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978-1-107-01528-9 - The American National State and the Early West

William H. Bergmann

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Introduction

In December 1804, Thomas Jefferson sent a recently concluded treaty with the Sauk and Fox Indians to the Senate for ratification. His accompanying communiqué briefly argued that the accord strengthened the ability of the United States to govern “those Indians by commerce rather than by Arms.”¹ Jefferson, like so many policy makers of his day, viewed trade and warfare as two strategies to shape U.S. relations with Native American nations. Although he likely did not mean to do so at the time, Jefferson’s pithy reflection on methods of commerce and arms captured a broad federal approach to the early trans-Appalachian West. Since 1789, the federal government had deployed fiscal and military powers granted to it by the Constitution to transform the early western economy through land acquisitions, infrastructure, commerce, and communication. In doing so, the federal government expanded its bureaucratic institutions into the West, bridging geographic and political obstacles created by the Appalachian Mountains, and fostered early commercial capitalism there. Some economic changes occurred directly as the result of federal policy, such as when the United States went to war against Native Americans and purchased provisions and other *matériel* for its military. Others occurred incidentally as states and local communities worked to transform their own infrastructures and economies to benefit from federal money injected into the region. By both intent and accident, federal policy exercised through its institutions sowed seeds of commercial capitalism in the West, which bore fruit during the nineteenth century.

This is not a traditional rendering of American expansionism. Most people, scholars included, rarely view the federal government as an important player in

¹ Thomas Jefferson to the Senate, December 31, 1804, and Articles of a Treaty, November 3, 1804, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs* (hereafter *Am. St. Pap., Ind. Af.*), 1: 693–4.

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the development of the trans-Appalachian West.² Rather they envision a country largely devoid of a powerful national government, with spontaneous, opportunistic, egalitarian, and racist forces shaping the early nation.³ Turnerian echoes of resilient pioneers pressing into a wilderness and transforming hard-scrabble frontier into a bastion of liberty remain in contemporary scholarship even if those frontiersmen are viewed with a more critical eye for the violence they perpetrated.⁴ Such histories serve to emphasize American exceptionalism and overstate historic American anxieties of powerful, dangerous, and inefficient government.⁵

The American National State and the Early West seeks to transform this narrative by bringing the national state back into the story.⁶ Rather than view the transformation of the early West as the product of laissez-faire, liberalism, state ineptitude, or complacency, this work explores the variegated ways the federal government contributed to western expansion by cultivating partnerships with state governments and local businesses, thereby fostering a commercial economy. In doing so, this book adds to a growing literature that reveals, in the words of historian William Novak, an American state “more powerful, capacious, tenacious, interventionist, and redistributive” than commonly recognized.⁷ And because expansionism became a central theme of the state-building exercise throughout the early republic, revealing the role of the federal government in the early West offers insight into the development of the national state more broadly.

A successful republic, expansionist or not, was not inevitable. At its inception in 1776, differences between the newly confederated states tended to overwhelm any similarities beyond the common revolution against Great Britain. The first national state constructed by the founding fathers, under the aegis of the Articles of Confederation, reflected a sense of internationalism rather

² The role of the federal government has been explored far more for the trans-Mississippi West. Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987).

³ Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); John D. Barnhart, *Valley of Democracy: The Frontier versus the Plantation in the Ohio Valley, 1775–1818* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1953).

⁴ Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600–1860* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973). For a critique of recent Turnerian interpretations, see Larry F. Kutchin, “The Neo-Turnerian Frontier,” review of *From the Fallen Tree: Frontier Narratives, Environmental Politics, and the Roots of National Pastoral, 1749–1826*, by Thomas Hallock, *Early American Literature*, vol. 40, no. 1 (2005), 163–71.

⁵ Robert E. Wright and Brian P. Murphy, “The Private Provision of Transportation Infrastructure in Antebellum America: Lessons and Warnings,” Social Science Research Network <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1335301>.

⁶ Theda Skocpol, “Bringing the State Back In: Current Research,” in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3–43.

⁷ William Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *American Historical Review* (hereafter *AHR*), vol. 113, no. 3 (June 2008), 758.

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than nationalism (here referring to a centralized government, not an affective identity) embraced by its framers.⁸ After years of struggling through a postwar depression, witnessing Congress's inability to repay lingering wartime debts, experiencing a weak international standing, and worrying about potential disunion, among other perceived ills, nationalists met in Philadelphia to write the Constitution.⁹ The new government made the national state stronger than its predecessor because it possessed fiscal and military powers it could wield for purposes of defense, commerce, and foreign policy.¹⁰ Bureaucratic institutions erected under it became instruments for political and economic change.¹¹ Today, scholars recognize the military as one of the most important bureaucratic institutions for state building.¹² Most history textbooks implicitly reflect this understanding when they refer to President Washington's nationalization of the militia to put down the Whiskey Rebellion and consequential certification of national state fiscal authority through the threat of military force.¹³ The federal government also deployed the military for the benefit of western settlers, as was the case when it sent a force against Indians in the Ohio country. This action signaled to those settlers the commitment of the federal government to the region at a moment when local disintegrationist forces threatened national state integrationist designs.¹⁴

⁸ David C. Hendrickson, "The First Union: Nationalism versus Internationalism in the American Revolution" in Eliga H. Gould and Peter S. Onuf, eds., *Empire and Nation: The American Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 35–53; John M. Murrin, "A Roof without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity," in Richard R. Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward Carlos Carter, eds., *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 333–48.

⁹ Richard B. Morris, *The Forging of the Union, 1781–1789* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987).

¹⁰ Max Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

¹¹ Richard R. John, "Government Institutions as Agents of Change: Rethinking American Political Development in the Early Republic, 1787–1835," *Studies in American Political Development*, vol. 11 (Fall 1997), 347–80.

¹² Ira Katznelson, "Flexible Capacity: The Military and Early American Statebuilding," in Ira Katznelson and Martin Shefter, eds., *Shaped by War and Trade: International Influences on American Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 82–110. For treatments dealing with later eras see Richard Franklin Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859–1877* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

¹³ Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

¹⁴ Andrew R. L. Cayton, "'Separate Interests' and the Nation-State: The Washington Administration and the Origins of Regionalism in the Trans-Appalachian West," *Journal of American History* (hereafter *JAH*), vol. 79 (June 1992), 39–67; Andrew R. L. Cayton, "Radicals in the 'Western World': The Federalist Conquest of Trans-Appalachian North America," in Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, eds., *Federalists Reconsidered* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 77–96.

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State-building efforts went far beyond the military. National public works projects endorsed by Congress and presidential administrations radiated communication and commercial networks across the states.¹⁵ Similarly, the Post Office produced a national informational network, which facilitated communication while also engendering a sense of a national “imagined community.”¹⁶ Transactions between merchants and customs house officials dovetailed mutual national and local interests.¹⁷ As bureaucracy expanded, the three branches of government wrote a body of administrative law to preserve national state authority as it diffused across the bureaucratic landscape.¹⁸

Institutional development of the federal government had significant implications in the early West. There, local commerce and local institutions emerged and crystallized alongside federal institutions of one sort or another, at times harmoniously and at others contentiously.¹⁹ Because nationalists sought an integrated union, an expansion of federal institutions was critical to asserting federal sovereignty in newly opened areas. Indeed, for more than a century, the struggle among European powers to control the Ohio Valley had in part been one of establishing and legitimating sovereignty.²⁰ The early United States continued this trend but far more assertively brought national state discipline to bear on people who lived at the geographic and practical limits of its power.²¹

¹⁵ John Lauritz Larson, *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Carter Goodrich, *Government Promotion of American Canals and Railroads, 1800–1890* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Stephen Minicucci, “Internal Improvements and the Union, 1790–1860,” in *Studies in American Political Development*, vol. 18 (Fall 2004), 160–85; Stephen Minicucci, “The ‘Cement of Interest’: Interest-Based Models of Nation-Building in the Early Republic,” *Social Science History*, vol. 25 (Summer 2001), 247–74.

¹⁶ Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); Richard B. Kielbowicz, *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office, and Public Information, 1700–1860* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989).

¹⁷ Gautham Rao, “The Creation of the American State: Customhouses, Law, and Commerce in the Age of Revolution” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008).

¹⁸ Jerry L. Mashaw, “Recovering American Administrative Law: Federalist Foundation, 1787–1801,” *Yale Law Journal*, vol. 115 (April 2006), 1256–1344. For administrative strategies, see Leonard D. White, *The Federalists: A Study in Administrative History* (New York: Macmillan, 1948); Leonard D. White, *The Jeffersonians: A Study in Administrative History, 1801–1829* (New York: Macmillan, 1951).

¹⁹ Andrew R. L. Cayton, *The Frontier Republic: Ideology and Politics in the Ohio Country, 1780–1825* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1986); Daniel J. Elazar, *The American Partnership: Intergovernmental Co-operation in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

²⁰ Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007); Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

²¹ Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500–2000* (New York: Viking, 2005).

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Such an institutional expansion dovetailed with ideological and practical efforts to integrate new territories into the union and preserve the republic. Creating new states meant orchestrating institutional expansionism with the federal government as conductor.²² After 1789, Federalists especially wanted to encourage growth of the national economy, which they hoped would bind together its corners in a “union of interests.”²³

The economic roots of this agenda lay in a fundamental problem of the early republic. Although the Constitution established a national government, little affective nationalism existed to wed people to the country and thus preserve the republic. Economic and institutional expansion, in this line of thinking, would accomplish the same, or something similar, in its stead. Alexander Hamilton and Tench Coxe likely had this in mind in 1791 when they considered invoking Adam Smith’s arguments about the role of internal improvements to link “country” and “town” as they wrote early drafts of the “Report on Manufactures.”²⁴ It should come as little surprise that the federal government therefore would take a strong hand in shaping new territories in both the Northwest and Southwest to preserve the republic through economic integration.²⁵

Westerners readily identified the close relationship between local economic growth and federal policies. From Ohio in 1811, Benjamin Van Cleve argued that a post road in the western part of the state would enhance settlement and the economy of the region.²⁶ Such an awareness that the national state could serve as patron to local economic development through its institutions evidenced the efficacy of such policies. John Sloane, a representative from Ohio,

²² Peter S. Onuf, *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); Peter S. Onuf, *The Origins of the Federal Republic: Jurisdictional Controversies in the United States, 1775–1787* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); Gary Lawson and Guy Seidman, *The Constitution of Empire: Territorial Expansion and American Legal History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Jack N. Rakove, “Ambiguous Achievement: The Northwest Ordinance,” in Frederick D. Williams, ed., *The Northwest Ordinance: Essays on Its Formulation, Provisions, and Legacy* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1989), 1–19.

²³ Cathy D. Matson and Peter S. Onuf, *A Union of Interests: Political and Economic Thought in Revolutionary America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990).

²⁴ Alexander Hamilton’s First Draft of the Report on the Subject of Manufactures, Tench Coxe’s Draft of the Report on the Subject of Manufactures, and Alexander Hamilton’s Third Draft of the Report on the Subject of Manufactures, in *Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 10, ed. Harold C. Syrett (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 20, 39, 116.

²⁵ For the influence of the federal government in the Old Southwest, see Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Angela Pulley Hudson, *Creek Paths and Federal Roads: Indians, Settlers, and Slaves and the Making of the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

²⁶ Benjamin Van Cleve to Thomas Worthington, August 31, 1811, Papers of Thomas Worthington, 1795–1827, Archives and Library of the Ohio Historical Society (hereafter OHS), Columbus, OH.

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saw local economic issues as pieces within a national puzzle; local projects represented a “national object” in the “interest not only of this State but of the whole union.”²⁷

Although the federal government did not install a litany of economic regulatory measures on state governments and local communities during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it did pursue policies that interacted with local and regional economies and influenced the distribution and exchange of private property. Nowhere was this more the case than in the early West, where many new settlers relied on government bureaucracy from the military to the Post Office as outlets for local goods, as well as investors in infrastructure, communication networks, and new land acquisitions. If the emergence of a market economy during the first half of the nineteenth century was a cultural shift from subsistence economies rooted in individual landownership to commercial agriculture and manufacturing, then the federal government shouldered the risk and expense for opening up new lands by way of wars and treaties with Native Americans.²⁸ It also contributed by encouraging commercial production, especially in support of the wars, in lands already opened up to settlement. Moreover, if a measure of the emergence of a market economy is based in the convergence and synchronicity of prices, then federal fiscal power deployed to improve communication and transportation networks added to farmers’ choices of where and when to sell surplus crops.²⁹ Because the first permanent white American settlers in the Ohio Valley brought with them a proclivity for commercial consumption forged in their involvement in the trans-Atlantic British economy, federal projects affecting production paired with consumptional attitudes to provide a foundation for commercial growth, even if a capitalist economy had not emerged.³⁰ In this way, threads of entrepreneurial enterprise and public policy wove together and augmented each other

²⁷ John Sloan to Thomas Worthington, January 25, 1805, folder 1, box 3, and January 24, 1811, folder 5, box 4, Papers of Thomas Worthington, OHS.

²⁸ Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Allan Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Allan Kulikoff, *The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992); Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780–1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Michael Merrill, “Cash Is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States,” *Radical History Review*, vol. 4 (1977), 42–71; James A. Henretta, “Families and Farms: *Mentalité* in Pre-Industrial America,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series (hereafter WMQ), vol. 35 (Jan. 1978), 3–32.

²⁹ Winifred Barr Rothenberg, *From Market-Places to a Market Economy: The Transformation of Rural Massachusetts, 1750–1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860* (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1951); Carter Goodrich, *Government Promotion of American Canals and Railroads, 1800–1890* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

³⁰ Elizabeth A. Perkins, “The Consumer Frontier: Household Consumption in Early Kentucky,” *JAH*, vol. 78, no. 2 (Sept. 1991), 486–510; T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

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to create a complex fabric of regional economic development much stronger than the sum of its parts.³¹

The national state that emerged by the end of the War of 1812 was a powerful and influential one. More than a government of “courts and parties,” the federal bureaucracy lending weight to the nation was concentrated, penetrative, centralized, and specialized.³² Yet paradoxically, most Americans did not view it as such. Even Tocqueville characterized American government as an “invisible machine.”³³ How could this be?³⁴ One reason is that while the influence of the federal government was most visible in the territories, it appeared far less so in the new states.³⁵ Nevertheless, much of the strength of the federal bureaucracy remained in its marriage with the economy. Its marks were pervasive in the landscape but more often overshadowed by flashy state politics and local boosterism.³⁶ National government was quite noticeable during war, but in the minds of most Americans its peacetime activities were tucked away to the less attractive recesses of administrative deliberation and action. Visibility, however, is not a good measure of a strong government. Such an assessment rather should be made based on the ability of government to accomplish desired and achievable goals within its limits of power.³⁷ With this measure, we must view the government, especially its administrative capacity, as strong for its ability to foster a commercial economy through the appropriation of land, distribution of fiscal resources of the national state, shouldering the risk of exploration and discovery of resources, and developing an infrastructure. The bulk of this

³¹ William J. Novak, “Public Economy and the Well-Ordered Market: Law and Economic Regulation in 19th-Century America,” *Law & Social Inquiry* vol. 18 (Winter 1993), 1–32; Oscar Handlin and Mary Flug Handlin, *Commonwealth: A Study of the Role of Government in the American Economy: Massachusetts, 1774–1861* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Louis Hartz, *Economic Policy and Democratic Thought: Pennsylvania, 1776–1860* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948).

³² The language used here comes from Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 20. For similar arguments regarding the early republic, see Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Richard Franklin Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan*. For a supporting argument for this statement, see Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

³³ Quoted in Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, 6.

³⁴ Tocqueville was far more interested in political aspects of American life than administrative ones. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. and ed. by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 90.

³⁵ Brian Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight: The Mystery of National Authority in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), especially chapter 5.

³⁶ For the vibrant political culture, see Donald Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic: Democratic Politics in Ohio, 1793–1821* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998).

³⁷ John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688–1783* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), xix–xx.

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work was accomplished via federal institutions scattered throughout the West. In Kentucky and Ohio after statehood, many, but not all, of the benefits of this investment fell to the states or were privatized, though national state efforts continued, and not only in Indian country.

Energy to accomplish these tasks came from many forces internal to the United States and from the decisions and actions made in Indian country and British Canada, among others. British plans for Canada and Native American responses to American expansionism provided a context for the decisions federal policymakers made. Therefore a regional perspective will be deployed to better understand the contingent nature of American institutional expansion.³⁸ Similar to U.S. hopes to integrate the West into the national state system through economic change, Britain wanted to see early western Canada (the southern Great Lakes) transformed into a province sustained by commercial agriculture and woven into its trans-Atlantic empire, which thrived despite the loss of the American colonies.³⁹ United States expansionism represented both a threat and potential boon for the Canadian West. Decisions made in Whitehall, as well as those arrived at provincially, shaped and were shaped by their American counterparts.

By the early 1790s, Native Americans in the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes witnessed two expansive settler zones wedging into their territories. Choices made by Native American individuals, families, clans, moieties, villages, tribes (nations), and intertribal confederacies reflected exigencies both within and without their control.⁴⁰ Relationships they constructed with federal and Canadian institutions signaled manifold attempts to retain autonomy in a politically and

³⁸ François Furstenberg, "The Significance of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier in Atlantic History," *AHR*, vol. 113, (June 2008), 647–77; White, *The Middle Ground*; Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*; Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 2006); John J. Bukowczyk, Nora Faires, David R. Smith, and Randy William Widdis, *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650–1990* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005); Kim M. Gruenwald, *River of Enterprise: The Commercial Origins of Regional Identity in the Ohio Valley, 1790–1850* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); David Curtis Skaggs and Larry L. Nelson, eds., *The Sixty Years' War for the Great Lakes, 1754–1814* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001).

³⁹ Donald Creighton, *The Empire of the St. Lawrence* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1965; orig. pub. *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence, 1760–1850* [1937]); Douglas McCalla, *Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada, 1784–1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830* (New York: Longman, 1989).

⁴⁰ This work relies on the arguments provided in a number of ethnohistorical monographs, especially C. A. Weslager, *Delaware Indians: A History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1972); James H. Howard, *Shawnee! The Ceremonialism of a Native Indian Tribe and Its Cultural Background* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1981); John Sugden, *Blue Jacket: Warrior of the Shawnees* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); John Sugden, *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997); Stewart Rafert, *The Miami Indians of Indiana: A Persistent People, 1654–1994* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996).

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economically dynamic region. Like their colonial forebears, American agents constructed a bureaucratic system to control and cater to Native Americans.⁴¹ Federal agents across the administrative hierarchy responded to and attempted to anticipate their decisions. Together these three groups, internally diverse as they were, defined the nature of national state institutional expansion into and the economic transformation of the trans-Appalachian West.

This study examines the role of the federal government in the western economy from 1775 through 1815 by exploring the roles its bureaucratic institutions played in the process. Chapter 1 begins with the dissolution of British authority in the West on the eve of the Revolutionary War and then traces the transformation of the ensuing property war between settlers and Indians from local and state control to federal control. Chapter 2 examines the interplay between the federal military in the Ohio Valley and the local economy while also considering how Native Americans and British administrators in Canada responded to the conflict and how those decisions affected their economies. The third chapter investigates the struggle to define a new economy and emergent bordered land in the Ohio country in the months following the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The next two chapters look at the continuing role of the federal government in the Ohio Valley and southern Great Lakes from 1795 through the first decade of the nineteenth century. Chapter 4 focuses on the expansion of national-state institutions in settler territory while Chapter 5 scrutinizes the endeavors of federal institutions in Indian country both to transform the Native American economy and to prepare territories for resource exploitation. Chapter 6 closes the book by examining the role of federal institutions in precipitating the War of 1812 in the West and the elaboration of relationships between the federal government and the regional economy during that conflict.

A note on word usage. For the purpose of accessibility, I have chosen to use anglicized names for Indian nations rather than their own self-referential identifiers. When discussing aboriginal peoples in general, *Indian* and *Native American* are used interchangeably, as are *tribe* and *nation* despite the different connotations invoked by each. The notation *Indian country* is used to describe unceded territories. Even though Indian country conveys a sense of singularity, it was not. As will be seen, territorial control and ownership was highly contested and fractured. Although I recognize that Native Americans and British subjects in North America fall under the broader domain *American*, for convenience I have reserved that word for white settlers in territories of the United

⁴¹ James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975); Richard White, *Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); White, *Middle Ground*; Colin G. Calloway, *Crown and Calumet: British-Indian Relations, 1783–1815* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987).

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States. *Settler* too is used for expediency. Just as easily, settler could be used to describe Native Americans establishing new towns. Additionally, as one of my colleagues reminds me, “unsettler” might be more accurate given the disruptive behavior they brought to the region on so many fronts. Throughout the text, *trans-Appalachian West* and *Northwest* denote lands including the Ohio Valley watershed north to the southern shore of Lake Erie and southwestern Lake Ontario, while *Southwest* means the borderland from Georgia to the Mississippi. Finally, in much recent literature, *nationalism* captures an affective identity associated with the creation of an imagined national community. Here, unless otherwise noted, it refers more simply to support for a strong, centralized national government. In a sense: national-ism in contrast to the decentralization associated with strict federalism.