

## Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton: The Concepts of Time and Space in the Era of Nation-State Building

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We have many Jeffersons: Jefferson the democrat; Jefferson the liberal; and Jefferson the republican. Americans have interpreted Jefferson to suit and craft their changing self-image.<sup>1</sup> Each generation, faced with its own problems, invented a different Jefferson. Throughout their post-revolutionary history, Americans have turned to Jefferson more than any other thinker.

Ironically, an examination of Jefferson's influence during his lifetime shows that his words and deeds were heatedly challenged — and often superseded — by competing visions of the American republic. One must not confuse Jeffersonian with Madisonian ideas, nor overstate the relevance of the Jeffersonians to the crucial issues of the 1790s. In this period, after all, First Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton formulated almost all of the significant policies of the Washington administration. Hamilton's dominant influence led James Madison, co-author of *The Federalist*, to break off relations with Hamilton and ally himself with Jefferson to form a Republican challenge to Hamiltonian policies. Nevertheless, when the Republicans came to power they adopted many of the same Hamiltonian policies they had once bitterly op-

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posed as antithetical to their vision of the American republic.<sup>2</sup> To understand this period requires close attention to the swirl of debates and hybrid process of policy formation.

## 1

As Robert Shalhope pointed out, “a republican synthesis” emerged in the late 1960s.<sup>3</sup> This synthesis was a product of three books: Bernard Bailyn’s *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, Gordon S. Wood’s *The Creation of the American Republic*, and J.G.A. Pocock’s *The Machiavellian Moment*.<sup>4</sup> These three historians challenged the Hartzian paradigm which stressed that American society was already a Lockean world in the colonial period.<sup>5</sup> These historians found colonial society neither modern nor liberal. Bailyn found the origins of the Revolution in ideological rhetoric. Wood examined changing concepts of republicanism between 1776 and 1787. And Pocock traced the Anglo-American republicanism to its origin, classical republicanism.

However, we cannot say that a republican consensus and not a liberal consensus emerged in the Revolutionary period. Colonists employed republican rhetoric — terms such as “public interest,” “virtue,” and “independence” — to resolve their decade-long controversy with England and to legitimize their new state governments. Yet the colonists themselves competed against each other to claim revolutionary symbols and ideas.<sup>6</sup> Plural and antagonistic visions of republicanism characterized contemporary writings and speeches. John Adams once said that republic might mean “anything, everything, or nothing.” Hamilton, too, observed that the term was “used in various senses.”<sup>7</sup> Moreover, just as the revolutionary generation was putting forth competing republican ideologies, social and economic changes as well as political democratization undermined preconditions for a republican government.

It was Joyce Appleby who first called Pocock and his students “ideological historians” because they did not recognize the significance of the burgeoning market-oriented economy, widespread support among colonists for an individualistic way of life, and the presence of a Lockean or liberal moment in revolutionary politics.<sup>8</sup> Appleby asserted that ordinary people (predominantly farmers) came to seek pecuniary interest, methods to improve their circumstances, and ways to climb the social ladder “in an age of commercial expansion.” For these ordinary people, liberty meant freedom to pursue self-interest and freedom from govern-

ment while republican liberty required devotion to the public good and an obligation to participate in politics. Appleby expressed her interpretation of late eighteenth-century America with the title of her book: *Capitalism and a New Social Order*. She observed that the order and stability of American society was established autonomously, *without* governmental intervention, as a result of the exchange of agricultural surpluses in the free market. Appleby insisted that it was these liberal principles that animated the Republicans and not republicanism.<sup>9</sup>

Appleby called into question dominant historical interpretations, arguing that Republicans, in “shedding the past,” had laid claim to “future economic development...tied to the belief in economic freedom.” Federalists, however, expected “that the new American political institutions would continue to function within the old assumptions about a politically active elite and a deferential, compliant electorate.”<sup>10</sup> In fact, neo-Beardians were ahead of Appleby in tracing how farmers, retailers, and mechanics went beyond the conventional, communitarian market in order to pursue their own interests during the war boom. Borrowing E.P. Thompson’s framework, they concluded that a republican consensus was collapsing among these groups.<sup>11</sup> In his splendid book, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, Wood claimed that during the 1790s a republican way of thinking was transforming to one along Jacksonian democratic lines. In his debates with Appleby, Lance Banning conceded that liberalism and republicanism coexisted in the late eighteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The republican synthesis has been reshaped by these studies.

Republicanism underwent a process of transformation during the Revolutionary era. Anti-federalists opposed ratification of the Federal Constitution because they thought that a republic could be maintained only in a small area such as a state. In a large empire, they insisted, tyranny would inevitably emerge.<sup>13</sup> The founding fathers also recognized the difficulty of establishing a republic in a large territory while nonetheless attempting just that. Although Madison was afraid that an energetic government could transgress “the inviolable attention due to liberty and to the republican form,” he nonetheless found in the Union “a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government.” At the Federal Convention Madison interpreted the stance of Hamilton, who was regarded as an anti-republican, as follows: According to Madison, although Hamilton despaired “that a republican government could be established over so great an extent, he was sensible at the same time that it would be unwise to propose one of any other form.”<sup>14</sup> By what means

could a republican government be realized in a vast territory where people pursued their own self-interests? This essay addresses the question by focusing on how Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton contended with it.

## 2

An anti-federalist said that “in a republic, the manners, sentiments, and interests of the people should be similar.” This homogeneity could be preserved through collective memory, maintainable only in a small territory. This anti-federalist also observed that given the variety of climates, products, laws, and customs among the states, a legislature formed of representatives from all parts of the country “would be composed of such heterogeneous and discordant principles, as would constantly be contending with each other.”<sup>15</sup>

One can easily find such arguments in the controversy over the ratification of the Constitution. The anti-federalists insisted that there were necessary and indispensable conditions of time and place for maintaining republican government. The founding fathers struggled against the warnings of David Hume and Charles Louis de Secondat Montesquieu to define a modern and large republic.<sup>16</sup> About the relationship between time and republican government, the founding fathers seemed to have three concepts.

First, they sought to understand whether history were a progressive or corruptive agent. As exemplified by Jean-Jacque Rousseau’s *Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes*, eighteenth-century intellectuals found no easy answers to whether or not the modern world was superior to the classical world. Rousseau favored the classical world because he concluded that a healthy political body could exist only in an agrarian society. Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, notably Hume, defended the modern, civilized society and observed that the classical republic could not be a model for a society in which commerce and the division of labor flourished.<sup>17</sup> These two opposing historical views influenced the founding fathers. Second, the founding fathers understood that each state, or colony, had its own collective memory. They wondered if a republic that unified the states could be established without collective memory, or whether a new collective memory could be invented? Finally, the founding fathers wondered if the United States should follow precedent in modelling their republic. After the colonists won independence from the British monarchy, there

was a consensus among Americans that the new nation should be a republic. For most people, however, a republic meant a polity without a monarch but not necessarily much more. The classical tradition left its influence in the title of the Senate, but the establishment of the American republic did not represent a return to the classical world. Hamilton criticized anti-federalists' sketches of republican government in America as "just copies" of original classical republics, and insisted that the "science of politics...has received great improvement."<sup>18</sup> He would have concurred with Alexis de Tocqueville's statement that a new science of politics was needed for a new world.

Madison observed that commercial development was inevitable and that America would not be excluded from commercialization; he concluded that without some remedies to the effects of commercialization the republic would dissolve. "In all civilized Countries," he was convinced, "the people fall into different classes havg. a real or supposed difference of interests." Madison agreed with Charles Pinkney's observation that "we had not among us those hereditary distinctions, of rank which were a great source of the contests in the ancient Govts. as well as the modern States of Europe, nor those extremes of wealth or poverty which characterize the latter." He stressed, however, that we (Americans) cannot "be regarded even at this time, as one homogeneous mass, in which every thing that affects a part will affect in the same manner the whole." Madison pointed out that the "man who is possessed of wealth, who lolls on his sofa or rolls in his carriage, cannot judge of the wants or feelings of the day laborer." He thus warned that in "framing a system which we wish to last for ages, we shd. not lose sight of the changes which ages will produce." "In future times," he forecasted, "a great majority of the people will not only be without landed, but any other sort of, property."<sup>19</sup>

While Madison did not abandon establishing a federal republic, of course, he could not design it by relying directly on the historical examples. For him, the confederate republics both of antiquity and of the feudal ages seemed to be unsuccessful. Madison concluded that not "a due subordination and harmony...but the contrary is sufficiently displayed in the vicissitudes and fate of the republic." Although the German confederacy had "a similar principle" to the American, it was not to be emulated. "The history of Germany," Madison continued, was "a history of wars between the emperor and the princes and states; of wars among princes and states themselves; of the licentiousness of the strong and the oppression of the weak; of foreign intrusions and foreign in-

trigues; of requisitions of men and money disregarded, or partially complied with; of attempts to enforce them, altogether abortive, or attended with slaughter and desolation, involving the innocent with the guilty; of general imbecility, confusion, and misery.”<sup>20</sup> Thus, Madison tried to prove the legitimacy of the federal republic scientifically and not historically. Robert Dahl argued that Madison’s theory was “more compactly logical, almost mathematical,” than any “other political writing.”<sup>21</sup> Indeed, in *The Federalist* Number 51, Madison tested the principles of republican government as if politics were a kind of physics. “In a compound republic of America,” he pointed out, “the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments, and then the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments.” “The different governments,” he continued, “will control each other, at the same time that each will be controlled by itself.”<sup>22</sup> As a result, the republican government which had owed its existence to history or tradition was transformed into the separation of government or a system of checks and balances.

Madison believed it necessary to adopt a method to attach the people to the federal republic. Only through such means could the federal government, lacking a collective memory, match state governments in legitimacy. Madison’s scientific arguments in *The Federalist Papers* seem to mark the beginning of political science.<sup>23</sup> Arthur Bentley and Robert Dahl, with their stress on “experimental truth” or “experimental fact,” might be called heirs to Madison.<sup>24</sup> Madison was nonetheless willing to dispense with scientific theory during the actual process of republic building. He came to think that even a large republic needed collective memories and thought it necessary to rely on states to furnish a collective memory. Madison observed that the federal republic as well as each state could function only with a common sense of history and place (one could call this “Heimat”). It was in this sense that Madison parted with Hamilton. In *The Federalist* Number 39, Madison concluded that we find the Constitution “neither wholly *national* nor wholly *federal*.”<sup>25</sup> This argument should be understood not only as his effort to persuade anti-federalists of the viability of the federal republic, but also as an appeal to Hamilton the nationalist. Madison’s interpretation was that while the federal government was delegated certain specific powers with regard to which it had exclusive authority, each state government preserved other powers by which it could maintain its own popular government and democratize the federal government.<sup>26</sup> For him, the federal republic was

nothing but a confederation of small republics with collective memories. Madison presented his statist theory in the Virginia Resolutions. He insisted that in the case of "deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise" of unconstitutional powers by the federal government, the states "have the right and are duty bound to interpose for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining within their respective limits, the authorities, rights and liberties appertaining to them." And he appealed to other states to join Virginia "in declaring that the acts aforesaid are unconstitutional."<sup>27</sup>

While Madison tried to establish a federal republic against the progress of time, Hamilton worked to adapt it to the development of commerce and manufacture. He did not think the emergence of "civilized society" posed a threat to republican government. Instead he promoted industry as a means to shoring up the federal republic.<sup>28</sup> His reports on financial policies, especially on the subject of manufactures, were bitterly attacked by the Republicans because of their anti-republican tendencies. An anonymous column published in the *National Gazette* in 1792 alleged that the enemies of state governments would prefer "a consolidated, energetic government supported by public creditors, speculators, members of these several companies, and others receiving bounties and exemptions rising upon the ruins of our free republics."<sup>29</sup>

To understand why Hamilton proposed such anti-republican policies, one must grasp the changing economic activity which the Revolutionary War helped spur. Pauline Maier concluded that "for the merchants, artisans, and seamen elsewhere who rallied to the American cause, the revolution promised to give far more than it asked, and its rewards would be of a material as well as spiritual sort." For these people liberty was "good business."<sup>30</sup> William Findley, an anti-federalist of Pennsylvania, said that the human soul "is affected by wealth, in almost all its faculties. It is affected by its present interest, by its expectations, and by its fears." "I love and pursue it," he continued, "not as an end, but as a means of enjoying happiness and independence."<sup>31</sup> Thus, people were released from communitary regulations, and expected enduring prosperity and the improvement of their circumstances. For Hamilton, a prerequisite to establishing the federal republic was satisfying people's egoistic desires.

Hamilton did not naively approve of the emerging modern liberal society. He understood that the United States must invent its own national tradition which would become instilled in people's minds as collective memory.<sup>32</sup> He observed that because man "is very much a creature of

habit...a thing that rarely strikes his senses will generally have but a transient influence upon his mind.”<sup>33</sup> State governments, therefore, were a threat to the federal republic. Since each colony (state) had formed a network of bonds which tied people together, these governments possessed “the confidence of the people” and could “combine all the resources of the community.” “The people, by throwing themselves into either” state governments or the general government, “will infallibly make [one] preponderate.” Hamilton sought to direct “the affections of the citizen toward” the federal government.<sup>34</sup> He hoped time would accomplish this. “’Tis time only,” he wrote, “that can mature and perfect so compound a system, can liquidate the meaning of all the parts, and can adjust them to each other in a harmonious and consistent WHOLE.”<sup>35</sup> This was not an optimistic answer. Hamilton was so sensitive to the handicap of federal government in winning the hearts of the people that he thought at length about how to attach them to the federal government.

There can be no exaggerating the significance of classical republicanism for revolutionary Americans. Anti-federalists emphasized the analogy between republics and state governments. Consequently, it was necessary for Hamilton to disclose the defects of ancient republics. Speaking to the people of New York, he asserted:

It is impossible to read the history of the petty republics of Greece and Italy without feeling sensations of horror and disgust at the distractions with which they were continually agitated, and at the rapid succession of revolutions by which they were kept in a state of perpetual vibration between the extremes of tyranny and anarchy.<sup>36</sup>

Hamilton condemned the anti-federalists’ understanding of Montesquieu’s argument over small republics, and cited *De l’Esprit des Lois* to justify a federal republic. “So far are the suggestions of Montesquieu,” Hamilton noted, “he explicitly treats of a CONFEDERATE REPUBLIC as the expedient for extending the sphere of popular government and reconciling the advantages of monarchy with those of republicanism.”<sup>37</sup> To establish the modern republic, Hamilton could not help struggling against tradition and history as well.

Jefferson was convinced that America and Europe found themselves in different streams of time. In response to Madison’s pessimistic conclusion that “a certain degree of misery seems inseparable from a high degree of populousness,” Jefferson argued that such a crisis would not arise “for many centuries.”<sup>38</sup> For him as well as Madison, historical decline or cor-



ruption occurred as a result of overpopulation, especially from an increase in nonfarmers. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson said that “generally speaking, the proportion which the aggregate of the other classes of citizens bears in any state to that of its husbandmen is the proportion of its unsound to its healthy parts, and is a good enough barometer whereby to measure its degree of corruption.”<sup>39</sup> In Europe, “the mobs of great cities” were harmful to republican government. Their dependence “begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue.” On the other hand, the large proportion of Americans remained farmers “whose breasts he (God) has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.”<sup>40</sup>

If we focus on this aspect as do the authors of the republican synthesis, Jefferson can be interpreted as seeking to establish a federal republic based on the model of the ancient and classical republics. As already noted, however, Jefferson has also been understood as a herald of modern liberalism and as a true product of the Enlightenment. Appleby asserted that progress or prosperity was prominent in late eighteenth-century thinking, and that people espousing progress and prosperity were found among the Jeffersonians, not the Hamiltonians.<sup>41</sup> This explanation contradicted the republican synthesis because, according to the republican school, the development of economic activity could not fail to ruin republican government. Still, if Jefferson conceived this development not as the growth of luxurious consumption but as the animation of industrious labor, the pursuit of public virtue was not incongruous with anticipating and promoting progress.<sup>42</sup> Thus Jefferson could speak in the Enlightenment’s words at the same time that he wrote in the classical republican language.

Additionally, Jefferson might not have considered it important whether history would progress or decline. He did not relate the capability of the federal republic to historical change. For him, a republic could restart whenever it was necessary, and Jefferson saw virtue in the continual regeneration of the republic. A periodic rebellion was “a medicine...necessary for the sound health of government.... The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants.”<sup>43</sup> This proposition was for a kind of recurring revolution. If each generation overthrew the precedent republican government, however, it would be difficult to maintain the collective memory indispensable for republics. As Hannah Arendt said in *On Revolution*, if the action of founding becomes the routine work, the memory of founding and

tradition fades away.<sup>44</sup>

## 3

George Mason, an anti-federalist planter, observed that there had never existed “a government over a very extensive country without destroying the liberties of the people.” This, he argued, was true “in all ages.”<sup>45</sup> Anti-federalists accepted Montesquieu’s argument that republics existed only in limited territory, and in extensive realms tyranny inevitably overwhelms the republic. Moreover, their experience in community politics convinced them of the plausibility of his reasoning.

James Madison wrestled with persuading his countrymen of the validity of republican government in a large empire. In *The Federalist Papers*, he defended a large republic because it could prevent the emergence of the tyranny of the majority. He observed that if you “extend the sphere and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests...you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens.” In a large republic more so than in a small one, the public interest would be realized easily through representative government. Madison insisted that “a chosen body of citizens” with public virtue “may best discern the true interest of their country...and will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations.”<sup>46</sup>

Madison based his belief in the viability of a large republic on other grounds as well. As Secretary of State, he supported the Louisiana Purchase. Although this purchase resulted directly from the Mississippi crisis of 1801-1803,<sup>47</sup> it can also be understood as a vote of confidence in the viability of a large republic. In fact, Madison thought that the corruption and the decline of public virtue would be remedied by the enlargement of the republic’s territory. Madison’s argument deserves examination.

Madison observed that as the population of America increased, its political economy became too heterogeneous to sustain republican government. “We see in the populous Countries in Europe now,” he asserted, “what we shall be hereafter.”<sup>48</sup> “At the expiration of twenty-five years hence, I conceive that in every part of the United States, there will be as great a population as there is now in the settled parts. We see already, that in the most populous parts of the Union, and where there is but a medium, manufactures are beginning to be established.”<sup>49</sup> Madison, however, did not abandon the republican potential in America. He in-

sisted that manufacturing should be kept in each household and that the development of a division of labor should proceed between America and Europe and not simply within America. Madison stressed that the farmers “who provide at once their own food and their own raiment, may be viewed as the most truly independent and happy. They are more; they are the best basis of public liberty, and the strongest bulwark of public safety. It follows, that the greater the proportion of this class to the whole society, the more free, the more independent, and the more happy must be the society itself.”<sup>50</sup> Thus, it was necessary to extend the space of the republic to keep the agrarian part of the population predominant. If Americans could use the “vacant land of the U.S. lying on the waters of the Mississippi,” Madison predicted in 1784, “we shall consequently have few internal manufactures in proportion to our numbers as at present.”<sup>51</sup> For Madison the extent of the territory was not an obstacle to surmount but a necessary and indispensable condition to realize republican government.

Jefferson agreed with Madison on the necessity of enlarging space to maintain and cultivate the public virtue. By focusing on Jefferson’s understanding of spatial development, one can understand why he was indifferent to historical decline. For him, republican government seemed to be maintained only in America because of its immense extent. “In Europe the lands are either cultivated, or locked up against the cultivator,” Jefferson noted. He happily contrasted Europe’s situation with that of America: “...we have an immensity of land courting the industry of the husbandman.”<sup>52</sup> “Those who labour in the earth are,” he continued, “the chosen people of God,” because “no age nor nation has furnished an example” in which their morals were corrupted.<sup>53</sup> Only farmers could preserve the public virtue. Jefferson concluded that “cultivators of the earth are the most virtuous and independent citizens.”<sup>54</sup> Thus, argued Jefferson, as long as “we have land to labour,” America could maintain a healthy and virtuous government.<sup>55</sup> In 1788, Madison and Jefferson only differed slightly in their predictions of when America’s existing territory would be settled. Madison predicted twenty-five years and Jefferson calculated forty years.<sup>56</sup> After the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson happily remarked that by “enlarging the empire of liberty, ...we multiply its auxiliaries, and provide new sources of renovation...”<sup>57</sup>

Jefferson envisioned the American empire as a purely agrarian society, whereas Madison envisioned a commercialized agrarian society. Jeffer-

son conceived that America could and should “turn all our citizens to the cultivation of the earth.”<sup>58</sup> If manufacturing and commerce developed, Jefferson worried, “pure government” would be corroded the same way as “sores” sapped “the strength of the human body.”<sup>59</sup> Jefferson supported the need to secure free overseas trade so that America would have a market for agricultural products and could obtain manufactured products. The Atlantic Ocean was the barrier that kept sores from intruding into healthy American society. Jefferson described the division of labour between America and Europe:

It is better to carry provisions and materials to workmen there, than bring them to the provisions and materials, and with them their manners and principles. The loss by the transportation of commodities across the Atlantic will be made up in happiness and permanence of government.<sup>60</sup>

Jefferson argued that to secure overseas markets, America must adopt an omnidirectional foreign policy. Indeed, in *Notes on Virginia*, Jefferson insisted that we should “endeavour...to cultivate the peace and friendship of every nation.” “Our interest will be to throw open the doors of commerce, and to knock off all its shackles,” he continued, “giving perfect freedom to all persons for the vent of whatever they may choose to bring into our ports, and asking the same in theirs.”<sup>61</sup> One should not interpret this vision of diplomacy as a predisposition to commit America to international society. On the contrary, Jefferson saw free trade as a means of isolating America from baneful influences. In 1823 Jefferson wrote to President James Monroe:

Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should therefore have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe.<sup>62</sup>

Two months after receiving Jefferson’s letter, Monroe gave his annual message to Congress; this address came to be known as the “Monroe Doctrine.” From that point on American diplomacy followed an isolationistic approach toward Europe. Of course American isolationism did not result exclusively from Jefferson. In his farewell address, George Washington stressed that America’s “detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course.”<sup>63</sup> He also advised his

countrymen to utilize "the advantages of so peculiar a situation."<sup>64</sup>

Jefferson and Washington both recommended isolation, but for different reasons. Washington saw isolation as a realistic and necessary path for the infant nation. To accomplish and secure the independent position of the U.S. it was necessary to avoid entangling "our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice."<sup>65</sup> Jefferson did not share Washington's sense of impending external crisis. He viewed the new republic not as a fragile infant but rather as an energetic youth. What this energetic youth required in Jefferson's mind was protection from corrupting influence; there was no better protection than the Atlantic. Jefferson approached Europe from an ideological perspective. He asserted that America "should...have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavors should surely be, to make our hemisphere that of freedom."<sup>66</sup> From today's perspective, one could say that Jefferson, convinced that America embodied the universal truth, championed a Cold War way of thinking. It is not inappropriate to trace the "legalistic and moralistic approach" in American foreign policy to Jefferson.<sup>67</sup> It was Jefferson who, concluding that Britain had violated a basic principle of the relationship between nations — free trade(a principle never agreed upon by the European powers), ordered the Embargo of 1807.<sup>68</sup> Jefferson made logic stand on its head. Isolated by the Atlantic, America had the energy and strength not only to defend her isolation but to impose her will on nation-states across the Atlantic.

While Jefferson imagined America a place distinct from Europe, he did not grasp her as one republic. While he tried to extend the territory, he did not intend to establish a consolidated republic. Madison came to rely on states for creating the federal republic, but Jefferson intended to subdivide the large territory. Jefferson was actually even more radical: working to enlarge the territory, he proposed a ward system.<sup>69</sup> In December 1778, Jefferson planned this system to "give stability and solid glory to the republic."<sup>70</sup> And in 1810, he wrote: "I have two great measures at heart, without which no republic can maintain itself in strength." The ward system was one of them. Basing his model on New England's town system, Jefferson intended to divide every county into hundreds, which he saw as fundamental units required to nurture public virtue.<sup>71</sup> It seems contradictory that Jefferson sought expansion while hoping to create small republics. Jefferson, however, saw no inconsistency. "The elemen-

tary republics of the wards, the county republics, the State republics, and the republic of the Union would form a gradation of authorities, standing each on the basis of law, holding every one its delegated share of powers, and constituting truly a system of fundamental balances and checks for the government."<sup>72</sup> While seeking to create miniature republics, Jefferson required a large republic that would prevent private interests from prevailing. Jefferson, like Madison, came to conceive of the American republic as a layered confederacy.

## 4

Although Hamilton "was much discouraged by the amazing extent of Country," he nonetheless struggled with founding a republican government.<sup>73</sup> For Hamilton the existing territory was at the very limit of what was permissible for a republic. Hamilton, with regards to the Louisiana Purchase, was doubtful about the advantage of possessing land west of the Mississippi. Referring to "the present extent of the United States," and noting that "not one sixteenth part of its territory is yet under occupation," Hamilton concluded that "the advantage of the acquisition, as it relates to actual settlement, appears too distant and remote to strike the mind of a sober politician with force."<sup>74</sup>

Whereas Jefferson reproached Hamilton for becoming an American Caesar, Hamilton questioned the validity of the American republic becoming the American empire. He took seriously the arguments of the anti-federalists and Montesquieu about the need of a small republic. The philosophy of David Hume provided no relief. "It is not easy for distant parts of a large state," Hume had concluded, "to combine in any plan of free government; but they easily conspire in the esteem and reverence for a single person who, by means of this popular favor, may seize the power and forcing the more obstinate to submit, may establish a monarchical government."<sup>75</sup> Hamilton nonetheless believed that if the federal government could only win the affections of the people, it could be governed by civil power and not military power.<sup>76</sup> Whether the authority of the Union would be sufficient for civil power to govern depended on not only the longstanding memory but also the extent of space. "A government continually at a distance and out of sight," Hamilton observed, "can hardly be expected to interest the sensations of the people."<sup>77</sup> The public memory could not be counted on because the federal republic still required founding. So Hamilton worked to limit the realm of the Union.

For Hamilton, the task of nation-building already faced enough problems without westward expansion. The existing territory was vast and already divided into states — autonomous political bodies. Hamilton wondered how the federal republic would be able to detach the affections of the citizens from their states while tying the people together as a whole. In other words, how would the federal government create one large political body, an American nation? Hamilton's solution was the commercial republic, one in which agriculture, commerce, and manufacture coexisted in the prosperity provided by a national market. This was a counter-proposal to the communal small republic that both Jefferson and Madison saw as necessary to nurture the public virtue. Hamilton understood that classical virtue was sure to give rise to parochialism and localism, thus weakening the fabric of the republic. If this occurred, the Union would be no better off than before. In *The Federalist Papers*, Hamilton had forecasted, correctly, that "several States, in case of disunion, or such combinations of them as might happen to be formed out of the wreck of the general Confederacy, would be subject to those vicissitudes of peace and war, of friendship and enmity with each other, which have fallen to the lot to all neighboring nations not united under one government."<sup>78</sup> To avoid this situation, the federal government should extend its authority to "matters of internal concern" to satisfy people's needs and wants.<sup>79</sup> "Mutual wants constitute," Hamilton concluded, "one of the strongest links of political connection; and the extent of these bears a natural proportion to the diversity in means of mutual supply."<sup>80</sup> If private interest, which he thought was the strongest motive to human action, could be satisfied, a single harmonious and orderly republic could be established in a heterogeneous society.<sup>81</sup>

It is wrong to interpret such a republic as nothing more than an economic body in which people pursue only pecuniary interest. For Hamilton, the human being was not *homo economicus*, although he did not believe in *zōon politikon*. He expected that through free intercourse among various interests, humans would come to feel sympathy for others, which was a kind of public spirit. Hamilton, in his *Report on Manufacture*, predicted:

In proportion as the mind is accustomed to trace the intimate connection of interest which subsists between all the parts of a society united under the same government, the infinite variety of channels will serve to circulate the prosperity of each, to and through the rest, — in that proportion will be lit-

tle apt to be disturbed by the solicitude and apprehensions which originate in local discriminations.<sup>82</sup>

Hamilton could not hope for the formation of a national identity such as that provided France by the French Revolution. He nonetheless wished that people would consider the federal republic as one nation.

## 5

Jefferson and Madison held to their conviction that the Hamiltonian system destroyed republican government. They feared his approval of self-interest and his advocacy of a strong, energetic government. While Hamilton resigned himself to the emergence of the modern market economy, he worked to keep private interests and passions from corrupting the public sphere, where virtuous and enlightened statesmen were to pursue the public good selflessly.<sup>83</sup> This ruling style seemed to come from *raison d'être* more than from civic virtue, which meant the ability of participating in the decision making process. In the confrontation between Jefferson, Madison and Hamilton, one sees the antagonism between *Il Principe* and *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio*.

May one assert that Jefferson's election to the presidency opened the age of democracy? Or that this election swept away an "antidemocratic" Hamiltonian system? Many historians who stress the significance of civic humanism tend to downplay the tensions between republicanism and democracy,<sup>84</sup> and to analyze the transition from the Jeffersonian era to the Jacksonian era as a linear process of democratization. It is true that Jacksonians split off from Jeffersonian republicans, so clearly the parties had some affinities.<sup>85</sup>

Jacksonians were not the only successors to Republicans, however. Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and their supporters opposed Jacksonians in order to defend the Jeffersonian heritage, although some of their visions, especially Clay's American System, bore a close resemblance to the Hamiltonian system.<sup>86</sup> It is thus possible to trace the influence of Hamilton on the Jacksonian era. This is not to say that Hamilton's vision predominated over the visions of Jefferson and Madison in the early nineteenth-century. More research is required to fully understand the relationship between the Hamiltonian and Republican systems, and the relationship between the 1790s and the first three decades of nineteenth-century.



After the failure of the Embargo, through which Jefferson had sought to maintain the agrarian republic, he came to support the encouragement of manufacture. After the War of 1812, Madison proposed a peacetime army of twenty thousand men, federal support for internal improvements, tariff protection for American industries, and the creation of a new national bank.<sup>87</sup> Preceding Clay and John Q. Adams, both Jefferson and Madison adopted parts of the Hamiltonian system; in the 1790s they had criticized these very measures as anti-republican plots. Clearly the Jeffersonian republic could not be realized without the pillars of the Hamiltonian system.

The Jacksonian era was not confronted with the difficulties of the founding era. Hamilton, then Jefferson and Madison, had liquidated the remaining business of the Revolution, winning both security from external threats and internal integration. Republican ideas were not seriously debated in the emerging era because the founding fathers had established the federal republic. While the terms of republicanism were transmitted to the Jacksonian era, during that period the so-called "people" were not virtuous citizens but common men who preferred private to public interest. The new order of the age was realized by "private citizens."<sup>88</sup> Support for Jacksonian Democracy was in fact support for economic liberalism far more than for classical republicanism.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Merrill Peterson, *The Jeffersonian Image in the American Mind* (New York, 1960).

<sup>2</sup> Lance Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology* (Ithaca, 1978), pp. 300-301.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Shalhope, "Toward a Republican Synthesis: The Emergence of an Understanding of Republicanism in American Historiography," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 29 (Jan. 1972), pp. 49-80.

<sup>4</sup> Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, 1967); Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill, 1969); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975).

<sup>5</sup> Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution* (New York, 1955).

<sup>6</sup> For an analysis of the role of language in revolutionary politics, see Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Los Angeles, 1984). Hunt argued that revolutionary politics in America was over interest, not language.

<sup>7</sup> For Adam's quote, see Charles Francis Adams, ed., *The Works of John Adams*

(Boston, 1850-56), Vol.10. p. 378; For that of Hamilton, see Harold C. Syrett, ed., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton* (New York, 1961-81), Vol.5, p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> For Appleby's critique of the republican synthesis and its proponents' interpretations of the American Revolution, see Joyce Appleby, *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Joyce Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York, 1984).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88, p. 79, p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of neo-Beardian essays, see Alfred F. Young, ed., *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (Dekalb, 1976).

<sup>12</sup> Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1992); Lance Banning, "Jeffersonian Ideology Revisited: Liberal and Classical Ideas in the New American Republic," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 43 (Jan. 1986), pp. 3-19.

<sup>13</sup> See Herbert J. Storing, ed., *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, 7 vols. (Chicago, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, Issac Kramnick ed. (New York, 1987), p. 243, p. 128; Max Farrand ed., *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (New Heaven, 1966), vol. 2, p. 288.

<sup>15</sup> Herbert J. Storing, ed., *The Complete Anti-Federalist* (Chicago, 1981), vol.2, pp. 369-370.

<sup>16</sup> In *The Federalist Papers*, Number 9, Hamilton defended the Constitution by reinterpreting Montesquieu's small republic. See pp. 118-122. For a discussion of the influence of Hume on Madison, see Douglass Adair's essay in Trevor Colbourn, ed., *Fame and the Founding Fathers* (New York, 1974). In his *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government* (Stanford, 1970), Gerald Stourzh discusses the influence of Hume on Hamilton.

<sup>17</sup> For a concise and excellent explanation of the controversy over the modern and the classical, in Takeshi Sasaki, Seiichi Sumi, and Atsushi Sugita, *Seiyou Seiji Shisoushi* [History of Western Political Thought] (Tokyo, 1995), pp. 120-127.

<sup>18</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 9, p. 119.

<sup>19</sup> Farrand, ed., *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, vol. 1, p. 422, p. 431, p. 422, vol. 2, pp. 203-204.

<sup>20</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 18, p. 162, p. 164, p. 166.

<sup>21</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (Chicago, 1956), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 51, p. 321.

<sup>23</sup> For this interpretation, see Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory*.

<sup>24</sup> For a genealogy of American political science, see Sheldon S. Wolin, "The Idea of the State in America," *Humanities in Society*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring 1980), pp. 151-168.

<sup>25</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 39, p. 259.

<sup>26</sup> Here I have drawn on the work of Lance Banning, "The Practicable Sphere of a Republic: James Madison, the Constitutional Convention, and the Emergence of Revolutionary Federalism," in Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II, eds., *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, 1987), pp. 162-187.

<sup>27</sup> The Virginia Resolutions, January 4, 1799. Gaillard Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison* (New York, 1900-1910), vol. 6, pp. 326-331.

<sup>28</sup> For a more detailed explanation of the relationship between commerce and

manufacture, and republican government, see Katsuro Nakano, *Amerika Renpō Taisei no Kakuritu* [A Vision of the Federal System] (University of Tokyo Press, 1993).

<sup>29</sup> "Brutus," no. 3, *National Gazette*, March 22, 1792.

<sup>30</sup> Pauline Maier, *The Old Revolutionaries: Political Lives in the Age of Samuel Adams* (New York, 1980), p. 100.

<sup>31</sup> Gordon S. Wood, "Interests and Disinterestedness in the Making of the Constitution," in *Beyond Confederation*, p. 99.

<sup>32</sup> For a discussion of the concept of invented tradition, see Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, England, 1983).

<sup>33</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 27, p. 203.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 28, p. 206; no. 27, 203.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 82, p. 458.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 9, p. 118.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119, p. 120.

<sup>38</sup> Madison to Jefferson, June 19, 1786, in Julian P. Boyd *et al.*, eds., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton, 1950- ), vol. 9, p. 660; Jefferson to Madison, *ibid.*, vol. 12, p. 442.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. William Peden (Chapel Hill, 1955), p. 165.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> See Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order*, pp. 79-105.

<sup>42</sup> Here I have drawn on the work of Michel Lienesch, *New Order of the Age: Time, the Constitution, and the Making of Modern American Political Thought* (Princeton, 1988).

<sup>43</sup> Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, November 13, 1787, Boyd ed., *Papers of Jefferson*, vol. 12, p. 356.

<sup>44</sup> See Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1965), p.235.

<sup>45</sup> George Mason, address to the Virginia convention, June 4, 1788, Jonathan Elliot, ed., *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of Federal Constitution*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1861-63), vol. 3, p. 87.

<sup>46</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 10, p. 126, p. 127.

<sup>47</sup> For an examination of the Mississippi Crisis, see Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803: A Study in Trade, Politics, and Diplomacy* (New York, 1934).

<sup>48</sup> Farrand, ed., *The Records of the Federal Convention*, vol. 2, p. 124.

<sup>49</sup> Rutland *et al.*, eds., *Papers of Madison*, vol. 11, p. 125.

<sup>50</sup> Hunt, ed., *Writings of Madison*, vol. 6, pp. 96-99.

<sup>51</sup> Madison to Jefferson, Aug. 30, 1784, Rutland *et al.*, eds., *Papers of Madison*, vol. 8, pp. 107-108.

<sup>52</sup> Peden, ed., *Notes on Virginia*, p. 164.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>56</sup> See James Madison, "Power to Levy Direct Taxes; the Mississippi Question," June 12, 1788, Rutland *et al.*, eds., *Papers of Madison*, vol. 11, p. 125.

<sup>57</sup> Jefferson to the president and legislative council, the speaker and house of representatives of the territory of Indiana, Dec. 28, 1805, as cited in Adrienne Koch, *The Great Collaboration* (New York, 1950), pp. 244-245.

<sup>58</sup> Peden, ed., *Notes on Virginia*, p. 175.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>62</sup> Jefferson to Monroe, October 24, 1823, Ford, ed., *Writings of Jefferson*, vol.10, p. 277.

<sup>63</sup> Farewell Address, September 17, 1796, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (Washington, D.C., 1931-44), vol. 25. p. 234.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* Here I have profited from Makoto Saito's excellent analysis of early American diplomacy. See Saito, *Amerika Kakumeishi Kenkyu* [An Interpretation of the American Revolution] (Tokyo, 1992). See, especially, chapter 11.

<sup>66</sup> Jefferson to Monroe, October 24, 1823, Ford, ed., *Writings of Jefferson*, vol.10, p. 277.

<sup>67</sup> For an analysis of the legalistic-moralistic approach in American foreign policy, see George Kennan, *American Diplomacy* (Chicago, 1951).

<sup>68</sup> For an analysis of Jefferson's views of the relationship between the political economy and foreign policy, see chapter nine in Drew R. McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill, 1980). This issue is also addressed in chapter 6.

<sup>69</sup> For a discussion of the ward system, see chapter one of Takeshi Igarashi, *Amerika no Kenkoku* [Building of the American Republic] (Tokyo, 1984).

<sup>70</sup> Cited in Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (New York, 1970), p. 150.

<sup>71</sup> Jefferson to John Tyler, May 26, 1810, Ford, ed., *Writings of Jefferson*, vol.9, pp. 276-277.

<sup>72</sup> Jefferson to Joseph C. Cabell, February 2, 1816, *ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 661.

<sup>73</sup> Farrand, ed., *The Records of the Federal Convention*, pp. 283-284.

<sup>74</sup> Purchase of Louisiana, July 5, 1803, Syrett, ed., *Papers of Hamilton*, vol. 26, p. 133.

<sup>75</sup> Cited in Stourtz, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>76</sup> *The Federalist Papers*, no. 27, p. 203.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 8, pp. 113-114.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 27, p. 203.

<sup>80</sup> Report on Manufactures, Syrett, ed., *Papers of Hamilton*, vol. 10, p. 295.

<sup>81</sup> Hamilton did not believe that disinterestedness was a motive for human action in a commercialized society. See "The Farmer Refuted," February 23, 1775, *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 92.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 293-295.

<sup>83</sup> For Hamilton's concept of public spiritedness, see Forrest McDonald, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York, 1979), pp. 259-261.

<sup>84</sup> Sheldon S. Wolin, *The Presence of the Past* (Baltimore, 1989), pp. 4-5.

<sup>85</sup> Russell L. Hanson, *The Democratic Imagination in America: Conversations with Our Past* (Princeton, 1985), pp. 119-120.

<sup>86</sup> McCoy, *Elusive Republic*, p. 250.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222. See also Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, p. 299.

<sup>88</sup> Lienesch used this concept in *New Order of the Ages*, p. 173.