

THE UNRECOGNIZED REVOLUTION: THE ELECTION OF 1860 AND THE UPHEAVAL IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

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Among the many changes the presidential election of 1860 ushered in, none was as abrupt as the one in American foreign policy. National policy toward other nations went from expansionism and free trade to isolationism and protectionism. This change, representing nearly a perfect one-hundred-eighty-degree about-face, happened almost instantaneously, was in place once the Republicans took over the presidency and southerners vacated Congress; it lasted until a wave of imperialism swept over the country in the 1890s. Historians and others have long noted the rise of protectionism with the Republican embrace of power, and many have focused on it to explain the alteration in economic conditions in the last decade of the nineteenth century—the rise of big business, protest movements, and the large inequality in wealth distribution. Economists have uniformly declared Republican foreign policy an international disaster.¹ What has been missed in this interpretation has been the intimate connection between trade policy and expansionism. Despite economic theory about free trade evoking pacifism and fair play, the historical reality for the United States is that free trade economic policy moved hand in hand with geographical expansionism, war, colonialism, imperialism, and racism, whereas protectionism traveled comfortably with anti-expansionism, egalitarianism, and republicanism. 1860 was the year of the turning point.²

Foreign affairs, especially the role of European powers, has not been a subject of intense scrutiny for scholars interested in the coming of the Civil War. Usually, such investigations have relegated themselves to the diplomacy of the acquisition of Texas, the Mexican War, the Oregon boundary dispute, and sundry activities in the 1850s involving filibustering. The subject deserves revisiting because foreign policy had a large albeit silent role in the onrush of the sectional conflict. First, the primary reason for the nation solidifying into a powerful state under the Constitution in 1789 was fear of European empires carving up the infant United States, and the disappearance of that fear is a story that has never been told; but without its disappearance it is doubtful if the Gulf states would have had the temerity to secede. Second, the direction of the country under Democratic Party rule was geographical expansion, a policy that its leaders would not set limits to and which for political and economic reasons the Party did not have to. Third, the foreign policy consideration focused antislavery attention on the one power of the federal government that could undoubtedly damage the North--the ability to declare war on other nations.³

The Democratic party, assuming one can call the Democratic-Republicans of Thomas Jefferson an early predecessor, became the party of territorial acquisition. Historical tradition has been to ascribe its land-grabbing impulse to a desire to keep the United States an agrarian nation filled with small farmers and to stall the rise of the manufacturing interest and its accompanying teeming cities of wretched wage-earners. Jefferson acquired the Louisiana Territory; Andrew Jackson extinguished southern tribes' title to lands east of the Mississippi River, John Tyler (not quite a Democrat but a state's right apostle) almost obtained Texas, James K. Polk did acquire Texas, conducted the Mexican War, and settled the Oregon Boundary

dispute, Franklin Pierce acquired the chunk of land necessary for a southern railroad to the Pacific, the Gadsden Purchase, and exhibited American desire for Cuba, and James Buchanan continued the quest for Cuba, an action sanctioned by his bitter rival Stephen A. Douglas. But the economic drive to obtain this land may have had less to do with getting land for surplus farmers than with increasing the commercial capabilities of the United States. Expansionism was distinctly tied to commercial visions. At the same time the Democrats were absorbing nearly two million square miles of land between 1803 and 1860, they successfully established the United States as a participant in the free trade area of the Atlantic Community. The Compromise Tariff of 1833 started reducing the high tariffs of the 1820s; a momentary reversal occurred in 1842 when the Whigs reinstalled an element of protectionism, but then in the Tariff of 1846 (the Walker Tariff), the Democrats consciously put the nation on a free trade course, and furthered that rush to foreign trade with the Tariff of 1857, which effectively returned the tariff back to its rates of taxation in 1816. Commerce and imperialism were marching hand in hand.

The opponent of the Democrats, the Whigs, had their doubts about the need for territorial expansion, believing the country would be better off developing the untapped resources the nation already possessed. But into the discussion of the annexation of Texas and the acquisition of California and New Mexico territories as war booty from the Mexican War came the slavery issue. The abolitionists writing for the *New-Englander* magazine said the reason for the absorption of Texas was, "We answer, *slavery*." In one of the more important pamphlets of the time, John G. Palfrey quoted Calhoun about the Texas annexation, proving that slavery was behind it: "The measure of annexation is calculated and designed, by the open declarations of its friends, to uphold the interests of slavery, extend its influence, and secure its permanent

duration.” As to the Mexican War, various northerners easily tied the conflict to the motives of slaveholders to extend slavery. One correspondent of Whig congressman Nathaniel P. Tallmadge wrote, “If [Polk’s war is] for conquest, is the conquered country to be *free*, or the abode of slavers? It needs no prophet to tell how great an excitement all this will produce.” A Democratic editor remarked about the Mexican War that it showed that the South “caused the annexation of [Texas], and that involved us in a war that was abhorrent to all our felings.” For another abolitionist, the national question became “whether this government, besides consenting not to hasten the death of slavery where it has its being, shall extend and perpetuate it, in order to maintain an equilibrium, an everlasting equilibrium of power between slave representation and free, on the floor of Congress.”⁴

From the foreign affairs of the United States in the 1840s came two northern obsessions that would rule northern politics in the 1850s. The first was the existence of the Slave Power, its control of the federal government, and its design to extend and perpetuate slavery, or as Free Soiler Charles Sumner said, the “*Usurpations and Aggressions of the Slave Power*.” The other concern was whether the Democratic party intended for slavery to enter new territories or not, out of which came the policy of restriction of slavery to its state boundaries as existed in 1846. The northern attack on expansionist policy and the possible establishment of slavery in newly acquired territories absorbed the country between 1846 and 1850, and the antislavery contingent used every argument at their disposal, most prominently the religious argument against slaveholding, the danger slavery posed to civil liberties and a republican form of government, the incompatibility of slave labor with free labor, and the belief that slavery produced a backward economy.⁵

The political party system of Whigs versus Democrats weathered the antislavery storm between 1846 and 1850, and it is generally conceded that the antislavery impulse shrank back into minor significance. Yet the overall suspicion was planted, and that suspicion came out of foreign affairs. In antislavery eyes, as well as among probably moderate northerners, the Slave Power flexed its muscle in the federal government through use of foreign affairs, and did so to commit the nation to war for territorial expansion. The phrase 'restriction of slavery to its present boundaries' carried with it a distinct implication for American foreign policy: slavery was not to be admitted into any future territory absorbed through foreign events. Thus the rise of the "territorial issue" after 1847 was not just limited to the western United States, it carried a broader implication--and the implication was the rejection of Manifest Destiny and landed expansion.⁶

Northern suspicion of southern politicians had both its irrational and rational aspects. On the one hand, plenty of southerners rued the Mexican War for bringing up the question of slavery's expansion by adding new territories to the United States.⁷ On the other hand, the policy of restriction of slavery outraged southerners and produced an array of counter-arguments. Northern restriction of slavery's expansion was a violation of states' rights, it was an outrage on southern honor and equality of treatment in the Union, it revealed a sullen northern envy of the prosperity of the southern states, it disclosed the desire of northerners to add enough free states to pass an amendment to abolish slavery, and it showed a foolish and dangerous belief that Africans could function adequately outside of slavery.⁸

But it also showed that even though southerners often disclaimed an intention to add new territory, they strongly disliked the prospect of having any such possibility being forever

removed from them. For a number of reasons (often related to population pressure), many southerners sounded the tocsin about the eventual effects of a policy of slavery restriction. "And here we are hedged in--the door of egress locked and bar[r]ed--and all chance for escape forever interdicted," wrote the editor of the *Mississippian*, while a Georgian worried that the purpose of exclusion "is to surround us with a cordon of abolition States for the special design of destroying from fifteen to twenty [hundred] millions of slave property." Robert J. Walker, later to be famous as the governor of Kansas during the Lecompton Constitution crisis, wrote Stephen A. Douglas complaining of the restriction policy because "who can say that we will *never* desire to annex central America? This annexation will ultimately be desired by both, and be most important to the interest of both."⁹

As the United States entered the 1850s, the commercial expansionist vision of northern and southern Democrats did not dim nor did they view favorably European empires, especially the British. Douglas in 1848 already indicated that the United States was involved in a "struggle between Great Britain and us . . . for the mastery of the ocean--to determine which is the greatest commercial power."¹⁰ In 1853, Douglas decried the Clayton-Bulwer treaty being considered by the Senate, warned against British intervention in Nicaragua, and declared that that no territorial limits should ever be placed on the ability of the United States to expand, and he left open the possibility of acquiring Mexico, Cuba, and the states of Central America.¹¹

Democratic adventures in the Caribbean took some bizarre forms in the 1850s. During Pierce's term, and probably making the Kansas-Nebraska Act seem even more the work of pro-slavery plotters, three American ambassadors called for the Spanish to sell Cuba to the United States or to have it removed by war, the Ostend Manifesto. Efforts by radical expansionists to

obtain Cuba produced the “filibustering” movement, a private enterprise effort to get Cubans to revolt by invasion of the island by groups of Americans (the Lopez expedition and the maneuvers of John A. Quitman of Mississippi). And there were the adventures of William Walker, the grey-eyed man of destiny, who took over Nicaragua for a while, later invaded Honduras, and finally met death by firing squad.¹² Some of this activity had proslavery leanings, a political agenda to secure more slave states to balance foreseen additions of free states from the remainder of the Louisiana Territory, and may have had some economic drive behind it due to cotton exhaustion of soil in the Gulf states.¹³ These activities made the “Slave Power” notion of northerners carry some rational weight, and events after the election of James Buchanan did nothing to dissuade northerners that slaveholders and their northern Democratic allies were plotting to plunge the nation into wars to expand the domain of the peculiar institution--defiling northern ideals while using northern money and northern men to accomplish its schemes of conquest.

In the midst of bickering over Kansas and the Dred Scott decision handed down by the Supreme Court, newspapers picked up in 1857 a movement in England that could threaten American prosperity. In Manchester in April 1857, the merchants and manufacturers of cotton assembled to discuss the lack of supply of raw cotton and their dependence on the American slave states. The conclusion was to raise money and attempt to foster cotton cultivation elsewhere in the world, especially India, Egypt, and Africa.¹⁴ American commentators detected a free labor purpose behind the Cotton Supply Association. A speaker at the British meetings was the famed African explorer, Dr. Livingston, and in one meeting Livingston told the attendees that he *“looks to Central Africa as the great ultimate rival to the American Slave*

States, as the ground on which the battle against Slavery must be fought and won [emphasis in original].” The Livingston report on African made its rounds in North America and was duly commented on.¹⁵

England’s attempt to spread cotton culture to other lands elicited southern commentary, and most of it was self-congratulatory. Many southern commentators read in the reports of the Association that England was starved for cotton and a greater supply of it was necessary. One individual, John M. Cardoza (Jacob N. Cardoza?) interestingly indicated the need of further expansion of the cotton kingdom because demand was outstripping supply, and the result would be higher prices for slaves as well as for cotton, resulting in cotton goods being too expensive for many people in Europe.¹⁶ But at this moment of sectional wrangling, southerners gave two analyses of the reports emanating from England. First, England’s reliance on cotton was so extreme that any disruption of the trade would produce social upheaval--a point that would buttress Confederate faith in King Cotton Diplomacy.¹⁷ Second, southerners usually said that attempts to expand cotton production elsewhere were doomed to failure and they did not hesitate to explain why: cotton cultivation required slavery, and “all experiments with the object of extending the culture of cotton in other countries have ended in utter failure, and they will be equally ineffectual in the future.” This point was reinforced by the northern organ of Stephen Douglas, the *Chicago Daily Times*: the English need to realize the “great moving cause of our successive cotton raising, namely, slave labor.”¹⁸

Conditions were ripe to justify expansion of the cotton kingdom beyond the boundaries of the United States. David Christy, famous for coining the expression ‘Cotton Is King,’ explained in a manner friendly to the South, that cotton planters needed two things: a cheap

supply of grains so the cost of maintaining slaves would be kept down, and a maintenance of monopoly of cotton supply to England by ensuring that other nations did not generate an alternative supply. Geographical expansion was the answer to both problems. Christy said the way to disrupt the Cotton Supply Association was by plunging into South America and taking those lands for cotton. Moreover, the western grain growers will join in this geographical expansion by “demanding profitable markets.” He tied the two groups together in a wave of Manifest Destiny: the farmers of the future “will demand a market for their products. This can be furnished, only, by the extension of slavery.”¹⁹ Agreeing that slavery was expansionist beyond the continental limits of the United States was the anti-slavery writer and ex-Democrat from Maine, George M. Weston. Weston explained that slavery was much more mobile than free labor; in an explanation that anticipated Gavin Wright by ninety years, he wrote “In free communities, property becomes fixed in edifices, in machinery, and in improvements of the soil. In slave communities, there is scarcely any property except slaves, and they are moveable. . . . Freedom is enterprising, but not migratory, as slavery is.”²⁰ As if to augur the potential expansion the *New York Times* reported in February 1859 that a joint stock company of England was going to try to raise cotton in Cuba.²¹

President James Buchanan was an expansionist and he desired the acquisition of Cuba. In his December 1858 Annual Message to Congress, he called for the United States to make the attempt to purchase the island from Spain. In Congress, James Slidell of Louisiana fashioned a bill to appropriate \$30 million for the project. Congress did not approve the project, but the acquisition of Cuba as a new American territory became a political issue of the first rank for the next two years. Democrats hoped that this fuse would reignite the fires of Manifest Destiny,

thereby overwhelming the sectional divisions over slavery.²²

The Cuban proposal found a receptive audience in the Democratic press, and one can assume with most Democrats North and South. Indeed, many Democratic publishers pushed beyond Cuba and argued for taking parts of Northern Mexico and other lands in Central America.²³ While southern Democrats could favor the scheme because it gave them more land to expand plantation agriculture and potentially a new slave state, the response of northern Democrats was far more interesting. They demonstrated forcefully the tie behind expanding commerce, allegedly free trade, and the imperialism of annexing land by conquest. The iron and coal state of Pennsylvania, wrote one editor, would benefit because Cuba was running out of timber and Pennsylvania could reap profits by sending her cheap coal, while the middle states would find Cuba an “excellent market for their meat, corn, wheat, &c., while New England would find an outlet for her manufactures.” Altogether, obtaining control of Cuba was not only necessary for national defense, but also “a necessity of the industry, commerce and civilization of both Cuba and the United States.” The editor of the Albany *Atlas and Argus* in an editorial entitled “Cuba--Why we want it,” got to the point: “WE WANT CHEAP SUGAR.” After detailing all the benefits the United States would obtain from annexation, the editor then later decried congressional efforts to raise the tariff because it would violate “commercial freedom.”²⁴ Northern Democrats thoroughly mixed together imperialism with free trade commerce, never seeing in it any ideological antagonism. (Note: free trade is supposed to be maximized when it is “free” which means uncoerced; imperialism is, of course, a rank form of coercion.)

“In this emergency,” wrote one Pennsylvania Republican editor, the Democrats “again turn to Cuba.” Most Republicans remained locked in the battle over slavery's expansion into the

West and had little patience for a re-emergence of Manifest Destiny. Many saw the effort as a desperate bid by the Democrats to find a new and popular appeal to the electorate. Wrote Lyman Trumbull to Abraham Lincoln, "They [the Democrats] are attempting to get up a new issue on the Cuba question. What think you it?" Trumbull asked whether the voters might favor the scheme and be angry at Republican opposition. He also added, interestingly, that he was not totally against obtaining Cuba "under any and all circumstances," but it was "foolish" at the present moment to attempt it.²⁵

Southern attitudes toward geographical expansion were tilted more to political calculation of northern antislavery sentiment than to southern economic needs. Between 1857 and 1859, southerners feared most the likelihood they would never again add a slave state to their congressional totals, that the free states would overwhelm their members in Congress by the addition of new free labor states from the West, and that all this would lead to a forced emancipation within a few decades. Not only were southerners concerned about the loss of the financial investments in slaves, they found northerners guilty of having a false idea of the capacity of African Americans for freedom and were undermining white supremacy. Mississippi Representative Jabez L. M. Curry perhaps put it as well as any other: "The real crux of the agitation" embroiling the nation "is the anti-slavery sentiment of the North; the conviction that property in man is a sin and a crime; that the African is the equal of the white man; that he is a citizen of the United States. . . ." ²⁶

An expansionist current lay within southern thinking before the election of 1860, and it involved projecting the commercial future and the population prospects of the South. Perhaps the strongest expansionist in the South was Mississippi Senator Albert Gallatin Brown who

advocated taking Central America and was frank about why: "it is because I want to plant slavery there." The usually bold Democratic paper, the Richmond *Enquirer*, added, "The South must look Southward for the expansion of her institutions." The editor continued, "there are empires in that direction magnificent in extent and in the advantages of geographical location, soil and and climate, over which Anglo-Americanism seems destined to obtain control." The population argument revolved around trying to figure out the practical results of the Republican policy of restriction of slavery to its current boundaries, should that policy ever be implemented. Southerners came to the conclusion, put in printed form in 1860 by Senator Robert M. T. Hunter, that slavery restriction would lead to class war by bottling up slaves in the eastern states while allowing whites to migrate out west. To avoid this catastrophe, expansion was necessary, and the expansion was into Central America. In 1859, southerners, while feeling no immediate pinch for territory, nonetheless kept an expansionist ambition alive. Southerners generally backed the proposal to purchase Cuba.²⁷

The election of 1860 extinguished the flames of antebellum Manifest Destiny. Republicans generally campaigned on defeating the slave power and limiting the ability of slavery to affect the North and its free labor civilization. It cannot be said that foreign affairs much entered their speeches and appeals, but it was included in their insistence that slavery must be restricted. A decided moderate, E. Littell, editor of *Littell's Living Age*, wrote Nathaniel P. Banks and said southerners badly misread northerners, for all northerners were "opposed to any meddling with Slavery in the States," but favored "preventing its extension beyond them." But from southern statements about expansion, it was clear expansionist southerners were thinking beyond the boundaries of the United States and moving toward foreign adventurism once again.

A few southerners, in the midst of their central worry about Republican antislavery sentiments, said the South was going to have to expand eventually and slavery restriction would harm them. Even a Cotton Whig doughface, William B. Lawrence, recognized that slavery would have to expand in the near future: “but that the well-being of the negroes themselves nay their very existence, requires an expansion of territory for their migration, commensurate, at least, with the increasing demand throughout the world of those products, for . . . which nature has particularly adapted the African race;” Republicans would, he argued, yield to this reality.²⁸ Meanwhile, northern Democrats passed resolutions favoring the acquisition of Cuba, and several said that if expansion brought in lands favorable to the economics of plantation slavery, then slavery should be allowed to expand there.²⁹

What happened to Manifest Destiny in the election of 1860 is best exemplified by Manifest Destiny’s leading northern exponent, Stephen Douglas. Douglas was well known for his expansionist vision that not only included Cuba and Central America but parts of Asia and Canada. During his debates with Abraham Lincoln in 1858, he tried initially to steer the public back into the glory of territorial acquisition. In his first debate at Ottawa, after baiting Lincoln with being an abolitionist who advocated race equality, he reminded the audience that the United States had the best institutions on earth and had spread them via geographical expansion, thus becoming “the most powerful [nation] on the face of the earth, and if we only adhere to that principle [states rights and popular sovereignty], we [will] go forward increasing in territory, in power, in strength and in glory . . .” By the second debate at Freeport he made his policy of expansionism explicit: “I tell you increase, and multiply, and expand, is the law of this nation’s existence. You cannot limit this great Republic by mere boundary lines, saying, ‘thus far shalt

thou go, and no further.”³⁰ Not long after his debates, he told a New Orleans audience that he favored the acquisition of Cuba and “expansion as fast as [is] consistent with our interest and the increase and development of our population and resources.”³¹ Before the Democratic conventions of 1860, a former Indiana Congressman, Daniel Mace, wrote Douglas, “The acquisition of Cuba and the absorption of Mexico, at the proper time, could be carried in the north west.”³²

But during his precedent-shattering campaign for the presidency, when he traveled throughout the nation between July and November, the Manifest Destiny theme disappeared from his speeches. At first, he trumpeted the importance of his doctrine of popular sovereignty and the detrimental effects of letting the slavery issue push all other considerations from the attention of Congress; in every place he visited, he talked on upholding the white man's republic. When he toured the South, he had to confront secessionists and their desire to leave the Union. Rebuking secessionists forthrightly, Douglas became embroiled in the questions of slavery restriction in the West and potential secession caused by a Republican victory at the polls; these concerns moved him further away from an advocacy of expansionism. The best he could muster was a statement now and again that obedience to the Constitution and laws had made the United States a large and powerful country and that the future beckoned more of the same if people would just abandon their sectionalism.³³ By the end of the campaign, Manifest Destiny had been wiped completely off the agenda of live public issues.

The election of 1860 made a revolution in American foreign policy. With the ascension of the Republicans came a reincarnation of Whig hostility to landed expansion, foreign conquest, and the need for trade outside the continental boundaries of the United States. The Democratic

Party was the party of expansion, and the Republican seizure of power eliminated Democratic control of foreign policy and its expansionist vision for nearly twenty-five years. When the Democrats finally regained the presidency in 1884, Manifest Destiny had been virtually obliterated from the consciousness of Democrats.

Most often historians have looked upon the Republican triumph beginning in 1860 as the victory of an economic program whose most salient policy was protectionism, a policy that economists refer to as “beggar-thy-neighbor.” But a close look at Manifest Destiny in the 1850s reveals that the creed of free trade among nations, and its supposed expansion of “civilization,” democracy, and civil liberties, marched hand in hand with the behaviors free trade was supposed to tame and eliminate: blatant racism (“anglo-saxonism” was a common term among the Manifest Destiny crowd), armed conquest, and rule by military might. Whether slavery *needed* to expand or not cannot be answered, but the explicit goal of 1850s expansionism was the tropical lands where plantation slavery had the best chance of operating successfully. The intertwining of Manifest Destiny and the slavery issue obviously proved fatal to expansionism, and for some scholars that circumstance indicates the triumph of domestic concerns over foreign policy matters. Yet it was the northern recognition of the possible use of the federal government’s war-making capacity to acquire land for slavery that gave the term “Slave Power” substance. The Republican policy of restriction of slavery to its then current boundaries had more implications than domestic ones about the western territories; the advocacy included foreign affairs. Thus when the Republicans settled into power, passed the Morrill tariffs and maintained them, they also abandoned for nearly four decades the militarism of free trade Manifest Destiny. On no other occasion has American foreign policy so abruptly changed

direction.

Endnotes

1. This is actually the old “Beard-Hacker” thesis posited by Louis Hacker and Charles Beard and Mary Beard. It has been resurrected lately by Richard Franklin Bense, *The Political Economy of American Industrialization, 1877-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Leonard P. Curry, *Blueprint for Modern America: Nonmilitary Legislation of the First Civil War Congress* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1968); and Heather Cox Richardson, *The Greatest Nation of the Earth: Republican Economic Policies during the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997). The free trade viewpoint on the backwardness of the protectionist surge in the late nineteenth century is presented by Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and the poor Periphery before 1950* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 7-12, 110-14, 146; Kevin H. O’Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History; The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), 2-12.

2. The scholar who first noted the alliance between expansionism and free trade was Bernard Semmel writing about the imperialism of England in the 19th century; Bernard Semmel, *The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism: Classical Political Economy, the Empire of Free Trade, and Imperialism, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1970)..

3. Among the authors who have written about Manifest Destiny and diplomacy between 1846 and 1860 are Wilbur Devereus Jones, *The American Problem in British Diplomacy, 1841-1861*

(London: Macmillan Press, 1974); Howard Jones, *The Course of American Diplomacy*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1988); Richard V. Francaviglia and Douglas W. Richmond, eds., *Dueling Eagles: Reinterpreting the U.S.-Mexican War, 1846-1848* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2000); Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963); Anders Stephenson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995); Allen K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935); Sam W. Haynes, *James K. Polk and the Expansionist Impulse* (New York: Longman, 1997); Paul A. Varg, *United States Foreign Relations, 1820-1860* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1979); Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973); David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861*, completed and edited by Don E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Harper, 1976).

4. "Texas" *New Englander*, 2 (July 1844), 453; John G. Palfrey, *Papers on the Slave Power, First Published in the "Boston Whig"* (Boston: Merrill, Cobb, & Co. [1846]), 21; P. Potter to N. P. Tallmadge, October 15, 1847, Tallmadge Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisc.; *Oneida Morning Herald*, October 29, 1850; [G. J. Wood?], "The Question: Are You Ready for the Question," *New Englander*, 8 (May 1850), 293. See especially Joel H. Silbey, *Storm over Texas; The Annexation Controversy and the Road to Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 35-51, 117-21; Don E. Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the United States Government's Relation to Slavery*, completed by Ward M. McAfee

(New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 118-28; Frederick Merk, *Fruits of Propaganda in the Tyler Administration*, collaborated with Lois B. Merk (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 97-114.

5. Charles Sumner, "The Free-Soil Party Explained and Vindicated," September 12, 1849, speech at Worcester, Mass., in Sumner, *The Works of Charles Sumner* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1876), II, 296. *Rochester Democrat*, January 14, 1847; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 4, 1848; Simon Cameron to Edmund Burke, June 15, 1849, Edmund Burke Papers, Library of Congress; George W. Julian, speech in House of Representatives, May 14, 1850, in Julian, *Speeches on Political Questions* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1872), 25.

6. On the rise of the expansionist issue and the strength of the two-party system, see Potter, *Impending Crisis*, chaps. 1-3; Leonard L. Richards, *The Slave Power: The Free North and Southern Domination, 1780-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University press, 2000), chaps. 6, 7; Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York; W. W. Norton, 1978); Joel H. Silbey, *The Shrine of Party: Congressional Voting Behavior, 1841-1852* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967). For an example of an editor who linked the slave power, expansion, and foreign affairs, see *Rochester Democrat*, May 26, 1854.

7. *Richmond Whig*, January 12, 1847; John C. Calhoun to Mrs. Sarah Maury, February 18, 1847, in Robert L. Meriwether, et al., eds., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun* (Columbia: Univeristy of Souther Carolina Press, 1959-), 24, 165; W. F. DeSaussure to James Henry Hammond, March

13, 1847, James Henry Hammond Papers, Library of Congress; W. C. Rives to J. J. Crittenden, 8 February 1847, in William Rives Papers, Library of Congress. See Ernest M. Lander, *Reluctant Imperialists: Calhoun, the South Carolinians, and the Mexican War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980); Robert E. May, *John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University press, 1985), 228-30.

8. Message of John A. Quitman to Mississippi State Legislature, November 18, 1850, in Jackson *Mississippian*, November 22, 1850; speech of James C. Dobbin (NC), February 11, 1847, House, *Cong. Globe*, 29th Cong., 2d Sess., 384-86; Jefferson Davis, Speech on Oregon Bill, July 12, 1848, in James T. McIntosh, ed., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971-), III, 339-42; Macon *Georgia Journal and Messenger*, September 27, 1848; *Charleston Mercury*, February 17, 1847; *Yazoo (Miss.) Democrat*, September 19, 1850. On southern reactions, William w. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 353-510.

9. Jackson *Mississippian*, September 13, 1850; A Southern Clergyman in Augusta, Ga. *Weekly Constitutionalist*, September 18, 1850; Robert J. Waltker to Douglas, May 4, 1850, Stephen A. Douglas Papers, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. On population concerns, see William L. Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

10. Douglas on contracts to Collins steamers, July 20, 1848, Senate, *Cong. Globe*, 30th Cong.,

1st Sess., 964.

11. Douglas speech, Senate, February 14, 1854, *Cong. Globe*, 32d Cong., 2d Sess., Appendix, 172; speech of Douglas at Dinner of the Jackson Democratic Association, January 8, 1852, in Washington D. C. *Daily Union*, January 11, 1852; Johannsen, *Douglas*, 322-29, 521-23; Howard Jones, *Course of American Diplomacy*, I, 177-81; Varg, *U.S. Foreign Relations*, chap. 9.

12. These episodes are all amply detailed in May, *Southern Dream of A Caribbean Empire*, chaps. 3-7.

13. The soil exhaustion theory of southern expansionism can be found most in Eugene Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South* (New York: Vintage, 1965), chap. 10, and recently restated in Roger G. Kennedy, *Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause: Land, Farmers, Slavery and the Louisiana Purchase* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), chaps. 1, 2.

14. *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 76 (May 23, 1857), p. 382; other meetings where held; see *ibid.*, 84 (July 11, 1857), 82; *ibid.*, 85 (July 18, 1857), 103; *Littell's Living Age*, 55 (December 12, 1857), 698-99.

15. Report in *New York Times*, September 26, 1857; (Washington, D. C.) *National Era*, May 20, 1858; (Washington, D. C.) *Daily National Intelligencer*, November 4, 1857; (Washington, D.

C.) *The States*, October 30, 1857; *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, "The Cotton Trade," in *Eclectic Magazine*, 42 (September 1857), 80-81; *Charleston Courier*, October 10, 1860; New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, December 15, 1858; *Natchez Mississippi Free Trader*, September 18, 1857.

16. John M. Cardoza, "Supply and . . . Cotton," *DeBow's Review*, 22 (April 1857), 337-46.

17. "Cotton In India," *DeBow's Review*, 26 (June 1859), 707-708; "The Cotton Power," *ibid.*, 26 (January 1859), 84-97; "Cotton is King," *ibid.*, 28 (9 May 1860), 588; *Richmond Whig*, October 9, 1857.

18. Quotes from General P. A. Morse from Natchitoches (La.) *Chronicle*, in (Washington, D. C.) *National Intelligencer*, October 3, 1857; *Chicago Daily Times*, November 6, 1857. See also E. Deloney, "The South Demands More Negro Labor," *De Bow's Review*, 25 (November 1858), 491-506; (Washington, D. C.) *The States*, October 21, 1857. Northerners recognized the purposes of the Cotton Supply Association and wished it well, but seemingly did not put much faith in any immediate outcome that would be a setback to American slavery; New York *Tribune*, August 16, 26, October 29, 1859; *New York Times*, October 27, 1858, February 1, 1859; Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*, February 3, 15, 1860.

19. David Christy, *Cotton is King; or, Slavery in the Light of Political Economy* (3rd ed.), in E. N. Elliott, ed., *Cotton is King, and Proslavery Arguments* (Augusta, Ga.: Pritchard, Abbott & Loomis, 1860), 56, quotes 59 and 60, 91-96.

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20. George M. Weston, *The Progress of Slavery in the United States* (Washington, D. C.: George M. Weston, 1858, 5.; cf., Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), chaps. 1-2.
21. New York *Times*, February 11, 1859.
22. For a brief description of the Cuban annexation attempt under Buchanan, see Fehrenbacher and MacAfee, *Slaveholding Republic*, 130-33.
23. Favorably disposed to taking Cuba would include: Albany *Atlas and Argus*, December 7, 1858; *Erie Weekly Observer*, December 18, 1858; editor, "Editor's Table," *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, 18 (March 1859), 551-52; *Hartford Daily Times*, December 14, 1858; *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, January 30, 1859; reports of MALOU in New Orleans *Daily Crescent*, January 28, February 4, 1859. The Washington, D. C. Paper, *The States*, ran editorial after editorial on Mexico, Nicaragua, and Cuba: December 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 1859, January 4, 7, 30, 31, February 4, 24, 1859; on taking other lands in Central America, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, December 9, 1858; Johnston, Pa., *Allegheny Mountain Echo*, April 28, 1858; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, December 9, 1858.
24. Pennsylvania quoted by *Erie Weekly Observer*, October 23, 1858; Albany *Atlas and Argus*, January 24, 1859; see also Concord *New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, September 8, 1858, February 23, 1859; *Easton Pennsylvania Argus*, February 3, 1859; New York *Herald*,

October 23, 1858; resolutions favorable to the acquisition of Cuba can be found in *Pittsburgh Post*, March 19, 1859; *Hartford Daily Times*, February 10, 1859.

25. *Erie* (Pennsylvania) *Gazette*, February 10, 1859; Lyman Trumbull to Abraham Lincoln, January 29, 1859, Robert Todd Lincoln Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.. See also *Indianapolis Journal*, December 10, 1858; *Evansville* (Ind.) *Journal*, January 6, 1859; *Cincinnati Gazette*, December 9, 1858; *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, December 10, 1858; *Chicago Press and Tribune*, January 26, 1859.

26. Quote from Curry speech, December 10, 1859, House of Representatives, *Cong. Globe*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 94; address of Governor Pettus, Mississippi, in *Weekly Vicksburg Whig*, November 23, 1859; William G. Simms to James Henry Hammond, January 28, 1858, in Mary C. Simms Oliphant, Alfred Taylor Odell, and T. C. Duncan Eaves, eds., *The Letters of William Gilmore Sims* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1955), IV (?), 22; John A. Quitman to C. S. Tarpley, et al., March 31, 1851, in J. F. H. Claiborne, *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1860), II, 130; Oliver Otis Howard, *Autobiography* (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1908), I, 104; H. Gourdin to Richard Lathers, December 12, 1860 in Richard Lathers, *Reminiscences*, ed. Alvan F. Sanborn (New York: Grafton Press, 1907), 81; speech of James H. Hammond, in *New York Times*, November 6, 1858; A. H. Stephens speech, *New York Herald*, July 11, 1859; Senator Thompson of Kentucky, February 26, 1857, *Cong. Globe*, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 849-51; see also Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (repr., New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1958), I, 77-

83. On southern expansionism, note the comment of George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 140.

27. A. G. Brown speech in Natchez *Mississippi Free Trader*, September 27, 1858; editorial of *Richmond Enquirer*, November 27, 1857; on populaton, R. M. T. Hunter to James R. Micou, Thomas Croxton et al., December 10, 1860, in Charles H. Ambler, ed., *Correspondence of Robert. M. T. Hunter, 1826-1876* (rpr., New York: DaCapo Press, 1971), 345-46; on Cuba and Central America, speech of William Barksdale, (Jackson) *Semi-Weekly Mississippian*, September 27, 1859; L. Q. Lamar, January 13, 1858, House of Representatives, *Cong. Globe*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., Appendix, 49-51; (Jackson) *Mississippian*, December 17, 1858, January 1, 1859; *Milledgeville (Ga.) Southern Recorder*, November 2, 1858; *Richmond Whig* quoted in *ibid.*, April 19, 1859; *Raleigh N.C. Tri-Weekly Standard*, January 29, 1859. For the tie between American expansion and the ideas of “world progress . . . the spreading of civilization [and] of civil and religious liberty,” see New Orleans *Daily Crescent*, January 14, 1859.

28. E. Littell to N. P. Banks, November 9, 1860, Nathaniel P. Banks Papers, Illinois Historical Society, Springfield, Illinois; W. B. Lawrence to William C. Rives, November 7, 1860, William C. Rives Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.; J. L. M. Curry speech, *Mobile Daily Register*, March 28, 1860; letter of G. In Augusta, Ga. *Daily Constitutionalist*, April 11, 1860; see comments by California Senator Latham about the Crittenden Compromise, January 16, 1861, in *Cong. Globe*, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 403.

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29. Democratic meeting, speech of Jacob Vanatta, in *Newark Daily Advertiser*, August 23, 1860; Breckinridge Democratic meeting, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, July 3, 1860.
30. Robert W. Johannsen, ed., *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 48, 92. On Douglas' expansionism, see Robert W. Johannsen, *Stephen A. Douglas* (Paper ed.; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 170-74, 322-29, 521-23, 528-31, 683-84; Stewart Winger, *Lincoln, Religion, and Romantic Cultural Reform* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), 18-28.
31. Speech in New Orleans, December 1858, in James W. Sheahan, *The Life of Stephen A. Douglas* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1860), 123.
32. Daniel Mace to Douglas, February 22, 1860, in Douglas Papers, Addenda, Box 2, University of Chicago.
33. See James L. Huston, *Stephen A. Douglas and the Dilemmas of Democratic Equality* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), chap. 6. Based on reports of Douglas's sojourns in the newspapers, e.g., Raleigh, NC, *Weekly Standard*, September 5, 1860; *New York Times*, August 29, September 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 27, 1860; *Boston Herald*, July 18, August 1, 3, 1860.