The Shaping of Anglo-America: A Symposium on Early American History

SHOICHI OSHIMO
KOZO IKEMOTO
MINORU KAWAKITA
and TORAO TOMITA

Editorial Note

This symposium was held at Ritsumeikan University in May 1981 as a part of the program of the annual convention of the Japanese Society of Western History. Since this issue does not contain any article on social history, the Editorial Board decided to include a summary of the record of the symposium to indicate Japanese historians' interest in social and socio-economic aspects of early American history. The following summary was edited and translated from a taped record by the editor, who chaired the symposium, with the cooperation of the participants. Professor Toyoomi Nagata of Ritsumeikan University, the organizer of the symposium, kindly made the arrangement with the JSWH Program Committee-1981 to make it possible for this journal to publish this summary.

Chair: This symposium on early American history is entitled "The Shaping of Anglo-America." This title prompts us to pose a number of questions. First, what kind of society was transplanted in North America? And how did it change subsequently? Second, When did colonial society in North America begin to have a definite pattern or "Americanness"? And what was it exactly? Third, why did the colonies revolt against Britain and why were they able to seek and win independence? Mr. Oshimo, our first speaker, will discuss mainly the first group of questions with a focus on New England. Then Mr. Ikemoto will deal mainly with the second group of questions with a focus on Virginia. Mr. Kawakita, our last speaker, will address himself mainly to the third group of questions in the context of the British mercantile system. Then Mr. Tomita will

comment on these three presentations. We did not plan our symposium exactly this way. We simply asked Mr. Oshimo to discuss the problems of New England, Mr. Ikemoto to discuss the problems of Virginia, and Mr. Kawakita to discuss Anglo-America in the context of the British mercantile system. In result, however, each paper takes up one of the three major questions mentioned above.

Shoichi OSHIMO, The Transplanted "Fragments" of English Society in New England.

Some years ago, Louis Hartz (*The Founding of New Societies*) presented the concept of a "fragmented society" with regard to the overseas transplantation of European societies. Although I do not agree with his oversimplified view, I think his concept of a "fragmented society" is useful. Making use of Hartz's concept and of information provided by recent studies in colonial social history, I would like to discuss the nature of New England society in the 17th century.

Before the appearance of Hartz's thesis, it was commonly assumed that the transplanted societies, fragments of English society, were Americanized as they developed. Hartz argued, however, that the fragment transplanted from Britain, which he called the "bourgeois fragment," being detached from the context of English society, became the whole society in America and has perpetuated itself. This perpetuity of the transplanted fragment is the essence of his thesis. American society, according to him, has retained the "bourgeois" character, lacking any entrenched aristocratic values and any significant proletarian movement.

I think his characterization of the American fragment as a bourgeois fragment is an oversimplification. How about the proprietary system, for instance? Was this feudal fragment a mere insignificant attachment to the predominant bourgeois fragment, which was destined to be eliminated sooner or later? This feudal element actually survived until the Revolution. Indeed, the proprietary system remained so viable that some historians even argue that there was a "feudal revival" in 18th-century America. Various fragments, I would say, were transplanted in the colonies and survived under the new circumstances.

Now I would like to discuss the case of New England society. As you may suspect, I am going to emphasize the perpetuity of the transplanted fragments rather than the "Americanization" of the transplanted society. This emphasis is based on recent studies in New England social history. The development of public education is a case in point. You may be

familiar with Bernard Bailyn's study on the origin of public education in New England. He considered its development as a result of the Americanization of the family structure. Since extended families were replaced by nuclear families in mobile New England society, the community had to take over the task of socializing children that had been performed by elders in extended families. This Bailyn thesis has been challenged by new studies both in America and Britain. As these new studies indicate, New England families were not substantially different from families in England, nor was New England society more mobile than English society. It is more appropriate to say that some tendencies, which had latently existed in England, emerged in articulate form and were perpetuated in New England.

Recent studies of New England towns suggest that the social characteristics of these towns were quite varied. But this variety was not primarily a product of the conditions in America. It had its origin in the fact that the nature of local communities was quite varied in England.

I would like to take up another example to illustrate my point. There was a conflict between the Puritan oligarchy and settlers in various localities in early New England. This conflict reflected the different experiences the oligarchs and the settlers had had in England. The Puritan leaders had brought into New England the political perception of the gentry. Since the English gentry played a political role at both national and local levels, they were able to understand both the need of integration and the desire for local autonomy. Although their efforts for integration were resisted by local settlers, they paid considerable respect to the autonomy of individual towns. It may be said that Massachusetts society was composed of the gentry fragment concerned with central integration and the localist fragment bent on preserving local autonomy.

It would be dangerous to discuss Puritanism in New England in a single sentence. But I might say that the New England Puritans reflected the concern of the Puritans who had scattered in localities in England without central direction. In this concern, the unique system of limiting suffrage to the church members originated. When locally entrenched Puritans had wanted to have some influence at the center, they had tried to get elected to the Parliament. Naturally they had wished to limit the electorate to the Puritans, and they were finally able to make it a rule in the Bay Colony.

New England society changed as it developed. However, the change was not really a case of Americanization. It was rather a result of the

impact of the mother country upon colonial society. Some historians use the term "Anglicization." Although the meaning of this term is ambiguous and can be varied, it cannot be denied that the impact of the mother country continued to be an important element in shaping the social consciousness of the New England people. While prosperous merchants, for example, tried to imitate the life style of the mercantile elite in London, inhabitants in backcountry communities tended to adopt more traditional English values for themselves. I surmise, therefore, there was more than one way of Anglicization.

Kozo IKEMOTO, The Creation of a Republic Based on Negro Slavery

Since the theme of this symposium is the shaping of Anglo-America, I would like to focus my discussion of Virginia on the period during which colonial society began to develop a definite pattern. It was the last quarter of the 17th century when a republic based on the slavery of the Negro race began to take shape. I would like to emphasize the words "of the Negro race," because slavery in Anglo-America was inseparably tied to racism against the black people.

As Edmund Morgan's significant work (*American Slavery, American Freedom*) pointed out, Bacon's Rebellion was an important turning point in Virginia history. This event prompted the colony to shift its labor force from white servitude to Negro slavery. Bacon's Rebellion had three aspects: a power struggle between "ins" and "outs" within the colonial elite; a war of frontier inhabitants against the Indians; and a manifestation of social discontent among the lower class whites. During the second half of the 17th century, the colony was often troubled by disturbances of the so-called "giddy multitude," composed mostly of white servants and freedmen. In one aspect, Bacon's Rebellion was a major example of these social disturbances. The decision by planters to substitute Negro slavery for white servitude was their response to this social problem. Of course, several economic factors were involved in this shift to Negro slavery: decreasing profitability of tobacco production, increasing shortage of white servants, and liberalization of English slave trade. But I would like to emphasize the social factor mentioned above.

As white servitude was replaced by Negro slavery, unfree labor was associated with a permanent and inheritable social status, and this status was associated with the Negro race. Thus slavery was built upon racism. Racism was also directed against the Indians. Some attempts were made to enslave them. We may say that their enslavement, though small in

scale, was a forerunner of Negro slavery. Incidentally, Bacon's Rebellion was a turning point also in white-Indian relations in Virginia. It marked the end of Indian resistance in western Virginia. Around the turn of the century, the Virginia law proceeded to codify the status of the slave in detail, while providing the remaining white servants with better protection. It also replaced religious terms by racial terms as the basis of discrimination. An act of 1705 concerning servants and slaves signified the legal maturing of Negro slavery in Virginia.

In the first half of the 18th century, the white community of Virginia developed into a more harmonious and more governable one, composed mainly of planters and farmers. It must be remembered that many farmers also owned a few slaves.

Although the "planter-gentry class" contained several core families, closely interrelated by blood and marriage, this class was by no means a closed oligarchy, but rather an open, growing class, supplied with new men who newly acquired a vast tract of land and a number of slaves.

Political leadership was in the hands of the planter-gentry, who transformed the House of Burgesses into a powerful organ of the colonial government. But most farmers were able to participate in politics. As R. E. and B. K. Brown emphasized, suffrage was more wide-spread in Virginia than it was in Massachusetts. Not only did they vote in the election of the House of Burgesses, but they also served in local government. Important local offices, such as justices of the peace, were reserved for the local gentry, to be sure. But there were a number of minor offices to be filled by ordinary people. In this sense, a considerable degree of democracy existed in 18th-century Virginia. This way, the planter-gentry integrated the common people into a political system dominated by themselves and imbued the common people with a sense of common interest with them.

As a result, they were able to secure the common people's cooperations in their resistance against the mother country and also in their dealings with Negroes and Indians. I would like to call such a political community created by the planter-gentry a "gentry republic," although Virginia was a crown colony until the Revolution. It would not be a misnomer, since the gentry was the dominant political force in pre-revolutionary as well as post-revolutionary Virginia.

I would like to add a few words regarding the economic basis of this republic. It was tobacco that integrated colonial Virginia into the British mercantile system. The existence of an extensive unsettled land in western

Virginia enabled planters and farmers not only to acquire fresh land for tobacco cultivation but also to diversify their produce. Virginians developed grain production—production of corn and wheat, part of which was exported to the West Indies and Southern Europe. Grain production was a considerable source of income for farmers. Planters, too, turned to grain production when tobacco production became less profitable. Thus it gave resilience to Virginia's plantation economy.

As I have made clear, the white men's republic and Negro slavery joined in paradoxical symbiosis in Virginia, paradoxical because the development of the former tended to establish the latter more firmly, and vice versa. This system, having reached maturity in the middle of the 18th century, did not change substantially after Independence and continued until the Civil War. This paradoxical symbiosis represented a peculiar feature of Anglo-America.

Minoru KAWAKITA, The Place of the North American Colonies in the British Mercantile System.

As Immanuel Wallerstein observed, the capitalist world-economy took shape during the age of mercantilism, beginning in the 16th century, with Western Europe as the core and with other regions as peripheries. Manufactured goods produced by free labor in the core were exchanged with staples produced by some kind of forced labor in peripheries. There were also some intermediate areas which may be called semi-peripheries. The Northern colonies on the North American continent were such intermediate areas. They never fell into the position of a periphery. Instead, they became a relatively self-sufficient intermediate zone and functioned, so to speak, as a belt-conveyer connecting peripheries with the core. Britain attempted to make New England a periphery for a while. The Naval Store Act of 1704 was the culmination of this effort. But this effort did not succeed. Instead of producing materials for ship-building, New England developed its own ship-building industry, becoming a major supplier of ships within the empire. Besides, New England developed an extensive carrying trade, making use of ships they built. Thus the region was integrated into the world-economy as a semi-periphery. The tobacco colonies in the South, on the other hand, were integrated into the world-economy as a periphery. Like the sugar colonies in the West Indies, the tobacco colonies were a typical periphery producing a staple by slave labor. Unlike the sugar colonies, however, the tobacco colonies,

together with other British colonies on the Continent, revolted against Britain and formed the United States, which later developed into a core area. Were the tobacco colonies definitely different from the sugar colonies in their relationship to the mother country, even though they were both staple producing peripheries? I would say there were definite differences between them, and because of these differences, the tobacco colonies sought independence in the American Revolution, while the sugar colonies remained subservient to Britain. I would like to discuss these differences in some detail.

Since sugar plantations yielded huge profit, many sugar planters became absentee owners, preferring to live in England instead of settling in the colonies. Profit from tobacco production was more modest and its cultivation required more careful managerial attention. Tobacco planters could not therefore afford to become absentees. A number of West Indian sugar planters, living in England, got elected in the Parliament and exercised their political influence at home. Tobacco planters, staying in the colonies, were never able to have comparable influence on British politics. Their power basis was colonial assemblies.

Sugar and tobacco planters also differed in their respective relations with British merchants. Sugar planters marketed their produce through commission agents in London. Only large planters could afford to use this marketing method. Therefore only large planters survived in the sugar colonies. Tobacco, too, was handled by commission agents in London. But Glasgow merchants also entered this tobacco marketing business, developing the store system. They established stores in the colonies and traded with small and medium-sized planters. They were successful in expanding foreign, especially French, markets for tobacco. More than half (60–70%) of tobacco was marketed through the store system. Because of the development of this system, small and medium-sized planters were able to thrive in the tobacco colonies. This brought forth a great difference in the social structure of these two kinds of colonies.

Both sugar and tobacco planters were indebted to merchants in Britain. Since many sugar planters lived in Britain, this indebtedness did not become an issue between the mother country and the colonies. In the case of the tobacco colonies, this indebtedness became a cause of colonial discontent with the British mercantile system.

Because of extensive absentee ownership in the sugar colonies, much of the planters' income from sugar exports never left Britain. Most of

the planters' income from tobacco exports on the other hand was brought into the colonies. No doubt, part of it was used to increase the social capital of the colonies.

Another difference between sugar and tobacco was their competitive strength in the international market. The British West Indian sugar planters, confronted with competition with the French West Indian sugar planters, needed the protected empire market to maintain their profit margin, and the British home market was a rapidly expanding one. Sugar consumption in Britain was multiplying as tea drinking became a national habit. The tobacco planters, on the other hand, did not need to fear international competition. Nor was the British home market able to absorb their whole product. A large part of tobacco was reexported from Britain to other countries. Therefore, they could expect that they would be able to export their tobacco directly to foreign markets when their colonies became independent. Sugar planters could never entertain such a hope. To tobacco planters, the navigation acts may have seemed to be a burden. To sugar planters, the navigation acts were nothing but a blessing.

Finally, let me add a few comments on the colonies as a market for British manufactured goods. By the middle of the 18th century, exports to the Continental colonies surpassed exports to the West Indies. It should be remembered, however, that many West Indian planters resided in Britain and their consumption did not appear in export statistics. Thus, the demand, created by the British colonies as a whole, was much larger than statistics suggest. While the British woolen industry possessed superior competitive strength in the international market, other miscellaneous manufactures were not competitive enough to penetrate into the European market. For this reason, the colonial market was critically important for the British manufactures other than woolen, including cotton and iron—products of the future leading sectors of the Industrial Revolution. In spite of Adam Smith, it must be said that the mercantile system nursed weaker branches of British manufacturing by providing them with an expanding market in the colonies.

Torao TOMITA, Comments

The three speakers discussed major problems in early American history. I myself have been keenly interested in these problems. They confirmed and clarified much of my thinking on these issues. But there were several points in their presentations I found not so convincing. I would like to

ask one question to each speaker. I am not fully persuaded by the Anglicization thesis suggested by Mr. Oshimo. Mr. Oshimo focused his discussion on the 17th century. I would like to know his opinion about colonial development in the 18th century. In that century, the colonies developed, as Mr. Ikemoto suggested in regard to Virginia, societies of their own. I think this is, so to speak, "Americanization" rather than "Anglicization." There might have been a sentiment among the colonial upper-class to imitate the life style of the English gentry or merchants. But the social realities in America were quite different from those in Britain.

Mr. Ikemoto argued that a considerable degree of democracy existed in Virginia. I presume he meant democracy within the white community, though he did not so qualify. However, it would still be inappropriate to call the Virginia political system a democracy. Such concessions as suffrage and a share in minor office holding to ordinary people were merely part of the "divide and rule" strategy of the ruling class. Planters aimed at separating ordinary people from Indians, blacks and the white lower class. If we put the matter in the total picture of Virginia society,—I assume Mr. Ikemoto intended to do this—it is very clear that we should not emphasize the existence of democracy in Virginia.

Mr. Ikemoto characterized the combination of a republic with Negro slavery in Virginia as a "paradoxical one." More precisely, it was a "combination with contradictions." For example, there were a number of slave revolts during the Revolutionary Era, which shook the basis of the plantation system in Virginia.

Mr. Kawakita stated that Virginia tobacco was very strong in the international market, and therefore tobacco planters considered independence a practical choice. However, tobacco production became less profitable in Virginia toward the end of the Colonial Period. Planters had to seek new sources of profit in grain production and land speculation. In my view, the decline of profit from tobacco and the growing involvement in land speculation drove Virginia planters toward independence. After independence, large planters were no longer able to produce tobacco with profit. Only small and medium-sized planters in the southern region of the state, who maintained their connections with English and Scottish merchants, were able to cultivate tobacco profitably.

Chair: I would like to ask each speaker to respond to Mr. Tomita's comments.

OSHIMO: I agree that the meaning of the term Anglicization is am-

biguous. Several scholars give different meanings to the term. When I look at colonial society in an evolutionary process, it is difficult to ascertain which part of evolution was caused by local, indigenous factors and which part was stimulated by new developments in Britain. British society itself became a society quite different from what it had been in the 17th century. When I speak of Anglicization in 18th-century New England, I primarily mean two social trends. One is attempt by the emerging mercantile elite in Boston to adopt the values and life-style of the mercantile culture of London. The other is the tendency of the country people to understand their conditions in terms of the English Whig ideology rather than within the framework of traditional Puritanism.

IKEMOTO: Mr. Tomita questioned my usage of the term "democracy." I wish Mr. Tomita will understand I used the term in a very limited sense. I emphasized the extensive participation of the common people in politics, because I consider it a very important aspect of the socio-political system of Virginia. It was made possible because of Negro slavery, and it strengthened support for slavery.

Of course, there were contradictions or internal conflicts in the system which I called a "gentry republic." I might add that sectional, religious conflicts developed in Virginia toward the end of the Colonial Period, as its western regions were settled by people different from Virginians of older regions in religion and ethnic background. But I would like to stress the fact that the system—the gentry republic based on Negro slavery—was able to survive for a long time by adjusting itself to these internal problems with flexibility.

KAWAKITA: It is true that tobacco planters faced difficulty in marketing their produce when they actually lost the old connections with London and Glasgow merchants. But if you compare tobacco of the Chesapeake colonies with sugar of the British West Indies, you can not but notice the former's superior strength in the international market. Tobacco planters had an alternative, even though it might have been just a theoretical one. What I really tried to explain was the historical origins of the very divergent courses of development taken by the two "peripheral" areas.

Chair: Now the discussion is open to the audience.

Hiroshi IMAI[1] (English History): I am pleased to have heard today several terms familiar to specialists in English history. Both Mr. Oshimo and Mr. Ikemoto spoke of the gentry, the transplantation of the gentry fragment in New England and of the gentry republic in Virginia. As it

is well known, the gentry class in the narrow sense of the term was declining in England when Anglo-America was taking shape. I wonder if you both could discuss the image of the English gentry in colonial America.
OSHIMO: I used the term gentry rather loosely as it is commonly used in American colonial history. The gentry was the upper class of colonial society, the ruling elite in other words. Because of the absence of nobility, they were politically dominant in the colonies. The colonial gentry, therefore, were able to play their leadership role more effectively. John Winthrop, for example, came from a typical gentry family. He was strongly aware of the leadership role of his class. He settled in America, because he thought he would be able to play the role better in the colony than at home. There were other leaders who came to New England in the 17th century, because they, like Winthrop, expected they could play a leadership role more effectively in the new society.
IKEMOTO: I used the term "Virginia gentry" in quotations. Their social basis was quite different from the English gentry. But there were similarities between them. The Virginia gentry identified themselves with the English gentry. Virginians' image of the latter, I think, was formed by their reading of English books.
IMAI: Another question is related to political ideas. When we consider the transplantation of English culture in America, we have to pay due attention to the transplantation of political ideas and their transformation in the process of transplantation. The idea of a republic governed by the gentry had existed in 17th-century England. Lacking in Britain, I think, was federalism. Probably because of the limited geographical scale of the country, the British did not conceive a confederation of local communities as a political system. May we say, then, federalism is a very American idea?
IKEMOTO: Although federalism itself was not an American invention we may say American federalism was a very American idea. It developed from their views of the status of the colonies in the British Empire. The colonists began to view the British Empire as a federal empire toward the end of the Colonial Period. The U.S. confederation was a natural outgrowth of this idea of a federal empire.
Nobumichi HIRAIDE[2] (American Economic History): This criticism was already raised by Mr. Tomita, so my comments may be repetitious. But I too fear Mr. Ikemoto drew an excessively rosy picture of Virginia society, a sort of farmers' paradise. I should say Mr. Kawakita's picture of Virginia is likewise too rosy. Mr. Kawakita said that Virginians were

able to envision independence because of the strength of tobacco in the international market. The fact, however, was that the tobacco colony was firmly subordinated to the British economy. Therefore, political independence did not bring economic independence to Virginia.

IKEMOTO: It is not my intention to describe 18th-century Virginia as farmers' paradise. I emphasized the planter-gentry's hegemony and pointed out that democratic aspects of Virginia politics were inseparably related to racism and slavery. It is paradoxical to see Jeffersonian democratic Republicanism rising in Virginia when New England was still controlled by conservative Federalism. Thus I characterized Virginia as a gentry republic based on Negro slavery. This socio-political system did not perish with the decline of tobacco production. It was very resilient. And there were reasons for its resilience.

KAWAKITA: I tried to explain why the tobacco colonies were able to seek political independence while the sugar colonies could not. Certainly political independence did not bring economic independence with it. In the modern world-economy, the international division of labor surpassed political boundaries. In a long term perspective, however, we may say that the political independence of a country could have some influence on its economic status.

Toru MATSUI[3] (History of the British Empire and Modern India): I would like to comment on Mr. Kawakita's presentation. He presented two types of socio-economic structure in the periphery: the Virginia-tobacco type and the West Indies-sugar type. Both depended upon the core economy,—in this case, upon the British economy, but they differed in the manner of dependence. The Virginia-tobacco type had an alternative to political dependence, which the West Indies had not. Mr. Kawakita's analysis was a persuasive explanation of the difference in their political attitudes toward the mother country. But Virginia did not act alone in the American Revolution, and the existence of New England and the Middle colonies as its neighbors was the decisive factor in this case. Mr. Kawakita did not mention this point. Perhaps this was too obvious to be mentioned. Another thing which I would like to know is whether Mr. Kawakita would present this typology of peripheral societies in a much wider context, for I think it might be useful to the general discussion of peripheral economic development in modern world history.

KAWAKITA: I do not think I can extend my typology so far. Its application is limited to the colonies in the British Empire. However, I think I need to discuss the case of Ireland to make my typology more complete.

Yuzo KAMO[4] (Latin American and Caribbean History): I remember Richard S. Dunn's *Sugar and Slaves* pointed out that racial prejudice in America today had originated in the West Indies. Probably we have to take into consideration the West Indian factor when we discuss racial problems in American history. Mr. Ikemoto pointed out that Virginia began to rely on Negro slavery in the 1670s. It was almost simultaneous with an explosive development of the slave plantation system in Barbados. I would like to ask Mr. Ikemoto if there was any connection between parallel developments of these slave systems, for example, any influence of the slave system in Barbados upon that in Virginia. Mr. Kawakita's comparison of the tobacco colonies and the West Indies is well taken. But I do not think all the difference can be explained away by the difference of staples: tobacco and sugar. The social structures of the two colonies were quite different. Difference in social structure explains difference in political attitude. In connection with this problem, I would like to add one more observation. The colonists in North America developed an American identity. But there was no West Indian identity. For the colonists in the West Indies, their only identity was with the British Empire.

IKEMOTO: Mr. Kamo raised an interesting point. In the 17th century, Virginia often imported Negro slaves from the West Indies, particularly from Barbados, although their numbers were relatively small. These Negroes had learned some English and acculturated themselves to the plantation culture. But from the turn of the century on, an increasing number of slaves were imported directly from West Africa. However, I would like to say, as Winthrop Jordan pointed out, that Virginians made their decisions concerning Negroes relatively free from external influences.

KAWAKITA: Virginia and the West Indies were strikingly different in social structure. But what caused this difference? Some historians say, and I tend to agree with them, that different staples brought forth different social structures.

Chair: Mr. Oshimo, would you make some comments on the problems of American identity?

OSHIMO: It is true that the colonists in British North America developed an "American" consciousness in the 18th century. But the problem of self-identity for them was a very complex one. Again, I would emphasize its diverse character, which reflected diversity in the North American colonies. In New England, for example, Puritans revealed strong self-

consciousness in their attitude toward the culture of the mother coun-
try. This might be considered as a prototype of American identity. Dur-
ing the 18th century, Anglicization and quest for an American identity
went on simultaneously. But these two processes were not mutually ex-
clusive. Those who played an important role in Anglicizing New England
also had self-awareness which might have contributed to the develop-
ment of an American identity.
Chair: Mr. Tomita, would you like to make some additional comments?
Tomita: Well, this symposium may have left many problems untouched
or insufficiently discussed. But I hope our discussion has demonstrated
that there are many interesting problems in early American history. I
regret that younger Japanese historians specializing in U.S. history do
not have much interest in early American history. I hope this symposium
can be an occasion to stimulate their interest. I am pleased to see many
young people among the audience. I am also pleased with the nature
of this symposium, for it is not a mere gathering of U.S. history
specialists, but a dialogue between Americanists and non-Americanists.
Mr. Kawakita, an English history specialist, was among the three paper-
givers and several other non-Americanists joined us in discussion. We
need more of this kind of dialogue.
Chair: Thank you, Mr. Tomita. You have preempted most of what I
wanted to say. I shall not repeat what Mr. Tomita has said. Instead,
I would like to conclude this symposium with a few comments on the
problems which have been discussed this afternoon.

Mr. Oshimo reminded us that various segments of English society were
transplanted in North America, including such an archaic one as the pro-
prietary system. Under this archaic system, however, Pennsylvania
possessed a very liberal written constitution and developed a society com-
posed mainly of medium-sized land owners. Even if the proprietary system
was a form of feudalism, it did not prevent the development of a liberal
and democratic society. In other words, it was able to survive in America
by connecting itself with such a society. We might say this archaic system
was Americanized.

Several aspects of the old English tradition, which were discarded in
Britain in the 18th century, survived in the colonies and were given a
new life and a new meaning. For instance, the concept of local represen-
tation was replaced by the concept of national representation in Britain.
In America, it survived and furnished colonial resistance against the
Parliamentary authority with a theoretical weapon. This concept also

stimulated American propensity toward federalism. Another example is the idea of the higher law, which was replaced by the idea of Parliamentary supremacy in Britain. This idea survived in the colonies, and this again provided colonial resistance with a theoretical support. Moreover, it became the theoretical basis of American constitutionalism.

Mr. Ikemoto emphasized the importance of the presence of Indians and Negroes in early American history. The adoption of Negro slavery, as Mr. Ikemoto stressed, made harmony among the whites easier in Virginia. It is ironical, as he hinted, that the existence of slavery helped the rise of Jeffersonian democracy in Virginia, while many New Englanders and New Yorkers were worried about the presence of the white lower class in the Early National Period. It must be remembered, however, that Jefferson and other liberal Virginians did not want slavery to be perpetuated. They knew that their republic based on slavery was an anomaly. They were also aware that slavery was an obstacle in developing an American self-identity—America as the land of liberty.

Mr. Kawakita reminded us of the importance of the context of the British mercantile system in understanding colonial history. Comparing the status of the tobacco colonies with that of the sugar colonies in the British mercantile system, he explained why the tobacco colonies were able to seek independence in spite of their "peripheral" status. He emphasized the strength of tobacco in the international market, while his critics, Mr. Tomita and Mr. Hiraide emphasized the declining profitability of tobacco cultivation. Mr. Kawakita held the view that the Virginians revolted with self-confidence, while Mr. Tomita and Mr. Hiraide tended to regard their revolt as an act of desperation. But I do not think these two views are mutually exclusive.

Economic factors alone, of course, cannot explain the American Revolution. As Mr. Matsui suggested, geographical factors were important. The West Indies, island colonies, were extremely vulnerable to British sea power and that of her rivals. Virginia, situated on a continent, was able to unite itself with other continental colonies. Jointly, they held a great continental domain. When we speak of an inter-colonial union, we come to the problems of American identity mentioned by Mr. Kamo. A vision of America as a great country began to emerge in the American mind in the 1750s. As Max Savelle suggested, this "discovery of America" by the colonists was an important pre-condition for the American Revolution.

As Mr. Tomita said, this symposium is a memorable occasion, since

it has provided U.S. history specialists with an opportunity of dialogue with historians specializing in other areas. As chairman, I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants for their contributions and to Mr. Toyoomi Nagata and other members of the program committee for conceiving this kind of symposium as a part of the convention program.