New Countries

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PART I
HEMISPHERIC CHALLENGES
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In 1500, the Americas were home to powerful states concentrated in western highlands, cultivating communities along Atlantic coasts and in eastern woodlands, and diverse hunting, gathering, and farming peoples in vast interiors. The peoples of the hemisphere faced war and trade, production and migration—yet lived in a world of their own. They were only connected to Europe, Africa, and Asia after Iberians arrived in the 1490s, an accident of Europeans’ search for new routes to trade with Asia. China produced silks and porcelains, South Asia made printed cotton cloth, and Southeast Asia provided pepper, cinnamon, and other spices—all coveted by European consumers. Asians sought little made by Europeans; rather, they demanded payment in money, gold and silver, for their fine manufactures and rare commodities. China and South Asia were economic powers around 1500. Europe could charitably be called an emerging region.¹
Trade between Asia and Europe had a long history. Overland excursions departed Krakow and other towns in Eastern Europe with silver to swap for silks and other luxuries. Traders from Venice and Genoa sailed through the Bosporus and across the Black Sea to meet overland caravans heading east. Others landed in the eastern Mediterranean to deal with Muslim merchants who moved money and goods across the Levant and on to South Asia and China. The old trades were limited in two ways: Europe produced little gold and limited silver, the latter mostly in Germanic lands; and land routes and sea-lanes required traders to deal with intermediaries aiming to profit and states demanding revenue for protection. Still, trade flourished for centuries.

When fifteenth-century Portuguese mariners, often funded by Genoese bankers, aimed to sail around Africa to trade directly with South Asia, their goal was to enter established trades while limiting the involvement of merchants and monarchs along the way. When Columbus, a Genoese mariner sailing for Castile, headed west across the Atlantic, his goal was the same—however poor his global geography. For a time, the Americas became an obstacle in the search for direct trade with Asia (while Columbus insisted he had already arrived there). Soon enough, however, the hemisphere, long a world to itself, became a key producer of commodities that accelerated trades that for the first time were truly global. Spanish American gold and especially silver stimulated trade everywhere. Meanwhile, the Atlantic Americas produced rising quantities of sugar, sending the sweet that was also a preservative and in time became a staple to Europeans in exchange for growing numbers of enslaved Africans—people who were made commodities of trade, drawing their continent ever deeper into global circuits of profit and degradation.

The incorporation of the Americas into four European empires—first Spanish and Portuguese, later British, and French—grounded the first world economy. The empires spread European ways of rule and promises of justice; they promoted Christianity (with diverse emphases), and promised salvation to those who embraced new truths. They also aimed to subordinate native American majorities—while the smallpox and other diseases that came as fellow travelers from the Old World decimated indigenous numbers. Then, to replace the dying and replenish laboring populations, Europeans turned to buying young African men (and women too), setting them to work in pursuit of profit—justifying their enslavement with racial and religious legitimations.

The taking of the Americas into the European empires inserted the hemisphere in global trades—the founding moment of the world economy. In the sixteenth century and long after, the pivotal exchange was Asian manufactures for bullion—drawing Asian wares to Europe. The gold and silver that stimu-
lated expanded trades came primarily from Spanish America. Most went to Spain, passed through Western Europe and Mediterranean cities, often sent to Muslim ports, and then on to South Asia and China—drawing Asian goods in return flow. After 1570, an important second flow sailed from Acapulco to Manila, where a Chinese merchant community assembled wares from across Asia—Chinese silks and porcelains, Indian cottons, Island spices—for shipment across the Pacific to Spain’s America, which thanks to booming silver economies had means to buy them. After 1600, transpacific trade took up to a third of American silver for the next century—evidence of a truly global commercial economy. Meanwhile, sugar made by slaves sold out of Africa shaped Brazil in the seventeenth century, the greater Caribbean in the eighteenth. Silver, sugar, and slaves made the Americas pivotal to a new world economy for centuries—until everything changed around 1800.²

The Americas in the World Economy: The Challenge
A new and more global understanding of the economic history of the world has emerged in recent decades. Through the twentieth century, the rise of European—or, better, Western European and North American—hegemony was presumed, and mostly explained by cultural characteristics and innovative efforts within European domains in analyses ranging from Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*³ to the works of Douglass North, beginning with *The Rise of the Western World* (with Robert Paul Thomas)⁴ and culminating in *Understanding the Process of Economic Change*.⁵ The rise of China in the 1990s opened scholars to new visions. Asia was rediscovered, and the era of European hegemony was recognized as relatively brief—beginning about 1800 and of uncertain longevity as the twenty-first century began. The new understanding began with recognition of the long historic primacy of Asia in Andre Gunder Frank’s *ReOrient*⁶ and Kenneth Pomeranz’s *The Great Divergence*.⁷ In different ways, they emphasized the economic dominance of Asia in the sixteenth century and the late rise of Europe as the nineteenth began. The new challenge focuses on explaining, not presuming, the rise of Europe—a task begun by Pomeranz and continued by many, including Prasannan Parthasarathi in his bluntly titled *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not*.⁸ The new vision gained powerful synthesis in Ronald Findlay and Kevin O’Rourke, *Power and Plenty: Trade, War, and the World Economy in the Second Millennium*.⁹

The Americas are everywhere in the new vision: the stimulus of New World silver from the sixteenth century; the Atlantic economy of sugar, slavery, and
more from the seventeenth. Pomeranz explains the rise of British hegemony around 1800 by two factors: access to local coal for energy and to American lands for raw materials and markets. Still, the place of the Americas in global economic history comes late in Pomeranz and remains limited in most syntheses. They focus on a shifting balance between China and Western Europe, with the Islamic world and South Asia as essential participants and intermediaries. The Americas appear often as suppliers of silver and sugar, but rarely as major participants in the world economy—until the rise of the United States toward industrial hegemony in the late nineteenth century.

Here, I sketch an emerging understanding of global economic history after 1500—pointing to ways that the Americas were pivotal participants. I then turn to the two great economies tying the Americas to global production and trade—silver; and sugar and slavery—and to the links integrating them. With that foundation, I explore the ways that wars and shifting trades rooted in global strategic-economic changes helped set off the conflicts that led to new countries across the Americas after 1760 and how those conflicts were pivotal to accelerating the global turn that consolidated the British-ruled industrial capitalism that shaped the nineteenth century. I conclude by surveying the very different opportunities and challenges faced by the emerging countries of the Americas in the new industrial world. Brazil, Cuba, and the United States prospered for decades supplying staples raised mostly by slaves; all ended slavery after 1860—but only the United States found industrial power in late nineteenth century. In contrast, the silver economies of Spanish America collapsed as Mexico, Peru, and Bolivia became nations. They struggled for decades. So did Haiti—where slave revolution led to withdrawal and then exclusion from global trades—and Guatemala, which had never lived the stimulus of silver and contributed only dyestuffs to the new economy of the early nineteenth century.

The transformation of the global economy and the rise of new countries across the Americas between 1750 and 1870 were inseparable processes. Yet their integration is little understood, in good part because scholars of New World nation-making focus insistently on internal (and sometimes transatlantic) social and political developments while globally oriented analysts of economic history attend minimally to the Americas. This essay aims to deepen understanding of—and expand conversations about—the integration of the Americas in the world in a key era of global change.
It is a truism that a global economy could only develop in the sixteenth century when European empires began to incorporate the Americas into trade networks linking Europe, Africa, and Asia. Still, it is important to recognize the importance of long-distance trade before 1500. For centuries, trade linked Western Europe and East Asia, sometimes passing overland, sometimes taking mostly water routes from the Middle East via South Asia to China. Luxuries such as spices and silks generally traveled west, exchanged for silver or furs or other primary goods. Those trades also touched Africa via the Indian Ocean and across the Sahara. Luxury goods of high value to low weight ruled early commerce, generating wealth for traders, revenue for rulers, and prestige for rich consumers. Different ports and centers of trade, diverse producers and consumers, were favored or prejudiced over time. Throughout, Europe mostly produced primary goods and bought luxuries; centers of innovative production and trade moved around the Islamic world, South Asia, and China, while trade linked diverse Eurasian societies.¹⁰

A second “world economy” integrated much of the Americas before 1500. Dependence on archaeology has left knowledge of the hemisphere focused on sites of power and symbols of rule and religion along with material products from crops to pottery. We lack the travel and trade narratives that tell so much of what we know about early Eurasian exchanges. Still, recent studies show that during the first millennium (CE) trade linked diverse peoples from the highland basins of central Mexico ruled by the great city of Teotihuacan, through Gulf lowlands where Olmecs had earlier ruled, highland Oaxaca led by Monte Albán, to the Maya zones of Yucatán and Guatemala. Imperial centers rose and fell—as in Eurasia—but trade persisted, as did war. War and trade shaped both Eurasia and Mesoamerica through the first millennium.¹¹

Commercial integration drove north from Mesoamerica in the second millennium. After the fall of Teotihuacan, Tula and its Toltec rulers consolidated power in central Mexico, keeping trade alive with Mayas far to the southeast while pressing northward. Centers of power and enclaves of cultivation reached the upper Río Grande Valley (now greater New Mexico), linked by trade and cultural exchange to central Mexico. Waterborne trade followed the Gulf Coast and went up the Mississippi to bring Mesoamerican trade, goods, and cultural contacts to Cahokia—a state emerging near the confluence of the Ohio, Missouri, and Mississippi Rivers. The spread of maize, Mesoamerica’s great contribution to the Americas and the world, across North America to coastal New England long before 1500 reveals very wide exchanges.¹²
While trades within Mesoamerica and linking that region to North America are best known, there is evidence of ties to South America as well. Maize became a major crop in Andean valleys in the first millennium; the Tarascan regime of western Mesoamerica resisted Mexica (Aztec) expansion in the fifteenth century in part thanks to copper metallurgy gained from Andean contacts. In the Andes, the Inca state remains famous for pressing power and exchange outward from Cuzco, integrating regions now highland and coastal Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia and reaching southern Columbia and northern Chile and Argentina. Scholars insist that exchange was not trade inside the Inca domain and that it operated through hierarchies of reciprocity organized by local, regional, and imperial lords. Still, exchange was everywhere, tied to military power and regime rule, and legitimated by claims of reciprocity (that masked and perhaps limited inequities). Seen in its larger function, Inca exchange was not radically different from Eurasian trades, where military power was always a factor, state sanction essential, and claims of mutual benefit constant. The Inca perhaps took the fusion of regime and exchange to an extreme, but the integration was far from unique.

Before 1500—and long after—the Eurasian and American “world economies” were what Findlay and O’Rourke call polycentric. No single city, regime, or region of power dominated. Places of rule might be pivots of trade; often they were separate—as when inland capitals dealt with coastal ports of trade. Over time, political regimes rose and fell; commercial nodes and trade routes shifted too. Still, trade persisted, stimulating production of luxury goods, precious metals, and more; profiting merchants and funding regimes and their militaries on land and sea. Because of high transport costs, long-distance trade focused on goods of high value and low weight. Trade thus stimulated production, generated wealth, and sustained powerful states; yet every center of power and trade in the early world economies had to be supplied with food, cloth, combustibles, and building materials by local and regional producers.

While trade promoted continuing exchanges and constant wars, the local economies that supplied trades and sustained regimes varied widely. Production might depend on small growers and artisans, large-scale producers, or a mix; labor could be bound, drafted, or negotiated, paid well, poorly, or not at all. Cities and ports might draw sustenance by trade, tributes, or taxes. Local markets might be vibrant or limited. Concentrations of profit and power could be great or limited; inequities and exploitations could be limited or deeply debilitating. The key is that in polycentric commercial economies, trade linked centers of power and production across long distances, over time favoring some,
weakening others. Commerce stimulated and sustained local and regional diversities of power and production—while all interacted in war and trade.

Polycentrism continued to mark the larger world economy that began when Europeans linked the Americas, Eurasia, and Africa after 1500. The inclusion of the Americas brought rising flows of silver after 1550, of sugar after 1600—and the growing trade in slaves they stimulated. American silver paid for Chinese silks and porcelains, Southeast Asian spices, and Indian cottons; sugar and silver stimulated the soaring demand for slaves. And in the profitable process, European and Euro-American merchants found newly pivotal roles while demanding and funding protection by newly powerful European regimes becoming oceanic empires.

Europeans were not suddenly dominant, as too many histories suggest. But they shifted from struggling as marginal participants often subject to Islamic and other intermediaries to gain Asian wares, to become traders in control of key commodities and linking American, Asian, African, and European markets and producers. Portuguese, Dutch, and English traders sailed directly to South and East Asian ports; Spanish American merchants delivered silver to Chinese merchants entrenched at Manila, exchanging it for wares from China, the islands, and South Asia. Into the eighteenth century, industrial primacy in silks and porcelains remained with China; South Asia made cotton goods coveted in Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Europeans became traders of rising importance thanks to control of the world’s primary sources of silver, the profits of Atlantic sugar and slave trades, innovations in sailing technology, and rising naval power.

Competition among Europeans, and between Europeans and Asians, set off escalating conflicts that became a crisis in the late eighteenth century. From that time of conflict and crisis came a new British industrial, commercial, and imperial hegemony that ended the long era of polycentric economic interactions. In what Findlay and O’Rourke call a new era of global specialization, the industrial capitalism that developed in England after 1780 led to a new world economy: power and industrial production concentrated in one pivotal region, in time spreading to a very few others; the rest of the world provided raw materials, foodstuffs, stimulants—and markets. The era of conflict and transformation from 1750 to 1870 was more than the rise of British power grounded in new techniques of production. It was the end of a long era of wide competition for power and profit in a polycentric world economy and the rise of a new industrial-commercial-imperial hegemony based in England, Western Europe, and the northeastern United States.
The rest of the world was not left out; most of the Americas, Africa, and much of Asia were locked into roles as dependent suppliers of primary products, raw materials and foodstuffs that were mostly land and labor intensive. The importance of a commodity to industry, or to feeding industrial populations, the quality and extent of land or mineral deposits, the plenty and mobility of labor all varied. Some regions—and many regimes and traders—prospered supplying industrial inputs and sustenance. Few beyond the North Atlantic axis of industrial concentration contended for power and primacy in the world of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism.

The global shift from polycentric commercial competition and integration to Anglo-centric industrial capitalism shaped the possibilities and constraints facing new countries across Americas after 1800. Most analysts see a global transformation driven by events in Europe—powered by the intersection of war, revolution, and technological innovation there. The conflicts that broke the dominance of the European empires in the Americas and led to the birth of diverse new nations appear as simultaneous, yet largely separate, developments. As the new countries of the Americas emerged in the 1820s, British dominance of a new industrial world seemed set. People and nascent states across the Americas had no choice but to respond.

Analyses that see the rise of industrial capitalism as external to the Americas tend to exclude the Americas from the analysis of that pivotal transformation—an unfortunate deficit in the generally persuasive synthesis of Findlay and O’Rourke in *Power and Plenty*. New World silver, so pivotal in studies of world trade after 1550, disappears from their discussions of conflict and trade after 1770—even as New Spain’s silver output reached historic peaks.\(^\text{15}\) The sugar and slave trades so central to studies of the eighteenth-century Atlantic too often become marginal to analyses of the years after 1800, especially when the goal is to explain industrialism in Europe and its global impact. Yet we know that Atlantic sugar and slave trades were radically disrupted by the Haitian Revolution in the 1790s and that silver collapsed as a New World stimulus to world trade after 1810, undermined by insurgency in the Bajío region of New Spain. Popular risings abruptly destroyed the two leading engines of American participation in world trade.\(^\text{16}\)

The two New World risings and their economic consequences are the most obvious evidence that the global economic transformation and the emergence of new countries across the Americas were not separate processes. The rise of industrial capitalism usually appears a European triumph; the emergence of new American nations too often seems a tragedy—with the celebrated exception of
the United States. An integrated analysis of the Americas from 1750 to 1870 will show that triumph and tragedy were inseparable—across the Americas and around the world.

*American Silver and the First World Economy*

Two primary economies tied the Americas to the world in the eighteenth century: a silver economy based in mainland Spanish America and the sugar and slave economy in Atlantic colonies from Brazil through the Caribbean. Regions not directly shaped by these core trades often supplied one, the other, or both. There were exceptions: the gold (and slave) economy of the early eighteenth century in southern Brazil and the fur trade of inland North America. The latter reminds us that many peoples remained independent, uncolonized, in American interiors, yet they too joined rising trades. Still, the silver of Spanish America and the sugar and slavery of Atlantic America powerfully shaped global trades and defined the hemisphere’s place in the world in the eighteenth century.

Silver rose first. In the wake of the early sixteenth-century incursions that destabilized Mesoamerican and Andean states and brought diseases that set off devastating depopulations, the great mountains of silver encountered at Potosí and Zacatecas in the 1540s fed China’s soaring demand for silver (deemed the only specie for taxation and large-scale and international trade there in the 1550s). The profits of silver stimulated new ways of production and consolidated European rule across Spain’s Americas. Taxco near Mexico City pioneered silver mining from the 1530s; Potosí and the Andes led the mining that fueled world trade between 1550 and 1650; Zacatecas and northern New Spain took off around 1600. After a slowdown during the second half of the seventeenth century, Zacatecas and Guanajuato led New Spain to global leadership in the eighteenth century, while Potosí and the Andes struggled to regain earlier dynamism.¹⁷

In the process, three variants of silver societies developed in Spanish America. In the Andes, the Inca led the largest and most consolidated state in the Americas in 1500. After Inca rule collapsed and during the years that Old World diseases devastated native communities, regional native powers carried on as silver rose. Perhaps because of long wars and a slow consolidation of Spanish rule while native population fell by more than 80 percent, regional native lords (kurakas, sometimes renamed caciques) remained pivotal to colonial rule and the silver economy. So did the *mitá*, the Inca labor draft adapted to

*Americas in the Rise of Industrial Capitalism—33*
Map 1.1. The Americas, ca. 1780
send workers to Potosí. Yet as the city of silver high in the Andes rose to global eminence—its population reaching 150,000 after 1600 while the wider Andes fell to less than a million—Europeans seeking wealth and natives seeking chances together forged (unequally, of course) new commercial ways around mines that drove global trade.

The silver economy of Andean Potosí built on—and commercialized—indigenous precedents more than other regions of Spanish America. Lima became the Andean center of government, finance, religion, and education, while nearby Callao sent silver into world trade; in Ecuador, Guayaquil built ships for Pacific trade while Quito made cloth sold across the Andes; regions now in northwestern Argentina sent livestock to Potosí; Chile provided a European diet of wheat, wine, and olive oil to those who ruled the Andean boom in Lima and Potosí. All that prospered to 1650, laden with exploitations and cultural conflicts, then collapsed and struggled to revive in the eighteenth century. The limits of the revival and rising Spanish revenue demands made the Andes a region of escalating conflict from 1740 to the 1780s.¹⁸

New Spain developed two distinct silver societies before 1650. Warring Mexico, Tarasco, Zapotec, Maya, and other states contested rule in Mesoamerica around 1500. Conquest proved more rapid there, thanks to deep local divisions and the disease-driven depopulation that devastated the region from the 1520s. When silver mining rose near Mexico City at Taxco in the 1530s and Pachuca in the 1550s, indigenous ways of rule and work faced challenges. By 1600, few native lords still held roles parallel to those claimed by Andean kurakas. The repartimiento labor draft, built on the Mexica’s cuatequil levy, was fragmented and less pivotal than the mitá, declining rapidly around Mexico City from the 1630s. Still, the silver economy there depended on the hundreds of native communities reconsolidated after 1550 as indigenous republics—ruled by councils of native notables and holding lands that sustained local governance, religion, and family production. After 1600, as population fell to 10 percent of precontact levels, increasingly commercial market and labor relations linked communities, silver mines, and the city together—and to rising global trades.¹⁹

North of Mesoamerica, commercial dynamism shaped everything. Before 1520, Mesoamerican states had faced fiercely independent hunting, gathering, and sometimes cultivating Chichimecas in the region called the Bajío. When Europeans arrived, the fertile basin was a conflict zone; neither states nor communities accustomed to sustain them ruled there or in regions north. After silver was found at Zacatecas in 1546 and Guanajuato in 1555, a flood of migrants—Europeans seeking profit, Mesoamericans looking for opportunity, and Africans bound to work—set off decades of conflict with Chichimecas.
struggling to stay independent. After pacification in the 1590s, the Bajío and the North saw the construction of a thoroughly commercial social order (few communities gained rights as republics). With Chichimecas devastated by war and disease, and marginalized in missions and mountain enclaves by the 1590s, Spanish North America grew as a thoroughly commercial domain of mines, cities of trade and textiles, irrigated estates, and grazing properties.

New Spain, which integrated Spanish Mesoamerica and North America through its capital city of Mexico, remained second to the Andes in silver before 1650; but as production collapsed at Potosí, it revived at Parral, far north of Zacatecas, in the 1640s. Spanish North America ruled world silver production during the eighteenth century, led again by Zacatecas and Guanajuato. The Bajío, mixing mining at Guanajuato, trade, textile, and tobacco production at Querétaro, and irrigated commercial cultivation across rich bottomlands, became the most dynamic capitalist region of the Americas. Facing a brief decline of Chinese demand for silver and rising Spanish revenue demands in the 1760s, Guanajuato mine workers protested new taxes and militia recruitment. They were crushed in 1767. Then, silver drove to new heights in the Bajío and regions north from 1770 to 1810. Thanks to Bourbon trade policies and rising demand, most of that silver went first to Europe, funding wars and commercial expansion there. But ultimately the production of silver that peaked in New Spain after 1770 responded to record demand and purchases in China from 1775 to 1808.

Mexico City replaced a shrunken Potosí as the largest New World city, passing 130,000 around 1800. (Other leading cities—New York, Guanajuato, and Querétaro in North America, and Lima, Rio de Janeiro, and Buenos Aires in South America—hovered around 50,000–60,000.) The principal center of government, finance, and trade in the Americas, Mexico City integrated the silver economies of Spanish Mesoamerica and Spanish North America, linking them to Spain, Europe, and China. The cities and the mines along New Spain’s silver routes—from the Gulf port of Veracruz through Puebla to Mexico City (with an extension to Acapulco on the Pacific), then north through Querétaro and Guanajuato, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí to regions from Texas to California (after 1770)—generated the most dynamic economy in the Americas, sustaining with grains, sugar, cloth, tobacco, and livestock the production of silver that drove global trade.

In contrast, southern Mesoamerica, less tied to the stimulus of silver, remained a region of small and scattered Spanish towns surrounded by indigenous communities that sustained themselves and sought commercial gain when they could. In highland Oaxaca, Mixtec villagers made cochineal dye sent to native weavers, colonial cloth makers, and European industries. Farther south, in the
Kingdom of Guatemala, growers around San Salvador raised indigo, another dye sent to cloth makers in worlds old and new. In warm basins and coastal lowlands, native growers raised cotton for artisans across New Spain. Offshore, Havana built ships and provided military protection against European interlopers. The soaring revenues of New Spain’s silver economy paid for Spanish rule from Yucatán to California, in Manila where Chinese merchants traded Asian wares for American silver, and in Havana and New Orleans—with surpluses sent to the always-strained treasury in Spain.  

While the silver economy of the Andes struggled and faced resistance that culminated in the great rebellions of the 1780s, followed by years of repression and reconstruction, the silver economy of New Spain soared through the eighteenth century—and peaked after 1770. Social pressures mounted there too. But across Mesoamerica, they were negotiated by enduring indigenous republics and mediated by colonial judges—keeping most conflict in the courts and workers in mines and fields. In northerly regions of Spanish North America, social pressures were moderated before 1750 by persistent population

**FIGURE 1.1.** In the heights of silver capitalism: The Rayas Mine and Mellado Church, Guanajuato, Mexico. Author photo
scarcities that favored workers and tenants, forcing mine entrepreneurs and estate operators to offer fair remunerations and solid securities. After 1770, population pressures in the pivotal Bajío allowed entrepreneurs in mining and commercial cultivation to press new exploitations in a region where community rights and lands were scarce and judicial mediation less accessible. Social pressures deepened, exacerbated by cultural conflicts provoked by enlightened elites who increasingly maligned popular religious ways. Still, Chinese demand drove an economic boom that sustained social peace and soaring production in the Bajío to 1810—when everything collapsed in a revolutionary conflagration.24

The Atlantic Economy: Sugar and Slavery
The Atlantic sugar and slave economy developed in parallel with the Spanish-global silver economy. There were early experiments in sugar and slavery in Spanish Santo Domingo, but once silver flourished, capital flowed to the mainland. Enclaves of sugar and slavery emerged along New Spain’s Gulf Coast, in lowland basins south of Mexico City, and later on the coast of Peru, but they were adjuncts to silver economies.25 Sugar became the primary product, and enslaved Africans essential laborers, in Atlantic America. Starting in Portuguese Brazil, Europeans turned to sugar to compete with the power silver generated in Spain’s America.

Sugar and slavery had a long history. The pairing began to help fund the Crusades in the eastern Mediterranean. Profitable, the combination migrated west across the inland sea and took hold on eastern Atlantic islands in the fifteenth century. Africans became the primary slaves—and a growing commodity in trade. Still, sugar production, the African slave trade, and the European markets and profits they stimulated remained limited. The great expansion came when the complex crossed the Atlantic in the sixteenth century. After experiments in the Spanish Caribbean, Brazil led the rise of sugar production in the Americas—and the shift to bound African labor on a mass scale.26

After 1550, the Portuguese regime’s drive for revenues, settlers’ search for profit, and Genoese financiers’ readiness to invest made the northeast coast of Brazil home to an expanding sugar industry. The climate was perfect; coastal lands were ample, fertile, and well watered. The challenge was labor. At first, planters used few enslaved Africans—usually skilled craftsmen purchased in the Atlantic islands to oversee planting and refining. Most permanent workers were bound Tupí and other natives taken in raids into the interior; harvest labor came from free natives congregated in Jesuit mission villages. The com-
bination provided flexible labor at low cost; it built the industry and showed its profitability. But the early labor system proved short-lived; natives drawn into regular contact with Europeans suffered the same diseases that devastated people across Spain’s Americas. As the profitability of sugar was proven, the first labor system that sustained it in Brazil collapsed. The Portuguese with Genoese financing turned to the African slave trade, escalating its numbers to sustain a promising second Atlantic economy.27

In the decades after 1600, Portuguese Brazil (under Spanish sovereignty 1580–1640) proved the potential of sugar and slavery. The Dutch, at war with Spain’s Hapsburgs, invaded to claim the rich coasts around Recife in the 1620s. With ample capital and maritime capacity, once the Dutch mastered sugar production and the slave trade, they helped transfer the combination to the Caribbean, where the British and French learned quickly. Sugar (not unlike silver) lives cycles of boom and decline; the crop exhausts the nutrients in once-rich soils after eighty to one hundred years. Brazil made the industry a staple of Atlantic America from 1570 to 1650 (coinciding with the Andean silver cycle at Potosí). Brazil’s decline helped British Barbados rise after 1640, soon followed by Jamaica. As European markets widened, French Saint Domingue expanded sugar and slavery after 1720. When British Islands began to falter in the 1760s, Spanish Cuba found new openings.28 As colonies rose and decayed, sugar production moved to fill demand in Europe—drawing growing numbers of slaves from Africa. After 1750, Saint Domingue became the leading Atlantic sugar and slave economy. Production along with planter and slave trader profits soared; so did slave numbers as degradations deepened.29

Like silver, sugar and slavery stimulated widespread commerce. Early on, the Brazilian interior provided sugar plantations with staples and livestock. From the seventeenth century, the farming, fishing, timbering, and shipbuilding of New England sustained British sugar and slave colonies.30 Before 1765, Louisiana supported French Saint Domingue; then under Spanish rule it took a similar role sustaining sugar and slavery in Cuba. Sugar islands might be small—but their dynamic industry stimulated the slave trade that took millions of people out of Africa and promoted linked economic activities across far regions of Atlantic America.

Sugar—which found expanding European markets as a sweet, a preservative, and later as a quick energy substitute for protein in popular diets—made the slave trade possible and profitable on a large scale.31 The trade made slaves available to other colonial producers. Southern Brazil boomed with an economy of gold, diamonds, and slavery from 1695 to 1750, stimulating a frontier of settlement and staples production based in São Paulo, driving west, and also
grounded in slave labor. In Atlantic North America, environments too cold for sugar saw the rise of rice, indigo, and slavery in South Carolina, and tobacco and slavery around the Chesapeake. Slaves labored on Hudson Valley estates and Long Island farms, producing staples often exported to the Caribbean. The plains around Caracas built an economy of cacao and slavery. Planters found profit and regimes took revenues. Slave labor spread across Atlantic America while sugar and slavery, profit and degradation, peaked in Saint Domingue. When Paris revolutionaries proclaimed liberty and equality and shook colonial rule, slaves in Saint Domingue rose after 1790 and took freedom and justice as they saw them.

Silver and Sugar and Slavery: Global Integration

The silver economies of Spanish America and the sugar and slave economies of Atlantic America often appear separate. They developed in different regions of the Americas, under different empires, with different ways of production, labor relations, and cultural conversations. Yet they developed in parallel: both had beginnings before 1550; both rose to global importance between 1570 and 1650; both faced lulls from 1650 to 1700—and both soared to unprecedented heights during the eighteenth century. While the leading centers of production shifted from the Andes and Brazil between 1550 and 1650 to New Spain and the Caribbean from 1700 to 1800, the parallel trajectories held. More than parallel: the two New World economies were linked.

Most obviously, the two great early American economies were linked in the competition for geopolitical economic primacy among European powers. Early on, the bullion of Spanish America favored Hapsburg power. When Phillip II claimed the Crown of Portugal in 1580, he vastly enlarged Hapsburg domains and trades by adding the emerging sugar economy of Brazil and trading ports in Africa and Asia. The original Potosí silver and Brazilian sugar booms not only came simultaneously from 1570 to 1640—they peaked under a common Spanish sovereignty that in the early 1600s ruled all of Europe’s Americas (but for a few marginal British and Dutch settlements). That unprecedented accumulation of American domains and wealth in global trades set Dutch republicans (who rebelled against Hapsburg rule in 1564), British and French monarchs, and merchants everywhere in search of parallel domains and trades. Without gaining revenues and riches in the new global economy they could not compete in a transformed world of power. The Dutch became key intermediaries in the rise of competing British and French Atlantic empires in the seventeenth century. With no access to silver, the latecomers settled on sugar and slavery.
The larger ties linking the silver and sugar and slave economies become clear when we see them in global context. It has finally become commonplace to emphasize the centrality of New World silver to Europeans’ ability to trade in Asia—to buy Chinese silks and porcelains, island spices, and Indian cottons. Now Prasannan Parthasarathi has focused analysis on the key link tying sugar and slavery to silver. Fine printed cotton cloths from India were the leading products demanded in Africa as the price of slaves—and Europeans only gained those cloths with silver from Spain’s Americas. In the era of the foundation of the New World economies, common sovereignty facilitated Portuguese traders’ access to Andean silver, delivered to India to purchase cloth taken to Africa to buy slaves shipped to Brazil and Spanish America from 1580 to 1640. After 1700, British merchants of the monopoly East India Company took growing quantities of Indian cotton goods, paid with rising flows of New Spain’s silver (gained through the asiento contract to supply slaves to Spain’s Americas), to purchase people bound as slaves to labor in Atlantic sugar production and related enterprises. Spanish American silver also funded allied French merchants’ ability to sell Africans in Saint Domingue. We now see why British and French merchants and regimes did all they could in war and trade, legally and illegally, in open and clandestine transactions, to gain New Spain’s silver. They worked through factors in Seville and Cádiz; they smuggled in Caribbean ports and Buenos Aires. And we understand why Spain insisted that its ships and merchants must monopolize silver, ensuring that silver would profit Spaniards and Spanish revenues in the Americas and Europe—while allowing loopholes large enough to enable silver to find its way to pivotal global trades.

New Challenges, 1750–1790
Wars escalated across the Atlantic world in the eighteenth century. European empires fought for hegemony at home and wealth in the Americas and around the world. Our new understanding of the linked importance of the two New World economies to European power and global trade places that time of conflict and its escalation after 1750 in new light—light essential to understanding the role of the Americas in the conflicts of 1790 to 1825 that accelerated the global transformation to industrial capitalism.

The War of Spanish Succession begun in 1700 set Bourbons on the Spanish throne, cementing a dynastic and commercial alliance between Spain and France and giving the latter favored access to Spain’s American trade and silver. The Methuen Treaty of 1703 tied Portugal to Britain, assuring the latter privileged access to the gold beginning to flow from southern Brazil. Then the Treaty
of Utrecht that ended the war in 1713 compensated Britain with a monopoly of the slave trade to Spain’s Americas, tightening the linkage of New Spain’s silver, Indian cottons, and African slaving as English traders supplied both British and Spanish America.

The first half of the eighteenth century proved an era of rising global trades. New Spain’s silver and Brazil’s gold soared simultaneously, the former stimulating the world and especially China, the latter notably benefiting Britain. Only a strong expansion of trade could sustain booms in both metals. Then around 1750, Brazilian gold production dropped as Chinese demand for silver fell. Gold production declined through the rest of the century. Silver revived in the 1770s, flowing more fully toward Europe, then on to India to buy cottons to trade for African slaves, and finally on to China. With less Brazilian gold after 1750, British merchants and their regime backers sought greater access to Spanish American silver in their drive toward global commercial hegemony. Wars came quickly.

The Seven Years’ War of 1757 to 1763 is perhaps better named the First World War, as it was fought in Europe and across the Americas, India, and the Philippines, and the sea-lanes that linked them. Early on Britain mobilized North American colonials to claim Canada from France—a conquest of much cost and little immediate economic value. More revealing, British forces took Havana and Manila in 1762 and 1763, demonstrating the military vulnerability of Spain and the strategic-commercial importance of New Spain’s silver. Silver regularly accumulated in Havana before sailing west to Europe; the Pacific flow landed in Manila to be traded with Chinese merchants for Asian wares. Taking the ports was possible, claiming the silver a challenge—the precious commodity could be held in New Spain to the end of the war or diverted to other channels. By the Treaty of Paris, Britain kept Canada and gained Florida, consolidating rule in eastern North America. It returned Havana and Manila to Spain, which also gained Louisiana—reinforcing its control of the silver economy of New Spain and North America west of the Mississippi. From a war often imagined a great British victory Britain gained little in the Americas, where Spanish power was reinforced. Britain did win European recognition of its rising hegemony in India.

In the near term, the primary result was that all the empires faced great debts. Their first response was to make colonials pay. Spain’s Bourbons demanded new taxes, militia recruitment, and administrative controls beginning in 1764, provoking riotous resistance in and around the mines of Guanajuato and regions north in New Spain. There, colonial entrepreneurs quickly backed the regime in a mix of repression and accommodation. Peace was reestablished
in 1767 and silver production rose to hold at historic peaks from 1770 to 1810 thanks to renewed Chinese demand. Parallel demands for revenues and power struck the colonies of British North America from Massachusetts to Virginia in the 1760s. There, however, key colonial merchants and planters saw no reason to pay; they led resistance demanding limited taxation and self-rule that culminated in U.S. independence—declared in 1776 and accomplished in 1783.\footnote{Simply stated, the silver economy made the link between Spain and New Spain so valuable to Bourbon rulers and colonial entrepreneurs that they colluded to maintain the colonial relationship. In contrast, the mainland colonies of British America were a costly burden to imperial officials while the revenue demands of the 1760s and 1770s made imperial rule unacceptable to many colonial merchants and planters. New Spain remained Spanish because its silver economy was uniquely valuable; the United States became the first New World nation in good part because its economy was a peripheral adjunct to Caribbean sugar and slave economies, where planters and merchants continued to profit and proved slow to imagine independence.}{41}

Still, the war that enabled U.S. independence had global ramifications. France sent troops and a navy, the latter pivotal to Washington’s victory at Yorktown—generating debts that led to calling the Estates General in 1789 and the outbreak of revolution in Paris. Spain provided British American rebels with sustenance and funds—mostly silver pesos from New Spain (which became the basis of the U.S. dollar). Amid the conflict, with Spain distracted and backing Anglo-American independence, 1780 saw the outbreak of the great risings led by Túpac Amaru and the Kataris in the Andean heartland (where the silver economy struggled). Mass violent demands for native rights and social justice were contained only when colonial elites again rallied to Spanish colonial rule in devastated uplands. Britain lost its mainland colonies south of Canada; Jamaica, its leading Caribbean sugar and slave colony, lost dynamism. Meanwhile, French Saint Domingue soared to new heights of sugar, coffee, indigo, and slavery.

The First Great Transformation
It is often said that U.S. independence turned Britain’s imperial attention to India. It is now clear that Britain, in an unplanned shift in which merchants, manufacturers, and regime officials both competed and colluded without set goals, transformed cotton manufacturing, global trades, and capitalism. From 1780 to 1820, while wars and revolutions raged across Europe and the Americas, a new world economy dominated by Britain rose. Every region of the Americas

Americas in the Rise of Industrial Capitalism—43
and the world had to adapt—sooner in the new countries of the Americas and old empires of Asia, later in regions less tied to global trade around 1800.\textsuperscript{43}

The rise of Britain to global industrial hegemony has been honored as a triumph of British entrepreneurship and technological innovation—and it was both in pivotally important ways.\textsuperscript{44} The development of water- and steam-powered ways of spinning cotton thread during the late eighteenth century transformed production and work in ways that would go on to transform the world. The achievement is clear—and well emphasized. The goals at the beginning are now equally clear—thanks to Parthasarathi. A group of British inventors and manufacturers backed by merchants outside the East India Company aimed to displace Indian cotton goods in the world economy. Why? British-produced cotton cloth would not require silver. Success after 1780 required technological innovation and new sources of cotton, which first came from Brazil and then increasingly from the newly independent United States. As Beckert shows in *Empire of Cotton*, early industrialism linked British industry and U.S. plantations to compete with the EOC and Indian producers in world cotton markets. Still, British and Indian-EOC production held strong past 1810, until silver production collapsed—favoring British industries and U.S. planters as the Napoleonic wars ended in British triumph. In time, British power in India used taxes and prohibitions to inhibit South Asian cloth from competing with British manufactures.\textsuperscript{45} The rise of British industrial hegemony was both a technological triumph and an unplanned outcome of complex global-imperial wars, insurgencies, and trades. They were simultaneous, essential, and inseparable.\textsuperscript{46}

In the process, the balance of economic power in the Americas and the world shifted. British manufacturers and traders aimed to mechanize production of cotton wares in England in order to replace Indian cloths in markets in Europe, Africa, and the Americas. With success thanks to mechanical innovation and imperial power, they reduced the need for New Spain’s silver to purchase the South Asian cloth much in demand in European and American markets, and essential to buying African slaves. The detailed ramifications await careful study, but key developments seem clear.

Chinese demand for silver had dropped briefly after 1750, and then rose to new heights in the 1770s.\textsuperscript{47} With the growth of British cotton production and the displacement of Indian cloth in British trade, British traders might spend less silver in India and send more directly to China. We know that the value in pesos (identical to U.S. dollars after 1780) of silver production in New Spain rose into the 1750s, fell in the 1760s, then soared to new heights from 1770 to the mid-1780s—to dip slightly, stabilize, and fluctuate at historically high
levels from 1795 to 1810. During the era of escalating European warfare after 1793, Britain and France competed for access to New Spain’s rising flows of silver. To the extent that British merchants needed less silver to buy South Asian cotton goods to trade for African slaves, they could seek direct trade with China where demand held strong. While the French monarchy faced the debts created by supporting U.S. independence, French merchants still needed New Spain’s silver to access the cloth needed to send rising numbers of Africans to Saint Domingue in the 1780s. While debt crisis led to political revolution in Paris, the flood of recently arrived Africans, often young men enslaved after fighting as soldiers, fed the extreme polarities of Saint Domingue—extreme even compared with other Caribbean slave colonies—that exploded in revolution in the 1790s.

Crucible of Conflict, 1790–1825

There was, of course, no direct and simple causal line from the rapid expansion of slavery in Saint Domingue to the Haitian Revolution, nor from deepening pressures on Bajío producers to insurgency in 1810. War and politics inevitably intervened. Better, the decades from 1780 to 1820 proved the inextricable linkages among global trades, geopolitical conflicts, regional economies, social relations of production, popular risings, Euro-American monarchies, and Asian regimes as old empires fragmented, new nations rose, and popular communities pressed gains when they could. The challenge—and necessity—is to seek an integrated history of the Americas while the polycentric global economy of 1500 to 1800 gave way to the industrial concentration that shaped the nineteenth century. British industrial innovation, French political revolution, Haitian total revolution, Bajío popular insurgency (an apolitical revolution?), Indian economic demise and Chinese collapse—all caught up in decades of geopolitical conflict and shifting global trades—were all essential elements of the transformation that reshaped the world as the nineteenth century began.

The peace that ended the War of U.S. Independence in 1783 proved brief. The French monarchy faced debts it could not pay, in large part resulting from its support of British American rebels. Seeing no other recourse, Louis XVI called long-dormant Estates General, and that assembly became the site and source of a French Revolution that promised new liberties and participations to French people—who, now proclaimed citizens, deposed and killed the king—and eventually led to Napoleon’s rule, first in France, then across Europe. Early proclamations of citizenship and liberty set off debates and armed conflicts in Saint Domingue, leading to slave risings that ended slavery, broke with France,
and in 1804 founded the second nation in the Americas—Haiti. In the process, armed ex-slaves took the land for family production and destroyed the leading sugar and slave economy of Atlantic America. By the mid-1790s, Saint Domingue no longer sent sugar or profits to France, nor did it buy slaves.

The collapse of Saint Domingue did not end the importance of sugar and slavery in the Atlantic world. Production quickly revived in Brazil, as did demand for slaves in Portuguese colonies still tied to Britain. Sugar and slavery also rose in Cuba, still a Spanish colony, yet in times of war dependent on British acquiescence and U.S. neutral shipping to sell sugar and buy slaves. War and revolutions in France and Haiti shifted the focus of sugar and slavery in the Americas, sustaining continuing conflicts over trade and revenues. Silver production in New Spain, after dipping in the late 1780s, rose to new heights in the early 1790s and held near those peaks to 1810 thanks to Atlantic war and Chinese demand. Saint Domingue lost its leading role—and ended slavery. In the early 1800s, France lost power in the Americas as it expanded in Europe. Spain struggled in the geopolitics of Europe—but New Spain flourished; Cuba rose as a sugar and slave colony; and Buenos Aires found new trade supporting revived Brazilian plantations.

From the 1790s, U.S. merchants had profited as the only seafaring neutrals in the Atlantic in times of shifting conflicts—while cotton production rose across an expanding South to supply British mills. Able to increase the number of slaves without imports, southern planters developed a growing cotton and slave economy—without dependence on New Spain’s silver to obtain labor. Britain, favored by industrial innovation, maritime power, and insular location faced constant conflicts, always away from home, that brought gains at the intersection of war, trade, and industrial development. In the Americas, the leading role of New Spain’s silver economy and the dynamism of sugar and slavery (away from Haiti) persisted to 1810. The polycentric world economy held on.

In 1793, on the pretext of defending monarchy after the killing of the Louis XVI, the European powers led by Britain and including Spanish Bourbons and Austrian Hapsburgs turned to war against revolutionary France. With Paris in disarray and Saint Domingue in flames, it was a chance for the remaining old regimes to crush a struggling contender for Atlantic power. The attempt to restore monarchy failed (until 1815), however, thanks to the revolutionary regime’s ability to mix nationalist visions, new participations, and the end of feudal taxes and fees and successfully call a levée en masse that mobilized vast armies to defend the revolution. In 1802, when the Peace of Amiens brought a respite from war, Britain ruled the seas and global trade, and continued to industrialize; France dominated its continental neighbors, having lost the trade
and revenues of Saint Domingue; and Spain still held New Spain, the source of silver that still fueled global trades and funded European regimes. Carlos Marichal has shown how France and Britain disputed the peak silver flows from 1796 to 1810—a conflict as pivotal as any battle. By deals among regimes, merchants, and financiers, far from the public eye, about two-thirds of New Spain’s record production benefited a renewed French-Spanish alliance. An important third funded British war and trade.⁵² Still, nearly all eventually passed in trade to China—and British merchants increasingly ruled that profitable commerce. The world had changed enormously since the 1550s, but Spanish American silver remained pivotal to the global geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy in 1808, even as industrial innovation and threats to the slave geopolitical economy.⁵³

With the loss of Saint Domingue to ex-slave soldiers backed by yellow fever and malaria that devastated European troops sent to the tropics, Napoleon faced embarrassment in the world of European armies and a loss of trade and the revenues it made. That marginalization was completed in 1805 when the British navy destroyed the combined French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar. New Spain’s silver could only reach Europe via deals brokered by British foes. It still came, as every power needed funds in times of war—but France’s reliance on its primary foe for access to key specie created a debilitating dependence.

From 1805, Britain ruled Atlantic sea-lanes, thus Europe’s access to the Americas, New Spain’s silver, and the profits of still flourishing China trades. Attempting to counter by controlling continental Europe, Napoleon took the gamble of invading Iberia in 1807, taking Lisbon, then turning on Madrid early in 1808. The Portuguese monarchy escaped to Brazil, escorted by a British fleet, ensuring that plantations there (booming again after the collapse of Saint Domingue) would benefit Britain’s trade and revenues.⁵⁴ So Napoleon turned to invade his Spanish ally, provoking divisions in the monarchy—until he captured both contenders to rule and in May 1808 saw the people of Madrid rise to challenge his armies, setting off wars for independence in Spain and diverging responses across the Americas.⁵⁵

In Spain, resistance to Napoleon concentrated in Seville and then Cádiz, leading to the liberal constitution of 1812 that offered new but limited rights to colonials, hoping they would remain in the empire.⁵⁶ In New Spain, two years of debates focused in Mexico City from 1808 created deep rifts, dividing those loyal to the regime emerging in Seville from others who preferred to claim regional autonomy awaiting the resolution of the conflicts in Europe.⁵⁷ Those divisions led to the revolt led by Miguel Hidalgo in the Bajío in September 1810. The rising mobilized regional elites, Guanajuato mine laborers, and rural workers and tenants to take control of the Bajío in the fall of 1810. Early in 1811,
the political movement collapsed, Hidalgo and other leaders were captured, and most mine workers returned to the mines. But the rural majority returned home to the Bajío to press a popular, redistributive insurgency from early in 1811. In a decade of conflict, they took the land from the commercial estates that had ruled their lives and sustained the silver economy for centuries, turning to family production. The parallels with Haiti are clear.

The Bajío insurgency strangled silver mining by raising the costs of supplies and transport and breaking the integration of the Bajío with Mexico City and the larger economy of Spanish North America. Popular insurgency, civil war, and economic disruption led to a decade without investment in the mines that made the world’s money. Infrastructure and production both collapsed. From 1795 to 1810, New Spain sent over 20 million pesos of silver yearly into the world economy. From 1811, silver production was cut in half, and with limited fluctuations held at 10–12 million pesos yearly to 1840. It was a devastating collapse for the economy of New Spain as it became Mexico in 1821. The fall of silver at the hands of Bajío insurgents also transformed global trades.

Since the 1780s, the rise of British industrial textiles had begun to limit the need for New Spain’s silver to buy Indian cotton cloth to pay for African slaves. But war, rising Atlantic trade, and Chinese demand had kept demand for silver high. When from 1811 the silver flowing from New Spain fell by half, the global reverberations proved extensive and enduring.

For two and a half centuries, silver was a key commodity and money in an expanding polycentric world economy. Its sudden scarcity after 1810 struck trades already challenged by constant war from 1750 to 1815. Fernand Braudel dated the end of eighteenth-century global economic growth to 1812—without seeing the link to the collapse of New Spain’s silver mines. Now, Man-Houng Lin has shown that the sudden fall of Chinese production and participation in global trade resulted directly from the dearth of silver. She sees Latin American independence wars as the cause; within those wars, it was the decade of popular insurgency in the Bajío that undermined New Spain’s silver production and the global trades it fueled.

The sudden scarcity of silver, amid war and commercial disruption, both stimulated and enabled Britain’s acceleration of textile industrialization, limiting its need for silver to buy Indian cottons, replacing them in global markets with cloth made in British mills. In a radical reorientation of Asian trade, British merchants began to sell South Asian opium in China, extracting silver in payment. The silver that had flowed into China for centuries began to flow out, demonetizing the economy, inhibiting commercial life, cutting state revenues, stimulating political instability—and spreading all the liabilities of a proliferat-
ing opium culture among the Chinese. China became the “silver mine” that met India’s demand for silver as the new Mexican nation learned its mines would not recover for decades. And China lost economic dynamism as it exported raw silk (rather than fine silk cloth) and tea, along with its stores of silver—in exchange for opium. Once a dynamic engine in a polycentric world economy, China became a commodity exporter, a society Europeans would later see as “underdeveloped”—ignoring their own profitable role in creating that underdevelopment.

Meanwhile, Britain protected itself at home by shifting to gold as primary money. It had relied increasingly on gold since gaining favored access to Brazil after 1700. Amid the wars of 1790–1815 it turned to a de facto gold standard, tied to developing paper monies. After the wars it shifted explicitly to a gold standard in the 1820s, insulating its industrializing economy from the difficulties linked to continuing scarcities of silver.61

While revolutionary slaves destroyed the plantation economy of Haiti, popular insurgents undermined the silver economy of the New Spain, and Britain rose to industrial eminence between 1790 and 1820, other regions of the Americas adapted as they could. The rise of sugar and slavery in Cuba, and of sugar and coffee and slavery in Brazil, are widely recognized. Both experienced relatively stable adaptations to the new world of British power after 1820. The young United States lived more complex and conflictive adaptations during the decades of war and global transformation.

In the 1790s, deep debates divided the new republic. One vision, promoted by Thomas Jefferson, saw an agrarian and export-driven future, honoring yeoman farmers while presuming slave production on southern plantations (despite Jefferson’s dreams of emancipation and deportation). The alternative pressed by Alexander Hamilton preferred commercial ways focused in northern trading cities. Both were sustained after 1793 by northern traders’ ability to prosper as neutrals in Atlantic wars. They sold farmers’ grains to diverse Europeans and planters’ cotton to British industries; they traded in New Spain to keep silver flowing into global commerce. Jefferson’s taking the presidency in 1800 suggested a triumph of his vision—though the election was very close and contested.

War soon proved decisive to the adaptive rise of the U.S. economy. With the end of the Peace of Amiens in 1804 and British victory at Trafalgar in 1805, Britain aimed to monopolize Atlantic commerce while France consolidated power on mainland Europe. U.S. merchants saw opportunity in trading between the Americas and Europe—an opportunity Britain aimed to stop with embargoes and naval power. Rising conflict at sea led Jefferson to impose his
own embargo in 1808—hoping to stop costly naval contests, and perhaps to consolidate a republic grounded in cultivation. Of course farmers could easily continue to feed themselves and the residents of small port towns, but planters committed to cotton lost outlets in Britain.

While merchants and planters protested the embargo, New Englanders invested in mechanized cotton mills, using the southern slave-grown staple earlier sold to Britain. Under the embargo from 1808 to 1812 and war with England from 1812 to 1814, the Northeast became an industrial producer. After the peace, new industrialists demanded tariff protection against British imports. The wars of 1790 to 1825 were as pivotal to the rise of U.S. power as they were to the Haitian Revolution, which destroyed France’s role in the Atlantic economy, and to the Bajío insurgency, which brought down New Spain’s silver economy. As the 1820s began, the United States balanced southern and northern interests in the Missouri Compromise, enabling the expansion of a continental economy now grounded in northern commerce and industry and southern cotton and slavery; speculators and settlers pressed a westward expansion that displaced native peoples to generate staples in the Ohio basin and cotton (and slavery) in a new Southwest focused on Louisiana.

Of course, the greatest economic transformation of the age was under way in Britain between 1790 and 1820. The one pivotal participant in three decades of war that never saw destructive conflicts at home, Britain kept trade alive while entrepreneurs accelerated industrial innovation. Meanwhile, wars on the European mainland inhibited industry in France while counterinsurgency in Spain from 1808 to 1814, fought by Spaniards backed by Britain, destroyed the mechanized cotton industry that had begun in Calatuña in the 1780s.

When the era of war closed in the 1820s, Britain was positioned to rule a world economy dominated by industrial textile production and supplied by slave-grown U.S. cotton, taking soaring profits from the trades they stimulated.

**Breaking Away**

In 1820 in the Americas, only the United States and Haiti were independent; in Spanish America, only Buenos Aires and Caracas were committed to independence. The political future of the hemisphere was far from set. But the first global economy had fallen, leaving people everywhere searching for new futures. And 1820 brought new uncertainty to questions of sovereignty in the Spanish empire when military forces in Spain forced Fernando VII to reinstate the liberal Constitution of 1812. As economic change accelerated, Spanish Americans faced new debates that led to five years of renewed conflict and the
emergence of new polities. By 1824 all Iberian America had claimed independence, except Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean. Brazil held together as a constitutional monarchy, while Spain’s domains fragmented into diverse republics.

Buenos Aires and Caracas consolidated independence by sending armies led by José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar, respectively, to break Spanish rule in the Andes. Bolívar finished the work by creating the republic of Bolivia, including Potosí, long ago the heart of the global silver economy, in 1824. Loyalists in New Spain were pacifying the last popular insurgents in the Bajío in 1820, when Spain’s return to liberal rule set Agustín de Iturbide, who had fought to defend Spain for a decade, to forging an alliance of the powerful that founded Mexico in 1821 as an empire that quickly collapsed and became a federal republic in 1824. Portuguese King João remained in Rio de Janeiro into 1821, then returned to Lisbon to deal with a Cádiz-inspired liberal movement aiming to return Brazil to colonial status. His son Pedro broke with Portugal in 1822, crowned emperor of a Brazil that remained a monarchy until 1889.

Spanish America turned to building republican nations between 1821 and 1824; Brazil worked to forge a constitutional monarchy. All joined the political processes of the age, grounding new regimes in variants of popular sovereignty and offering new electoral participations. Across the Americas, diverse new countries converged in turning to the politics of popular sovereignty, opening processes that proved long, conflictive, and repeatedly coercive—including in the United States, where the war of 1860–1865 proved the bloodiest conflict of all. Yet history repeatedly reports the United States as a most creative and successful republic, while seeing Latin Americans as incapable, repeatedly turning to military-authoritarian rule. The dichotomy was never so clear. To understand the diverging trajectories of the new countries that emerged across the Americas in the first half of the nineteenth century, we must see their different possibilities and responses in new times of industrial capitalism. The new countries of the Americas converged—and never simply copied, as Roberto Breña emphasizes—in pursuing politics of popular sovereignty. They diverged as regions with diverse resources and populations adapted to a rapidly and radically changing world economy. The result was mostly divergence.

*Divergence in Atlantic America*

Haiti diverged most. The armed slaves’ assault on sugar and slavery transformed its economy; withdrawal and exclusion from trade led to economic isolation. Haitians struggled on, committed to personal liberty and family production.
while facing exclusion in the world of nations and trade. Limited coffee exports earned some revenues, minimally funding regimes decried as too military—yet that acquiesced in the turn to family sustenance that was the first interest of the emancipated populace. The revolutionary fall of sugar and slavery in Haiti did not end that long-profitable relationship in the greater Caribbean. It expanded in Cuba, on smaller islands, and in mainland zones such as British Demerara, where in 1823 slaves attempted to follow Haitian’s example in a rising that did hasten the end of slavery in Britain’s empire. Older British and French islands saw sugar production and profits wane as soils exhausted and slavery ended between 1830 and 1850. They remained colonies (even if officially part of a French nation) searching for economies. Ironically, people of African ancestry across the British and French Caribbean, long enslaved, lived by economies of sustenance through most of the nineteenth century. By different means, they ended where Haitians had fought to get. The parallels were limited, however. Haitians often held their own land, yet faced international exclusions aimed to punish black revolutionaries; islanders under British and French rule usually lived as tenants, while gaining some access to education and trade: the small rewards of not being revolutionary.

Cuba was different, not because it was Spanish and remained a colony, but because its expansion of sugar and slavery came on fresh soils after 1750, to accelerate in the 1790s when the Haitian Revolution opened markets. Into the nineteenth century Cuba was economically prosperous for local planters and merchants in Havana, Spain, Britain, and the United States. Many of the latter profited by delivering growing numbers of slaves, despite proclaimed opposition and the illegality of the trade in Britain and the United States after 1807. Slaves paid for Cuba’s rise during and after the conflicts that led to Haitian and Latin American independence. Masters and merchants profited while ideologues worried about Haitian precedents; together they aimed to keep slaves less than a majority. Cuba’s sugar and slave boom, the last of the cycles that shaped Atlantic America, generated limited resistance during decades of expansion. Deepening conflicts came in the 1860s, ending slavery in 1886 and Spanish rule in 1898.

Brazil, where sugar and slavery first flourished in the Americas, lived important continuities as it diverged from other former slave colonies after 1820. Its sugar, gold, and diamond economy had linked to Britain (via Portugal) in the early eighteenth century. Exports fell after 1750, despite the Marquis de Pombal’s enlightened policies. The economy struggled through the 1780s, until the Haitian Revolution opened markets for a revival of northeastern sugar and slavery and the beginning of coffee and slavery around Rio. The 1808 arrival of
Map 1.2. The Americas, ca. 1850
the royal court in Rio definitively linked a revitalized slave economy to British merchants and markets.67

Brazil avoided a long, destructive war for independence. When the regime broke with Portugal in 1822, it fought regional conflicts to expel the last Portuguese forces, to hold northeastern and southern regions in the empire based in Rio, and to block limited slave resistance.68 Thanks to export profits and British naval support, Brazil held together as a monarchy (with new constitutional participations) committed to slavery (in this it was like Cuba, in a Spanish empire struggling toward constitutional ways). Sugar declined in the face of Cuban expansion in the 1820s, but coffee and slavery grew to sustain a Brazilian empire linked to Britain. Slave imports held strong to 1850, when British opposition turned from rhetorical to naval. The empire of coffee and slavery promised popular sovereignty and electoral competition in a regime shaped by entrepreneurial power and patronage politics. Facing political uncertainties and periodic conflicts into the 1840s, Brazil proved the most stable regime in the Americas until slavery and empire collapsed together in 1888–1889. Throughout, Brazil sustained British power and prosperity.69

The same can be said of the southern United States to 1860. Slavery was long established around the Chesapeake and near Charleston, serving tobacco, indigo, and rice growers. A war for independence and early national politics led by slaveholding planters guaranteed the endurance of slavery, facilitating the rise of cotton and slavery to supply British industry from the 1790s. Slavery expanded numerically and geographically, making cotton to sustain British production. The United States proved the rare region where slave populations grew without imports, assuaging British opposition to the oceanic slave trade while its industry, power, and prosperity depended on slave-grown cotton.70

Still, the rise of the United States was more complex. As noted, trade embargo and war between 1808 and 1814 brought a reluctant turn to industry in the North. New England became a consumer of slave-grown cotton and an emerging competitor to British manufacturers. New Englanders depended on the slave South while promoting wage labor in industries at home. Contradiction was everywhere. After the Missouri Compromise of 1820 an economy of continental contradictions drove west, taking land from independent natives to expand cotton grown by slaves and staples raised by free farmers. In 1835 southerners facilitated the secession of Mexican Texas to expand cotton and slavery. From 1846 to 1848 they pressed a war begun to take Texas into the Union—and ended by taking a vast new West, including California’s gold.71

The United States claimed a continent of unparalleled resources—a republic of popular sovereignty, committed to slavery, slowly opening electoral rights
for free white men. Its expansive prosperity generated conflicts that deepened after war with Mexico brought vast new lands into the Union—Texas, grounded in cotton and slavery; California, producing vast riches in gold; and all the lands between. A devastating and not very civil war ended slavery in 1865, confirmed the triumph of northern industry, and set the reunited continental nation on course to become Britain’s great competitor for global hegemony.  

Britain ruled the world of concentrated economic power that shaped the nineteenth century by building industry at home, drawing resources and selling cloth in markets across the globe, and emerging unchallenged from the wars of 1790–1825. The United States later built a parallel power, concentrating industry in its Northeast, while drawing resources and selling in markets across a continent taken into a huge nation populated by people fleeing Europe—at the cost of slaves, Mexicans, and native Americans. Both the enormity and the fragility of Britain’s rise became clear as it faced the competition of a United States with continental foundations after 1880.  

The Atlantic America created by sugar and slavery—Beckert would call it war capitalism—found diverse adaptations in the nineteenth-century world of concentrated industrial power. Haitians withdrew for their own very good reasons—and paid with poverty. Brazil deepened its ties with Britain and prospered as a key commodity producer—while growing numbers labored in slavery. Cuba remained a colony to become the last sugar and slave economy of the Americas. The United States took advantage of early independence to prosper from trade and then industry during the wars of 1790–1820, sustaining British power with expanding cotton and slavery to 1865, while northeastern mills competed with British industry. Haitians made a revolutionary choice to end slavery and exports. Brazil, Cuba, and the United States, in contrast, expanded slavery, found commercial success, and after 1860 faced conflicts grounded in the contradictions of their slave-based export successes.

_Inversions in Spanish and Indigenous America_

The continental regions of Spanish America broke ties with Spain after 1820 and quickly broke apart to create more than a dozen new countries. Following three centuries of pivotal global importance thanks to the silver, no region of Spanish America would contend for power, and few found prosperity in the era of North Atlantic industrial capitalism. Spanish America and China had been linked for centuries in silver-fueled global trades. The fall of silver left both to grapple with economic challenges and political conflicts—in inevitably different ways.

_Americas in the Rise of Industrial Capitalism—55_
FIGURES 1.2 AND 1.3. At the base of industrial capitalism: Scenes on a cotton plantation
The Andean silver economy had stimulated global trade as it commercialized social relations still grounded in Inca and indigenous ways from 1550 to 1650, also stimulating a broad commercial integration linking regions that would become northern Argentina, central Chile, and Ecuador to Lima, Potosí, and the Andean heartland. As New Spain became the center of silver production and global trades in the eighteenth century, Andeans struggled as rising state demands provoked social conflicts that culminated in the 1780s. Madrid tried a cure by shifting Andean silver toward the Atlantic via Buenos Aires in 1776, helping set off the risings of the 1780s and contributing to disruptions that continued through a repressive aftermath. Most of the powerful in the Andean heartland resisted independence until the 1820s; then, caught between Spanish liberalism and armies from Buenos Aires and Caracas, they built fragmented republics—Peru and Bolivia in the heartland; Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela in outlying regions. All searched for new economies and polities; none succeeded until they found export links to the industrial world after 1850: Chile stabilized first when it provided foodstuffs to gold rush California; coastal Peru and Chile (in regions taken by war from Bolivia) profited when they sent guano and nitrates to fertilize commercial fields in Cuba and elsewhere; Colombia and Venezuela prospered late when they joined the stimulant economy of coffee exports later in the century. 

Buenos Aires and the Río de la Plata provide a revealing history of a region that was geographically Atlantic, not grounded in sugar and slavery, but instead long linked to the Andean silver economy in peripheral ways. The area faced complex changes from 1790 to 1825 and endured deep political conflicts long after. Still, while struggling to become nations, the ports and peoples of the Plata and the Pampas found prosperity sustaining the rising power of Britain.

Buenos Aires was founded in the late sixteenth century to block Potosí silver from trading outside preferred imperial channels; the name of the estuary, the River of Silver, shows that silver found its way to the Atlantic there. For two centuries, the city survived by smuggling just enough silver to profit those sent to limit smuggling. The opening of the port in 1776 and the new viceroyalty set there with jurisdiction over Potosí aimed to promote silver production and ease its arrival in Atlantic trade (as eighteenth-century flows were drawn increasingly east toward Europe before heading to India and China). But the risings that rocked the Andean heartland in the 1780s guaranteed that Buenos Aires would never become a great silver exporter.

Instead, the South Atlantic port found new opportunity during Haiti’s revolution and the shifting production and trade it opened. As Brazil revived sugar and slavery in the Northeast and began coffee and slavery in the South, the
Pampas became a source of salted beef and other foodstuffs to sustain growing numbers of slaves. Buenos Aires became a center of trade, shipping, and processing; its population grew toward sixty thousand around 1800—including large numbers of African slaves made available and affordable by the closure of Saint Domingue. In his transforming study *Workshop of Revolution: Plebian Buenos Aires and the Atlantic World, 1776–1810*, Lyman Johnson details how the city became a center of production and social tension that fended off British invasion in 1806 and quickly turned to seeking independence when Napoleon invaded Spain in 1808. The merchants and artisans, growers and grazers of greater Buenos Aires sought access to the world to continue to prosper.75

Decades of war—first within and then against the Spanish empire, later among neighbors along the Río de Plata—followed as a region facing new economic prospects struggled to consolidate states and political systems. Buenos Aires eventually became the center of an emerging Argentina that prospered first by sustaining slaves in Brazil and Cuba, then by sending wool, leather, wheat, and beef to Britain. Uruguay became a small replica of Argentina, set up by Britain to create a buffer with Brazil.76 Paraguay turned inward to become a mostly Guaraní nation, rejecting trade to preserve economic autonomy and indigenous ways—until a deadly war funded by Britain set an alliance of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay against Paraguay, forcing it open to the world in the 1860s, consolidating a nation of enduring Guaraní poverty.77

Paraguay’s creation as a Guaraní nation was the extreme case of a common outcome of the conflicts and transformations of 1790 to 1825 in South America. As new nations struggled to build polities and new economies, indigenous peoples often found new autonomies that endured for decades. In regions once at the heart of the silver economy, indigenous republics found economic openings while facing fragile and contested national political powers. Other native peoples who had lived free at the margins of empires, yet dealt with traders for the horses, arms, tools, and other goods that enabled independence, found new ways of assertion as new states struggled after 1810. The spread of indigenous independence across the Andes and adjacent lowlands frustrated those who presumed native subordination. But that independence was real—if, outside Paraguay, never recognized in the world of nations—long into the nineteenth century.78 Only the consolidation of export economies tied to British hegemony and rising U.S. demand after 1860 enabled South American states to solidify and then curtail native independence—and crush Paraguay.

The transformation of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, which in its largest sense stretched from Costa Rica to California, followed a different path. Still,
it too ended with disintegrations, struggles to create new polities, searches for new economies, and indigenous independence—all facilitating the rising power of the United States. What made New Spain different was the strength of its silver economy to 1810—and the depth of the insurgent-driven collapse that followed. The fall of silver was clear in 1811, and entrenched by 1820 when Spain returned to liberal rule, setting off a movement that aimed to draw Fernando VII to Mexico City to rule all New Spain—including the Kingdom of Guatemala (Central America) and Cuba in a North American Bourbon monarchy. Fernando refused, Cuba never joined, and Guatemala broke away.

Cuba remained a prosperous Atlantic colony of sugar and slavery; had it joined Mexico, a mostly mainland nation would have gained the profits of sugar, the problem of slavery (which it later faced in Texas), and the merchant and naval power they sustained. The Kingdom of Guatemala had gained little from the silver economy. It was linked to the world in the eighteenth century mostly by the indigo raised around San Salvador and sent into trade by Guatemala City merchants. The region had little incentive to become subordinate to a regime based in Mexico City. Guatemala led the kingdom away in 1822, to soon face conflict and fragmentation into five Central American states. As cochineal from the highlands east of Guatemala City replaced indigo as the region’s primary trade commodity, El Salvador broke with Guatemala. Guatemala then reconstituted as a union of indigenous western highlands, ladino (mixed/Hispanic) eastern uplands, and a capital region that concentrated power. None of the Central American nations built solid states until they found commodities to sell in the new economy of the late nineteenth century: coffee in Pacific hills from the 1850s; bananas in Caribbean lowlands from the 1890s.

In Mexico, Agustín Iturbide, a commander noted for hard campaigns against political rebels and Bajío insurgents, became emperor on Fernando’s refusal to take a New World throne. When New Spain began to fragment as silver collapsed, the empire gave way to a federal republic in 1824. Its central powers faced an empty treasury as mine revenues plummeted and silver and internal taxes went to the states. British lenders funded the regime for a few years, opened Mexico to British cloth, and created debts that plagued the nation for decades. To 1810 New Spain had exported revenue and capital; after 1820, the Mexican state and entrepreneurs turned to British investors for capital and new technologies. They sustained the state and drained some mines—but generated few profits as silver production held low. Once the world’s source of money,
Mexico became an importer of capital and technology—a debtor with an uncertain future.

Across central and southern regions the residents of indigenous republics, earlier granted land and self-rule to sustain the silver economy, found new autonomies as the nation and commercial ways floundered. Families that had led the decade of insurgency in the Bajío, taking down the silver economy, kept control of often-irrigated lands, feeding themselves, supplying local markets, enjoying autonomies that extended to new roles for women heads of rural households. Populations held amid national troubles.

Decades of economic challenge and political conflict followed. Amid debates over centralism and federalism, liberalism and conservatism, Zacatecas’s mines came back to life in the 1820s; Guanajuato revived in the 1840s—when silver production finally began to rise. British investors had left facing bankruptcies; they also left steam pumps and other technologies that, adapted by Mexican entrepreneurs to Mexican ways of production, began to revive mining. Meanwhile, in the early 1830s, a government seeking a new economy set tariffs on cloth imports to fund a national development bank that underwrote mechanized industries in the 1830s and 1840s. Could Mexico combine revived silver mining with mechanized industry to find new prosperity and political consolidation? As the 1840s began, it seemed imaginable.

Any consolidation, however, faced two threats from the north. The Comanche, like many South American natives, had lived on the margins of the Spanish world, adopting horses and firearms to assert independent power. With the fall of the silver economy and the instability of the Mexican republic, a Comanche empire rose after 1810 on the lands between New Mexico, Texas, and the United States. Mexican northward expansion ended as Comanche drove south. Meanwhile, migrants from the United States expanded cotton and slavery in Texas. In 1836 they took Texas out of Mexico, deepening Mexican political conflicts. In 1846, expansionist U.S. southerners won incorporation of secessionist Texas as a slave state, knowing the act would provoke war with Mexico and allow the U.S to claim the land from Texas through California. The war also helped end Comanche independence. Defeat and the loss of northern territories renewed political and social conflicts in Mexico, inhibiting economic revival for decades.

The collapse of New Spain’s silver economy brought a difficult birth to Mexico and favored the expansive power of the United States. When gold revived an economy of bullion, irrigated cultivation, and commercial grazing in the 1850s, it came in California, stimulating the economic growth and westward
expansion of the United States. Yet the challenge of dealing with the expansion of slavery into the lands claimed from Mexico led directly to the Civil War. Only after 1865 did the United States consolidate as a nation under northern leadership, accelerating a westward expansion that often replicated the bullion economy of Spanish North America in lands recently taken under U.S. rule and increasingly emptied of long-resistant native peoples.

Mexico did not find a political settlement or a new economy until the 1870s—in a liberal authoritarian regime that pressed against small producers, favored capitalist agriculture, and welcomed U.S. capital to revive mines, build railroads, and energize an economy increasingly tied to U.S. markets. In a great North American inversion, the regions of New Spain that had driven global trade via a flourishing silver economy before 1810, by 1870 were dependencies of a rising United States. Irony upon irony: much of the “U.S.” capital that came to profit in Mexico was generated in California, Colorado, and Arizona mining booms. After 1848, lands once Mexican prospered by replicating the silver economy of Spanish North America; they benefited from the work of Mexicans, some long-established residents, others migrants newly arrived on well-trodden trails or newly built rails. The United States that challenged Britain for global hegemony around 1900 was favored by the collapse of New Spain’s silver economy; it prospered by incorporating its northern lands, its dynamic ways, and many of its industrious peoples.

The world of concentrated industrial capitalism persisted into the early twentieth century. After 1870, Britain shared and disputed hegemony with industries and empires rising in the United States and Germany. Both competitors joined Britain on the gold standard in the 1870s, ending the long sway of that metal-money—and ultimately prejudicing any revival of the silver economies that once had made the Andes and New Spain central to global trades. A North Atlantic axis of geopolitical economic power ruled militarily and industrially, drawing commodities from and selling wares to an expanding and often colonized “rest of the world,” until the competitors for hegemony fell into brutal war from 1914 to 1918, while key outliers—Mexico, Russia, and China—turned to revolutions that became crucibles for imagining different ways of global and national development.

Still, the world created between 1770 and 1830 limped forward to 1930—when the Great Depression completed the collapse of the first global industrial economy. Then, nations across the Americas turned to programs promising to bring the benefits of industrialism home in projects of national development. The attempt proved difficult, often impossible, in a mid-twentieth-century
era of wars, revolutions, and technological innovation—this time bringing population explosion, unprecedented urbanization, and a new postindustrial globalization.

Notes


9 See Findlay and O’Rourke, *Power and Plenty*.


22 On Chinese demand for American silver and its demise around 1750, see Flynn and Giráldez, “Cycles of Silver.” On peaking Chinese demand after 1770, increasingly via British traders, see Lin, *China Upside Down*.


24 Tutino, *Making a New World*.


33 Again, see McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America*.
39 For studies of the war that emphasize British success, see Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America* (New York: Knopf, 2000), and Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 2009).
41 This comparison is developed in Tutino, *Making a New World*, chap. 4.
42 I aim to bring the Americas to the center of the transformation analyzed well by Findlay and O'Rourke in *Power and Plenty*—except for an inability to see the Americas outside the United States. The global adaptations that followed are synthesized well by C. A. Bayly in *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003)—except for his difficulty seeing the Americas—including the United States.

46 And thus it is time to end the endless debates about which mattered most.


50 Again see Fick, *The Making of Haiti*, and Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*.


52 Marichal, *La bancarrota del virreinato*.


56 The rise of liberalism in Spain is detailed in chapter 2, “The Cádiz Liberal Revolution,” by Roberto Breña; the conflicts of 1808 to 1810 and the emergence of the Hidalgo revolt are detailed in chapter 7, “Becoming Mexico,” by Alfredo Ávila and John Tutino.

57 That the conflicts that began in New Spain in 1808 were not seeking independence from Spain is the focus of Jaime Rodríguez, *“We Are Now the True Spaniards”: Sovereignty, Revolution, Independence, and the Emergence of the Federal Republic of Mexico, 1808–1824* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).

58 See Tutino, “The Revolution in Mexican Independence.”


63 See Fraser, Napoleon’s Cursed War, and Cayuela Fernández and Gallego Palomares, La guerra de la independencia.


68 See Richard Graham, Feeding the City: From Street Market to Liberal Reform in Salvador, Brazil, 1780–1860 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), and João José Reis, Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).


Adam Rothman, *Slave Country*. The inseparable integration of southern cotton and slavery and British industry is now the focus of Beckert, *Empire of Cotton.


On how war with Mexico led to Civil War, see John Ashworth, *The Republic in Crisis, 1848–1861* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); that the Civil War was fought over slavery, see Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over* (New York: Knopf, 2007); understanding the postwar United States begins with Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988).

This links this volume and Findlay and O’Rourke, *Power and Plenty*. After 1880 Britain built a new empire in Asia and Africa, while the United States expanded beyond the continent, beginning in Cuba. France, Germany, Japan, and Russia joined the scramble.


The conflicts that led to Mexico are synthesized in Alfredo Avila, *En nombre de la nación* (Mexico City: Taurus, 2002); Jordana Dym, *From Sovereign Villages to National States: City, State, and Federation on Central America, 1759–1839* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), brings new depth to understanding independence and fragmentation in the former Kingdom of Guatemala.


Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience*.


See Tutino, *Mexico and Mexicans in the Making of the United States*.
