

Republicanism and Federalism in the Constitutional Decade

PETER S. ONUF and CATHY MATSON

THE TRIUMPH of the 'republican synthesis' in American Revolutionary historiography has inevitably provoked a backlash. The first critics, seeking to correct the ideological school's elitist assumptions, questioned the appeal of republican rhetoric beyond the colonial ruling classes whose dominance was jeopardized by British efforts to reform the empire. The classic oppositions of virtue and corruption, and liberty and power, in the real Whig tradition may have illuminated the colonists' political situation and helped mobilize resistance to imperial rule. But 'middling' and 'lesser' Americans had their own reasons for resisting the assertion of imperial authority and could justify resistance in their own languages. More recently, scholars have emphasized the continuing importance of diverse discursive traditions during the years of radical institutional and ideological transformation following 1776. Alongside the transformative influence of republicanism, Revolutionaries appealed to the competing discourses of, among others, economic liberalism, jurisprudence, millennialism, radical political egalitarianism, and the Scottish Enlightenment.¹

1. Works on republicanism that have shaped our thinking include J. G. A. Pocock's essays in *Virtue, Commerce, and History* (Cambridge University Press, 1985); Isaac Kramnick, 'Republican Revisionism Revisited,' *American Historical Review* 87 (1982): 629-64; the articles by Lance Banning and Joyce Appleby in the *William and Mary Quarterly* 43 (1986): 3-34; and Drew McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill, 1980). On other important discourses, see Joyce Appleby, 'The Social Origins of American Revolutionary Ideology,' *Journal of American History* 64 (1978): 935-58;

PETER S. ONUF is professor of history at the University of Virginia. CATHY MATSON is associate professor of history at the University of Delaware.

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Revolutionary experiences engaged Americans in struggles over the meanings and implications of such central concepts in these languages as 'sovereignty,' 'interest,' 'development,' and 'freedom.' Yet as the diverse interests and ambitions of Revolutionaries tested inherited concepts, common definitions failed to emerge. Rather, the 'Americanization' of discursive traditions represented a distinctive blend of many voices. Americans were at once 'liberals' and 'republicans' who were led, during the protracted political struggles to sustain their independence and secure it over the 1780s, to the invention of 'federalism.' At the Constitutional Convention the Framers had appropriated significant elements of federalism and constructed a complicated regime—'partly national, and partly federal'—and yet were poised to perpetuate the ideological confusion of the Revolutionary era.²

Revolutionary Americans agreed that their new republics should secure their liberty and property, but they had no clear conception of the role government should play in shaping economic life. Classical republican or corporatist notions of political economy seemed most relevant when patriot leaders called on fellow citizens to sacrifice private interests and devote themselves

Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York, 1984), chap. 2; C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford, 1962); Isaac Kramnick, 'The Great National Discussion: The Discourse of Politics in 1787,' *William and Mary Quarterly* 45 (1988): 3–32; Ralph Lerner, 'Commerce and Character: The Anglo-American as a New Model Man,' *ibid.*, 26 (1979): 3–26; Ruth Bloch, *Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought, 1756–1800* (New York, 1985); Thomas Durey, 'Thomas Paine's Apostles: Radical Emigrés and the Triumph of Jeffersonian Republicanism,' *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 (1987): 661–88; James T. Kloppenberg, 'The Virtues of Liberalism: Christianity, Republicanism, and Ethics in Early American Political Discourse,' *Journal of American History* 74 (1987): 9–33; Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (New York, 1984); Carole Shammas, 'The Domestic Environment in Early Modern England and America,' *Journal of Social History* 14 (1980): 3–24; Andrew Cayton, *The Frontier Republic: Ideology and Politics in the Ohio Country, 1780–1825* (Kent, Ohio, 1986); James Henretta, et al., eds., *The Economy of Early America, The Revolutionary Period, 1763–1790* (Charlottesville, 1988), pp. 45–87; and the provocative essay by Allan Kulikoff, 'The Transition to Capitalism in Rural America,' *William and Mary Quarterly* 46 (1989): 120–44.

2. The themes in this essay are more fully developed in Cathy Matson and Peter S. Onuf, *A Union of Interests, Political and Economic Thought in Revolutionary America* (Lawrence, Kan., 1990).

to the common cause. Popular enthusiasm for nonimportation demonstrated widespread opposition to the disruption of traditional economic and political relations. But these trade boycotts also revealed a characteristic 'liberal' faith in the future development of a prosperous, self-sufficient American economy. Revolutionaries were assured that the temporary sacrifice of luxury imports would be amply repaid once they had successfully asserted their economic as well as political independence.³

The Revolutionary crisis illuminated and accelerated long-term developments in political economic thought. During the century and a half before the Revolution, the dramatic expansion of the Atlantic economy challenged traditional premises. Responding to new opportunities, enterprising colonists found inspiration—and justification—in arguments for 'economic freedom.' On both sides of the Atlantic, proponents of freer trade insisted that unfettered private exchanges better served the general welfare than imperial regulation. Private interest thus began to overcome its customary taint, and liberty, which traditionally had been linked to land ownership, was now also identified with the freedom of venturers to take risks and accumulate mobile wealth.⁴

Forward-looking writers blamed imperial policymakers for the commercial setbacks of the 1760s that interrupted decades of sustained growth and prosperity. Merchants who sought to dismantle or neutralize the centralized regulations of British mercantilism thus welcomed the institution of an independent, decentralized political economy. The Revolution also promised to eliminate

3. On nonimportation and luxury see articles in the *Essex Gazette*, Jan. 4, 1774; 'Virginia Instructions for the Deputies,' *New York Gazetteer*, June 6, Sep. 26, 1765; *Rivington's New York Gazette*, Aug. 25, 1774; 'Answer . . . by Six Merchants,' *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, July 2, 1770; 'Philo-Veritas,' *ibid.*, July 23, 1770; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Nov. 17, 1773; *Newport Mercury*, Jan. 24, Feb. 7, 1774; *New Hampshire Gazette*, July 22, 1774; and *Boston Evening Post*, June 24, 1775. In general see J. E. Crowley, *This Sheba, Self: The Conceptualization of Economic Life in Eighteenth-Century America* (Baltimore, 1974).

4. See Neil McKendrick, et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (Bloomington, 1982), esp. McKendrick, 'Commercialization and the Economy,' pp. 9–194; Eugene Rotwein, ed., *David Hume: Writings on Economics* (Madison, 1955), introd.; and John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore, 1977). For American colonial adaptations of these beliefs, see Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, pp. 21–27.

arbitrary political restraints on commercial agriculture and home manufactures. The most enthusiastic proponents of economic independence glimpsed the dawning of a new epoch when the expansion of foreign trade and the development of the interior would elevate untold numbers of Americans to new levels of prosperity. A few late-colonial observers anticipated the important post-revolutionary transformation of thinking about 'wealth,' 'projecting,' and even 'luxury.' Implicit in this optimistic vision was a conception of a natural union of interests across the continent that depended on *eliminating* central government control.⁵

At first, the Revolution opened up a wide range of opportunities for small traders, shopkeepers, and farmers who provisioned American troops. Arguments for international and domestic economic liberty converged as northern merchants scurried to exploit old and new channels of trade. Merchants who sought to avoid onerous European commercial regulations were supported by state leaders such as Gov. Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut, who insisted that 'all restraints on trade are grievances, that a free intercourse and trade among the citizens of the United States tendeth to their mutual advantage.'⁶ Inland farmers became convinced that they could make a decent living only if they were free to seek the best prices for their surpluses. The commercialization of the countryside was apparent in places like Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where 'you would think your self in a Seaport town whose Trade was open,' that is, free.⁷ Small retailers and shopkeepers eagerly seized opportunities to deregulate prices and wages and to free domestic trade from laws and customs that fixed the quality of goods. Philadelphia artisans echoed the new refrain in 1779 when they said that 'trade should be as free as air, uninterrupted as the tides.'⁸

5. On this pre-Revolutionary optimism see McCoy, *The Elusive Republic*, pp. 86-106.

6. Proclamation of Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, Aug. 25, 1780, in Hugh Hastings, ed., *The Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of New York*, 10 vols. (Albany, N.Y., 1899-1914), 6:175-76. See also *ibid.*, 6:174 (Sep. 6, 1780).

7. Quoted in Robert East, *Business Enterprise in the American Revolutionary War Era* (orig. publ. New York, 1938; repr. Gloucester, Mass., 1964), 149-50. See also 'Rationalis,' *New Jersey Gazette*, Mar. 11, 1778.

8. *Tanners, Curriers, and Cordwainers of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1779). For the most

The opportunities and exigencies of warfare challenged and transformed traditional notions of political economy. Classical republicanism offered few useful clues to the proper organization and orientation of economic life as Revolutionaries were reshaping it. The great task for American political economists therefore was to realign a diverse array of sometimes hostile economic interest groups so that they would sustain the new political order. By shifting their emphasis from consumption to production and from exports to the development of domestic markets, some writers could imagine a harmony of interests. 'Nature has furnished us with every Thing for our Advantage, and we only want Frugality and Industry to make us Opuient,' said one writer. Another proposed that America's natural endowments were sufficient to 'bid defiance to the whole world,' until it could become 'a whole empire' in itself, 'extended farther and farther to the utmost ends of the earth, and yet continue firmly compacted.' Because luxury consumption had always been problematic for republicans, the new focus on increased productivity helped reconcile a dynamic economy with the traditional republican emphasis on hard work and modest general gain.⁹

Revolutionary Americans were eminently capable of sustaining the apparent conflict of classical republican and liberal premises, or of shifting from one position to another as circumstances required. Indeed, the crucible of rapid political change necessitated a willingness to compromise and adjust ideological commitments.

widely disseminated appeal for free trade, see Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (Garden City, N.Y., 1973), where he says 'America's plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is in the interest of all Europe to have America as a free port' (pp. 21-22).

9. The quotes are at 'John Trusty,' *New York Weekly Journal*, Apr. 22, 1734, and 'A Speech Delivered in Carpenter's Hall,' Mar. 16, 1775, in *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, Apr. 13, 1775. See also 'Crispin,' *Essex Gazette*, Jan. 14, 1772, and 'A Plan to perpetuate the union,' *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie & Dixon), Apr. 29, 1773. On Revolutionary economic freedom, see 'Notes of Debates,' Oct. 4, 20, and 21, 1775, in Worthington C. Ford, *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 34 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1904-37) 3:479, 498-99, 501. 'A Fair Trader,' writing in *Pennsylvania Packet*, Dec. 3, 1778, said that although 'private vices' did not create 'public benefits,' the private enterprises of Americans laid the foundation for future expansion. See also Peletiah Webster, 'An Essay on Free Trade and Finance,' in Webster, *Political Essays on the Nature and Operations of Money, Public Finances and Other Subjects* (Philadelphia, 1791), pp. 25-28.

The problems of raising and provisioning an army, currency inflation, and flagging spirits in civilian and military sectors after the first year of the war made it increasingly clear that the free play of enterprising individuals did not always advance the common cause. Unregulated foreign and domestic exchange raised troubling questions about American virtue and patriotism. Republican moralists suggested that corruption, venality, and luxury were the inevitable concomitants of the unbridled pursuit of self-interest. While 'little men' in agriculture and trade abused long credit and paper money, bankers, brokers, speculators, and other 'mushroom gentlemen' practiced 'deceit against the government and the public good.'¹⁰

Despite such condemnations, patriot leaders were hard pressed to reconcile repeated calls for popular self-sacrifice with the practical necessity of relying on profit-minded entrepreneurs to manage the war effort. If, in theory, 'trade flourishes best, when it is free,' competing interests did not agree about how best to secure their economic freedom. Congress's failure to satisfy their often contradictory demands alienated commercial farmers, artisans, and developers; merchants who feared that Congress was too distracted by its own internal divisions to develop a coherent commercial policy were driven into the arms of the new state govern-

10. E.g., The Continental Association agreement, in Ford, *Journals of Congress*, 1:75-81 (Oct. 20, 1774) and its subsequent modifications; 'Primitive Whig,' No. 2, Jan. 16, 1786, *New Jersey Gazette*, reprinted in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Jan. 25, 1786; Benjamin Rush, 'On the Defects of the Confederation,' in Dagobert D. Runes, ed., *The Selected Writings of Benjamin Rush* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947), pp. 28-31; George Washington to James Warren, Mar. 31, 1779, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1931-44), 14:312; John Adams to Mercy Otis Warren, Jan. 8, 1776, *Warren-Adams Letters: Being Chiefly a Correspondence among John Adams, Samuel Adams, and James Warren*, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, 2 vols. (Boston, 1917-25), 2:202; Benjamin Rush to James Searle, Jan. 21, 1778, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 3 (1879), p. 233; Alexander Hamilton to James Duane, Sep. 3, 1780, in Harold C. Syrett, et al., eds., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, 27 vols. (New York, 1961-87), 1:400-18, at p. 402, 416-17. For congressional deliberations on the merits of state regulations and popular economic freedom, see *Journals of Congress*, 11:569 (June 4, 1778). In general, see E. Wayne Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure: Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill, 1984), and Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill, 1979), pp. 186-89, 192-94, 200-7.

ments.¹¹ But instead of fostering free trade and private enterprise, the states were in fact forced to interfere far more extensively in the American economy than had the hated British mercantilist system itself. Characteristically, the emerging neo-mercantilist regime served both 'republican' and 'liberal' ends: price controls and local enforcement committees were designed to enforce public virtue, as were various prohibitions on trade to the lucrative West Indies markets; meanwhile, state imports, paper currency emissions, and modest protectionist measures helped extend the limits of economic opportunity.¹²

After the Revolution, the dominant position of the state governments in the American political economy seemed assured. Enthusiastic commentators described an expansive continental economy of myriad complementary interests that depended on *state* regulation and protection. The state governments were best situated to promote the development of their hinterlands, thus opening up vast new opportunities for enterprising republicans; the states alone could protect infant manufactures and promote internal improvements. And, given Congress's failure to regulate foreign trade effectively, the states' retaliatory measures against foreign nations were seen as the only hope for commercial recovery. Before the depression of the mid-1780s, variable coalitions of commercial farmers, international traders, and debt holders be-

11. The quote is from Thomas Paine, *The Crisis* (Garden City, N.Y., 1960), p. 178; see also 100-1, 120-21, 170-71, 174-75. For congressional support for economic freedom and its general weaknesses see Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, chap. 2.

12. On prices and wage-fixing, see Ford, *Journals of Congress*, 7:124, 9:953-57, 1043-47, at p. 1046 (Feb. 15, Nov. 22, and Dec. 20, 1777), and Albert S. Bolles, *The Financial History of the United States* (New York, 1884), pp. 158-73. On embargoes, see *Journals of Congress*, 11:569, 578; 14:986-87; 15:1137 (June 4, 5, 1778; Aug. 21, Oct. 2, 1779). On the state laws in general, see Richard Morris, *Government and Labor in Early America* (New York, 1946), pp. 103-16. On hostility to this taxation, see, for example, the discussion of New York's difficulties in the Hudson River Valley in 'The Real Farmer,' *New York Journal*, Feb. 15, 1779, and *ibid.*, July 26, Aug. 2, 9, 1779. On general wartime powers of the states, see Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure*, chaps. 2-3; Victor L. Johnson, *The American Commissariat during the Revolutionary War* (Philadelphia, 1941), pp. 37-47, 51-53; Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York, 1976), pp. 145-82; Clarence Ver Steeg, *Robert Morris: Revolutionary Financier* (Philadelphia, 1954), pp. 10-20; and East, *Business Enterprise*, pp. 30-48, 195-96.

came convinced that the state governments were the only effective or proper guarantors of their economic freedom.¹³

But for those who shared a continental or expansionist perspective, the postwar political economy proved to be unstable and conceptually incoherent. The belief in the natural harmony of interests that underlay the Revolutionary ideal of union was difficult to sustain in the face of progressive political fragmentation and the increasingly apparent impotence of the central government. Rising political conflict in the states, particularly over the direction of fiscal and economic policy, reflected conflicts of interests at the local level that in turn jeopardized the continuing union of the states. Nationalist critics charged that appeal to republican virtue or economic freedom simply disguised the dangerously divisive tendencies of the state governments.¹⁴ These tendencies were all too apparent in the American response to a series of British Orders in Council which placed mercantilist restraints on the northern fisheries and West Indies trade. Several states enacted retaliatory commercial policies to protect themselves from foreign depredations; but congressional nationalists were convinced that such a 'disunited' response would keep America on 'an unequal footing . . . with other nations' and stir up 'mutual disgusts and alienation amongst the several members of the [Amer-

13. Examples abound. See especially items dated Sep. 1, Nov. 17, 1785, in *New York Packet*; 'An Act to Encourage and Protect the Manufactures of This State,' *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Oct. 5, 1785; 'At a General Town Meeting,' *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 22, 1785; item dated Boston, Aug. 22, 1785, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Aug. 31, 1785; 'Colbert,' 'To the Inhabitants of Boston,' dated Boston, Apr. 18, 1785, in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 11, 1785; item in *Massachusetts Centinel*, Apr. 27, 1785; and 'Proceedings of the Tradesmen and Manufacturers,' Apr. 26, 1785, in *Massachusetts Centinel*, May 7, 1785. The first widely circulated interclass agreement was probably 'To the United States in Congress Assembled,' dated Boston, Apr. 22, 1785, by way of New York, May 31, repr. in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 8, 1785. See also letters from Boston tradesmen and manufacturers, promoting manufactures, in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 18, June 28, 1785; and 'Arteman,' in *ibid.*, Mar. 16, 1785.

14. See Hamilton to Duane, Sep. 3, 1780, in Syrett, et al., eds., *Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, 1:400-18, at pp. 402, 416-17, for a prominent nationalist's view of these circumstances. In general see Merrill Jensen, *The New Nation: A History of the United States during the Confederation, 1781-1789* (New York, 1950), chap. 14; and Cathy Matson, 'American Political Economy in the Constitutional Decade,' in *The U.S. Constitution: The First 200 Years*, ed. R. C. Simmons (Manchester, Engl., 1989), pp. 16-33.

ican] Empire.' The necessary result would be that 'the British [will] . . . govern our trade.'¹⁵ National economic independence depended on developing a national commercial policy. The United States could not eschew foreign trade and so remain in splendid, virtuous isolation; for 'commercial republicans' such a withdrawal from the world was the antithesis of what they understood by 'economic freedom.' In any case, the new nation's weakness would simply invite Old World countries to exploit the resulting power vacuum while leading Americans to regress to a more barbaric and internally warlike stage of development. There was instead a pressing need, wrote Tench Coxe, for uniform improvements in agriculture and 'internal navigation' that would 'bring into action the dormant powers of nature.' These were the preconditions for 'real independence,' with rural manufactures and commercial agriculture growing alongside a vigorous international commerce.¹⁶

The tendency of the states to pursue their own interests at one another's expense—what contemporary opponents called 'state jealousy'—became conspicuous to many nationalists by the mid-1780s. The states were clearly ill-equipped to deal with the effects of the mid-decade depression or to mount an effective response to the British Orders in Council. The states' retaliatory commercial regulations, said Peletiah Webster, actually threatened 'freedom of trade, or unrestrained liberty of the subject to hold or dispose of his property as he pleases.'¹⁷ At the peak of the depression some commentators began to blame state policies for currency shortages, low export prices, periodic protectionism and embargoes,

15. The quotes are in 'Memorial of Philadelphia Merchants,' *Virginia Journal*, June 16, 1785; and 'Common Sense,' 'To the People of America,' Dec. 9, 1783, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Dec. 17, 1783. For other predictions of dire consequences proceeding from British acts, as well as a discussion of the legislation and its British sources, see Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, chap. 4.

16. Tench Coxe, 'An address to an assembly of the friends of American manufactures,' Aug. 9, 1787, *American Museum*, 2 (Sep. 1787): 248–55, at p. 255. See also Michael Lienesch, *New Order of the Ages: The American Constitution and the Making of American Republican Thought* (Princeton, 1988), chap. 4; and Peter S. Onuf, 'Liberty, Development, and Union: Visions of the West in the 1780s,' *William and Mary Quarterly* 43 (1986): 179–213.

17. Peletiah Webster, 'Essay on Free Trade,' in *Political Essays*, pp. 9, 24.

and declining land values.¹⁸ Nationalist attacks on state particularism led to a general critical appraisal of the role of government in the regulation of the economy by 1786. A workable definition of economic freedom in America depended on clarifying the ambiguous relationships of the states with each other and of the states collectively with the world at large. A state-centered political economy was too fragmented and defensive, too ambivalent in its appeal to both classical republican and emergent liberal premises to permit a clear, continental vision of the new nation's future greatness. Nationalist critics argued that state policy-making obstructed continental economic development. Adverse conditions promoted increasingly bitter partisanship in the states, making mockery of the classical ideal of the small, harmonious republic. Nor did state control of the economy foster private or public virtue, as the alarming rise in smuggling and luxury consumption demonstrated.¹⁹

Proponents of national constitutional reform argued that a true harmony of interests was possible only by realigning interstate, class, and occupational interests on a continental scale. New coalitions of 'merchants and traders' or 'merchants and manufacturers' emerged in the major cities, calling for a 'unity of councils.'²⁰ They

18. Stephen Higginson to John Adams, Dec. 30, 1785, in J. F. Jameson, ed., 'Letters of Stephen Higginson,' *American Historical Association Report*, 1 (1896): 715-33, at p. 732; notices of the bankruptcies of Lawrence Marston and many others in New York City, reported in the *Journal of the Assembly of New York*, 8th sess., at p. 32 (Feb. 11, 1785), and at p. 181 (Apr. 27, 1785); and 9th sess., at pp. 100-1 (Mar. 24, 1786); items in *New York Morning Post*, Mar. 10, 1785; 'Unitas,' *New York Packet*, Mar. 4, 1785; and *ibid.*, Apr. 21, 1785; Peter Colt to Jeremiah Wadsworth, Dec. 28, 1783, cited in Margaret Martin, *Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley, 1750-1820*, Smith College Studies in History, 24 (Northampton, 1939), pp. 40-41; 'One of the People,' *New-Jersey Gazette*, Sep. 20, 1784; 'Farmer,' 'To the Inhabitants of Maryland,' dated Feb. 12, 1786, in *Maryland Journal*, Feb. 17, 1786; item dated Apr. 18, 1785, in *Massachusetts Centinel*, Apr. 20, 1785; item in *Massachusetts Centinel*, Apr. 27, 1785; and 'Proceedings of the Tradesmen and Manufacturers,' Apr. 26, 1785, *ibid.*, May 7, 1785.

19. 'Proceedings of the General Assembly,' Oct. 14, 1786, repr. in *New Haven Gazette*, Oct. 19, 1786; 'State of Connecticut, in the House of Representatives,' June 7, 1786, *ibid.*, June 8, 1787; 'State of Connecticut, In Convention,' Jan. 7, 1788, *ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1788; John Jay to unknown, in Henry P. Johnston, ed., *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 4 vols. (New York, 1890-93), 4:146-47; [Fisher Ames], *Connecticut Courant*, n.d., repr. in *New York Journal*, Mar. 29, 1787; and George Lux, signed editorial, *Maryland Journal*, Apr. 4, 1788.

20. See Committee of Merchants and Traders of the City of Philadelphia, June 21, 1785,

were convinced that 'nothing short of vesting Congress with full powers to regulate the internal as well as the external commerce of all the states, can reach the mischiefs we complain of.'²¹ Anticipating James Madison's argument for the 'extended republic,' critics of state economic policy suggested that republicanism itself could only survive in a stronger and more prosperous union.²²

Jurisdictional confusion in the West also illuminated the tenuousness of the American union and the dangers of state particularism. Struggles for control over or access to frontier regions retarded the drafting and ratification of the Articles of Confederation and periodically immobilized Congress. Meanwhile, the failure of the states to sort out their respective claims and establish a national framework for western development promoted lawlessness and disorder and jeopardized the union. Squatters, land speculators, and native Americans fought a continuous three-way

Pennsylvania Packet, June 24, 1785. See also item in *New York Packet*, Nov. 10, 1785; *ibid.*, Mar. 7, 1785; 'Pro-Bono Republicae,' *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 11, 1785; item in *Maryland Journal*, Aug. 9, 1785; John Habersham to Joseph Clay, June 24, 1785, and Robert Sherman to Elias Shipman, May 1, 1784, in E. C. Burnett, ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, 8 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1921-36), 8:151-52, 7:516; Minutes of the New York Chamber of Commerce, Mss. dated May 1785, New York Public Library; 'A Friend to Commerce,' *Independent Chronicle*, Sep. 1, 1785, repr. in *Pennsylvania Packet*, Sep. 20, 1785; items in *New York Journal*, May 11, June 15, July 6, 1786; items in *New York Packet*, May 4, June 9, Aug. 14, 1786; item dated Apr. 1, 1786, in *Pennsylvania Packet*, Sep. 20, 1786; and 'The Memorial of the Committee of Merchants and Traders of Philadelphia,' Apr. 6, 1785, repr. in *American Museum* 1 (Apr. 1787): 313-14. These calls for regional, trans-state coalitions may be contrasted to the appeals for state sovereignty in n.16.

21. 'Resolutions of the Merchants, Traders and others of the town of Boston,' Apr. 22, 1785, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 8, 1785. See also Samuel Adams to John Adams, July 1785, cited in George Bancroft, *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States of America*, 2 vols. (New York, 1896), 1:444.

22. See 'Memorial and Petition of Robert Bell,' Mar. 6, 1784, *Pennsylvania Packet*, Mar. 12, 1785; 'State of Rhode Island, In General Assembly,' *United States Chronicle*, July 21, 1785; Stephen Higginson to John Adams, July 1787, in Jameson, 'Letters of Stephen Higginson,' p. 737; George Cabot to Alexander Hamilton, Oct. 8, 1791, in Arthur H. Cole, ed., *Industrial and Commercial Correspondence of Alexander Hamilton* (orig. publ. Chicago, 1928; repr. New York, 1968), pp. 168-70; and items in *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), Dec. 25, 1783, June 24, 1784, Mar. 24, 1785. On smuggling and luxury see the brief citations listed in Herbert C. Bell, David W. Parker, et al., *Guide to British West Indian Archive Materials, in London and in the Islands, for the History of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1926), pp. 33, 35, 104, 265, 266, 295, 326; Timothy Davis, *Thoughts on Taxation in a Letter to a Friend* (New York, 1784), p. 7; 'Cincinnatus,' *Independent Journal and General Advertiser*, May 10, 14, 21, 1784; and 'A Plain but real Friend to America,' 'On American Manufactures,' *Maryland Journal*, Oct. 21, 1785.

struggle, while separatists—frustrated by Congress's unwillingness to recognize new states—entered into treasonous negotiations with neighboring imperial powers. State jealousies thus were as debilitating and dangerous in the West as they were in disputes over commercial policy. If further proof were needed, the western lands controversies demonstrated conclusively that a voluntary and consensual 'union' of republican citizens and states would not long survive. Instead of sustaining small, virtuous republican state governments, the Articles of Confederation encouraged a ruinous competition for relative advantage. Guided only by their narrow conceptions of their immediate interest, the states failed to recognize their common, national interest in promoting enterprise and development.²³

Conflicts over commerce and territory provided ample material for the nationalist assault on state particularism. But proponents of a stronger union could not rely on negative arguments alone if they were to gain broad popular support. To be successful, they had to develop a coherent political economic program that responded to the demands of innumerable old and new interest groups. Therefore, even as they emphasized the self-destructive tendencies of state sovereignty, nationalists invoked the language of expansion and development, so popular in the states during and after the Revolution, and tied it to a 'general welfare' that transcended the illusory economic freedom of citizens in autonomous states. An 'energetic' central government, reformers promised, would promote manufacturing and internal development; a 'true national interest' would subsume and mediate all centrifugal tendencies. Discounting the conventional republican insistence on small states and hostility to wealth and luxury, reformers linked the survival of republican government to national economic recovery. The nationalists' political program thus appropriated the bold economic visions of western and southern expansionists as well as of ambitious commercial farmers, manufacturers, and lesser mer-

23. See Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, chap. 3.

chants in the East. Interregional and international development would go hand in hand. Sales of western lands would make possible the creation of a national domain under congressional control; the institution of a national impost would enrich and strengthen the central government; improvements in banking and transportation would expand the scope of individual enterprise. Thus the foundations would be laid for a dynamic and prosperous republican empire in the New World.²⁴

Nationalists fused appeals to patriotism and self-interest in their campaign against state sovereignty. But if the failure of the states to satisfy the demands of a wide and growing array of interests was easily demonstrated, it did *not* necessarily follow that a strong union would promote all interests equally well. Indeed, dissatisfaction with the states revealed a widespread conviction that discrete interests were 'naturally' aligned along regional lines. If this was true, a division of the existing union into three or four sectional confederacies would perhaps better reflect and serve American interests. Benjamin Rush summarized the argument for such a division: proponents claimed that 'these confederacies . . . will be united by nature, by interest, and by manners, and consequently they will be safe, agreeable and durable.'²⁵ 'Lycurgus' concurred: 'The religion, manners, customs, exports, imports and general interest' of each section would produce a 'unanimity' that 'would render us secure at home, and respected abroad, and promote

24. Samplings of this emerging vision can be gleaned from Hamilton, 'The Continentalist,' Nos. 1 and 2, Apr. 18 and July 4, 1782, in Syrett, et al., eds., *Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, 3:75-82, 99-106; Hamilton, 'Remarks on Appropriating the Impost Exclusively to the Army,' Feb. 19, 1783, in *ibid.*, 3:262; items in *New York Packet*, Oct. 24, 1782, Apr. 21, 1785; 'At a General Town Meeting,' June 20, 1785, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 22, 1785; Madison to Monroe, Nov. 27, 1784, and to Jefferson, Apr. 27, 1784, in William T. Hutchison, et al., eds., *Papers of James Madison*, 17 vols. to date (Chicago and Charlottesville, 1962-), 8:156-58 and 265-70, at pp. 268-69; Tench Coxe, *A View of the United States of America* (Philadelphia, 1794); and John Lauritz Larson, "'Bind the Republic Together": The National Union and the Struggle for a System of Internal Improvements,' *Journal of American History* 74 (1987):363-87.

25. 'Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia,' n.d., *Columbia Herald*, July 11, 1785; and item in *Independent Chronicle*, Feb. 15, 1787, in Merrill Jensen et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, 8 vols. to date (Madison, 1976-), 13:59. The editors have identified nineteen reprintings of this piece in ten states before May 12, 1787; *ibid.*, 13:59n.

agriculture, manufactures, and commerce.²⁶ Most importantly, separate regional confederations might provide energetic, responsive governments without abandoning the republican principles that Americans held dear. These new unions would avoid the dilemma of large states which, according to the conventional wisdom, tended to disintegrate unless held together by coercive force, or of small sovereign states prone to democratic excesses and incipient anarchy. Drawing inspiration from the premise that shared economic interests constituted the most durable bonds of union, proponents of regional confederacies helped subvert the standard identification of republicanism with the state governments.²⁷

The challenge for nationalists was to demonstrate that sectional interests were interdependent and that there really was a transcendent national interest. The discourse of economic expansion again played a crucial role. Expansionists and developers were not necessarily nationalists; indeed, many of them remained committed to state sponsorship or looked to the projected regional unions. But the premises of their arguments—that governments played a key role in advancing enterprise and that interdependent local or regional interests would all benefit from development—were equally applicable to the national economy. By 1787 most international traders were ready to believe that they would benefit from national commercial regulation; now a conceptual breakthrough was necessary to convince rural manufacturers, inland traders, and farmers great and small that a nationally directed political economy would serve them as well.

This reconceptualization was facilitated by a shift in focus from consumption to production in accounts of the nation's economic prospects. Enterprising producers in their myriad activities created new values in which the entire community ultimately shared; wealth was both the just reward of productive enterprise

26. Benjamin Rush to Richard Price, Oct. 27, 1786, in Lyman Butterfield, ed., *The Letters of Benjamin Rush*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1951), 1:408–10; and 'Lycurgus,' Mar. 30, 1787, *New York Daily Advertiser*, Apr. 2, 1787, in Jensen et al., eds., *History of Ratification*, 13:58–59.

27. The sources and rationales for sectional unions are offered in Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interest*, chap. 5.

and, functioning as capital, the means of creating more wealth. Not only commercial prosperity, but a productive domestic economy would also satisfy the 'civilized wants' of a 'happy people.'²⁸

Traditional warnings about the dangers of luxury and selfishness were less frequently heard. The new political economists assured Americans that economic development would not lead to moral and material corruption. Instead, the pursuit of private interests, adequately secured and minimally restrained, guaranteed a bountiful future. Americans would move to higher levels of development, even to 'taste, refinement & extravagance,' with all its 'many elegant improvements.' 'We must be a . . . luxurious people,' asserted David Daggett.²⁹ William Vans Murray concluded that it was a 'romantic . . . fiction' to believe that 'virtue' was 'incompatible with a state of luxurious society.' 'In a correspondent state of his improvement,' luxury was 'natural' to civilized mankind.³⁰ Other writers predicted that enterprising settlers from every part of the union would move into the inland empire where 'the invigorating breath of industry' would 'animate . . . all the regenerating powers of nature.'³¹ The interests of the continent must not be sacrificed to the short-sighted selfishness of quarreling states or sections. Only a strong national government could 'unite all the streams of water on the continent, and confine them in one channel.'³²

28. [William Barton], *The True Interest of the United States, and Particularly of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1786), p. 1; item dated Worcester, Mass., Nov. 17, 1785, in *New-Jersey Gazette*, Nov. 28, 1785. See also the discussion in J. R. Pole, *The Gift of Government: Political Responsibility from the English Restoration to American Independence* (Athens, Ga., 1983), pp. 32-40, 146-48.

29. David Daggett, 'Debate over Sumptuary Laws by M. A. Candidates at Yale,' Sep. 13, 1786, in *New-Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, Oct. 12, 1786. Also see 'Spectator,' *New-Haven Gazette*, Mar. 3, 1785.

30. William Vans Murray, 'Political Sketches,' dated Middle Temple, Apr. 1787 (written 1784-85), *American Museum* 2 (Sep. 1787), 220-48, at pp. 237, 228, 233, 234. See also, 'Candidus,' *London Evening Post*, n.d., repr. in *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 21, 1784; and 'Collective Observations,' dated New York, June 1, 1786, *Connecticut Courant*, June 5, 1786.

31. E.g., item dated New York, July 20, 1786, in *Freeman's Journal*, July 26, 1786; 'Lycurgus,' No. 1, *New-Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, Feb. 16, 1786; item dated Worcester, Mass., Nov. 17, 1785, in *New-Jersey Gazette*, Nov. 28, 1785; [Tench Coxe], *An Enquiry into the Principles on which a Commercial System for the United States should be Founded* (Philadelphia, 1787); and New York Chamber of Commerce, *Gentlemen, the interest of the landholder . . .* (New York, 1785).

32. 'Examiner,' No. 1, *Virginia Journal*, Feb. 8, 1787. Also, 'To the Political Freethinkers

The crises of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary years—whether imagined or real—accelerated the transformation of republican ideology. Convinced that urgent action was imperative, proponents of national constitutional reform turned traditional wisdom on its head. Republicanism did *not* flourish in small states; instead, the fragmentation of authority threatened to corrupt American virtue by Europeanizing American politics. But what sort of regime was best suited to the genius of American republicanism? The delegates who gathered at Philadelphia soon realized that there were conceptual as well as political limits to their reform efforts. They were bound to protect the interests of the states they represented, whatever their misgivings about state sovereignty; they were also well aware of the more inclusive sectional interests that the separate states had inadequately served but which might be at even greater risk under a powerful central government.

The task of the Framers was to incorporate the states and sections into a constitutional framework that would sustain republicanism by harmonizing interests and promoting enterprise. As the deliberations of the convention underscored the complexity of this task, the annihilation of state authority seemed less and less imperative. From the beginning, debate over representation revealed deep divisions among nationalists over the role of the states in the new regime. The convention nearly broke up because of the impasse between large-state advocates of proportional representation and small-state delegates who wanted to preserve the equality of state voting guaranteed by the Articles. But by the time of the Connecticut Compromise (July 16), most of the Framers came to recognize the legitimacy of state claims to constitutional protection and the undesirability of giving the central government unlimited power. Debate over the organization of the new government thus made the delegates aware of the clashing political interests

of America,' *New-York Daily Advertiser*, May 24, 1787, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 13:113-15; and 'Observator,' No. 1, *New-Haven Gazette*, Aug. 25, 1785.

of the states and therefore increasingly willing to incorporate genuinely federal elements in their design.³³

This turn toward federalism also enabled delegates to deal with the conflicting sectional interests that jeopardized the survival of the union.³⁴ By mitigating sectionalist impulses, concern with states' rights helped secure national union. First, debate over representation led delegates from different parts of the country to combine forces. Through the complex scheme that incorporated the principle of proportional representation in one house and state equality in the other, divergent interests would be protected against hostile national majorities without being explicitly recognized. The debate deflected attention away from conflicting sectional interests; both sides were committed to national union, albeit on radically different terms.

At the same time, delegates came to see that the federal features of the Constitution could provide a crucial line of defense against the potential abuse of national power at the expense of specific sectional interests. And, of course, the compromise on representation created a 'partly federal, and partly national' regime that committed delegates to work towards preserving the union. The delegates could then talk about sectional interests without questioning the future of the union or the presumption of a national interest.

The Framers' conceptualization of the national economy was shaped by these political exigencies. Debate over the national regulation of commerce revealed broadly divergent and apparently contradictory conceptions of local and regional interest. But once the delegates had agreed on the fundamentally important question of how the new government would be organized — and who there-

33. These paragraphs draw from Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, chap. 6.

34. See Rosemarie Zagari, *The Politics of Size: Representation in the United States, 1776-1812* (Ithaca, 1987), chap. 3; Jack N. Rakove, 'The Great Compromise: Ideas, Interests, and the Politics of Constitution Making,' *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 (1987): 424-57; and Lance Banning, 'The Practicable Sphere of a Republic: James Madison, The Constitutional Convention, and the Emergence of Revolutionary Federalism,' in Richard Beeman, et al., *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, 1987), pp. 162-87.

fore would have a voice in setting the course of national policy—they could effectively negotiate the precise limits of national power. Indeed, the articulation of distinct interests was essential for fixing the ‘bargain among the Northern & Southern States’ described by Gouverneur Morris: a simple majority in Congress could regulate trade (a concession to northern commerce), but no duties could be laid on exports and there would be no federal interference with the slave trade for another twenty years. The result was to circumscribe congressional authority where, as in the case of export duties, it was most likely to have a conspicuously unequal impact on regional economies. Such guarantees, like those securing states’ rights, served an important function in making the Constitution acceptable to diverse interests across the continent.³⁵

The Framers were considerably less clear about how the new government would deploy its regulatory and revenue powers to foster economic development. Although few delegates questioned the need to curb conflicting state policies and the necessity of a uniform impost was conceded by all,³⁶ proposals to give the new government power to set export and tonnage duties or to impose trade embargoes met stiff and effective resistance.³⁷ The fundamental rift between northern commercial interests and the slave-owning staple exporters of the South, the greatest threat to the

35. The quote is from Morris Speech, Aug. 22, in Max Farrand, *Records of the Federal Convention*, 4 vols. (New Haven, 1911–37), 2:374. Morris pointed to this compromise earlier in his speech of July 13, in *ibid.*, 1:604. The compromise is at *ibid.*, Aug. 24, 2:396, 415–17, and 442.

36. Randolph speech, May 29, in *ibid.*, 1:19; Wilson speech, June 16, in *ibid.*, 1:254; Lansing speech, June 16, in *ibid.*, 1:258 (Yates’s notes); and Martin speech, June 19, in *ibid.*, 4:20–28, at pp. 24–25.

37. James McHenry notes of meeting of Maryland delegation at ‘Mr. Carrolls lodging,’ Aug. 7, in *ibid.*, 2:210–12, at p. 211; Langdon speech, Aug. 21, in *ibid.*, 2:359; Madison speech, Aug. 21, in *ibid.*, 2:361; Morris speech, Aug. 16, 21, in *ibid.*, 2:307, 360; Ellsworth speech, Aug. 21, in *ibid.*, 2:360; Gerry speech, Aug. 16, 21, in *ibid.*, 2:307, 362; Charles Pinckney speeches, July 12, in *ibid.*, 1:592; Williamson speech, Aug. 16, in *ibid.*, 2:307; Thomas FitzSimons speech, Aug. 21, in *ibid.*, 2:362; George Clymer speech, Aug. 21, in *ibid.*, 2:363; Mason speeches of Aug. 16 and 21, in *ibid.*, 2:305–6, 362–63. See also the New Jersey ‘propositions,’ submitted by Paterson, June 15, in *ibid.*, 1:242–45, esp. at 243, and Hamilton’s attack on their economic implications in Hamilton’s speech, June 18, in *ibid.*, 1:285–86. This argument was revived during the first Washington administration; see, e.g., Hugh Williamson in the House of Representatives, Feb. 3, 1792, in *ibid.*, 3:365–66.

survival of the union, was resolved in the Convention's most famous and notorious compromises. The need to preserve sectional harmony precluded debate over national support of internal improvements and manufactures: committees charged with considering these questions never reported. The idea that the new union would effectively serve diverse, sometimes conflicting, sectional interests was crucial to its appeal. The delegates thus sought to avoid issues that would emphasize their differences and polarize public opinion. Different parts of the country might benefit unequally from improved transportation links with frontier settlements; others would gain more from measures fostering manufactures.³⁸

Delegates were acutely sensitive to the possible impact of constitutional provisions on their constituents. From the unreconstructed nationalist perspective, the struggle for relative advantage at the convention appeared to recapitulate politics as usual under the Confederation. But dealing with each other helped the delegates appreciate the wide array of interests that any workable scheme would have to accommodate. In the process of airing and arguing their different specific agendas, the Framers discovered the virtues of federalism; they came to see that a balance between central and state authority would provide the best security for their own rights and interests. The Constitution was designed to perpetuate a plurality of distinctive jurisdictional and political economic interests across the continent; it would foster a 'national interest' that necessarily remained vague and ambiguous.³⁹

38. On the recognition of dangerous sectional divisions as a first step toward the slavery compromise, see John Rutledge speech, Aug. 21, in *ibid.*, 2:364; C. C. Pinckney speech, Aug. 22, in *ibid.*, 2:371; Butler speeches, Aug. 21, 22, in *ibid.*, 2:360, 374; Gorham speech, Aug. 22, in *ibid.*, 2:375; and Madison speech, Sep. 15, in *ibid.*, 2:639-40. On economic issues sent to committee, see proposition referred to Committee of Detail, Aug. 18, in *ibid.*, 2:321, 325. See also comments on internal improvements and banks at *ibid.*, 2:335, 343, 463-64, 503-4, 529, and 615-16. For later commentary on Congress's powers over banks and corporate charters, see esp. Madison to Edward Livingston, Apr. 17, 1824, in *ibid.*, 3:463; T. W. Cobb in the U. S. Senate, Feb. 23, 1825, in *ibid.*, 3:464-66; and entry for Mar. 11, 1798, in Jefferson's 'Anas,' repr. in *ibid.*, 3:375-76. On the economic limits of the sections see McCoy, 'James Madison and Visions of American Nationality in the Confederation Period: A Regional Perspective,' in Beeman, et al., *Beyond Confederation*, pp. 226-58.

39. Pierce Butler to Weed Butler, May 5, 1788, in Farrand, *Records*, 3:301-4, at p. 304;

During the ratification controversy, Federalists insisted that their federal republic, imperfect as it might be, was the only effective guarantee against anarchy and disunion. The preservation of the union was in turn the essential condition for the economic growth that would harmonize apparently divergent interests. Drawing on the visionary projections of spokesmen for territorial expansion and economic development, reformers promised that a dynamic and expanding national economy would enable Americans to overcome the destructive conflicts of interest so characteristic of the Confederation period. In the process, they would demonstrate the fundamental fallacy of classical thinking about the proper size of republics. Republicanism would flourish in the New World *because* the United States was an 'extended republic.' Far from jeopardizing individual liberties or states' rights, the growth of national prosperity and power was their best—indeed, their only—guarantee.⁴⁰

By appropriating the language of expansion and development, Federalists appealed not only to those cosmopolitan nationalists who had long thought in continental terms, but also to the growing number of enterprising Americans of the 'middling' sort who were dissatisfied with state economic policies. Federalists denied that their proposed system would promote aristocracy and privilege or jeopardize republican liberty; on the contrary, their union was the only possible means to extend the economic opportunity promised by independence.⁴¹ Thus the Federalists ingeniously combined a

Rufus King in the Massachusetts convention, Jan. 17, 1788, in *ibid.*, 3:255; and Madison speech, June 29, in *ibid.*, 1:476 (Yates's notes).

40. See Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth to Gov. Samuel Huntington, Sep. 26, 1787, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 3:351-53; 'Aristides' [Alexander Contee Hanson], *Remarks on the Proposed Plan of a Federal Government* (Annapolis, 1788), in Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States* (Brooklyn, N.Y., 1888), pp. 217-57, at pp. 223-24; and James Madison speech at Virginia convention, in Jonathan Elliott, ed., *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*, 5 vols. (Philadelphia, 1876), 3:97.

41. On 'middling' Americans in Federalist rhetoric, see Cathy Matson, 'New York City Merchants and the Constitution: A Fragile Consensus,' in *New York and the Union: Contributions to the American Constitutional Experience*, eds. Stephen Schechter and Richard Bernstein (Albany, N.Y., 1990), pp. 254-79; Oliver Ellsworth, speech at Connecticut convention, Jan.

vision of mutually interlocking economic interests expanding across the continent with a set of pragmatic political compromises that would perpetuate republican government in a dynamic federal union.

Antifederalists were not necessarily hostile to banking reform, internal improvements, or protectionism. Many of them hoped to enjoy the benefits of economic growth and therefore rejected the backward-looking and elitist precepts of classical republicanism.⁴² But Antifederalist solicitude for local interests and state sovereignty constituted a major liability during the ratification debates. Antifederalists inevitably invoked traditional republican arguments about the necessity of civic vigilance over power as they sought to mobilize popular resistance against a 'consolidated' national government.⁴³ Federalists thus could effectively charge their

7, 1788, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 3:548-54; Samuel Reznick, 'The Rise and Early Development of Industrial Consciousness in the United States, 1760-1830,' *Journal of Economic and Business History* 4 (1932): 784-811; Charles G. Steffen, *The Mechanics of Baltimore: Workers and Politics in the Age of Revolution, 1763-1812* (Urbana, Ill., 1984), pp. 83-120; and Staughton Lynd, 'The Mechanics in New York City Politics, 1774-1788,' *Labor History* 5 (1964): 215-46, at pp. 241-45.

42. E.g., Melancton Smith speech at New York convention, June 20, 1788, in Elliott, *Debates in the State Conventions*, 2:233-34; 'Federal Farmer,' No. 1, Oct. 8, 1787, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 14:22; John Smilie speech at Pennsylvania convention, Dec. 3, 1787, in *ibid.*, 2:459; 'A Review of the Constitution, Proposed by the Late Convention Held at Philadelphia,' Oct. 28, 1787, in *ibid.*, 14:255-78, at p. 273; 'Maryland Farmer,' No. 3, *Maryland Gazette* (Baltimore), Mar. 18, 1788; 'A Farmer of New Jersey' [John Stevens], *Observations on Government* (New York, 1787), pp. 47-49; item in *Hudson Gazette*, June 28, 1787; 'Mediocrity,' *Country Journal*, Jan. 17, 1787; [Abraham Yates], *Political Papers, Addressed to the Advocates for a Congressional Revenue in the State of New York* (New York, 1786), essays of Mar. 17, 1785, p. 8, and Oct. 10, 1787, pp. 5-6, 14-15, 18-20; 'Cato,' No. 5, *New York Journal*, Nov. 22, 1787, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 14:182-85, at p. 183; 'A Republican,' *New York Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 19, 1786, Dec. 17, 1787; 'Philo-Patria,' *New York Journal*, Sep. 28, 1787; [Abraham Yates], *Political Papers*, essay of Mar. 17, 1785, p. 8; and William Findley, quoted in Matthew Carey, ed., *Debates and Proceedings of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania on the . . . Charter of the Bank* (Philadelphia, 1786), pp. 66, 87-89. For the association of these projects with small producers and lesser merchants, see item in *New York Journal*, Feb. 16, 1787; 'Agrippa' [James Winthrop], Nos. 7, 12, and 14, *Massachusetts Gazette*, Dec. 18, 1787, Jan. 11, 18, 1788; and 'A Farmer' [George Logan], 'Five Letters addressed to the yeomanry of the United States,' No. 5, Aug. 21, 1792, *American Museum* 12 (Sep. 1792): 159-67, at p. 161.

43. See 'Agrippa' [James Winthrop], Nos. 3, 8, *Massachusetts Gazette*, Nov. 30 and Dec. 25, 1787, in Paul Leicester Ford, *Essays on the Constitution of the United States* (Brooklyn, 1892), pp. 59-62, 76-78; Nos. 4, 9, 13, *Massachusetts Gazette*, Dec. 3 and 28, 1787, and Jan. 14, 1788, in Cecelia M. Kenyon, ed., *The Antifederalists* (Indianapolis, 1966), pp. 132-34, 134-37, and 138-47; 'A Plebeian' [Melancton Smith], *An Address to the People of the State*

opponents with an anti-commercial, anti-expansionist bias for which classical republicans had been famous. In any case, said Federalists, local attachments had already proved inadequate to the needs of the 'middling' Americans whom Antifederalists claimed to represent; state sovereignty erected unnatural barriers to the free play of mutually supporting interests and therefore jeopardized the new nation's prosperity and power.⁴⁴

The results of this bold reformulation of America's political economy were mixed. Ratification of the Constitution unleashed widespread enthusiasm for 'energetic' government and economic expansion. A few visionary observers turned their sights toward the domestic economy, suggesting that the new nation's rising wealth pointed toward a republican millennium. The American 'empire of liberty' would mobilize the productive energies of a free people to transform the bounties of nature. An increasingly prosperous and interdependent continental economy would protect

of New-York: Showing the necessity of making Amendments to the Constitution (New York, 1788), in Ford, *Pamphlets on the Constitution*, pp. 87-115, at 95-96, 97; Melancton Smith speech at New York convention, June 20, 1788, in Elliott, *Debates in the State Conventions*, 2:223-24; Patrick Henry speech at Virginia convention, June 7, 1788, in *ibid.*, 3:145; George Mason speech at Virginia convention, June 4, 1788, in *ibid.*, 3:30; 'Brutus' [Melancton Smith?], No. 1, Oct. 18, 1787, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 13:411-21, 15:418; 'Federalism,' May 8, 1788, in *Maryland Journal*, May 9, 1788; and Letters of Luther Martin, No. 3, Mar. 25, 1788, in *Maryland Journal*, Mar. 28, 1788, in Ford, *Essays on the Constitution*, pp. 372-77, at p. 375. See also Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, chap. 7.

44. Jacob E. Cooke, ed., *The Federalist* (Middletown, Conn., 1961), No. 22 (Hamilton), at p. 137; [Tench Coxe], *An Enquiry into the Principles on which a Commercial System for the United States should be Founded* (Philadelphia, 1787), pp. 28-33; William Hillhouse, Jr., *A Dissertation, in Answer to a late Lecture on the Political States of America* (New Haven, Conn., 1789), pp. 6-7, 12; Hugh Williamson, speech at Edenton, N.C., Feb. 25, 1788, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 16:201-9, at p. 206; item in *Massachusetts Centinel*, Apr. 11, 1787, in *ibid.*, 13:79; Hamilton's notes for a speech, June 18, 1787, in Farrand, *Records*, pp. 67-86, at p. 84; 'Plain Truth,' 'Reply to An Officer of the Late Continental Army,' *Independent Gazetteer*, Nov. 10, 1787, in Jensen et al., *History of Ratification*, 2:216-23, at p. 218; 'Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Virginia,' *Independent Gazetteer*, June 26, 1787, in *ibid.*, 13:145-47, at pp. 145-46; 'Harrington' [Rush], *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 30, 1787, in *ibid.*, 13:116-20, at p. 118; Henry Knox to unknown, Sep. 1787, in *ibid.*, 13:279-80; George Nicholas, draft of letter or speech, Feb. 16, 1788, in *ibid.*, 8:369-74, at pp. 373-74; Madison to George Nicholas, May 17, 1788, in Rutland et al., *Papers of James Madison*, 11:44-51, at p. 45; Francis Corbin speech, Virginia convention, June 7, 1788, in Elliott, *Debates in the State Conventions*, 3:107, 108; and David Ramsay, *An Address to the Freemen of South Carolina, on the subject of the Federal Constitution* (Charleston, 1788), in Ford, *Pamphlets on the Constitution*, pp. 371-80, at p. 373.

the new nation from the commercial depredations and corrupt influences of Old World powers.⁴⁵

But the Federalists in power were not always true to the inspiring rhetoric that had helped secure the ratification of the Constitution. As the first Washington administration began to formulate policy, it became clear that the new 'union of interests' was at least problematic, if not altogether imaginary. Partisan conflicts were not conducted in the spirit of compromise. Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's financial program proved controversial even among Federalists, who balked at his attempt to mix the interests of the national government with those of aggressive investors in land and manufactures.⁴⁶

Yet if Federalist promises remained unfulfilled, the idea of a natural union of interests persisted as a powerful influence in political economic thought. Future generations of investing and entrepreneurial Americans—including a widening layer of the 'middling sort'—could undertake bold new ventures in the name of the common weal. But there was another important legacy of the Federalist rhetoric. The Federalists had presented themselves as the true champions of American republicanism, and their notion of harmonious interdependent interests persuasively—if perhaps disingenuously—fused liberal appeals to development and enlightened self-interest with traditional conceptions of order, civic responsibility, and self-restraint. In this way, the immanent contradictions of Revolutionary ideology have been perpetuated; even as liberal capitalism triumphed in America, Americans continued to invoke the language of classical republicanism.

45. Sources of this optimism are discussed in Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, chaps. 7–8.

46. For doubts and early opposition, see James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, Oct. 24, 1787, in Julian P. Boyd et al., eds., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 22 vols. to date (Princeton, 1950–), 12:276–79; Madison in House, Apr. 22, 1790, in Farrand, *Records*, 3:360–61; Madison to Henry Lee, Apr. 15, 1792, in Hutchison, et al., *Papers of James Madison*, 14:287–88; Madison to Edmund Randolph, Mar. 14, 1790, and to Lee, Apr. 13, 1790, in *ibid.*, 13:106, 147–48; and Joseph S. Davis, *Essays in the Earlier History of American Corporations*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1917), 1:427–53.

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