

claims emerged from this transition. He is asking important questions but providing only the beginnings of an answer. And as with the urban chapters, it is unclear how unique Boston elites were with these endeavors. Maggor's preface is tantalizing in asserting that he will explain the emergence of America's industrial power, but his examples are much more parochial. Is this transition from a reliance on southern cotton just a Boston story? Weren't elites in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore likewise investing on the frontier? Were Bostonians doing it to a greater extent? Or for different reasons? This is unclear.

Despite the shortcomings of this book, the individual parts still make it a highly worthwhile read. The chapters on Boston are skillfully written and argued, providing interesting insights into urban debates. The chapters on the frontier ask provocative questions that have the potential to open up new paths of inquiry regarding both the development of the frontier and the industrialization of the United States. The author's instinct to bring together urban history and western studies at this critical point in American history is not only unique, but potentially groundbreaking. Even if these connections were not adequately fleshed out in this particular book, the implications for the future of both urban and frontier history are no less important.

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This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy. *By Matthew Karp.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016. 360 pp. Figures, notes, index. Cloth, \$29.95. ISBN: 978-0-674-73725-9.

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Reviewed by David Prior

Matthew Karp's excellent book enriches the growing scholarship examining U.S. slaveholders from an Atlantic perspective. His focus is on proslavery diplomats, politicians, and authors who, he argues, attempted to transform the United States into a bulwark of slavery in the Americas following British West Indian abolition in 1833. This proslavery foreign-policy elite, Karp contends, developed an ambitious vision of American power in the Western Hemisphere that proved resilient to domestic political divisions.

The first four chapters center on the administration of the accidental president John Tyler (1841–1845) and his die-hard proslavery advisers, the most prominent of these being John C. Calhoun. Chapter 1 sets the stage by framing the Southern dream of defending slavery across the Americas as a reaction to British abolition. If hyperbolic and paranoid, proslavery statesmen and writers understood that the world's leading power had become an antislavery force in the Atlantic. Chapter 2 explores how this reaction evolved into policy starting in the late 1830s with Matthew Maury and Abel Upshur's pioneering of proslavery navalism. Worried about British sea power and, nightmarishly, the prospect of a British-led army of Caribbean ex-slaves, these men and their allies urged an enlarged and modernized navy, if with limited success. Chapter 3 looks at diplomacy under Tyler, explaining the proslavery rationale for supporting the Webster-Ashburton Treaty (1842) and the administration's eagerness to defend slavery in Cuba from either rebellion or external meddling. Chapter 4 begins with the diplomatic career of Henry Wise in Brazil, where he campaigned against the Atlantic slave trade in part because he feared the British would use the trade as a pretext to pressure Brazil into complete abolition. It then covers the Tyler administration's well-known campaign to annex Texas, which Karp argues reflected not only greed for new plantation lands but also a strategic concern to shore up slavery's position in the hemisphere.

The next four chapters chart the rise of proslavery confidence during and following the annexation of Texas and the conquest of northern Mexico. Chapter 5 explains that James K. Polk, as the duly elected leader of a national political party, could not present himself as an exclusively sectional, proslavery politician. Yet in practice, Polk's policies were largely in line with those of Tyler and Calhoun, and the latter remained on good working terms with the president despite public disputes. In Chapter 6, Karp argues that while scholarship on the 1850s emphasizes American slaveholders' apprehensiveness over domestic politics, international developments kept them optimistic. Britain embraced free trade, a seeming concession of the necessity of slave-grown products. Emancipation appeared to have brought ruin to the British Caribbean. Brazil remained a sturdy slave-based economy and potential ally. Chapter 7 continues this theme, arguing that the proslavery foreign-policy elite, hardly unsettled by modernity, were confident that events were proving white supremacy was the key to global progress. The British and French revived coerced, racialized labor in the Caribbean, European empires grew, and scientific developments—and not just scientific racism—bolstered proslavery arguments.

The final chapters range from the administration of Franklin Pierce (1853–1857) through the early Civil War, with some discussion of

previous periods. These chapters underscore that proslavery statesmen consistently sought to build a strong state capable of a dynamic foreign policy and that they were increasingly inclined toward imperialism. Chapters 8 and 9 stress that these trends persisted even as sectional tensions mounted. Pierce's proslavery advisers schemed to protect slavery in Cuba, especially from its new antislavery governor, Juan de Pezuela. Southern defenders of slavery split over issues such as filibustering, but concurred on aggressively defending hemispheric slavery. Proslavery statesmen continued to demand a better navy and stronger army, with figures like James Cochrane Dobbin, Jefferson Davis, and Thomas Bocoock securing noteworthy victories. The final chapter explores secession and the Civil War, pointing out that proslavery statesmen with federal experience, not fire-eating state politicians, came to lead the Confederacy. In general, prominent Confederates desired a strong and active central state, just as they had in D.C., and were, like Alexander Stephens, open about their foundational commitment to slavery. The epilogue then turns to W. E. B. Du Bois's 1890 Harvard graduation lecture. Du Bois believed that Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy were the leading edge of the imperialism reshaping the globe as he spoke. Karp concurs, suggesting that if Du Bois's address was not a thorough historical analysis, "slaveholders can be seen as a vanguard for the coercive, state-powered racism that characterized the international relations of the late nineteenth century" (p. 254).

This detailed study will repay perusing by historians of Atlantic slavery, the American South, nineteenth-century international relations, and the Civil War. It offers incisive interpretations of specific events and themes in close dialogue with a wide-ranging historiography; a short review cannot do it justice here. But some will challenge the broader characterizations offered by this boldly argued work. It is particularly difficult to determine what the proslavery statesmen's hemispheric defense of slavery added up to in terms of international politics, in part because they often seemed preoccupied by remote, even fanciful, threats and opportunities. Some might conclude that, except for the smash-and-grab conquest of northern Mexico, proslavery statesmen rarely executed their geopolitical vision with sufficient resolve and finesse to be among the modern world's imperial forerunners. There is plenty of room for debate on this front, and Karp does acknowledge proslavery diplomatic shortcomings. One certainly shudders to think of a proslavery foreign policy in the age of quinine and the Gatling gun. A more straightforward problem is that the book provides detailed examples of proslavery statesmen and thinkers commenting on the contemporary successes of European racial imperialism. This would seem to undermine the idea that Confederates were a vanguard, or at

minimum leaves unclear who was marching behind them. This reader was also eager to know more about how cohesive this Southern foreign-policy elite was and why, especially given the political and ideological factionalism common to mid-nineteenth-century American politics. None of that, however, should discourage readers from engaging with this thoughtful and carefully researched work.

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A History of British National Audit: The Pursuit of Accountability. By David Dewar and Warwick Funnell. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. x + 303 pp. Appendices, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$95.00. ISBN: 978-0-19-879031-0.

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Reviewed by Randal Michie

This book is the product of an accounting historian—Warwick Funnell—and a career civil servant who spent forty years in the U.K. government's audit service—David Dewar. The result provides a detailed and scholarly account of the organization, conduct, purposes, and outcomes of the process whereby public expenditure in Britain was subjected to scrutiny from medieval times to the present. The Act of 1866 operates as the pivot around which the book revolves.

The British National Audit begins with the Norman Conquest of 1066 and subsequent attempts to monitor the expenditure of the monarch. In the early centuries, the purpose of the National Audit was little more than the presentation of accurate accounts detailing the expenditure that had taken place. Simple as that task appears, it was no easy matter to achieve due to the way that the monarch's personal expenditure was intermingled with that undertaken as head of state. It was not until 1697 that the Civil List was created, separating the two. Even then the task remained difficult as the purpose of the audit was gradually, but very slowly, extended to cover the efficiency with which public expenditure was undertaken and then to measure the effectiveness of the results. The scope of the public audit then expanded beyond all recognition as government expenditure expanded inexorably from 1914 onwards.

Though the National Audit appears to be a very technical subject with closely confined parameters, that is far from the case. It touches on the balance of power between the monarch and Parliament. As long