

SYMPOSIUM

A Brief History of the History of Capitalism, and a New American Variety

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Since the *new history of capitalism* (NHOC) trend received national publicity in 2013, American historians have enthusiastically pursued the complexities and varieties of capitalism, producing a body of scholarship that offers a plethora of capitalism-modifying adjectives yet leaves capitalism undefined. “A Brief History of the History of Capitalism, and a New American Variety” asks how historians developed these varieties and interpretations, and whether any gaps or limitations remain. To answer these questions, the essay begins with a survey of the many histories of capitalism, from the first use of the term, to America’s first business histories in the early twentieth century, to *world systems theory*, and up to the NHOC. It then makes the case for continued attempts at redefinition and specification by offering a new variety.

This new variety, *martial capitalism*, has its roots in the early national and antebellum eras and influenced the evolution of capitalism in the United States. It is a system of political economy in which concealed military power, rather than abstract market forces, serves as an invisible (“invisible,” at least, to those not subjected to it) hand and bestows economic opportunity upon some individuals. Under this system, government officials and private citizens coercively acquired resources, knowledge, territory, and “free trade” agreements in the service of aggressive economic opportunism. Steady military conflict, along with scattered and localized violence, intersected with honor, a mainstay in early American politics and culture, to engender a set of masculinized economic relations that shaped both the *what/where* and the *how* of capitalism in the United States.

Keywords: capitalism, United States, political economy, military

Introduction

The argument for *martial capitalism* builds on over a decade of the *new history of capitalism* (NHOC), taking seriously the field’s emphasis on both state intervention and the cultural underpinnings of political economy. However, unlike the capitalisms described by the NHOC,

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martial capitalism has a definition and an origin. It melds the theoretical foundations of old and new histories by describing both the institutional structures and individual experiences that explain the intersection of state power, violence, gender, and labor in the U.S. political economy. Although many studies of capitalism have neglected gender, martial capitalism allows us to see the manly, paternal, honor-bound aspects of capitalist development. This development depended on the contributions of unequal laborers, from enslaved individuals, to lowly paid women, men, and children, to skilled wage workers; as a system, it encompassed everyone under the jurisdiction of the U.S. federal government. The labors, and compelled compliance, of all these people made martial capitalism possible; yet, white men with capital perpetuated the system because it benefitted them, and because they had the power to do so.

Using personal papers, government documents, and other secondary sources, this essay briefly sketches some examples of individual participation in martial capitalism through land speculation, filibustering, diplomacy, military service, and exploration. These individual experiences reveal the masculinized, honor-bound, and coercive nature of the U.S. political economy from the nation's founding through the antebellum era, and bring us closer to understanding capitalism's historical nuances.

How many varieties of capitalism do we need to understand its evolution? There is no shortage of words that modify capitalism: free market, state, war, global, grassroots, merchant, agrarian, industrial, finance, corporate, entrepreneurial, crony, street, social.¹ There are Marxist theories and new histories, critiques and celebrations. Most historians agree that the capitalism described by standard economic definitions is an oversimplification. "A political, social, and economic system in which property, including capital assets, is owned and controlled for the most part by private persons," where "the price mechanism is used as a signaling system which allocates resources between uses," has never quite existed because, throughout history, irrational human actors and interventionist governments have displaced abstract and impersonal supply and demand. Dissatisfaction with traditional definitions aside, scholars of the NHOC are reluctant to redefine capitalism, even as they have introduced new analyses to complicate economists' varieties of entrepreneurial, state-guided capitalism, oligarchic, and big-firm capitalisms.² The plethora of capitalism-modifying adjectives leaves capitalism undefined, suggesting that capitalism is too capacious a term to explain any system of political economy satisfactorily. We need more precise definitions.

1. Hall and Soskice, *Varieties of Capitalism*. For a sampling of recent titles, see William Caferro, "Pre-modern European Capitalism, Christianity, and Florence," *Business History Review* 94, no. 1 (2020): 39–72; Michael Zakim, *Accounting for Capitalism: The World the Clerk Made* (Chicago, 2018); Joseph P. Slaughter, "Harmony in Business: Christian Communal Capitalism in the Early Republic," *Enterprise & Society* 21, no. 3 (2020): 716–67; José Galindo, *Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Crony Capitalism, and the Making of the Franco-Mexican Elite* (Tuscaloosa, 2021); Peter Knight, *Reading the Market: Genres of Financial Capitalism in Gilded Age America* (Baltimore, 2018); Qi Zhang, *Revolutionary Legacy, Power Structure, and Grassroots Capitalism under the Red Flag in China* (New York, 2019); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014). David Farber, *Crack: Rock Cocaine, Street Capitalism, and the Decade of Greed* (Cambridge, 2019); Alys Eve Weinbaum, *The Afterlife of Reproductive Slavery: Biocapitalism, and Black Feminism's Philosophy of History* (Durham, N.C., 2019). For all capitalism as constitutive of "racial capitalism," see Jenkins and LeRoy, *Histories of Racial Capitalism*, 1; Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," 77.

2. Pearce, *Macmillan Dictionary*, 54. William J. Baumol, Robert E. Litan, and Carl J. Schramm, *Good Capitalism, Bad Capitalism, and the Economics of Growth and Prosperity* (New Haven, 2007).

I would like to introduce and define another variety that developed in the United States' first decades, in an era that blended elements of premodern, agricultural, and moral economies, as well as modern, monetized, marketized, and industrialized ones. Martial capitalism was a system of political economy in which concealed military power, rather than abstract market forces, served as an invisible ("invisible," at least, to those not subjected to it) hand and bestowed economic opportunity upon some individuals. Under this system, government officials and private citizens coercively acquired resources, knowledge, territory, and "free trade" agreements in the service of aggressive economic opportunism. It was not a planned economic system but the result of private citizens' and public officials' aggressive pursuit of personal gain and willingness to use military force. Although very few Americans participated directly in the military and many white Americans made pretensions to their nation being a reluctant wielder of military power, there was a martial quality to economic life and domestic and international politics: from aggressive land speculation, bank wars, coercive trade agreements, and dueling in Congress, to forced labor camps and "frontier" violence. The evolution of capitalism has varied internationally over time, and although the United States was by no means "exceptional," its development of capitalism had its own particularities.

The United States' transition to capitalism cannot be explained by the main tenets of Marxist theories of capitalism, which did not yet exist and which hold that one's relationship to the means of production determined one's identity. In the United States, the myth of equal opportunity and prosperity for white men prevailed. Nor can this era be characterized as a self-regulated classical political economy because individual government officials wielded military and political power to shape economic outcomes. Also, although there was a militaristic quality to early U.S. economic life and domestic and international politics, its political economy diverged from those of early modern Europe's fiscal military states, which built their economies to serve large armies, and according to Sven Beckert, engaged in "war capitalism" to dominate global commodity networks (notably, cotton). "Military" and "war" refer to armed forces, whereas "martial" is subtler. "Martial" is warlike—inclined or disposed to war, but not necessarily engaged in large declared wars.³ Steady military conflict, along with scattered and localized violence, intersected with honor, a mainstay in early American politics and culture, to engender a set of masculinized economic relations that shaped both the *what/where* and the *how* of capitalism in the United States.

3. Marxist theory is also not relevant for the United State because, according to Shauna J. Sweeney, the "process of commodification and the murderous character of daily life under slavery produced a kind of elemental spiritual alienation that remains unaccounted for in Marx's consideration of workers' plight under capitalism," Shauna J. Sweeney, Chapter 2, in Destin Jenkins and Justin LeRoy, eds., *Histories of Racial Capitalism* (New York, 2021), 64. Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, xv. Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, 2002). Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South* (Princeton, 1996). For militarized manhood in America, see Toby Ditz, "Contending Masculinities in Early America," in Thomas Foster, ed., *New Men: Manliness in Early America* (New York, 2011), 257. For the concept of militarized masculinity more broadly, and its intersection with international relations, see, Maya Eichler, "Militarized Masculinities in International Relations," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 21, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2014): 81–93.

This essay will begin with a survey of literature on capitalism, before making the case for continued attempts at redefinition. It will do so by explaining martial capitalism and its significance for the early national and antebellum United States. The argument for martial capitalism builds on over a decade of the NHOC, taking seriously the field's emphasis on both state intervention and the cultural underpinnings of political economy.⁴ It also, in its specific definition of capitalism, models older scholarship. My argument for martial capitalism melds the theoretical foundations of old and new histories by describing both the institutional structures and individual experiences that accompanied the development of capitalism in the United States.

Capitalism as a system of economic behaviors and relations predates capitalism as a concept. The word as an "ism" was first used by French socialists Louis Blanc and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in the 1850s. It appeared in William Makepeace Thackeray's *The New-comer* in 1854, and became associated with Karl Marx after the 1867 publication of *Das Kapital*. Exactly how much capitalism predated its mid-nineteenth-century coinage, and whether its precise origins matters, has been a matter of debate among historians. Scholars began writing about the history of capitalism during the Great Depression. In 1939, America's first business historian, Norman Scott Brien Gras, traced capitalism's life span and variants back to the "petty capitalism" of medieval traveling merchants and shopkeepers, which was followed by, and coexisted with, early modern mercantile capitalism, industrial capitalism, and financial capitalism. National capitalism, Gras feared, threatened his preferred financial capitalism. He was not alone in his anxiety. Following World War II, in the face of global socialist movements and a rise in government interventionism, many scholars worried, unnecessarily, about the demise of capitalism, predicting, for example, the end of British capitalism by 1950.⁵

As business history took off in the 1960s, historians began debating the definitions and conditions of capitalism—a debate that the later NHOC scholars would dismiss. Economic historian Frederic C. Lane lamented capitalism's inexact application, a criticism with which today's historians of capitalism are familiar. He also lambasted Alfred Chandler and other "proponents of entrepreneurial history" for privileging administrative and entrepreneurial activity above all other factors of production.⁶ Today's historians of capitalism do not worry so much about factors of production. They focus instead on power relations, commodities and commoditization, and financial abstractions.

Although social scientists and historians of business dominated the ranks of the early theorists of capitalism, social historians increasingly took up the subject during the Cold

4. Martial capitalism includes "social habits, cultural logics," and "how businesspeople accumulated not just wealth but cultural and political capital." Zakim and Kornblith, *Capitalism Takes Command*, 2; Sven Beckert and Christine Desan, eds., *American Capitalism: New Histories* (New York, 2018).

5. Scholars before the Great Depression wrote about capitalism; however, they did not make it the explicit subject of their study. See, for example, Charles Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* (New York, 1921), 21, 29, which mentions "capitalism" twice. Norman Scott Brien Gras, *Business and Capitalism: An Introduction to Business History* (New York: F. S. Crofts and Company, 1939). Keith Hutchinson, *The Decline and Fall of British Capitalism* (New York: Scribner's, 1949).

6. Lane, "Meanings of Capitalism," 12.

War. Fernand Braudel's *Civilization and Capitalism* refuted Marxist interpretations while detailing ordinary people's experiences of economic changes. Like many of his predecessors in the NHOC today, Braudel highlighted the role of the state and contested the linear view of history held by both Marxists and liberal economists. He challenged economists and business historians who perceived the role of central governments under capitalism as protecting free markets; instead, he characterized governments as protectors of capitalist monopolists.

Braudel's work influenced another ancestor of the NHOC, *world systems theory*, which emerged as an interdisciplinary critique of capitalism in the 1970s. This neo-Marxist field uses the capitalist world economy as its mode of analysis to explain developments between and within different countries, all of which are dependent on their position as core, semi-periphery and periphery. Despite sharing with world systems theorists a skepticism of linear development and a concern with inequality, new historians of capitalism criticize the field for neglecting human agency. They are much more concerned with individuals' experiences and decision-making, drawing from new social history's attention to the lived experiences of diverse or marginalized groups of people. The "new labor history," spearheaded by David Montgomery and Herbert Gutman, focused on workers' experiences under capitalism. Other social historians, however, criticized the field's privileging of certain kinds of labor, its assumptions about working-class identity, and its general inattention to different social identities and sources of conflict, such as race and gender. The working class as a subject of study gradually fell out of favor by the 2000s, replaced by other marginalized groups whom capitalism subjugated.⁷

This dissatisfaction with the explanatory limitations of labor history, combined with the recognition of the failures of capitalism during the financial crisis of 2007–2009, culminated in the emergence of the NHOC. This "new" approach to capitalism is especially attuned to power, inequality, and the existence of slavery and other forms of coerced labor.⁸ (The scholarly trend to which this name applies predated the crisis: Harvard launched a seminar on the political economy of modern capitalism in 2005, and works by such historians as Seth Rockman, Louis Hyman, Julia Ott, Bethany Moreton and Stephen Mihm, and Jonathan Levy either began or were published before the crisis.)

Slavery has become central to the field, highlighted by the 2016 publication of *Slavery's Capitalism*, many of whose contributing authors have written books on the subject. These works, as well as Walter Johnson's *River of Dark Dreams*, draw from a long history of

7. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1974). James Petras, "Dependency and World System Theory: A Critique and New Directions," *Latin American Perspectives* 8, no. 3/4 (Autumn 1981): 148–155. Some NHOC scholars, however, are influenced by the geographic focus of world systems theory, Dan Rood, "Beckert Is Liverpool, Baptist Is New Orleans: Geography Returns to the History of Capitalism." *Journal of the Early Republic* 36, no. 1 (2016): 151–167. In 2005, Seth Rockman revived class as a viable category of analysis by redefining it as "a label for the social relations of capitalism," encapsulating "the way capitalism created a contingent relationship between those it advantaged and disadvantaged." Rockman, "Class and the History of Working People," 530, 535.

8. Jeffrey Sklansky criticizes the field for not paying enough attention to labor. Jeffrey Sklansky, "Labor, Money, and the Financial Turn in the History of Capitalism," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 23–46.

scholarship on the relationship between slavery and capitalism, most notably Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery*. Many of their claims about the profitability, modernity, and brutality of the institution of slavery have either already been made or have been refuted by economic historians.⁹

Is anything, then, actually new about the NHOC? Much has been written to answer this question in both the affirmative and the negative. The newest thing about the field is the label and the attention it has received, both publicly and from other historical fields.¹⁰

There have long been studies of capitalism, of social and cultural aspects of the economy, and of the relationship among slavery, capitalism, and democracy, and early Americanists engaged in vigorous debates throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s about the emergence of capitalism.¹¹ However, within the past decade, in addition to an outpouring of articles, new publishing venues devoted specifically to capitalism have emerged, notably, the series Columbia Studies in the History of U.S. Capitalism and *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics*. Each venue stresses the interdisciplinarity of the works they publish, acknowledging the field's indebtedness to wide-ranging scholarship. Each also acknowledges what is new or unique: The former "aims to publish canon-questioning research that challenges and denaturalizes existing categories and modes of analysis"; the latter aims to publish works that "take history 'from the bottom up' all the way to the top." Both assertions recognize what sets the NHOC apart from previous scholarship. The field's foundational works "denaturalize" capitalism, delineating the specific decisions and circumstances that built our modern economy, and showing how such hallmarks of capitalism as consumer debt, investment, and risk became regularized. More recent scholarship continues to explain the system's "hows" and to challenge assumptions about capitalism's inevitability.¹²

9. Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (Philadelphia, 2016). Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, 2013). For examples of economic historians' coverage of NHOC claims, see Alan L. Olmstead and Paul W. Rhode, "Cotton, Slavery, and the New History of capitalism," *Explorations in Economic History* 67 (Jan. 2018): 1–17; Hilt, "Economic History," 511–536; and Trevor Burnard and Giorgio Riello, "Slavery and the New History of Capitalism," *Journal of Global History* 15, no. 2 (July 2020): 225–44. See also, Harry L. Watson and John D. Majewski, "On the Banks of the James or the Congaree: Antebellum Political Economy," in *Reinterpreting Southern Histories: Essays in Historiography*, ed. Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2020), 166–196. For recent work that examines the relationships between slavery and another institution central to American capitalism—the national bank—without belaboring "capitalism," see Sharon Ann Murphy, "The Financialization of Slavery by the First and Second Banks of the United States," *Journal of Southern History* 87 (Aug. 2021): 385–426.

10. For a summary of some of these debates, see, for example, Seth Rockman, "What Makes the History of Capitalism Newsworthy?" *Journal of the Early Republic*, Volume 34, Number 3 (Fall 2014): 439–466. Agricultural history is one example of a field that has engaged with the history of capitalism. Deborah Fitzgerald, Lisa Onaga, Emily Pawley, Denise Phillips, and Jeremy Vetter, "Roundtable: Agricultural History and the History of Science," *Agricultural History* 92, no. 4 (Fall 2018): 569–604.

11. Christopher Clark, "Household Economy, Market Exchange and the Rise of Capitalism in the Connecticut Valley, 1800–1860," *Journal of Social History* 13, no. 2 (Dec. 1979): 169–189. Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (New York, 1994). Paul A. Gilje, Jeanne Boydston, Douglas Egerton, Christopher Clark, Jonathan Prude, Richard Stott, Cathy D. Matson, and Gordon S. Wood, "Special Issue on Capitalism in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 16, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 159–310. Naomi Lamoreaux, "Rethinking the Transition to Capitalism in the Early American Northeast," *The Journal of American History* 90, no. 2 (Sept. 2003): 437–461.

12. Julia C. Ott, *When Wall Street Met Main Street: The Quest for an Investors' Democracy* (Cambridge, MA, 2014); Louis Hyman, *Debtor Nation: The History of America in Red Ink* (Princeton, 2011); Jonathan Levy, *Freaks*

In general, the field shies away from defining capitalism, but investigates its many “varieties.” The NHOC’s subjects range widely, from “ordinary” Americans to business tycoons. Influenced by the new social history, the field is concerned with marginalized groups yet has received criticism for neglecting gender, as well as for the fact that many of its writers and subjects are white men. NHOC scholars, however, do not privilege elite white men in the same way that traditional histories have. Rather, their subject choice reflects an interest in studying elites from a critical rather than a normalizing or hagiographic perspective.¹³ To understand capitalism, one must understand the capitalists themselves. The field’s inclusion of both the marginalized and the marginalizing is emblematic of its capaciousness. The sum total of its coverage of commodities and commoditization, high finance and everyday transactions, the environment and ideology, to name just a few subjects, provides an expansive yet amorphous picture of capitalism.

For this reason, we need more precise definitions. This brings me back to the concept of martial capitalism, which contributes to, challenges, and clarifies the existing NHOC literature. Like other aspects of capitalism described by this literature, martial capitalism rests on power, as well as the centrality of slavery, violence, and the state. Unlike the capitalisms described by the NHOC, martial capitalism has a definition and an origin. This system of political economy, in which military power undergirds the efforts of government officials and private citizens to acquire resources, knowledge, territory, and “free trade” agreements in the service of aggressive economic opportunism and under the guise of liberal democracy, began with U.S. nationhood. I have written elsewhere about *national security capitalism*, a mixed enterprise system in which U.S. officials adapted policies, informal decision-making, and foreign relations to meet the nation’s current economic and military needs. Martial capitalism connects the broader structural system of national security capitalism to the individual, explaining the intersection of state power, violence, gender, and labor in U.S. development. Although many studies of capitalism have neglected gender, martial capitalism allows us to see the manly, paternal, honor-bound aspects of capitalist development. This development

of Fortune: The Emerging World of Capitalism and Risk in America (*Cambridge, 2014*). Joshua R. Greenberg, *Bank Notes and Shinplasters: The Rage for Paper Money in the Early Republic* (*Philadelphia, 2020*). Emma Hart, *Trading Spaces: The Colonial Marketplace and the Foundations of American Capitalism* (*Chicago, 2019*) Caitlin Rosenthal, *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management* (*Cambridge, MA, 2018*).

13. Amy Dru Stanley, “Histories of Capitalism and Sex Difference,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 343–350; Ellen Hartigan-O’Connor, “Gender’s Value in the History of Capitalism,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 36, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 613–635; Nan Enstad, “The ‘Sonorous Summons’ of the New History of Capitalism, Or, What Are We Talking about When We Talk about Economy?” *Modern American History* 2 (2019): 83–95. For the study of elite subjects, see for examples, Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie* (Cambridge, MA, 2003); Tom Cutterham, “‘A Very Promising Appearance’: Credit, Honor, and Deception in the Emerging Market for American Debt, 1784–92,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 75, no. 4 (Oct. 2018): 623–650. There have also been a host of critical/analytical biographies of elite white men. See for example, Jason M. Opal, *Avenging the People: Andrew Jackson, the Rule of Law, and the American Nation* (New York, 2017) and Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Nathaniel Bowditch and the Power of Numbers: How a Nineteenth-Century Man of Business, Science, and the Sea Changed American Life* (Chapel Hill, 2016).

depended on the contributions of unequal laborers, from enslaved individuals, to lowly paid women and children, to skilled wage workers.¹⁴

Capitalists' reliance on multiple forms of labor, and their performance of masculinity, helps explain the political contradictions that accompanied the economic transitions of the early United States. Despite the importance of political parties and sectionalism in the early national United States, many individual choices reflected political and economic pragmatism. In general, there was little ideological consistency among politicians of the era.¹⁵ Historians question why John C. Calhoun switched from being a nationalist to a states' rights proponent, and why John Quincy Adams was a champion of antislavery, as well as a sometimes defender of slaveholders' interests. Partisanship was often rooted in political pragmatism. Whether men were slaveholders or not, northerners or southerners, their interests were ultimately about capital and control, and as Paul Frymer has noted, most politicians agreed on the virtues of a white settler nation. Martial capitalism, like all other economic systems, spanned geographies and political parties, and it helps explain how and why political expediency often trumped moral and ideological stability.¹⁶ As a system, it encompassed everyone under the jurisdiction of the U.S. federal government; the labors, and compelled compliance, of all these people made martial capitalism possible. However, white men with capital perpetuated the system because it benefitted them, and because they had the power to do so.

14. Lindsay Schakenbach Regele, *Manufacturing Advantage: War, the State, and the Origins of American Industry, 1776–1848* (Baltimore, 2019). According to Amy Dru Stanley, “problems of sex appear to lie outside the optic of a new history of capitalism preoccupied with illuminating the financialization of social relations and vast market networks that envelope free and slave economies.” Amy Dru Stanley, “Histories of Capitalism and Sex Difference,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2016), 349. For the long-held contention that the federal government was weak, see William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (June 2008): 752–72. For work that challenges this contention, see, Brian Balogh, *A Government out of Sight: The Mystery of National Authority in Nineteenth Century America* (Cambridge, MA, 2009); Max M. Edling, *A Hercules in the Cradle: War, Money, and the American State, 1783–1867* (Chicago, 2014). For an overview of recent scholarship on “the state” and for an appeal to scholars to “question in whose interests, and for what purposes, those institutions worked,” see, Gautham Rao, “The New Historiography of the Early Federal Government: Institutions, Contexts, and the Imperial State,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 77, no. 1 (Jan. 2020), 98. For state power and territorial ambitions, see Edling, *A Hercules in the Cradle*, William Bergmann, *The American National State and the Early West* (New York, 2012). Tom Chaffin, *Pathfinder: John Charles Fremont and the Course of American Empire* (Tulsa, OK, 2014); Paul Frymer, *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion* (Princeton, 2017).

15. This challenges John Ashworth's argument that there was continuity in antebellum partisan ideologies and that ideologies protected class interests. John Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics in the Antebellum Republic* (New York, 1995).

16. For Adams's contradictory positions on slavery and foreign relations, see Alastair Su, “‘The Cause of Human Freedom’: John Quincy Adams and the Problem of Opium in the Age of Emancipation,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 40, no. 30 (Fall 2020): 465–496, and Stephen Chambers, *No God But Gain: The Untold Story of Cuban Slavery, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Making of the United States* (New York: Verso, 2015). Paul Frymer, *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion* (Princeton, 2017). Douglas Bowers argues that for the great majority of bills, parties offered little or no guidance. Douglas E. Bowers, “From Logrolling to Corruption: The Development of Lobbying in Pennsylvania, 1815–1861,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 3 (Winter 1983), 439–74, quote 451. For studies that make similar points, see, John H. Aldrich, *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Chicago, 1995), 97–125; and Mark Voss-Hubbard, *Beyond Party: Cultures of Antipartisanship in Northern Politics before the Civil War* (Baltimore, 2002).

Martial capitalism was gendered and racialized. It accorded with early national cultures of honor and masculinity. Early national codes of honor mandated white masculine control over family, property, labor, and reputation.¹⁷ White men's economic prosperity was predicated on both the cult of domesticity and the labor of subordinates inside and outside the home.

Amy Greenberg has identified two main types of masculinity in the nineteenth-century United States in her work on the gendered dimensions of U.S. expansionism and imperialism. "Martial" men embraced physical strength, domination, and aggression as markers of manhood, whereas "restrained" men valued self-discipline, morality, and the virtues of the private sphere (made possible by female domesticity). Martial capitalism thrived on masculine entitlement and aggression, as well as more subtle forms of masculinity. Because political and economic success required both strategic aggression and respectability, many elite merchants and men in government positions tempered some of the bellicose aspects of their manhood with gentility. These demonstrations of respectability and refinement mirrored the activities of England's "gentlemanly capitalists," and conformed men to a "transnational business masculinity" (a type of "hegemonic masculinity").¹⁸

In the United States, this masculinity hinged on whiteness. The nation was a "settler colonial slavery complex" that sought to absorb or eliminate Natives and marginalize African Americans. A major source of American economic opportunity—westward expansion—was fueled by government sponsorship of white settlement and violence. This included the

17. Bertram Wyatt-Brown defines honor culture as "the cluster of ethical rules ... by which judgments of behavior are ratified by community consensus." Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, xv. This honor culture is often associated with southern society, but Joanne Freeman extends it to national politics, arguing that a code of honor governed the actions of early republic political elites. Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, CT, 2002). This code of honor was, of course, always changing. John Mayfield argues that there was a tension between traditional notions of honor and the competitive, market-oriented. Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen*, xv. Craig Bruce Smith argues that following the American Revolution, "the rhetoric of national honor certainly remained, but in many places, it became secondary to maintaining one's own status and office." Craig Bruce Smith, *American Honor: The Creation of the Nation's Ideals during the Revolutionary Era* (Chapel Hill, 2018), 210. Jane Turner Censer, "Planters and the Southern Community: A Review Essay," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 94, no. 4 (Oct. 1986), 391. For the importance of manhood over honor, see Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007). For market economy values and white fraternal manhood, see Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch, *Brothers of a Vow: Secret Fraternal Orders and the Transformation of White Male Culture in Antebellum Virginia* (University of Georgia Press, 2010).

18. Amy Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2005). For an analysis of theories and categories of masculinity, see Andrea Waling, "Rethinking Masculinity Studies: Feminism, Masculinity, and Poststructural Accounts of Agency and Emotional Reflexivity," *The Journal of Men's Studies* 27, no. 1 (2019): 89–107. During the early nineteenth century, masculinity transitioned from being rooted in community service to revolving around self-improvement. This self-improvement targeted morality and, increasingly, virile physicality. E. Anthony Rotundo, "Body and Soul: Changing Ideals of American Middle-Class Manhood, 1770–1920," *Journal of Social History*, Volume 16, Issue 4, Summer 1983): 25. See also, E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations In Masculinity From The Revolution To The Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993). Amy Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2005). For respectability in this era, see Brian P. Luskey, "Jumping Counters in White Collars: Manliness, Respectability, and Work in the Antebellum City," *Journal of the Early Republic* Vol. 26, no. 2 (May 2006): 173–219. Cain and Hopkins, "Gentlemanly Capitalism," 505. Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge, 1995). R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (Dec. 2005): 829–859. Christine Beasley, "Rethinking Hegemonic Masculinity in a Globalizing World," *Men and Masculinities* 11, no. 1 (Oct. 2008): 86–103.

“removal” of Native Americans and the expansion of African American slavery. During and after the Civil War, when African American men used their “martial performances” to demonstrate their “worthiness for freedom” and argue for economic and political rights, white Americans still derived economic value from them, as well as other nonwhites. Systems of inequality persisted beyond the slavery/freedom divide because, as some historians have argued, all capitalism is racial capitalism.¹⁹ How economic systems are racialized, however, varies. Race operated in specific ways under martial capitalism, and to understand how, we need to go back to the founding era. There, we can see how restrained violence and economic opportunism became intertwined in the cultural development of the U.S. political economy.

As a national economic system, martial capitalism started with the Northwest Ordinance’s establishment of federal power over new territories and the assumption that the government would promote economic opportunity through access to land. This precedent ultimately involved conflict and economic prospects, not only in North America but overseas as well. Both government officials and private citizens engaged in economic and military aggression, and all presidents played some role in protecting martial capitalism. The most extreme example was perhaps Andrew Jackson. Although his brutal warfare against the Creek and Seminole Indians in the 1810s was not representative of the military subtleties of martial capitalism, he helped perpetuate the system by supporting white settlers’ economic opportunity at the expense of others and signing the Indian Removal Act. Even Thomas Jefferson, who is considered by some historians as anti-capitalist, and often professed to dislike the military, engaged in martial capitalism by purchasing the Louisiana Territory for commercial opportunities and sponsoring an expansion of the nation’s war-making capabilities.²⁰ Jefferson and other presidents responded to, and bolstered, what was happening on the ground among government officials and American citizens as they navigated the uneven transition to a market-based, “modern” economy. To explain this ad hoc development, I will briefly sketch some examples of individual participation in martial capitalism through land speculation, filibustering, diplomacy, military service, and exploration.

19. Ostler and Shoemaker, “Forum: Settler Colonialism,” 366. Miles, “Beyond a Boundary,” 417–426. Paul Frymer, *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion* (Princeton, 2017), 14–15. For the “logic of elimination” applied to Native Americans versus punitive laws against African Americans, see Patrick Wolfe, “Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race,” *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 3 (Jun. 2001), 892–893. Carole Emberton, “‘Only Murder Makes Men’: Reconsidering the Black Military Experience,” *The Journal of the Civil War Era*, Vol. 2, Issue 3 (Aug. 2012): 369–393. 387–388. Nancy Leong, “Racial Capitalism,” *Harvard Law Review* Vol. 126, no. 8 (Jun. 2013). Justin LeRoy, “Racial Capitalism and Black Philosophies of History,” in Jenkins and LeRoy, *Histories of Racial Capitalism*, 174.

20. For state power and territorial ambitions, see Max Edling, *A Hercules in the Cradle: War, Money, and the American State, 1783–1867* (Chicago, 2014); William Bergmann, *The American National State and the Early West* (New York, 2012); Tom Chaffin, *Pathfinder: John Charles Fremont and the Course of American Empire* (Tulsa, OK, 2014). For the significance of U.S. defeat in the Northwest Indian Wars, see Colin G. Calloway, *The Victory with No Name: The Native American Defeat of the First American Army* (New York, 2014); William Hogeland, *Autumn of the Black Snake: The Creation of the U.S. Army and the Invasion That Opened the West* (New York, 2017). Andrew Fagal, “The Political Economy of War in the Early American Republic, 1774–1821,” (Ph.D. diss., Binghamton University, 2013) Claudio J. Katz, “Thomas Jefferson’s Liberal Anticapitalism,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 1 (Jan. 2003): 1–17. Drew McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill, 1980).

First, it should be noted that the most successful agents of this system were not those who engaged in egregious violence. Violence was endemic in early America; its spectrum included dueling, homicide, and genocide, as well as domestic, workplace, political, and racial violence. However, the development of capitalism was most palatable to the majority of Americans when extreme brutality was veiled behind the illusion of minimal, honorable military engagement. Under martial capitalism, the myth of noble violence prevailed, which was why Lewis Wetzel, a frontiersman who participated in military campaigns against Native Americans in the Ohio region and was a member of Aaron Burr's 1805–1807 expedition to conquer Spanish Texas, received public criticism for murdering Native allies and was later imprisoned for counterfeiting.²¹ The military campaigns in which Wetzel participated were generally associated with increased opportunities and power for white settlers, yet his aggression exceeded what mainstream white Americans approved of for economic development. His obsession with Native obliteration and revenge overshadowed any profit motive.

Instead, the Andersons, a Kentucky family whose economic prosperity was tied to post-Revolution land speculation, slavery, and Indian removal, embodied the violent subtleties, persistent traditions, and wealth acquisition of the transition to capitalism. Historian Harry S. Stout has chronicled two generations of the Anderson family, arguing that land was central to their livelihood.²² He argues that the family existed at the intersection of traditional and modern economic practices and that they embodied “republican capitalism,” a term he uses only once and does not define. The family's economic activities can, I think, be more comprehensively described by martial capitalism. Family patriarch Richard Clough Anderson Sr., a Virginia Revolutionary War veteran, used his military service to acquire valuable plots of land, which he passed on to his descendants, who, as statesmen and army officers, fought racial warfare and garnered trade deals to enhance the profitability of stolen land.

Members of the Anderson family exemplified the interrelationship among capitalism, liberalism, and violence. Richard Clough Anderson Sr., for example, became surveyor general of the Virginia Military District and served as a militia commander on the frontier. His son, Robert, was an army officer who fought in the Black Hawk War, Seminole War, and Mexican War. Robert's older brother, Richard Clough Anderson Jr., served as the United States' first minister plenipotentiary to Colombia, where he negotiated a treaty that gave the United States “most-favored-nation” status.²³ The treaty that Anderson and Gran Colombian

21. Randolph Roth, *American Homicide* (Cambridge, MA, 2009). Samuel J. Watson's work reveals a professionalized officer corps that carried out violence beyond the purview of civilian decision-making. *Jackson's Sword: The Army Officer Corps on the American Frontier, 1810–1821* (Lawrence, KS, 2012). Christopher H. Bouton, *Setting Slavery's Limits: Physical Confrontations in Antebellum Virginia, 1801–1860* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2019); Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (New York, 2012); Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (New Haven, CT, 2019). Kelly A. Ryan, *Everyday Crimes: Social Violence and Civil Rights in Early America* (New York, 2019). Rachel Hope Cleves has written about the fear of democratic violence. Rachel Hope Cleves, *The Reign of Terror in America: Visions of Violence from Anti-Jacobinism to Antislavery* (New York, 2009). Brian D. Hardison and Ray Swick, “A Recruit for Aaron Burr: Lewis Wetzel and the Burr ‘Conspiracy.’” *West Virginia History*, New Series, 3, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 75–86.

22. Harry S. Stout, *American Aristocrats: A Family, a Fortune, and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2017).

23. E. Taylor Parks and Alfred Tischendorf, “Cartagena to Bogotá, 1825–1826: The Diary of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr.,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 42, no. 2 (May 1962): 217–231.

minister Pedro Gual Escandón signed served as the template for subsequent treaties in other Latin American nations, and marked an increase in American economic aggression overseas. When Richard died, his younger brother Larz became head of the family, and became extremely wealthy because of land, banking, and strategic ties to northerners.

In general, the Anderson family illustrates how white Americans maintained aspects of a traditional political economy—valuing landed wealth, honor, and family connections—while embracing aspects of militarized masculine capitalism and cultivating far-flung business and political connections. The experiences of the Anderson family occurred among other individuals in other domestic and international regions.

One of these regions was the Mediterranean—an important, yet problematic, area for U.S. commerce—and one of these individuals was James Leander Cathcart, a young sailor in the 1780s, and a future merchant and diplomat. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the North African states of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, required tribute payments for safe trade, seizing cargoes and sailors from noncompliant nations. Following independence, when the United States no longer received protection from the British navy, Boston- and Philadelphia-based ships were captured and their crews enslaved off the Barbary Coast. Cathcart was one of the first of these American prisoners. During his captivity, he worked as a prison clerk and borrowed money from a Swedish diplomat, which he used to purchase wine and open several taverns. He eventually became a secretary to the dey, helped negotiate prisoner releases, and became wealthy enough to purchase a ship to sail back to Philadelphia. In 1798, Cathcart was appointed as a diplomatic agent in Tunis and Tripoli, and in 1807 as a consul to Madeira and then Cádiz, where he ran a mercantile business. Cathcart used his influence to recommend an escalation of U.S. strategy in the Mediterranean from one of defense to one of offense, suggesting Robert Fulton's torpedo "to have the whole of their Navy destroyed by an invisible agent." Cathcart argued that the United States "must act independent of every nation on earth and trust to God and the strength of our own arms for a happy result." Cathcart got his wish when Congress voted to send naval power to Algiers in March, and the United States won a battle against Algiers several months later. The subsequent peace treaty ended tribute payments.²⁴ This is not to say that Cathcart singlehandedly caused this outcome, rather, that martial capitalist actions accorded with U.S. government decision-making.

24. Peter D. Eicher, "To the Shores of Tripoli: James Cathcart, William Eaton, and the First Barbary War," in *Raising the Flag: America's First Envoys in Faraway Lands* (Lincoln, NE, 2018): 34–71; Brett Goodin, *From Captives to Consuls: Three Sailors in Barbary and Their Self-Making across the Early American Republic, 1770–1840* (Baltimore, 2020); Hannah Farber, "Millions for Credit: Peace with Algiers and the Establishment of America's Commercial Reputation Overseas, 1795–1796," *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no.2 (Summer 2014): 187–217; Michael Kitzen, "Money Bags or Cannon Balls: The Origins of the Tripolitan War, 1795–1801," *Journal of the Early Republic* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 601–624. James Leander Cathcart, Feb. 5, 1815, Folder 17, Vol. 1, Joel Roberts Poinsett Papers (Collection 0512), Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter JRPP). For Americans' experimentation with the torpedo during the War of 1812, see Andrew J.B. Fagal, "Terror Weapons in the Naval War of 1812," *New York History* 94, no. 3-4 (Summer/Fall 2013): 221–240. Cathcart would later work on linking trade between Mexico and the Barbary States. Roberto Narváez, "Dos Comunicaciones de James Leander Cathcart a Pablo Obregón. Sobre un Proyecto para Iniciar las Relaciones entre México y Berbería (1826)," *Historia Mexicana* 68, no. 4 (2019): 1793–1830.

Cathcart was just one of many Americans who combined economic profit and bellicosity overseas. U.S. citizens were increasingly involved, for example, in South America's independence wars. Enterprising men took advantage of the wars as an opportunity for military adventure and financial profit. Many U.S. merchants were eager to eradicate Spain's commercial policies, which included privileged contracts for Spanish commercial houses and onerous duties and restrictions on foreign vessels. Men like Philadelphia financier and slave-owner Stephen Girard invested fortunes in Spanish American independence, shipping arms and supplies in the hope of patriot profits and lucrative trading relationships, whereas others joined filibustering expeditions.²⁵

When Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco de Miranda visited New York City in 1805, he had little trouble finding men to support a potentially profitable expedition to overthrow Spanish colonial rule. Participants had varying degrees of knowledge about the expedition, but all had martial capitalist motives. Samuel Ogden, a wealthy merchant, and William Stephens Smith, surveyor of the port of New York (and son-in-law of John Adams), were Miranda's two biggest supporters. Ogden provided the merchant ship *Leander* and assumed \$30,000 of debt outfitting it with military supplies, and Smith recruited roughly two hundred men to serve as the crew. These men rarely knew the destination but signed on for some combination of military adventure and financial betterment. Twenty-one-year-old Moses

25. For a discussion of the interconnectedness of merchants' individual interests and state apparatuses, see Hannah Farber, "State-Building after War's End: A Government Financier Adjusts His Portfolio for Peace," *Journal of The Early Republic* 38, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 67–76. Bibiano Torres Ramirez and Javier Ortiz de la Tabla, eds., *Reglamento para el Comercio Libre, 1778* (Seville, 1979); Fisher, "Imperial 'Free Trade,'" 21. Venezuela and New Spain were excluded from this "free trade" between Spain and the Americas. The Caracas Company had successfully dominated trade between Caracas and Vera, and it was feared that if this trade were opened to other Spanish merchants, they would all flock there to the detriment of other colonies' trade. For an explanation of the ways in which the New World silver trade enabled Spain to maintain a tobacco monopoly, see Carlos Marichal and Matilde Souto Mantecón, "Silver and Situations: New Spain and the Financing of the Spanish Empire in the Caribbean in the Eighteenth Century," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 74, no. 4 (1994): 587–613, 602. Frank Lawrence Owsley Jr. and Gene A. Smith argue that early filibustering missions reveal an administration determined to expand by whatever means necessary and that the adventurers who embodied this expansionist policy usually carried out their operations for land acquisition, as well as some hope of spreading democracy and liberty, in *Filibusters and Expansionists: Jeffersonian Manifest Destiny, 1800–1821* (Tuscaloosa and London, 1997), 3. For the *Leander* Expedition, see Lindsay Schakenbach, "Schemers, Dreamers, and a Revolutionary Foreign Policy: New York City in the Era of Second Independence, 1805–1815," *New York History* 94/3-4 (Summer/Fall 2013): 267–282. For U.S. attitudes and policies toward Latin American independence, see Caitlin A. Fitz, *Our Sister Republics: The United States in an Age of American Revolution* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2016). As Fitz shows, profits generally trumped republican idealism, but when the two coincided, supporters of independence felt noble. James E. Lewis Jr., *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire* (Chapel Hill, 1998); Harry Bernstein, *Origins of inter-American interest: 1700–1812* (Philadelphia, 1945); John J. Johnson, *A Hemisphere Apart: The Foundations of United States Policy Toward Latin America* (Baltimore, 1990); James Johnston Auchmuty, *The United States Government and Latin American Independence 1810–1830* (London, 1937); Charles Carroll Griffin, *The United States and the Disruption of the Spanish Empire, 1810–1822* (New York, 1937); Arthur P. Whittaker, *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800–1830* (Baltimore, 1941); Gordon S. Brown, *Latin American Rebels and the United States, 1806–1822* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2015); William L. Neumann, "United States Aid to the Chilean Wars of Independence," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 27, no. 2 (May 1947): 204–219. For the racial limits of U.S. sympathy in comparison to the cause of Greek independence, see Piero Gleijeses, "The Limits of Sympathy: The United States and the Independence of Spanish America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24, no. 3 (Oct. 1992): 481–505.

Smith, for example, had traveled with his sister from their family's farm on Long Island to visit an uncle in Brooklyn, when he heard about job opportunities on a naval expedition. He claims to have been lured by the promise of "good pay and fine uniform, lands and a horse."²⁶ Most of the investors had more knowledge and specifically sought free trade with what they hoped would be Spain's former colonies. One of these investors was John Swartwout, a New York businessman and former assemblyman, who served with Aaron Burr as one of the largest shareholders of the Bank of the Manhattan and was allegedly involved in Burr's concurrent expedition to conquer Spanish Texas. As federal marshal for the city, Swartwout protected Miranda's supporters from criminal consequences. When Smith and Ogden were tried for organizing an expedition against a nation with whom the United States was at peace, Swartwout packed the jury with people who were sympathetic to Miranda's cause, and Smith and Ogden were found not guilty.²⁷ Although Miranda's expedition failed, it set a precedent for U.S. economic and military intervention in the region.

Five years after Miranda's expedition, the future minister plenipotentiary to Mexico and secretary of war, Joel Roberts Poinsett, was appointed on a diplomatic mission to what are today the nations of Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay to "attend to the commercial and other concerns of our citizens," and to "explain the mutual advantages of a commerce with the United States." During Poinsett's travels to promote U.S. trade, he became involved in military conflict: When royalist troops from the Viceroyalty of Peru invaded Chile in early 1813, Poinsett assumed unauthorized command of a division of the Chilean army. Poinsett said that he intervened because American ships had been detained under the orders of the viceroy of Peru, who had nullified the free trade provisions of Chile's new constitution. He wanted honor and profit for Americans; as he later claimed, he "could not wait tamely and see our flag insulted, our ships seized and our citizens loaded with irons."²⁸

U.S. involvement increased throughout the 1810s as private citizens and state agents saw the opportunity for profit and power in the region's wars for independence. They abetted revolutionaries and engaged in profiteering by providing military supplies, and pushed the U.S. trade agenda by aggressively lobbying for favorable trade arrangements and security. Baltimore shipping firm D'Arcy and Didier, for example, sold arms with the help of U.S. Consul to Valparaiso Henry Hill. The firm often purchased surplus arms at auction in the United States and when they shipped three thousand muskets to Valparaiso, Hill arranged with the patriot government for their sale to Chilean soldiers and citizens.²⁹ Other consuls took advantage of the

26. Smith, *History of the Adventures and Sufferings of Moses Smith*, 15.

27. *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1907*, Volume 1 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Government Printing Office, 1908), 362; Murphy, "'A Very Convenient Instrument,'" 249. Stephen W. Brown, "Satisfaction at Bladensburg: The Pearson-Jackson Duel of 1809," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (January, 1981), 30.

28. Robert Smith to Joel Roberts Poinsett, August 27, 1810, Nov. 6, 1810, Folder 2, Vol. 1, JRPP. Hancock, *History of Chile*, 149. Joel Roberts Poinsett, August 5, 1814, and September 10, 1814, Folder 15, Vol. 1, JRPP.

29. For the sale of federally produced arms in Argentina, see Lindsay Schakenbach Regele, *Manufacturing Advantage War, the State, and the Origins of American Industry, 1776–1848* (Baltimore, 2019). "List of vessels sailing from port of Valparaiso between July 1817 and July 1818" in U.S. Department of State, *Despatches from US Consuls in Valparaiso, 1826–1906*, RG59, National Archives. Washington: 1961. Microfilm, no. T-167, roll 1. Henry Hill to D'Arcy and Didier and Shepard, June 22, 1817 and Hill to Palmer and Hamilton, D'Arcy and Didier, January 30, 1818, Henry Hill Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University. Box 1, Folder 2.

unequal power dynamic that developed as a result of the United States' supplying military provisions and political support to strong-arm favorable trade arrangements for U.S. merchants. For example, U.S. officials and merchants refused to accept Peru's efforts to support its domestic manufacture of *tucuyos*, a type of woven plain cotton that often appeared similar to plain white cloth from the United States, by levying a prohibitive duty of 80 percent on white sheetings produced in the United States. In a letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs José Manuel de Pardo, U.S. Consul to Lima William Tudor made subtle threats about the consequences of this trade policy. He argued that the encouragement of *tucuyos* would drive American domestics out of the market, which would negatively impact Peruvian consumers because Peruvian manufacturers could not produce the type or the quantity of cloth that the United States could. Tudor accused Peruvians of "unmanly boasting," and then later bragged that Peruvian consumers preferred American cloths to those from India or Britain. He complained that British cloth dominated the market only because of the discriminatory tariff policy, and that American manufacturers would better serve Peruvian consumers if the policy changed. To further pressure the minister, Tudor reminded him that half of all the foreign duties that Peru's treasury received came from American trade, lest the minister forget Peru's most important trading partner. When the government equalized the tariff on all foreign goods, *tucuyo* sales (which had dominated Peruvian markets since at least the early 1820s) dropped in comparison to American imports.³⁰

While Tudor coerced commercial arrangements in Lima, two men employed by the U.S. State Department in Mexico served as agents of martial capitalism by upholding Americans' property rights and honor. James Smith Wilcocks, a wealthy Philadelphian who worked as U.S. consul to Mexico from 1822 to 1834, and James Wilkinson, a former army officer from Maryland who was U.S. envoy to Mexico from 1816 to 1825, embodied the contradictory aspects of martial capitalism. Both men supported aggressive American interests, but Wilcocks emphasized the honor and reputation aspect of martial capitalism—criticizing U.S. Minister to Mexico Anthony Butler for being a "disgrace to the office he now holds"—whereas Wilkinson favored militarism: Twenty years earlier he had used his status as an army officer and governor of Louisiana to help Aaron Burr organize an expedition to seize Spanish land in North America, and subsequently sold Burr out and placed New Orleans under martial law.³¹

30. William Tudor to Henry Clay, June 11, 1826, USDS-DC Lima; William Tudor to John Quincy Adams, Aug. 24, 1824, William Tudor to José Manuel de Pardo, November 2, 1826, U.S. Department of State, Despatches from U.S. consuls, RG59, National Archives, Washington, D.C. USDS-DC Lima. In a letter to one of their selling agents, the Newmarket Manufacturing Company wrote that they had received information that cotton sheetings were selling well in Peru and Chile, Letter to Hacker Brown and Co., June 26, 1827, and October 15, 1828, Newmarket Manufacturing Company Vol. 1, Business Records of Various New England and New York Textile Firms, Baker Library, Harvard Business School. The Peruvian production of *tucuyos* had been a problem for imports since at least the early 1820s, but by the time of Tudor's negotiations, American bleached and unbleached cottons had supplanted those of other countries. See Thomas Hockley, March 1822, Thomas Hockley Letterbook 1819–1822, Hockley family papers 1731–1883, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; and Charles Frederick Bradford, "South American Market 1826–1830," Edward Hickling Bradford Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

31. JRP to James Wilcocks, May 14, 1825, Folder 15, Vol. 2, JRPP. Quinton Curtis Lamar, "A Diplomatic Disaster: The Mexican Mission of Anthony Butler, 1829–1834," *The Americas*, vol. 45, no. 1 (Jul. 1988), 16. Isaac Joslin Cox, "General Wilkinson and His Later Intrigues with the Spaniards," *The American Historical Review* 19, no. 4 (Jul. 1914): 794–812.

Wilcocks's and Wilkinson's interests converged in protecting American economic interests. Wilcocks owned several mines in Mexico; Wilkinson was an agent for various land companies in Texas and hoped to become an empresario himself. Baltimore investor Dennis A. Smith employed both men to represent his claims to the Mexican government for lending money to the revolutionary cause. Smith had paid for the heavy artillery, munitions, construction supplies, and 18-gun brig for revolutionary Francisco Xavier Mina's expedition in 1816, in the hopes of profiting from independence. Spanish forces executed Mina the following year, but after the Mexican independence struggle succeeded in 1821, Smith and others moved to capitalize on their investments by presenting their claims to the new Mexican government. They were not successful, but they were persistent, believing they were entitled to profit from Mexican independence. Wilcocks had more success protecting private property when he applied to Mexican officials to safely escort \$200,000 worth of American property out of the city during the transition of power between Augustín Iturbide's imperial government and his republican successors.³²

The diplomatic aggression and entitlement of officials like Wilkinson, Wilcocks, and Tudor had parallels among U.S. citizens abroad. For example, an American man named John Vernon was imprisoned in Mexico several times for his relations with a young woman whom he met during his travels in the country. Vernon first "eloped" with the woman without the consent of her family, who subsequently had Vernon arrested and put in jail. After posting bail, Vernon allegedly threatened to take his desired bride away by force. A town official and two soldiers found him carrying a pistol and apprehended him. Vernon admitted readily to possessing firearms but claimed not to realize they were illegal. He also claimed the woman's family had misunderstood his intentions and had unjustly imprisoned him as revenge. Vernon accused Mexican officials of corruption and begged U.S. diplomats to secure him a fair trial in Mexico City, pleading that the longer he was in jail, the more money he lost on his store.³³ Vernon's assumption of entitlement both to the woman and to a fair trial were emblematic of martial capitalism. He linked masculine aggression, economic profitability, and diplomatic favors with his rights as an American abroad.

Although some U.S. citizens and government agents worked to promote American economic interests with aggressive foreign relations, others did so through scientific ventures. Exploration was always important for U.S. economic interests, but it intensified in the late 1830s, when the term *manifest destiny* received its rhetorical framing, Indian "removal" began in earnest, and the government sponsored continental and oceanic surveys. Knowledge made possible U.S. military security and economic conquest, and two major initiatives were directly linked to martial capitalism: a reconnaissance of territory between and beyond the Missouri

32. James Wilcocks to John Quincy Adams, August 2, 1822, Despatches from U.S. consuls, Mexico, RG59, National Archives, Washington, D.C. David E. Narrett, "Geopolitics and Intrigue: James Wilkinson, the Spanish Borderlands, and Mexican Independence," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (Jan. 2012), 142. Harris Gaylord Warren, "The Origin of General Mina's Invasion of Mexico," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (Jul. 1938), 10–11. David E. Narrett, "Geopolitics and Intrigue: James Wilkinson, the Spanish Borderlands, and Mexican Independence," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (Jan. 2012): 101–146. James Smith Wilcocks to John Quincy Adams, 2 April 1823, U.S. Department of State, *Despatches from US Consuls in Mexico City, 1822–1906*, RG59, National Archives. Washington: 1949. Microfilm, no. M-296, roll 1.

33. John Vernon to JRP, [no date], and Sept., 1825 Folder 2, Vol. 3, and Dec. 4, 1825, Folder 3, Vol. 3, JRPP.

and Mississippi for settlement and science, and an extensive survey of the Pacific to aid American business, particularly the whaling industry.³⁴

The first initiative was part of a broader undertaking to update maps of the Louisiana Purchase territory and assemble intelligence for a chain of military forts across the continent to protect white settlement. The U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, led by Joseph N. Nicollet and assisted by John C. Frémont, set out to map this area in 1838. Despite long-standing resistance to military expenditures, there was a general enthusiasm for, and romanticization of, exploratory expeditions, and the corps received patriotic support. The U.S. military had actually already done much to make possible exploratory expeditions. On the corps' journey west to create a hydrographical map of the Upper Mississippi River Basin, Frémont noted that it seemed as if "an invisible hand smoothed and prepared our way."³⁵ This "invisible hand" (quite different from the "invisible hand" associated with Adam Smith's classical economic theories) was the military; the "smoothing" was violence against Native Americans (such as the Black Hawk War) in the service of economic development. Combined, the work of the U.S. military and Army Corps of Topographical Engineers helped fulfill the economic promises of Indian removal by making Native lands more familiar to white Americans.

A maritime expedition overseen by the navy and war departments, known as the United States Exploring Expedition (Ex. Ex.), sailed from Virginia soon after the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers set out to map the West. Although the Ex. Ex. was considered a scientific expedition, and its organizers consulted learned societies to determine the expedition's scientific objectives, it was also martial and economic. Science was inseparable from chauvinism and the economy. Chief promoter Jeremiah Reynold wanted "national glory," and a main goal of the expedition was to make the Pacific, an integral arena for expanding martial capitalism, a "knowable commercial space safe for the nation's maritime commerce." Tellingly, the expedition employed military stores and a sloop of war.³⁶

In addition to mapping the unfamiliar parts of the Pacific and South Sea, the expedition conducted a survey of the Fiji Islands, where Americans had begun traveling in the early 1800s for sandalwood and bêche-de-mer. The islands remained a maritime wilderness because of dangerous reefs and a supposedly cannibalistic population, and the difficulty doing business in the area—shipwrecks and massacres—was a major reason for the expedition. Just as scientific "discovery" was important, so were the major profits American merchants could make selling sea cucumbers as a luxury product to the Chinese.³⁷

34. Jane Cazneau, using the pen name "Cora Montgomery," coined the term *manifest destiny* in 1845, and laid the historical and political justification for it in 1839, in the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*. Laurel Clark Shire, *The Threshold of Manifest Destiny: Gender and National Expansion in Florida* (Philadelphia, 2016), 13. It has also been attributed to John L. O'Sullivan, but it is likely that Cazneau wrote the anonymous editorial associated with O'Sullivan. Volpe, "Origins of the Frémont Expeditions," 248.

35. William H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West 1803–1868* (New Haven, 1959), 17. John C. Frémont to Joel Roberts Poinsett, September 5, 1838, Letters, Papers of Joel R. Poinsett, Manuscript Division (MMC1421), Library of Congress.

36. Harley Harris Bartlett, "The Repots of the Wilkes Expedition, and the Work of Specialists in Science," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 85, no. 5 (Jun. 1940), 602. Smith, "Bound[less] Sea," 710. Strauss, "Preparing the Wilkes Expedition," 221.

37. Smith, "Bound[less] Sea," 712; Shoemaker, *Pursuing Respect*, 92. Melillo, "Making Sea Cucumbers," 453.

When the Ex. Ex. arrived in Fiji in May 1840, they were helped by a former Nantucket sailor named David Whippy, who had been living in Fiji since being shipwrecked over fifteen years prior and was now serving as a liaison for American merchants. Historian Nancy Shoemaker analyzes Whippy as an embodiment of American desires for respectability, but he also can be described through the lens of martial capitalism, which explains both his valuing of respectability and honorable reputation, as well as his entrepreneurial ventures, his commercial coercion, and exploitation of labor. Commander Charles Wilkes relied on Whippy as an interpreter, mediator, and advisor on local affairs. The expedition's objective was to assert sovereignty over Fijian commerce through both diplomacy and scientific survey, yet it was impossible to fully control oceanic territory. When the Ex. Ex. encountered resistance from Fijians, it resorted to force. As retribution for two American deaths, Commander Charles Wilkes, in accordance with notions of honor and vengeance, ordered one of his lieutenants to kill all Fijian men capable of providing armed resistance. Eighty Fijians died and two villages were destroyed.³⁸ When the expedition concluded in 1842, the Navy court-martialed Wilkes for his aggressive and reckless conduct. He was acquitted of most allegations, except for the illegal punishment of some of his subordinates.

The expedition became known for both Wilkes's controversial behavior and the sixty thousand specimens it collected in the service of American science. Its results, however, were martial and capitalistic. Maritime knowledge improved global trade, and Wilkes's authorization of the massacre of almost one hundred Fijians ultimately facilitated American business in the South Pacific by instilling fear of American militarism among locals.³⁹ The expedition cemented the relationship among violence, honor, and business.

The subtleties of this relationship became more overt over time. Although the United States did not officially declare war between 1812 and 1846, its military engagements became increasingly violent and expensive. Indian removal, for example, began as an ad hoc series of "voluntary" emigrations during the 1820s, to make coveted land available for gold mining and cotton plantations. On March 28, 1830, Jackson signed into law the Indian Removal Act (An Act to provide for an exchange of lands with the Indians residing in any of the states or territories, and for their removal west of the river Mississippi), formally shifting U.S. policy from one of "civilization" and assimilation to extermination.⁴⁰ Historians have depicted the tragedies of removal as the results of settler colonialism, Jackson's vengeance, and bureaucratic mismanagement.⁴¹ Emilie Connolly has recently linked removal to the federal

38. Smith, "Bound[less] Sea," 730. For an older history of vengeance in American society, see T. Cole Jones, *Captives of Liberty: Prisoners of War and the Politics of Vengeance in the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, 2019). Chaplin, "Planetary Power?" 14.

39. Smith, "Bound[less] Sea," 711. Shoemaker, *Pursuing Respect*, 94.

40. An Act to provide for an exchange of lands, 411.

41. Christopher D. Haveman, *Rivers of Sand: Creek Indian Emigration, Relocation, and Ethnic Cleansing in the American South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016) Jason M. Opal, *Avenging the People: Andrew Jackson, the Rule of Law, and the American Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Michael Morris, "Georgia and the Conversation over Indian Removal," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 91, no. 4 (Winter 2007), 403–23. Patrick Mingos, "Beneath the Underdog: Race, Religion, and the Trail of Tears," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 453–479; Ethan Davis, "An Administrative Trail of Tears: Indian Removal," *The American Journal of Legal History* 50, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): 49–100. See also, Brad Agnew, *Fort Gibson: Terminal on the Trail of Tears* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980).

government's practice of fiduciary colonialism, describing "the critical role of governments in claiming Indigenous homelands and engineering the speculative markets that spun out from the treaty process."⁴² Connolly's analysis of Native displacement accords well with that of Claudio Saunt, who argues that removal was not inevitable; rather, white greed, in conjunction with government planning, overpowered both opposition to Jackson's Removal Act, and any humanitarian concern for removal as a process.

Martial capitalism lends even more precision to our understanding of the militarization of Native displacement. What the Cherokee people would refer to as "the Trail of Tears" had roots in capitalist greed and patronizing pretensions to humanitarianism.⁴³ The policy and subsequent violence of removal was the result of acquisitiveness on the part of white planters and investors, state officials' permission for violence, and the federal government's willingness to use force.⁴⁴ These individuals operated in a culture of racialized, masculinized aggression, which presented at times as paternal honor and at other times like business acumen. Martial capitalism explains how the goals and strategies of speculators like Eli Shorter and J. D. Beers, who engaged in fraud and coercion to acquire Creek lands for cotton planting, intersected with those of U.S. agent William Ward, who ignored hundreds of Choctaw appeals to remain on their lands. In the United States, economic opportunity was tied to land, and many whites believed that they were the fittest occupants of that land and that violence was necessary, or even honorable. The sum total of these individuals' actions was mass deportation, supervised by the U.S. army and perpetrated by investors, who used intimidation tactics and militia who wielded guns.

In some cases, war facilitated this deportation. For example, the Black Hawk War began when the governor of Illinois used militia against the Sauk individuals Indians who attempted to reclaim their land after it had been settled by white Americans. About two hundred Sauk died and the remainder gave up their land to the U.S. government.⁴⁵ A much larger war occurred in Florida, where Seminoles were determined to remain on their land after the United States signed an 1832 treaty that required them to move west of the Mississippi over the following three years.⁴⁶ In 1835, a group of Seminoles ambushed the U.S. soldiers who were sent to "remove" them and, over the following year, launched attacks throughout the region. The Seminoles effectively interfered with white Americans' profits in the territory. Aspiring planters wanted their land; many had moved to Florida specifically because the average yield of Sea Isle Cotton (whose market price was about twice that of short staple) was

42. Connolly, "Panic, State Power, and Chickasaw Dispossession," 684.

43. Patrick Mingos, "Beneath the Underdog: Race, Religion, and the Trail of Tears," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 453–479; Ethan Davis, "An Administrative Trail of Tears: Indian Removal," *The American Journal of Legal History* 50, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): 49–100. There was also a check on U.S. military power. Catherine Denial, "Pelagie Faribault's Island: Property, Kinship, and the Meaning of Marriage in Dakota Country," *Minnesota History* 62, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 48–59.

44. Natives had little recourse against settlers who forced themselves on their land, often with weapons, because they no right to testify in state courts. Saunt, *Unworthy Republic*, 174.

45. Roger L. Nichols, *Black Hawk and the Warrior's Path* (West Sussex, UK, 2017). Patrick J. Jung, *The Black Hawk War of 1832* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007).

46. Colin G. Calloway, *Pen and Ink Witchcraft: Treaties and Treaty Making in American Indian History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

six hundred pounds per acre in Florida, versus South Carolina's three hundred.⁴⁷ Even more than in South Carolina, planters' well-being was tied to cotton. Cotton functioned as cash, collateral, and credit, which meant that when cotton prices plummeted in 1837, planters needed to produce ever greater amounts to stay financially solvent. The renewal of "hostilities" with Seminole people Indians made this impossible.⁴⁸ After several years failing to defeat the Seminoles, the commander of U.S. troops declared the war over; at the same time, Congress passed a law for the "armed occupation" of Florida by settlers who would receive federal money to defend their land. Although the United States struggled militarily against the Seminoles, this armed capitalism was ultimately successful. By the end of the Third Seminole War a decade later (initiated by armed white settlers), only three hundred Natives remained in Southwest Florida, slavery expanded in middle Florida, and the state became a profitable cotton exporter.⁴⁹

In 1846, when the United States finally formally declared war to promote racial, economic, and territorial ambitions, the "martial" aspect of political economy gave way to more overt militarism. However, the structures of power and economic inequality of the previous decades remained in place.⁵⁰ Martial capitalism existed alongside agrarian, merchant, and emerging industrial capitalism and laid the foundation for other forms of coercive, gendered capitalism to predominate following the Civil War into the twentieth century. As corporate capitalism, for example, prevailed, martial capitalism never went away. Its manly aggression and exploitation underpin the foundations of twentieth and twenty-first century capitalism in the United States.

Political economies change over time, across space, and among different populations; capitalism cannot and could not be universalized. For this reason, we need as much specificity as possible for different eras, regions, and populations. Martial capitalism describes the masculinized, honor-bound, and coercive features of the U.S. political economy from the nation's founding through the antebellum era, and brings us closer to understanding capitalism's historical nuances.

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47. Smith, "Cotton and the Factorage System," 36.

48. American State Papers, "Seminole Hostilities."

49. Andrews, *Communication from the Secretary of the Treasury*, 772. Over time, however, violence would begin to erase Florida's frontier past and it would take its place among the "Old South." Edward Baptist, *Creating an Old South: Middle Florida's Plantation Frontier before the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

50. Mathisen, "Second Slavery," 687.

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