom, the emancipation of the slave. For Delany, it was to set these slaves free. For Lincoln, it was presumably to create a war force that could shift the balance of war into the favour of the Union. Nonetheless, freeing the slaves was a shared goal. The Republican Party was in a position of power, believing they could win the war. Through power, they could influence the freedom of black Americans by keeping the Union alive. Delany believed in Lincoln and the goal of the Union.

Although Delany prided himself for being a Major, he never found himself at the front line commanding a black army. On the 9 April 1865, the Civil War came to an end. With the Civil War over, the maintaining of the Union gave way for the obtaining and solidifying of freedom for ex-slaves and black Americans in general. By winning the Civil War, the Republican Party became "the party in power, seeking freedom".<sup>40</sup> Although freedom became the most important subject, the Republican Party understood the significance of sustaining the Union after the war. It was important for the national government to show their position of power within the Union, to maintain its authority and to prevent another schism within the United States. Giving absolute freedom and equality to black Americans could once again alienate the South and lead into another conflict. Delany understood the importance of maintaining the Union and also recognized that after the death of Lincoln the Union was in danger. Specifically, because the new president, Andrew Johnson, did not have the same relationship with black Americans as his predecessor. President Johnson was known for being a racist and for believing that black Americans should not have equal rights. Furthermore, President Johnson was a democrat and

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<sup>37</sup> Rollin, *Life and services of Martin R. Delany*, 168.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, 168.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, 169-170.

<sup>40</sup> Green, *Freedom, union, and power: Lincoln and his party in the Civil War*, 25.

stood for everything Delany despised. Nonetheless, against what one might expect, Delany took a different approach to Johnson. An approach in which Delany was open for cooperation, even when Johnson halted the development of the Reconstruction and stopped the Republican Party from reaching what they desired to accomplish. Although not charmed by the new president, Delany showed change and took a different approach than directly criticizing the president. In a letter to the black delegation that went and meet with the president, Delany stated that “Do not misjudge the president, but believe, as I do, that he means to do right; that his intentions are good; (...) Do not expect too much of him – as black men, I mean. Do not forget that you are black and he is white”.<sup>41</sup>

Delany emphasised that the delegation should not forget their own colour and the colour of the president, understanding that there is still racial bias and conflict between the races. Essentially, according to Delany, the black delegate need not to criticize the President, but listen to him and try to calmly convince him otherwise. It seemed like Delany tried to blur the line between races by emphasizing the difference between races and the necessity to cooperate to overcome these differences. This idea that race was not always the most important factor in politics, in which cooperation and concessions were the way to elevate black Americans, stemmed from the fact that slavery was gone, that black Americans had gained rights and were allowed to vote. Delany saw these as irreversible and perceived these changes as the reason to dismiss the importance of racial difference.<sup>42</sup> This attitude even resulted in Delany wanting cooperation with his former enemy the Southern white American. Delany understood the importance of making concessions with Southern white Americans because they still controlled the land and with it, they stood in between the black American and his or her elevation. Without cooperation with the southern white American, according to Delany, it was impossible to gain economic independence.<sup>43</sup>

Delany followed up his letter to the black delegation with a letter to President Johnson. Delany began his letter by arguing that during the Civil War the country was split in two and that any outside intervention or exhaustion as a result of the duration of the war would result in the collapse of the Union. This was prevented by the influence of one group: the black Americans. “Without this force, or its equivalent, the rebellion could not have been subdued, and without

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<sup>41</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Delany’s advice to black leaders’, 22 February 1866, in *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 101.

<sup>42</sup> Adeleke, *Without regard to race: the other Martin Robison Delany*, 82.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, 83.

it as an inseparable national element, the Union is insecure”.<sup>44</sup> To further secure the Union, it is necessary, according to Delany, to acknowledge the political equality of black Americans with white Americans. Furthermore, the enfranchisement of the black American would further solidify the Union.<sup>45</sup> With the black American at the side of the United States, the US is a military power not to be messed with. The strength of the Union Army and its riches instilled fear into the world and the United States itself<sup>46</sup>. Together with the new gained political interests, the black American will not rebel against the government: “So will the fear of the loss of liberty and their political status, as an element in this great nation, serve as the outside pressure necessary to secure the fidelity of the black to the Union.”<sup>47</sup>

As argued before, Delany's approach in communicating with President Johnson did not show any outright criticism. Instead, Delany took a conciliatory approach. Instead of worsening the conflict between Republicans and Democrats, Delany tried to mend the wounds by emphasising the importance of cooperation between races. This is important to underline, because it showed a different perspective on Delany's relationship with the Republican Party. It had to do with the relationship between races. One of Delany's initial reasons to once again believe in ‘integrationism’ was because Delany saw opportunity to cooperate with white Americans. In his letter to President Johnson, Delany emphasised that both races are dependent on each other. Without white Americans it became near impossible for black Americans to gain freedom, to gain the right to vote and to have absolute equality. In essence, this meant that the possibility for cooperation between white and black Americans was one of the reasons for Delany to support the Republicans and not the Democrats. At the same time, it was one of the first signs that Delany's allegiance to the Republican Party was limited. As shown by his letter to President Johnson, if it was possible for Delany to obtain more equality by cooperating with a Democrat, than Delany would do this. Delany did not seem to care with which party or person he had to cooperate with if it eventually resulted in the elevation of black Americans.

Although the objective of maintaining the Union became a subject that the Republican Party still paid a considerable amount of attention on, freedom was the goal the Republican Party still mainly pursued. The Republican Party decided freedom was to be achieved by the

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<sup>44</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Delany to President Andrew Johnson’, 25 July 1866, in *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 103.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, 103.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, 103-104.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, 104.

Freedmen's Bureau.<sup>48</sup> The Freedmen's Bureau, as the name suggested, was a bureau created to help the freedmen with obtaining a house, land, job and rights. Freedmen were ex-slaves who received freedom during the Civil War. After the war, many of these freedmen remained in the South to start a new life. The concept of freedom for these freedmen differed in perspective with each group living in the South. For freedmen, it meant absolute equality with white Americans, while for ex-slave- and landowners the freedom of freedmen was a development that alienated these Democrats.<sup>49</sup> Freedom became a contested subject in the South. At the same time, freedom is what Delany strove towards.

The Freedmen's Bureau served as the local representation of the Republican Party. It portrayed what the Union desired freedom to become in the South. The bureau basically had the goal to disseminate 'free labor' throughout the South.<sup>50</sup> After the Civil War, Delany was transferred to a Freedmen's Bureau in ST. Helena as a sub-assistant commissioner. Like his job as a major, Delany worked for the Republican government and was tasked with the dissemination and implementation of Republican ideals in the South. For example, Delany made deals to obtain land for the freedmen on which they could start their own farm and maintain their own livelihood. This, in return, would harbour positive feelings towards the Republican Party from the side of the freedmen, which would result in the freedmen voting for the Republican Party in the next election.

As the sub-assistant Commissioner, Delany held a speech on St. Helena on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1865. Lieutenant Edward M. Stoeber was present at this speech and wrote it down. This second-hand account of Delany's speech does ask for critical reservation of its content. Yet at the same time there is no true evidence that Stoeber lied about Delany's speech. According to Stoeber, Delany said the following: *"It was only a War policy of the government, to declare the slaves of the south free, knowing that the whole power of the south laid in the possession of the slaves. But I want you to understand that we would not have become free, had we not armed ourselves and fought out our independence"*.<sup>51</sup>

Firstly, Delany indicated that the Republicans only freed the slaves for the war effort, not for the sake of elevation. Secondly, only the black Americans made their freedom possible, by

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<sup>48</sup> Paul Cimbala and Randall Miller, *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction* (New York; Fordham University Press, 2021) XV.

<sup>49</sup> Cimbala and Miller, *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction*, xv-xvi.

<sup>50</sup> Ibidem, 219.

<sup>51</sup> Edward M. Stoeber, 'Martin R. Delany counsels freedmen: address to freedmen on St. Helena Island', 28 July 1865, in *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 39.

arming themselves to fight for their freedom. In his speech, Delany depicted a different relationship with the Republican Party. Cooperation is a key word within this speech. On the one hand, Delany argued that it was black Americans themselves that were the cause of their freedom, not the white Republicans. At the other hand, the black brigades and regiments that freed slaves were only capable to do this because of the support of the Republican Party in Washington D.C. and on the battlefield. Without Lincoln approving the use and arming of black soldiers, black Americans could have never freed slaves. The notion that the freeing of slaves was a policy of war rather than an act for freedom, showed cracks in the relationship between Delany and the Republican Party. This became even more apparent when Delany stated that to not fully trust the Northern white Americans, because it is possible they could harm the elevation of the black American. Furthermore, Delany argued that black Americans had made western civilization and that white Americans abuse their position by using black Americans.<sup>52</sup>

During his period as a sub-assistant commissioner for the Freedmen's Bureau, Delany wrote a number of prospects. Of main interest was Delany's last known prospect, part seven, written between August and December of 1865. The prospect touched upon the subject of economy, a tenet of the Republican Party. Delany argued that "Political economy must stand most prominent as the leading feature of this great question of the elevation of the negro".<sup>53</sup> By being a part of the economy, improving the wealth of the United States and its people, black Americans could improve their position. Delany argued that "a prospective enhancement of the general wealth of the country – pecuniary benefit to accrue by it to society".<sup>54</sup> By giving freedmen land, not only had they got the position to further elevate themselves, but also added to the strength of the economy and with it improved the relationship with white Americans both in the North and the South. Furthermore, by becoming a vital part of the economy, black Americans would obtain a position of power, which they could use for furthering the equality they desire. This reflected the objective the Republican Party was striving towards, which was the improvement of the economy and the possibility for black Americans to improve their position. This faith in the economy improving the position of black Americans derived from

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<sup>52</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 29.

<sup>53</sup> Martin R. Delany, 'Prospects of the freedmen of Hilton Head Island 7', in *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 58.

<sup>54</sup> Martin R. Delany, 'Prospects of the freedmen of Hilton Head Island 7', in *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 58.

Delany's believe that the political culture of the United States would naturally result in equality and freedom.<sup>55</sup>

In conclusion, this chapter has as main thread the development of the relationship between Delany and the Republican Party during the Civil War and the initial years of the Reconstruction. At the core of Delany's emigrationist stance was the equality of races, the believe that black Americans deserved the same rights as white Americans. Delany sought this objective outside the borders of the United States because he did not believe equality could occur within the United States. The Civil War was as a sudden shock to Delany's believes. Delany perceived a United States that was willing to fight for the freedom of slaves. This meant that Delany's objective coincided with the Republican Party. The subject of slavery and its abolishment was what connected Delany to the Republican Party in the first place and led Delany to change his stance from 'emigrationist' to 'integrationist'. The willingness of the Republican Party to fight for the elevation the black Americans was what convinced Delany to stay in the United States and fight for equality in the United States. This relationship improved because Delany became firsthand involved with the war and Reconstruction, as a major and sub-assistant commissioner. After the war, Delany criticized the Republican Party for not caring too much for the freedmen, believing that the abolishment of slavery was a war policy, not an act for freedom. These were the first signs of Delany's disillusionment with the Republican Party.

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<sup>55</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany's Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 49.

## Chapter 2: Delany and the Republican Party, 1867-1874

At the heart of the Reconstruction Era was the subject of race. Southern landowners and ex-slaveholders were not used to the new relationship created between black and white Americans in the South. After 1867, racism worsened, groups of racist Southern Democrats, calling themselves the Ku Klux Klan, travelled throughout the south and murdered innocent black Americans. Furthermore, different groups of Republicans tried to obtain political positions in the South: scalawags, Southern Republicans supporting Reconstruction, and carpetbaggers, Northern Republicans travelling south for their own gain. These Republicans were not eager to give away positions of influence. This was particularly a problem in South Carolina, the state where Delany resided. The majority of the populace in South Carolina were black Americans. Fearing of losing their political positions, Scalawags and Carpetbaggers did everything to maintain their political positions and to keep black Americans away from these positions. Lastly, Delany believed that both race and merit were of importance for choosing nominees and politicians, while the Republican Party took a 'colour-blind' stance, meaning that race was not an important factor in their eyes. This created a conflict between Delany and the Republican Party. In this chapter, it will be examined how Delany's relationship with the Republican Party developed during the period of 1867-1874. The main argument within this chapter is the notion that Delany got alienated from the Republican Party because of these forementioned political, cultural and social aspects in Southern Carolina in the period of 1867-1874.

The Reconstruction era consists out of three different periods. Wartime Reconstruction was, as the name suggests, the early signs of reconstructing the South during the Civil War. Example of this Reconstruction was the founding of the Freedmen's Bureau. The second form of Reconstruction was the Presidential Reconstruction Period of 1865-1867. It differed from the Wartime Reconstruction because the government was not so eager to reconstruct the South anymore. With the ratification of the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment, which abolished the institution of slavery, Lincoln set expectations for the future of black Americans. With the assassination of Lincoln, the reigns of the United States came in possession of Andrew Johnson. Being a Democrat, Johnson had a different perspective on the equality of races.<sup>56</sup> While the Republican

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<sup>56</sup> Richard White, *The Republic for which it stands: the United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2017) 67.

Party was split on which course to pursue for Reconstruction, President Johnson did not seem to have any faith in Reconstruction and opposed the equality of black Americans.

During the first year of Johnson's presidency, the Radical Republicans, a specific faction within the Republican Party that wanted radical changes in the southern states, were not able to amass much influence on the president. This changed with the mid-term election of 1866, in which the Radical Republicans gained a lot more support and influence. This switch in influence became apparent when Congress overrode President Johnson's veto of the Civil Rights Act. This rise in support for the Radical Republicans was essential for the House of Representative election of 1867. The Republican Party wanted to win in both the North and the South. For the South, it was necessary for the Republican Party to allow freedmen to vote, because they were believed to definitely, without a question, vote Republican.<sup>57</sup> This was done by protecting freedmen and white Unionist during the elections against violence from southern Democrats.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, the Radical Republicans created the Reconstruction Act of 1867, in which the Confederate soldiers that fought during the Civil War lost their right to vote.<sup>59</sup> Punishing the South for their rebellious act, while at the same time cementing the position of the Republican Party in the South. With less Democrats that could vote, the higher the chance was that the Republican Party would get the majority of votes. The Reconstruction act led into the third and final period: Radical Reconstruction.<sup>60</sup>

The importance of politics for black Americans and their influence in it seemed to have grown substantially. By 1867, almost every black voter was part of a Union League.<sup>61</sup> Union Leagues were essentially local Republican organizations, supporting freedmen and other Republicans to vote. The Union Leagues stated what their position was on politics and urged the freedmen to vote the same. The Republican Party became a vital organisation for the freedmen in the South.<sup>62</sup> By the election of 1867, the percentage of black adult males that were allowed to vote rose from 0.5 percent to 80.5 percent.<sup>63</sup> A part of the Radical Republicans perceived this as

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<sup>57</sup> Judith Giesberg, "'A Muster-Roll of the American people': the 1870 census, voting rights, and the postwar South', *The journal of southern history*, 87(1) (2021) 37.

<sup>58</sup> White, *The Republic for which it stands: the United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896*, 83.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, 83.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, 83.

<sup>61</sup> Eric Foner, *A short history of Reconstruction* (New York; HarperCollins, 1990) 125.

<sup>62</sup> Foner, *A short history of Reconstruction*, 128.

<sup>63</sup> White, *The Republic for which it stands: the United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896*, 84.

good enough for the Radical Reconstruction to stop.<sup>64</sup> Although getting to vote, it did not mean that black Americans got political influence in equal terms to white Americans. Besides, groups like carpetbaggers and scalawags wanted to have the most influence in the southern States. Scalawags were open to aiding the black American, “So long as blacks were content to be junior partners in a white-dominated coalition”.<sup>65</sup>

During the United States House of Representatives election in 1867, the Republican Party put a lot of effort into convincing the freedmen into voting for the Republican Party. In South Carolina, the state Delany resided in, this led to a great number of freedmen supporting the Republican Party. While the Republican Party put a lot of effort into the freedmen, they essentially neglected white Americans during this election. As a result, many white Americans living in the South did not vote for the Republican Party. While black Americans were in the majority in South Carolina, it was important to keep white Americans happy to prevent another conflict. For this reason, during the period of 1868-1870, the Republican Party shifted their focus to white American voters, neglecting black Americans in the South.<sup>66</sup> Delany had different reasons to support the transition to more white Republican officeholders. During the 1867 House of Representatives election, white abolitionist Wendell Phillips argued that the United States should have a black American as vice-president. Delany referred to this situation in a letter to Henry H. Garnet and gave his opinion on the subject. Delany stated that “In such times as these, it requires men of the greatest practical experience, acquired ability, mature intelligence and discretional wisdom, to speak and act for the race now an integral part and essential element in the body politic of the nation.”<sup>67</sup> But, according to Delany, the taking of office by a black man should not be done “till we, at least, should be READY and QUALIFIED.”<sup>68</sup> This reflection of Delany on the subject of Wendell Phillips showed how Delany wanted to play it safe. Delany feared that the position of black Americans would be compromised when they would nominate a black American that was inadequate for the position, a situation which white Republicans and white Democrats would have abused to argue against political positions for black Americans. Merit was important, according to Delany, to secure the political position of black Americans. It showed a certain distrust towards the

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<sup>64</sup> Ibidem, 84.

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem, 131.

<sup>66</sup> Foner, *A short history of Reconstruction*, 142.

<sup>67</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Delany to Rev. Henry H. Garnet’, 27 July 1867, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 105.

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem, 105.

Republicans, believing that a mishap by black Americans could ill-used by the Republican Party.

After losing the Presidential election of 1868, Andrew Johnson was replaced by Republican Ulysses Grant. With a Republican at the helm, changes occurred in the South. In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified, giving equal citizenship to all citizens of the United States, including former slaves, and extended the Bill of rights, giving the freedmen more equality and protection under the law. Although the Fourteenth Amendment predated the inauguration of President Ulysses Grant, it would play a significant part in the course taken by President Grant. The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, would build further upon the foundation laid by the Fourteenth Amendment by securing the enfranchisement of freedmen. In the same year the census of 1870 was held.<sup>69</sup> During the census the government counted the number of American citizens living in the United States. The importance of keeping up with the growth of civilians was in the fact that the results of the count would influence the distribution of seats in the House of Representatives.<sup>70</sup> As a result of the enfranchisement of black American males, the number of citizens that were allowed to vote in the Southern states of the United States grew immensely. This meant that the South would obtain more seats as compared to a decade before, even a majority.<sup>71</sup>

While for the Republican Party the period of 1868-1870 was of importance for gaining the votes of white Americans, the census of 1870 changed this course. With it, the significance of black American voters for the Republican Party grew once more.<sup>72</sup> Groups like the KKK understood the important role black Americans played in the upcoming election and decided to use violence to scare black Americans away from voting. As a reaction, the Republican Party decided to protect black Americans during voting.<sup>73</sup> 1870 was also the year that Delany for the first time took the stage as a Republican nominee for a political position. Delany joined the Republican Party and started by giving a speech at a Military Hall on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 1870 in Charleston, during which Delany remarked the difference between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party regarding race. While the Democratic party put on a façade and pretended to fight for the equality of black Americans, the Republican party truly wanted to help black

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<sup>69</sup> Giesberg, "'A Muster-Roll of the American people': the 1870 census, voting rights, and the postwar South", 36.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem, 36.

<sup>71</sup> Ibidem, 37.

<sup>72</sup> Ibidem, 37.

<sup>73</sup> Ibidem, 37.

Americans.<sup>74</sup> The year of 1870 showed a shift in American politics. With the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment, black Americans had finally become, according to Delany, a political power in the United States and specifically South Carolina. No longer was Delany split on the subject of office holding by black Americans but encouraged it.<sup>75</sup> The more active role of black Americans with politics also increased the relationship between black Americans and the Republican Party. Within the Republican party, Delany emphasised, it was of importance that “We must be more united, black and white.”<sup>76</sup> For Delany, the fight for equality was a fight in cooperation with white Republicans.

At the same time, in the state of South Carolina, black Americans were in the majority “and we would hold the political power. We are the strongest, and propose to elect to the Senate or House of Representatives. (...) This is justice.”<sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, Delany did not desire for the black Americans to get more than half of the offices, nor do they not need a governor to be black.<sup>78</sup> Delany did however want a “colored Lieutenant Governor, and two colored men in the house of Representatives and one in the Senate, and our quota of state and county offices”.<sup>79</sup> Delany tried to balance race and merit. Delany argued that race was of importance to represent the majority of the populace in South Carolina, while the black politicians chosen had to have merit and skill, so not to damage the position of black Americans.

Newspaper the *Daily Republican* believed that Delany only cared for race and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1870, the *Daily Republican* stated that “we are sorry to say that some of the speakers were emphatically wrong, in as much as they made appeals to their hearers which were calculated to foster the most pernicious ideas concerning color or race.”<sup>80</sup> The newspaper first criticized Robert Carlos Delarge, a black American Republican that was a member of the House of Representatives, who, according to the *Daily Republican*, called for the black Americans to have their own political party and “to place no trust in the whites”.<sup>81</sup> The *Daily Republican* continued by stating that Delarge gave life to one of the evils that had haunted South Carolina,

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<sup>74</sup> *Daily Republican*, ‘Ward meeting at Military Hall’, 21 June 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 123-124.

<sup>75</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 93.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*, 124.

<sup>77</sup> *Daily Republican*, ‘Mass meeting of Republicans’, 24 June 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 125.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, 125.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, 125.

<sup>80</sup> *Daily Republican*, ‘Side Issues’, 24 June 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 126.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*, 126.

which was “the political action of one race against another simply because of race”.<sup>82</sup> The Daily Republican believed that placing emphasis on the skin colour for choosing the person into office will lead to conflict between races. The Republicans have fought hard to destroy the importance of race, to protect black Americans against violent white Americans and to stop the significance of race in politics.<sup>83</sup> Did the Republicans do all this “only to see the colored people return evil for evil, and seek to pit their race, as a race against the whites?”<sup>84</sup> The Daily Republican continued by remarking that Delany made the same notions in his speeches: “Col. Delany's extreme and impracticable views on race are too well known to need extended comment. If carried out, the result would be the arrangement of the pure blacks against the whites and browns, and he himself sent to the wall.”<sup>85</sup>

The Daily Republican argued that, if Delany would continue placing emphasis on the subject of race, Delany would create a split within the Republican Party between black Americans and white Americans, which would end in black Americans losing the political struggle. It would possibly once again leave black Americans in a position of political vulnerability and Delany should not advocate race as an important political subject. Furthermore, the emphasis on skin colour in the vying for office is not positive for the party nor the race, it only improved the position of the person himself. The newspaper believed that the emphasis on race and its differences will only strengthen the cause of the Democratic party, because if a split would occur within the Republican Party, the Democratic Party would have a stronger position than before.<sup>86</sup>

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, 1870, another Republican Meeting occurred, during which speaker L. J. Taylor took the stage and criticized Delany, stating “where his (Delany) race would be if it had not been for white men who gave them all they had?”<sup>87</sup> This perspective given by Taylor showed a different side of the Republican Party. The Daily Republican and Taylor criticized Delany for putting so much emphasis and importance on the subject of race, while colour blindness was desirable. These articles from the Daily Republican showed how the relationship

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<sup>82</sup> Ibidem, 126.

<sup>83</sup> Ibidem, 126.

<sup>84</sup> Daily Republican, ‘Side Issues’, 24 June 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 126.

<sup>85</sup> Ibidem, 127.

<sup>86</sup> Ibidem, 127.

<sup>87</sup> Daily Republican, ‘Republican Meeting-Ward 6’, 7 July 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 129.

between Delany and the Republican Party deteriorated, because of the conflict surrounding colour-blindness.

At a grand mass meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1870, Delany answered the criticism by claiming that he was for “universal suffrage, universal amnesty, and an equal division of the honors of office between the races.”<sup>88</sup> Delany reminded the people that he felt no prejudices towards the South.<sup>89</sup> During another speech in Charleston, possibly on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, at which he was announced as the fourth on the Republican list for the run of Governor in South Carolina, Delany further addressed the criticisms from the Daily Republican and from Taylor. Delany announced that he wanted his speech to be focussed on social standing and to open the eyes of the black Americans for this subject, “But I suppose the organ of our party would call that making a distinction on account of color”.<sup>90</sup> Delany further criticized the Republican party by stating that “They want to neutralize race, wipe out the word entirely.”<sup>91</sup> Delany placed a lot of importance on the subject of race, while white Republicans did not deem it necessary to explicitly mention any race or colour. This difference in view is at the core of Delany's conflict with the Republican Party.

To explain why Delany still found the subject of race of importance, Delany reminded the audience that white American had the privilege of education.<sup>92</sup> For black Americans to become educated, they needed a black American to enlighten them, because “If you depend on other people to enlighten and help you, you will find yourself again in slavery”.<sup>93</sup> The discussion surrounding race seemed to have taken quite a toll on Delany's relationship with the Republican Party. It seemed like Delany did not trust white Americans anymore and certainly did not want to be dependent on them.

Delany concluded his speech by claiming that if white Americans educated black Americans, it was more possible that black Americans would turn to the Democratic Party. If Frederick Douglass had not interfered, according to Delany, many black Americans would have left the Republican Party and joined the Democratic Party.<sup>94</sup> In a sense, Delany tried to show that the

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<sup>88</sup> Daily Republican, 'Grand Mass Meeting', 5 July 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 130.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, 130.

<sup>90</sup> Daily Republican, 'The Fourth in Charleston', 5 July 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 131.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*, 131.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, 131.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibidem*, 131.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibidem*, 131.

influence of black leaders made sure that black Americans remained with the Republican party. No longer was the cooperation between white and black Republicans at the core of what made Delany believe in the Republican Party. After the conflict surrounding the debate of colour-blindness, Delany believed more in a separation of races than a cooperation of races within the Republican Party. Without black Americans gaining an important position in the Party, the Republican Party was as good as the Democratic Party according to Delany. The conflict regarding race and the seemingly unwillingness of the Republican Party to support the nomination of black Americans in South Carolina was at the core of Delany's alienation with the Republican Party.

Yet, Delany understood that the only way he would be influencing the position of his race, was through politics and to be precise through the ranks of the Republican Party. So, Delany stayed as nominee and took a last effort to gain further equality for black Americans through the Republican Party. During Delany's last speech for the Gubernatorial election of 1870, which he held at a Military Hall on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August, in which Delany argued that the leaders of both races were to blame for the division between races. Cooperation was necessary for the Republican Party to work and to win. Delany remarked that “Let us know no color, either white, or black, but treat a man as a man, and let Radical Republicanism be our guiding point.”<sup>95</sup> It needs to be clear that Delany did not believe in the ideal of ‘colour-blindness’, as shown. It is possible, however, that Delany changed stance to appeal to the Republican Party, so that Delany had a better position for him to act for more equality for the freedmen. By appealing to a larger audience within the Republican Party, Delany dropped his own ideals to ensure a better negotiation position for the freedmen. Delany essentially showed this point by claiming that to “not forget that it was the white man who gave us what we now possess and who first brought us here.”<sup>96</sup>

Delany took the stage multiple times to convince citizens in southern states to vote for the Republican Party. With the results of the election of 1868 still in the back of their minds, the Republican Party was afraid of losing even more influence after the election of 1870. But the Republican Party had an advantage that the Democratic Party did not have. By having a Republican as President, they could implement policies that would help them win the election. President Grant introduced the First Enforcement Act, also known as the First Ku Klux Klan

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<sup>95</sup> Daily Republican, ‘Meeting at Military Hall’, 20 August 1870, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 132.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*, 133.

Act. This act made it possible for Governors to protect the freedmen during the voting process. Which was needed, because with the introduction of the black vote and the Reconstruction Acts, white on black violence become more numerous.<sup>97</sup>The Ku Klux Klan murdered and threatened freedmen to stop them from voting for the Republican Party. In South Carolina, Governor Robert K. Scott raised a force by arming a big group of freedmen and unionist to protect the freedmen during their voting.<sup>98</sup> This created anger among the Democratic Party. The Freedmen came and voted in great numbers and the Republican Party won the midterms election of 1870. At the same time, this win created a reaction of violence against the Freedmen, one with repercussions.<sup>99</sup> Governor Scott decided, as a result of all the criticism he received from the Democratic Party, to meet with Democrats and decided to remove black Americans from official positions to then gift these positions to Democrats It showed the difficulties for the Republican Party to keep in touch and understand their grassroots supporters.<sup>100</sup> Regarding the freedmen, they were all too happy to help them with voting so that the Republican Party would win. But outside of the elections, the freedmen did not get any support in their economic and social positions.<sup>101</sup>

Although the Republican Party had won the elections, Delany himself did not gain any political position. For Delany, the period of 1870-1871 supposedly consisted out of Delany using his ‘colour-blind’ stance to convince Republican politicians to support freedmen. Although not a lot is known from this period, it was however clear that Delany dropped his ‘colour-blind’ stance knowing the Republicans would not listen to him.<sup>102</sup> Delany became completely disillusioned from the Republican Party. As a result of this frustration, Delany decided to write to Frederick Douglass on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1871 to review the political situation in South Carolina.<sup>103</sup> As the war between North and South ended, the freed slaves were left with many uncertainties. The southern states had to repair and reorganize itself, without any real Southern leaders to accept and help the freedmen. The only force capable of taking leadership positions in the south and commencing the Reconstruction of the South was the Northern U.S. army.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Bruce E. Baker and Brian Kelly, *After slavery, race, labor, and citizenship in the Reconstruction South* (Gainesville; University Press of Florida, 2013) 203-206.

<sup>98</sup> Baker and Kelly, *After slavery race, labor, and citizenship in the reconstruction South*, 206.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem*, 206.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibidem*, 207.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibidem*, 207.

<sup>102</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 96.

<sup>103</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘A political review: letter from Delany to Frederick Douglass’, 15 August 1871, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 133.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibidem*, 133.

All kinds of white Americans drifted along with this army. Some were educated, refined and just overall good men, yet the majority was considered by Delany as “the lowest grade of northern society, negro haters at home, who could not have been elected to any position of honor or trust.”<sup>105</sup>

These Northern Republicans obtained positions of power in the South, to gain trust from the black Americans and became their leaders by claiming to be Republican, ‘Yankee’ and Radical.<sup>106</sup> Delany is hereby referring to the carpetbaggers, Northern Republicans of higher education that obtained a lot of political offices in the South. As mentioned before, these white Republicans were not eager to give away positions of power to black Americans. According to Delany, “these demagogues laid the foundation of their power upon a basis of the most dangerous political heresy. Deception, lying, cheating, chanting”.<sup>107</sup> The Republican Party left behind them their true goal of equal rights and started to sow division among black Americans. Republicans abused their position to gain support from black Americans while these same black Americans would gain nothing from voting the Republicans. Delany further argued that the Republican Party made sure that black Americans could not create a relationship and cooperate with local white Americans and ex-slaveowners, the groups according to Delany black Americans needed to enhance their live in the South.<sup>108</sup>

The carpetbaggers were in it for their personal wealth, stated Delany, without caring for the Republican cause.<sup>109</sup> According to Delany, white and black Americans in the political parties had enough after a while and decided to minimize the influence of the carpetbaggers. As a reaction, the white leaders spoke to “simple-minded people” and told them that their rights cannot be violated, that the majority of black Americans in Charleston would always have the biggest influence on politics and there was no such thing as colour anymore. They argued that the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment lessened the significance of colour.<sup>110</sup> “This bare faced deception was so instilled into them that it became dangerous in many instances to go into the country and speak of color in any manner whatever”.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 134.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibidem*, 134.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibidem*, 134.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*, 97.

<sup>109</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 135.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibidem*, 135.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibidem*, 135.

Delany continued by claiming that these carpetbaggers tried to diminish the importance of colour so that they can remain within a position of power. The majority of civilians living in South Carolina were black Americans. It was possible that the majority of political offices in South Carolina could have been held by black Americans, a development that threatened the political positions of the carpetbaggers. These carpetbaggers, according to Delany, tried to convince the Republicans that black Americans did not need black leaders.<sup>112</sup> The specific representation of race was perceived as unwanted, according to Delany. “By this means, they opposed the qualified men among the blacks, encouraged the ignorant and less qualified”.<sup>113</sup> They convinced the ‘ignorant’ of taking arms and marching to meetings, while riots, confusion and violence were “results of this most disgraceful state of affairs under which we live, all in the name of Republicanism.”<sup>114</sup> Delany seemed to understand why the Republicans called for a ‘colour-blind’ stance. It had nothing to do with the idea that race should be neutral and all races should be equal. According to Delany, carpetbaggers used the façade of ‘colour-blindness’ to obtain and maintain the important political positions for themselves. In its essence, ‘colour-blindness’ is used to halt the political elevation of black Americans.

Delany further remarked that these white leaders, in the name of Reconstruction and republicanism, were trying to create a split in society based on race.<sup>115</sup> The only way to remedy this was by creating an enlightened and intelligent civilization. “This canker, this leprosy” Delany argued in his letter to Douglass, “must be at once healed and by a permanent purification purged from the social system of our people whose vitals it has entered, threatening death to its emaciating victims, now the scoff and derision of the Caucasoid race.”<sup>116</sup> This showed how Delany feared that racism would worsen because of these white ‘demagogues’ and would lead to a bigger division between races or would even lead to the death of the black race. Delany stressed that by de-emphasising the importance of race within politics, which is the course the Republican Party had decided to take, it would result in the diminishing of the position of the black American.<sup>117</sup>

Delany understood that among the common American citizens this distinction in race had become less noticeable. Yet the higher class and especially the government in Washington,

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<sup>112</sup> Ibidem, 135.

<sup>113</sup> Ibidem, 135.

<sup>114</sup> Ibidem, 136.

<sup>115</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 136-137.

<sup>116</sup> Ibidem, 137.

<sup>117</sup> Ibidem, 137.

which was Republican, still made distinctions in race. “It is a fact most noticeable in executive appointment of colored men, there are none of pure black men, the pure Negro race, but all have been most carefully selected from those having an admixture of white blood.”<sup>118</sup> Delany specifically refers to the Republican Secretary of State Hamilton Fish as being racist towards black Americans and purposefully rejecting black Americans on positions of importance. Besides, “Other members of the cabinet it is said largely share these feelings against the pure Negro race.”<sup>119</sup> This does not only occur in the national government, but also in all the states. With one exception, all the black Americans that get a job are incompetent and they are appointed for the sole reason of discrediting the person and his race, according to Delany. At the same time, mixed races do get good jobs, according to Delany, because they have some white blood in their veins.<sup>120</sup> The neglect towards the black Americans by the Republican Party further fuelled the alienation of Delany regarding the Republican Party. Delany's agenda was mainly the elevation of the black American in post-Civil-War society. Race was a subject of main importance for Delany. The constant ignoring of black Americans by the Republican Party, which led to halting black American elevation, were at the heart of Delany disillusionment with the Republican Party. The black Americans eventually became a “political nonentity before the government of the country”.<sup>121</sup> If the Republican Party did not give equality to all races in their party and in the country, Delany believed the party should cease to exist.<sup>122</sup>

Delany continued his criticisms on the Republican Party and the importance of race in a letter to Justice Jonathan Wright, written on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1874, a black American who worked for the Supreme Court in South Carolina. The specific subject is the emigration of the white race into South Carolina: “I simply desire to say that this tide of emigration having now set in will go on to completion – that is, it will not cease till the white population in the state sufficiently outnumbers the blacks to secure to the whites the basis of A RULING ELEMENT”.<sup>123</sup> Through this, the ‘ruling element’ of the black Americans living in South Carolina will become null. Through immigration the white American in five years would be the majority in the state of South Carolina. Hereby, Delany mainly referred to the carpetbaggers

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<sup>118</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 137.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibidem*, 138.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibidem*, 138-139.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibidem*, 139.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibidem*, 140.

<sup>123</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Delany to Justice Jonathan Wright’, 10 February 1874, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 165.

and their intentions to gain political positions in the South. Delany stated that Wright and other intellectual black leaders should warn the black Americans of this coming danger.<sup>124</sup> Furthermore, a way that Delany wanted to appease to the white Americans is through the implementation of cumulative voting. This would create the option to have a minority representation of the white American in South Carolina.<sup>125</sup> Delany further stated that:

“THE WHITE RACE IS TRUE TO ITSELF, and it is useless and doing injustice to both races to conceal the fact, that in giving liberty and equality of rights to the blacks, they had no desire to see them rule over their own race. And the blacks may as well know this at once; that there is no scheme that can be laid, no measure that may be entered into, nor expenses so great which they will not incur to change such a relation between blacks and whites in the country. Rest assured of this, that there are no white people North or South who will submit to see the blacks rule over the whites in America.”<sup>126</sup>

The minority representation was necessary, because white Americans would never let black Americans rule over them. It was a criticism towards the Republican party, specifically carpetbaggers and scalawags, even going so far as calling Radicalist as a group that only made decisions that were positive for themselves, not for the common good.<sup>127</sup>

In conclusion, the subject of race was at the heart of Delany's alienation from the Republican Party. Delany believed that through cooperation between the black and white Americans, equality could be accomplished and with it the further elevation of black Americans, in particular the freedmen. Delany's support for the Republican Party was based on this relationship and cooperation. Race was a central theme in Delany's political perspective. Especially with the increasing violence in the South Delany argued for more political influence for the freedmen. Yet, the political elevation of the black American was halted by white Republicans living in the South or coming from the North. These scalawags and carpetbaggers obtained and protected the political positions of influence for themselves. Furthermore, the Republican Party showed aversion towards making race a political subject of importance. Through their colour-blind stance, the Republican Party came in conflict with the perspective of Delany. All these aspects had a toll on Delany's view on race. Increased violence from the KKK, the lack of political positions for black Americans because of scalawags and

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<sup>124</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 165.

<sup>125</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 100.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibidem*, 166.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem*, 166.

carpetbaggers and the colour-blind stance halted Delany from cooperating with the Republican Party. It all ended in Delany feeling disillusioned with the Republican Party.

### Chapter 3: Delany's disillusionment and the Democratic Party, 1874-1885.

The ranks of the Radical Republican party were corrupted. Money, through bribery, was a way to move mountains in the politics of South Carolina and of the United States itself. A great example of this corruption was the Credit Mobilier scandal, which was investigated by the House of Representatives in 1872. The actions and decisions of nine members of congress, of which eight were Republican, were scrutinized.<sup>128</sup> This scandal, although significant, was small in comparison to the widespread corruption happening in the Radical Republican Party. Besides, the Reconstruction did not show any significant changes that were wanted. This led to criticism from within the Republican Party, stating that changes were needed. Yet, these changes never came, which resulted in a split in the Republican Party in South Carolina. The Republicans that felt alienated from the Radical Republicans created their own party. Founded in 1872, the Independent Republican Party nominated James Lawrence Orr for Governor of South Carolina, by which they opposed the election of Franklin J. Moses. Jr in this position. Moses was blamed of being corrupt and the Independent Republicans wanted to remove him of his position.<sup>129</sup>

While losing the election of 1872, they tried again in 1874. The Republican Party choose Daniel Henry Chamberlain for nomination of South Carolina Governor, something the Independent Republicans were not pleased with. So, the Independent Republican chose for the position of Governor John T. Green and for the position of lieutenant governor Martin R. Delany. In this chapter, it will be researched how Delany's dissilusionment with the Republican Party resulted in Delany losing faith in all politics and how this resulted in Delany once again changing his black nationalistic stance from 'integrationist' to 'emigrationist'. The argument put forward in this chapter is that Delany's deteriorating relationship with the Republican Party, which eventually ended in Delany leaving for the Democratic Party, resulted in Delany losing faith in American politics and with it losing faith in finding equality and freedom in the United States. When it became impossible in Delany's perspective to achieve equality in the United States itself, Delany had to find equality outside of the American borders.

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<sup>128</sup> Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The ordeal of the reunion: A new history of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill; The University of North Carolina Press, 2014) 324.

<sup>129</sup> John S. Reynolds, *Reconstruction in South Carolina, 1865-1867* (New York; Negro Universities Press, 1969) 222-223.

On 1 October 1874, Delany entered the stage as an Independent Republican in front of the City Hall in Charleston. Delany started his speech with a straightforward and clear opinion, showing Delany's break with the Republican Party: "but the day is gone (...) when we can be made to believe that everything the Republican Party did was right."<sup>130</sup> The illusion that the Republican Party could only do good because of their past, because of their fight against slavery, was gone for Delany. Delany distanced himself from the Republican Party and foresaw that the opposition of the Republican Party was necessary to maintain and obtain the rights of freedmen. During the Independent Republican State Nominating Convention, held at the Hibernian Hall in Charleston on 2 October 1874, Delany expressed the opinion that the Northern politicians misled black Americans. It became the norm that the Republican Party did everything correct, which led to black Americans following the Republicans without criticizing their decisions. It made black Americans stop thinking for themselves.<sup>131</sup>

The only 'good' the Northern politicians procured for black Americans was the Land Commission, which in itself was a scheme for these politicians to put money in their own pockets.<sup>132</sup> According to Delany, the Republican leaders abused their position and the trust they got from black Americans for power and money, while pretending to act in the good interest of black Americans. At the same time, black leaders were conspiring with these Republicans, using their position for their own good. Delany pleaded for a change of the guard, replacing all these white and black leaders. This is where the Independent Republican Party came in: "This departure from the old double-dyed corrupt wing of the Republican Party was but the natural consequence of their corruption".<sup>133</sup> A specific aspect that is of interest was the believe that the corrupt Republicans were 'double-dyed', presumably stating that the corrupt individuals were of just one race, most like white. Delany's transition from the Republican Party to the Independent Republican Party was a result of the corruption apparent within the ranks of the Radical Republicans.

On 3 October 1874, at the Independent Republican State Convention in Charleston, Delany held another speech. Delany commenced his speech by referring to the different stages the Republican Party went through. In the beginning, it was created with the goal of opposing the

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<sup>130</sup> News and Courier, 'Independent Republicans: Conservatives and Republicans in a common cause', 1 October 1874, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 173.

<sup>131</sup> News and Courier, 'The Independent Republican State Nominating Convention: Hibernian Hall', 3 October 1874, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 174.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*, 174.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibidem*, 175.

Democratic Party. With time passing on, indifferences lead to different groups within the Republican Party. In the end “one part of our was taught as a fundamental principle that they must stand in direct hostility to one portion of the people which formed the community in which they lived.”<sup>134</sup> Presumably referring to the hostilities done by scalawags and carpetbaggers against the freedmen, it depicted another reason why Delany left the Republican Party. For the black Americans to maintain their rights, argued Delany, it was necessary for them to vote for the Independent Republican Party, because Republicans did nothing more than halt the elevation of black Americans for their personal progress.

On 6 October 1874, Delany joined another mass meeting in Charleston. Delany reminded the audience that the Reconstruction acts were not created for white Americans, because white Americans already had all these rights. Through reasoning, Delany argued, these acts must have been made for black Americans. Delany then asked the crowd if black Americans in South Carolina enjoyed any benefits “derived from the propagation of Republican sentiments”, to which the audience answered no.<sup>135</sup> Delany essentially stated that the Republican acts were all a ruse, it did nothing to improve the position of the black American in the south. Delany argued the following: “One thing it has done, and that is to keep up a continual strife, parading a huge scare crow by means of which they keep you in a state of continual fight, making you believe that you are in a constant danger of losing your liberties unless you have certain leaders to back you up and protect you. This is wat Republicanism has done for us, and the result has been to keep up a constant hostility between the whites and blacks.”<sup>136</sup>

The struggle for equality that the Republican Party fought for, had been, according to Delany, a ruse. The Republican Party pretended that a conflict existed between the white Southerners and black Americans, to instil fear into the freedmen. Believing they would lose their rights if the Democratic Party would seize power in South-Carolina, freedmen would as a result vote Republican. At the same time, Delany believed that the Republican Party tried to divide black Americans into opposing groups. According to Delany, he and Judge Green, the nominee for Governor, were called Democrats.<sup>137</sup> Delany reacted to this by arguing that “we are no longer to be frightened by the old bugbear of “Democrats”. Why, it was the Democrats who gave us

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<sup>134</sup> News and Courier, ‘The Independent Republican State Convention’, 5 October 1874, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 176.

<sup>135</sup> News and Courier, ‘Green and Delany’, 7 October 1874, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 177.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibidem*, 177.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibidem* 178-179.

freedom. And are we never to learn anything from the Democrats? (...) while we poor devils don't dare to vote for a good man because he is a Democrat.”<sup>138</sup>

Delany's view of politics had significantly changed since the Civil War. In the 1860's, black Americans, including Delany, supported the Republican Party for what they had accomplished. The Republican Party had gained the image of an anti-slavery and pro-equality party that cared for the rights of black Americans, while the Democrats became the ‘bugbear’ of racism, slavery and violence. With the disillusionment Delany went through in his relationship with the Republican Party, Delany understood that the Republican Party was not worth supporting just for its past. Not the political party, but the politician should be the main reason for one's decision. Delany argued, if a Democrat had good ideas and intentions, why should black Americans stop from voting him just because of the history of the Democratic Party.<sup>139</sup>

Delany wanted to break the stigma surrounding the Democratic Party that was present among black Americans in the South. Delany added to his argument by giving an example of a Democrat doing good for black Americans: “I was conductor on the Underground Railroad. You all know what that was – a society to carry off slaves and give them freedom. This required money. I tell you we got ten dollars from a Democrat where we got one dollar from a Republican and, what is more, we didn't refuse the money because it came from Democrats. Let us, in this new issue, extend our hands to every honest citizen of the state, and go on to certain success and triumph in our effort redeem the state.”<sup>140</sup> It is important to mention that it is unclear in how far Delany was part of the Underground Railroad, Presumably, if at all, Delany played a small role. This does affect the validity of Delany's notion that Democrats paid more for the help of slaves than Republicans.

Delany's continuous barrage of criticism meant for the Republican Party did not result in a win. With just a small margin, Chamberlain won. With this loss, Delany decided to return to the Republican Party.<sup>141</sup> More than a year went by without any sign of Delany. No letters, no speeches and no articles. 28 February 1876 marked the end of Delany's period of complete silence. More than one year after the failure that was his run for Lieutenant-Governor, Delany found himself in some trouble. In an extended letter to Frederick Douglass, Delany discussed the trial and conviction he had to undergo. Delany started by referring to the “worst class of

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<sup>138</sup> Ibidem, 179.

<sup>139</sup> Ibidem, 179.

<sup>140</sup> Ibidem, 180.

<sup>141</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 183.

white political adventurers from the North” and feared that this group would get more and more influence on politics and on black Americans living in the South.<sup>142</sup> For as long black Americans adhered to the rules and policies made by the Republicans, black Americans will keep their rights and freedom. But the moment a black American is against these Republicans, they would do everything in their power to halt this individual. Delany referred to himself as the individual that was being punished by these Republican leaders because he did not agree with their ideas. Delany argued that black Americans feared for their freedom more than during the antebellum days, while “It is not republicanism that is doing this, but imposters, intruders, villains by that name.”<sup>143</sup>

Delany believed that he was put before trial because of political reasons. Mainly, the ‘Crowning offence’ as Delany called it, was the fact that he was running for Lieutenant-Governor for the Independent Republicans, working together with the Conservatives.<sup>144</sup> Delany stated that this was “A conspiracy to send an innocent citizen to the state prison for the purpose of disgracing and humiliating him to destroy his political influence”.<sup>145</sup> Delany’s resentment for the Radical Republicans grew. Insofar even, that Delany called the Radical Republicans “moral assassins, unequalled by any KU-KLUX however vile, cruel and revolting” and they are like a “hydra-headed monster, whose heart is in Orangeburg, and its body entwined and coiled through every community in the state, with its vilest hideous head in Charleston.”<sup>146</sup> Before Civil War, the majority of inhabitants of Orangeburg were slaves. After the Civil War, these freedmen stayed and Orangeburg kept its strong Republican roots.

Delany referred to the Radical Republicans, comparing them to the Ku Klux Klan and portraying them as some disease spreading across South Carolina. Delany argued that the Radical Republicans used black Americans “as the political instrument of their oppression”.<sup>147</sup> By supporting freedmen and by ensuring the equality of black Americans with white Americans, the Radical Republicans are creating a gap between races in the South. By claiming these changes, according to Delany, the Radical Republicans were trying to anger the southern Democrats, insofar that “the first occasion for the murmur of a conflict of races, and the whole country will rise up and rush to arm with such force and power”, that eventually at the end of

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<sup>142</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Trial and Conviction’, 28 February 1876, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 186.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibidem*, 187.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibidem*, 195.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibidem*, 202.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibidem*, 203.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibidem*, 203.

all this bloodshed black Americans would “only be remembered among the things of the past!”<sup>148</sup> Delany believed this struggle between races could mean the end of black Americans and that the Radical Republicans are steering towards this goal.

Eventually, Delany would not be sentenced for any crime, but was forced to pay a fine. Interestingly, the governor of South Carolina, Republican David H. Chamberlain, had given a pardon to Delany. In return, Delany promised to help Chamberlain during the gubernational elections of 1876. This meant supporting the Republican Party once more. A mere 17 days later, Delany joined the National Independent Organization of Colored Men (NIOCM).<sup>149</sup> On 18 September 1876, Delany send a letter to Reverend Garland H. White. In it, Delany revealed he had become the president for the NIOCM.<sup>150</sup> This was an issue, because the NIOCM was a Democratic organisation. By accepting the position of Presidency, Delany left the Republican Party and essentially joined the Democratic Party. After the gubernational election of 1874, which the Independent Republican Party barely lost, the Democratic Party was in resurgence. It once again became the main opposition against the Republican Party, which meant there was no more need for the Independent Republican Party. The Republican Party had nominated Chamberlain, while the Democrats had nominated Wade Hampton III. Delany had chosen to support and be a part of the team of Democrat Wade Hampton III. The Democratic Party, a party Delany despised his whole live, the party of slavery and racism, the party Delany wanted to fight against during the Civil War, now had Delany to speak for them. It was not so much Delany's love for the Democratic Party than his hate for the Republican Party that steered Delany into the ranks of the Democrats. For Delany, the Republican Party became the party that abused and misrepresented black Americans. At the same time, Delany saw promise in the steps the Democratic Party was taking towards racial equality.

In early 1876, a call for insurgency and violence grew stronger in South Carolina. The Democrats believed that by scaring away the Republicans, through the use of violence, they could win the upcoming election of 1876. Within the Democratic Party, there were two groups. One group, the ‘Straight-out’, advocated to use violence and force to win the elections. The other group, the fusionists, were keener to try to negotiate with moderate Republicans.<sup>151</sup> These

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<sup>148</sup> Ibidem, 203.

<sup>149</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 215.

<sup>150</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘The black man’s political movement: Delany to Rev. Garland H. White’, 18 September 1876, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 218.

<sup>151</sup> Richard Zuczek, ‘The last campaign of the Civil War: South Carolina and the Revolution of 1876’, *Civil War History*, 42(1), (1996) 18-31.

two groups could not decide what the eventual policy should be. This changed by an event that occurred in Hamburg, South Carolina. After a spur of violence, a group of white Democrats sieged and attacked a group of black Americans hiding in a building. A number of these black Americans were executed afterwards. The Republican Party almost did nothing to lessen the violence after this conflict, showing to the Democratic party that they could get away with using violence. As a result, the 'Straight-out' tactic became the norm.<sup>152</sup>

Important for the Democrats was to gain support from the black Americans living in South Carolina. As a result, the Democratic Party used two strategies simultaneously. Wade Hampton promised to fight for the rights of the black Americans, while Martin Witherspoon Gary, a brigadier general of the confederate army and Democrat, used violence to gain more control in the state.<sup>153</sup> As a black American, Delany believed he and other black Americans needed to be careful with taking steps in politics: "We are not to set up ourselves as the censors of a government and critics of a constitution organized by an assemblage of as wise men as have been known to modern civilization; nor, through ignorance, assail Democracy nor Republicanism; the two fundamental and greatest principles which can underlie any government. It is only the perversion of these principles with which we have to deal, and the abuse of them that is the subject of complaint."<sup>154</sup>

Both democracy and republicanism matter, according to Delany, and it is the way one handled these principles of American society that bore weight. In the eyes of Delany, the Republican party did not rightly implement the principles of democracy and republicanism. Mainly, the changes for black Americans that were promised during Reconstruction did not see the light of day. The Republican Party seemed to alter their focus towards the maintaining of the union rather than helping black Americans. This played into the idea that the Republican Party was the party in power that had as goal the further improvement of freedom, yet during Reconstruction the importance of freedom diminished. The NIOCM had as goal, and with it the Democratic Party, to protect the interest of the black race. Delany's disappointment in the Republican Party and his cautioned optimism that the Democratic Party would further help elevate black Americans was why he supported Hampton.

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<sup>152</sup> Ibidem, 20.

<sup>153</sup> Ibidem, 24.

<sup>154</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 218.

For Delany, the Democratic Party represented a new opportunity with "the harmonization of our race as a race with the race originally comprising both of the old parties."<sup>155</sup> Democracy and republicanism had laid the foundation for black Americans to become equal with white Americans. Delany gave as example the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments. So, republicanism and democracy as ideals were not what Delany strove for, because they already existed<sup>156</sup>. What Delany wanted was the further improvement of these principles, which was to be done through cooperation with white Americans. Delany further expressed this sentiment in his letter to Garland by stating that: "let us now, after the war, have the same nominal institutions adapted to the change and new state of things, by the clasping of hands, and a combination of the two races in one great Southern party, based on the common interest of all the people of both races, inseparably connected, regarding and respecting alike each other's rights, conceding and supporting each other's just and legal claims, promoting peace, friendship and confidence, till we shall be in our domestic relations only known as one people and one party in interest."<sup>157</sup>

It indicated the move away from the Republican Party, which Delany portrayed as the Northern party, and showed Delany's intentions of strengthening the relationship and cooperation between white and black Americans in the Democratic Party. On the 9 October 1876, Delany was on stage at the Colored Democratic Club to hold a speech for the Democratic Party. In it, Delany argued that "The present movement, headed by Gen. Hampton, was of great importance to the colored people, and the expressions of Gen. Hampton and his supporters on the ticket went to show that they meant equal rights to all."<sup>158</sup> Delany continued his speech by reflecting on the criticism from the Republican Party that only the Republicans could secure the equality of black Americans. Delany countered this argument by declaring that the Democratic Party "recognized the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution" while vying to secure more rights for black Americans.<sup>159</sup>

If Republicans would have been attending the speech, Delany argued, the Republicans would have responded by claiming that the Democratic Party pretended to care for black Americans just to gain more votes. In reaction, Delany replied by expressing that "Cannot the colored people afford to trust their own native white people for two years when they have trusted alien

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<sup>155</sup> Ibidem, 218.

<sup>156</sup> Ibidem, 218-219.

<sup>157</sup> Ibidem, 219.

<sup>158</sup> News and Courier, 'The campaign in the city: the colored democracy of ward 4', 10 October 1876, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 220.

<sup>159</sup> Ibidem, 220.

adventurers for eight years?”<sup>160</sup> Delany was convinced that black Americans were at home in the South, while the Northern Republicans, in the form of carpetbaggers, came into the territory of black Americans and Southern Democrats and took their positions of power. Delany wanted to exclude the Republicans out of the picture, by creating a southern society containing only of black Americans and Democrats, because “That was just what the whole people wanted. They wanted both races to live amicably together.”<sup>161</sup> The Republican Party drove a wedge between black Americans and Southern Democrats. Once again, Delany's sentiment for the Democratic Party and despise against the Republican Party hailed from the discussion of race equality, claiming that black Americans could only live in freedom and full equality under the rule of the Democratic Party.

On 12 October 1876 Delany once again attended a meeting held at the Colored Democratic Club in Charleston. During his speech, Delany explained why he left the Republican Party and had joined the Democratic Party in the first place. Delany argued that Wade Hampton would establish “the true Jeffersonian Democracy”.<sup>162</sup> The Jeffersonian Democracy was a commitment to Republicanism, mainly the protection of the Southern farmers against the corporate North. Furthermore, Delany wanted to explain why he did not support the Republican Chamberlain. Chamberlain himself was not the reason, Delany argued. Instead, it was the bad company in which Chamberlain found himself that made Delany leave. Delany understood that black Americans were not so keen to vote for the Democratic Party and Delany had found a hard time convincing them otherwise. According to Delany, the Democratic Party reached out to black Americans to truly represent them.<sup>163</sup>

One day later, Delany was present at a meeting held in the Hibernian Hall in Charleston, which was called ‘An enthusiastic gathering of white and colored Democrats’ by the *News and Courier* newspaper.<sup>164</sup> Delany showed his compassion to the Democratic Party of South Carolina. At the same time, Delany used the opportunity to criticize the Republican Party, arguing that the Republican Party kept black Americans away from education to keep them

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<sup>160</sup> Ibidem, 220.

<sup>161</sup> Ibidem, 220.

<sup>162</sup> News and Courier, ‘The campaign in the city: meeting of the colored democratic club of third ward, October 21, 1876’, 12 October 1876, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 221.

<sup>163</sup> Ibidem, 221

<sup>164</sup> News and Courier, ‘The campaign in the city: a meeting in Hibernian Hall last night. An enthusiastic gathering of white and colored democrats’, 13 October 1876, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 222-223.

ignorant. Delany reminded “his hearers that the abolition of slavery was brought about by the teachings of such Democrats as Thomas Jefferson and Martin van Buren. The colored people had been misled into the belief that Democracy meant slavery, and it was done for the purpose of dividing the races.”<sup>165</sup>

Delany argued that at the core of American democracy, on which the Democratic Party was built, a multitude of principles existed that would make the abolishment of slavery possible. Although democracy made the abolishment of slavery possible, black Americans were taught otherwise by Republicans, who were trying to create a split between races for their own benefit. The intention of creating a gap between races was, according to Delany, at the core of what made the Republican Party wrong. As a result, Delany stated “I say, then, that the men who are endeavoring to keep us apart are the enemies of both races”.<sup>166</sup>

The Democratic Party won the election of 1876 and as a result black Americans in the South could no longer be protected by the Federal Government. The initial year after the victory was a positive experience for Delany, having received the office of trial justice. Yet, behind the scenes, ultra-conservative Democrats, called Redeemers, took control of South Carolina politics and unleashed a period of violence against black Americans. The Redeemers wanted white supremacy in the South, by taking away power from freedmen and Republicans.<sup>167</sup> Furthermore, Delany was removed from his office as trial justice. Violence against black Americans rose in South Carolina, insofar that it brought Delany back into his old stance on black nationalism. Once more, Delany considered emigration as a means to elevate black Americans.<sup>168</sup> Delany had no more hope, as a result of the increased violence, that it would be possible in the United States itself. Delany became disillusioned from American politics in its entirety. On 8 July 1878, Delany sent a letter to H. R. Latrobe, member of the Colonization movement, asking for a loan. In the letter, Delany stated as followed “Among the whites here we have no friends to our movement who would aid us by loan; but would rather contribute to prevent success.”<sup>169</sup> Delany distrusted white Americans and had suspicions regarding white American efforts surrounding emigration. In another letter written on 18 August 1880, sent to

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<sup>165</sup> Ibidem, 222.

<sup>166</sup> Ibidem, 223.

<sup>167</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 216-217.

<sup>168</sup> Ibidem, 216-217.

<sup>169</sup> Martin R. Delany, ‘Delany to Hon. H. R. Latrobe’, 8 July 1878, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 228.

William Coppinger, Delany expressed his desire to leave for Africa.<sup>170</sup> In the end, Delany would not return to Africa and his dreams for African emigration stopped with his death in 1885.

In conclusion, the last half of the 1870's was a tumultuous period for Delany. In particular, Delany's relation with American politics in general took a hit. After joining the Independent Republican Party, Delany was no longer part of the Republican Party. People would no longer vote for him as a black American in the Republican Party. Now, Delany had to convince voters with his personal political ideals, he no longer enjoyed automatic legitimacy because he was part of the Republican Party. With the Independent Republican Party failing after the election, it became clear that the majority of South Carolina did not agree with Delany's perspective. Delany believed that what he did was essential for the elevation of black Americans, but Delany did not find a lot of acceptance from black Americans for his ideas. After the election of 1874, once again, Delany had no win. After the election, Delany was accused of a number of felonies. When Delany stood charge before court in his trial, he believed he was set up by Republicans that did not like his views on politics. Delany felt alienated from the Republican Party, because his political ideals were not accepted by Republicans. So, Delany joined the Democratic Party. Here, Delany found some footing among its voters, cheering for every word Delany said. In the eyes of the Democratic Party, Delany was an intelligent black male that understood the Southern culture. Although the Democratic Party won in the election of 1876 and Delany got a job, the resulting increase in violence and Delany losing his position resulted in a new low for Delany. In combination with his lost relationship with the Republican Party, this event changed Delany's political perspective forever. No longer did Delany have faith in American politics. Delany believed equality and the elevation of black Americans was no longer possible in the United States itself, so Delany set his eyes once more on the African continent. The deteriorated relationship with the Republican Party, that eventually led Delany to the Democratic Party, was at the core of Delany's alienation with American politics in general and with Delany becoming an 'emigrationist' again.

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<sup>170</sup> Martin R. Delany, 'Delany to William Coppinger', 18 August 1880, in *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, ed. Tunde Adeleke, 229-230.

## Conclusion

“In the mean time, my course has been laid out, and my work in Africa all fixed and clear before me. (...) And as I could not be a corrupt politician, you see that I found no favor with those in influence and authority.”<sup>171</sup>

In this letter written in 1880 to William Copping, it became clear which course Delany had taken. Delany's eyes were set on Africa, aspiring to once more cross the seas on a boat to land on the east coast of the African continent. It would be a dream that, unfortunately for Delany, would not come true. The corruption present within American politics made Delany once again lose his faith in integration. This short fragment showed both of these developments. At the one hand, Delany stated that his work was in Africa. At the other hand, Delany portrayed his alienation from politics in the United States. These developments are connected. The following research question is at the heart of this research:

How and why did Martin Robison Delany's relationship with the Republican Party influence his perspective on ‘emigrationism’/‘integrationism’?

Delany changed his stance on black nationalism on multiple occasions. With each instance, Delany was influenced as a result of political interferences in either Delany's personal life or in the United States in general. While the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 hailed in the first period of Delany's ‘emigrationist’ stance, the Civil War had given Delany faith as such that Delany once more believed in integration. Lastly, as the Republican Party was unable to truly elevate black Americans, Delany became disillusioned from the American politics and once more supported the emigration of black Americans to Africa. So, the influence of politics is the answer to the question of ‘how’. Yet, why Delany was affected by these political decisions still needs to be answered. To understand Delany's eventual disposition towards the Republican Party, the start of the Civil War needs to be discussed. During the 1850's, the institution of slavery still stood strong. With the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, besides giving slave traders more power, Delany's objective towards finding a country outside of the United States for the freedom of black Americans was set. Because of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, slavery did not seem to be anywhere near its dying breath. The contrary was true, Southern slavery was

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<sup>171</sup> Adeleke, *Martin R. Delany Civil War and Reconstruction: a primary source reader*, 230.

able to solidify its fundament. Delany feared that slavery would once more become nationalized and predicted that more black Americans would become victims of slavery. Delany lost faith in the future of the United States. Faith was one of the principles that Delany held dear to. The Civil War gave Delany once more faith, faith that the fight for equality could be held on American soil.

Delany's objective was nothing short of the equality and elevation of black Americans. With the Civil War, this became a possibility. Delany observed how white soldiers took up the arms to fight for the freedom of slaves. Delany came to understand that without the help of white Americans, the freedom and equality of black Americans would not become reality. To be specific, without the help of the Republican Party. Delany's faith in obtaining equality between black and white Americans was connected with the Republican Party. This relationship with the Republican Party is at the heart of Delany's switch to 'integrationist' black nationalism and this same relationship would also lead to Delany once more considering emigration in the last years of his life.

Delany's relationship with the Republican Party during the Civil War and early Reconstruction became the golden standard for Delany. Black and white Americans cooperating to fight for the freedom of slaves and for the equality of black Americans. This cooperation, this sense that the Republicans had the same goals as Delany, was fuel for Delany's faith in 'integrationism'. In its essence, Delany's understanding of 'integrationism' was this combination of cooperation with white Americans and the objective of creating a country in which both black Americans and white Americans were enfranchised citizens with equal rights, access to political offices and possibilities. At the same time, Delany's emphasis on the cooperation between white and black Americans also showed the first signs of Delany's limited allegiance to the Republican Party. As became clear in his letter to President Johnson, Delany was open to cooperate with a Democratic president. This showed that Delany did not care with whom he had to cooperate if it resulted in the elevation of black Americans.

As the years of Reconstruction passed by, it became abundantly clear to Delany that cooperation with white Americans became more difficult. The two different groups of Republicans in South Carolina, scalawags and carpetbaggers, claimed chief political positions for their own and guarded these positions against possible black American officeholders. Furthermore, the national government seemed to place more importance on the maintaining of the union between North and South than to further the elevation of black Americans. Within

the Republican Party itself, it was even more clear that cooperation with white Americans became less probable. The Republican Party distanced itself from focussing on race and called for a 'colour-blind' stance. Delany was of the opinion that equality could only be achieved by focussing on the elevation of black Americans, by which using a 'colour-blind' stance would tarnish this goal.

As a result, Delany's relationship with the Republican Party became disillusioned. Delany left the Republican Party and joined the Democratic Party. This decision came from Delany's disappointment and lack of trust in the Republican Party, while at the same time believing the Democratic Party's call for more equality. Eventually, when the Democratic Party won the election and racism and violence against black Americans became even more widespread, Delany lost all faith in politics and returned to the topic of emigration. Indirectly, Delany's alienation from the Republican Party, which lead him into the Democratic Party where Delany once again became disappointed in politics, ended up in Delany abandoning all forms of politics.

The period of postbellum in regard to Delany career still has a lot of potential for research. Just a handful of books and articles have researched this period in Delany's life. It would be wrong to call Delany just a nationalist or just an 'integrationist'. The complexity of his character, the pragmatism Delany used and the sacrifices he made all were for the good of black Americans. Within the annals of history, the name of Martin Robison Delany is overshadowed by Frederick Douglass. Yet, the subject of Delany, his career and his life, deserves more extensive research.

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