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**WHARVES TO WATERFALLS:  
A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS POLITICAL ECONOMY  
FROM 1763 to 1825**

by

DAVID JOSEPH DORAN, JR.

Under the Direction of Susan M. Walcott

**ABSTRACT**

This research assesses how political legislation served as the catalyst in the transformation of Massachusetts through four specific economic stages from 1763 to 1825: fishing, privateering, global maritime commerce, and textile manufacturing. The objective of this analysis is to examine how politics forced coastal merchants to invest their commercial wealth into the burgeoning interior textile industry of the New England hinterland. Vance's mercantile model best explains European settlement of New England since multiple communities developed along the Atlantic coastline of the Massachusetts Bay region. Boston, Salem, and Newburyport emerged as entrepôts, which acted as intermediaries between Europe and the frontier. The methodology analyzes academic texts by historical geographers and on-site research through shiplogs in the archives at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. Merchant acumen, venture capital, and British technology transformed Massachusetts from the golden age of shipping to the birth of the industrial revolution in North America.

**Index Words:** Massachusetts, Maritime Commerce, Federalist Era, Industrial Revolution, New England

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DAVID JOSEPH DORAN, JR.

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2006

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David Joseph Doran, Jr.  
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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Statement of Problem**

This research assesses the transfer of capital between 1763 and 1825 from Massachusetts ports engaged in global maritime commerce to riverside cities involved in the emergent textile industry in the hinterland of southern New England. The paper highlights specific political legislation which acted as the catalyst in transforming the economy of the Massachusetts Bay region through four distinct economic transition stages: fishing, privateering, mercantilism, and industrialization. The main objective of this analysis is to examine a geographical analysis explaining how politics influenced New England merchants to shed the risk of maritime trade and invest their lucrative commercial wealth in the burgeoning textile industry located in the region's interior.

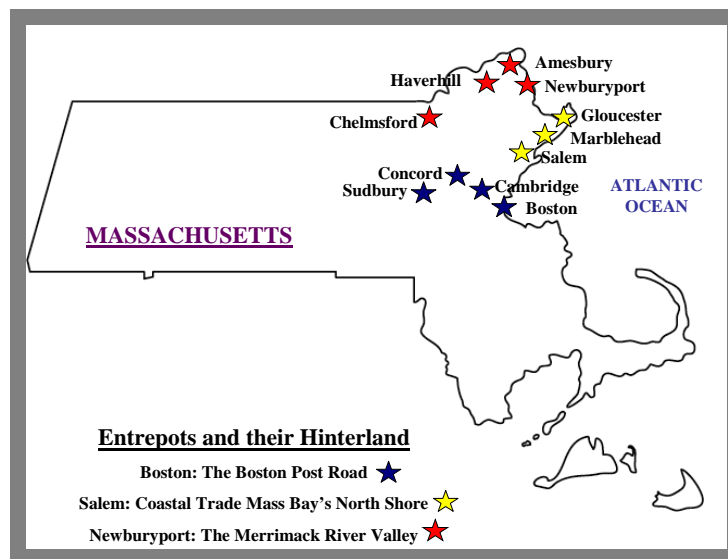
#### **Research Question**

What were the catalysts that transformed the political economy of the Massachusetts Bay area between 1763 and 1825 and dramatically sculpt the physical landscape of New England? The economy transitioned through four specific economic stages during this timeline: resource extraction, privateering, maritime commerce, and textile manufacturing. This paper focuses on the last shift of economic transition, which resulted in mass hinterland migration from North Atlantic coastal ports to riverside towns, located in the inland New England frontier, identifying the factors which influenced Massachusetts Bay merchants to abandon their maritime quests of fishing,

ship-building, and global commerce and invest their lucrative merchant capital into the burgeoning textile industry evolving within the New England hinterland?

New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, and Savannah developed as primate cities and principle seaports, maintaining the central place hierarchy within each respective colony (Meinig 1986). The three Massachusetts Bay ports of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport emerged as the largest gateways, entrepots, or unraveling points of trade within the Massachusetts Bay area of the New England region (Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1 Massachusetts Bay Entrepots & Hinterlands**

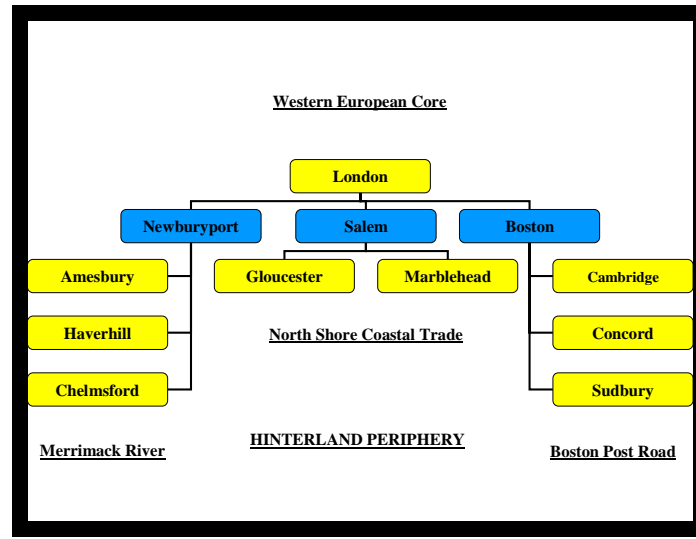


Source: Author

The geography of wholesaling involved the *mercantile model*, which was the addendum to *central place theory* involving an external trade system beyond the traditional parochial trade network, established during the pioneer economy of North America (Vance 1971). This involved the integration of the manufacturer, wholesaler, and retailer with the physical transfer of goods along great geographical distances. The decision made by London merchants for the establishment of settlements of the

Massachusetts Bay Company in 1629 was the similar analogy to the Venetians and their entrepots of the Adriatic in 1199 (Vance 1971). The three ports of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport emerged as thriving seaports, each entrepot remained autonomous from the other and controlled their own respective hinterland (Figure 1.2).

**Figure 1.2 The Mercantile Model & World System**



Source: Author

These Massachusetts gateway centers were located on the semi-periphery of the contemporary world system and served as market centers between the European core and their own respective hinterland on the periphery (Wallerstein 1974). These ports developed into the centers of exchange in commodities, information, and technology. Hinterland farmers exported surplus agricultural staples in exchange for imported European manufactured goods. Boston grew into the largest city in New England and connected to the hinterland communities by the Boston Post Road. Salem controlled the North Shore coastal trade between Marblehead and Gloucester. Newburyport's location at the mouth of the Merrimack River enabled it to control frontier towns situated on the banks of Southern New England's second longest river

## **Sources of Data**

The major theme in geographic literature discussed within this research concerns the pivotal political-economic transition in the Massachusetts Bay area between 1763 and 1825. Sources of data include academic texts by historical geographers along with on-site research in the archives of the Phillip's Library at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. The East India Marine Society Papers were the most effective source to show economic linkages, the networks and flows of commodities, capital, information, and technology. These manifests were nautical logbooks that recorded each unique maritime voyage and assisted the greater understanding of global commerce from 1785 to 1810. These journals described diverse commodities, unique ports of call, strong economic inter-dependencies, and unusual geographic phenomena. This extensive research will prove which political legislation acted as catalysts for economic transition and human migration and explain economic linkages through the geography of wholesaling in the modern world system of 1800.

## **Conclusion**

The hypothesis of this research is that geo-politics and sectionalism created the federal political legislation which served as the catalyst for economic transition and population migration. Bipartisan politics commenced in 1787 and 1825 commemorates the construction of the Erie Canal, which led to the status of New York as principal seaport of North America. The Embargo of 1807 devastated the economy of coastal New England and became the motivation for Massachusetts Bay merchants to become the nation's first venture capitalists, who transferred their lucrative maritime capital and British textile technology into the Yankee hinterland.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The literature review discusses the mercantile model (Vance 1971), which is the geographic location theory that describes the geography of wholesaling, the European colonial settlement of New England through multiple points of attachment along the North Atlantic Ocean. Wholesaling was an economic function of the European pioneer economy in North America and served as the intermediary of exchange between the manufacturer and consumer. This chapter commences with an in depth explanation of James E. Vance, Jr.'s contributions to geography through his academic text, *The Merchants' World – The Geography of Wholesaling*. This book introduced the mercantile model or wholesaler's paradigm. The literature review includes the commentary of critical historical geographers, who have supported this geographic theory and have provided valuable insight into my comprehension of the historical geography of the international political economy of the Massachusetts Bay area within the greater New England region between 1763 and 1825.

The discussion of the *mercantile model* (Vance 1971) and the geography of wholesaling is an extension or addendum to *central place theory* (Christaller 1933). This theory is pertinent to the description of the geography of wholesaling, the newest sector within European based world economy. This section on Vance is followed by the description of the Massachusetts Bay area, modern day metropolitan Boston, within the greater vernacular region of New England: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Samuel Eliot Morison, historian at both

Harvard and Northeastern Universities, completed the most extensive regional study of Massachusetts (Morison 1961). The topography of New England and The New England Confederation complete my sense of place sections through the research of historical geographers listed in the chronological order of publication. These scholars include Donald W. Meinig (Syracuse University), Joseph Wood (University of Southern Maine), and Stephen Hornsby (The University of Maine), whose text *British Atlantic, American Frontier*, 2005 was most useful in this research.

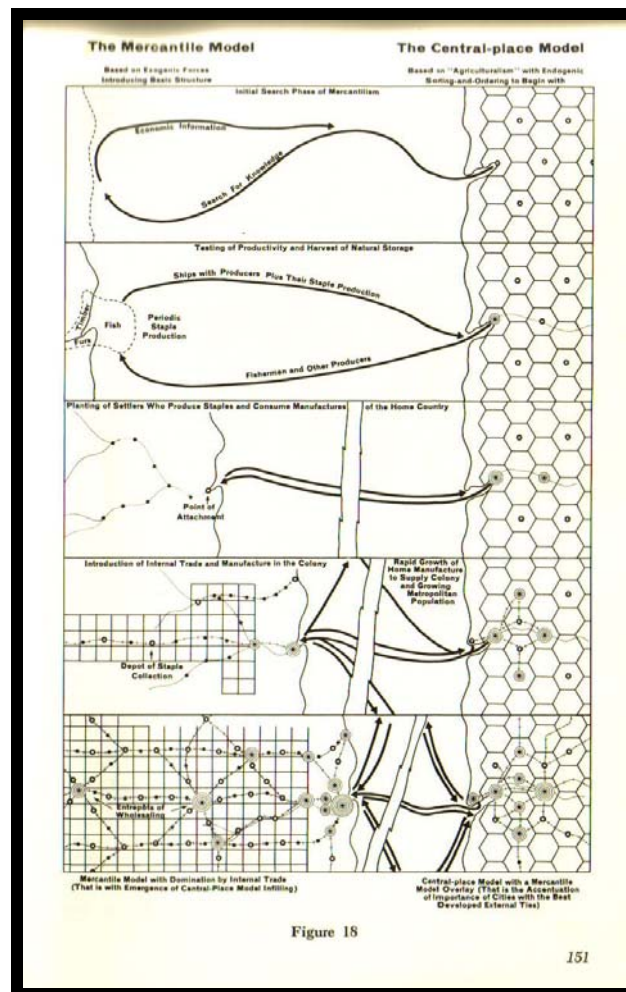
### **The Mercantile Model of Human Settlement**

The geographic location of the European settlement of New England is best explained by the *Mercantile Model* or the *Wholesale Paradigm*, proposed by James E. Vance, Jr. in 1971. He subscribed to the geographic location theories published by Christaller, Losch, and Weber yet believed *central place theory* (Christaller 1933) did not adequately explain the initial human settlement of the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1630 since multiple towns developed at Salem, Boston, and Gloucester. Vance referred to these coastal communities as multiple points of attachment which are defined as entrepôts, gateway centers, and intermediaries located on the semi-periphery of the modern 17<sup>th</sup> century North Atlantic *world system* (Wallerstein 1973). These seaport towns located on the western rim of the North Atlantic basin emerged as the North American gateway ports which connected interior, frontier hamlets to the *world system* dominated by the mercantile centers of Western Europe.

James E. Vance, Jr. was an economic and urban geographer, subscribing to the Berkeley school of cultural geography. He was a protégé of Carl Sauer and his geographical theory known as *Landschaft*, which translates into landscape in German

and is defined as the human cultural imprint superimposed upon the physical landscape. Vance focused on human settlement, transportation development, and the urbanization of North America. His laudable contribution to geography was the addendum to the location theories established by famous German geographers: Christaller, Losch, and Weber. Vance published *The Merchants' World: The Geography of Wholesaling* in 1971. It emphasized the economic linkages maintained by numerous Massachusetts Bay ports between their own respective hinterlands in the North American frontier and the core market cities of Western Europe (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1 The Mercantile Model and Central Place Model**



Source: Vance 1971



In this research Vance's concept is applied to explain the evolution of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport into the largest market centers of the Massachusetts Bay area. These coastal towns were competitive among each other as well as with other North American ports located on the semi-periphery of the North Atlantic rim of the 17<sup>th</sup> century world system. These entrepots maintained an economic advantage due to their geographic location, a central location between their own agricultural hinterland and cities of Western Europe (Wallerstein 1974). Farmers located in New England frontier towns exported surplus agricultural staples and raw materials (lumber) to their entrepot or gateway port by way of river or turnpike. The Boston Post Road, the North Shore, and the Merrimack River were economic linkages to the North Atlantic system and the geographic location of these Massachusetts Bay ports allowed merchant wholesalers control their own respective hinterlands. These seaports emerged as the market centers where the transfer of currency, commodities, and information were exchanged. Farmers and woodsmen returned to the interior with currency, information, and imported manufactured goods from Europe. Massachusetts Bay ports became the economic extensions of Europe in North American and were centrally located within the North Atlantic trade circuit.

The mercantile model used a historical rather than temporal approach to location theory. Vance subscribed to the geographic location theories established by Christaller, Losch, and Weber yet felt central place theory inadequately explained coastal New England settlement in 17<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous coastal merchant towns were the economic hinges which linked the European marketplace to the North American frontier in an open economic system (Gottmann 1963). The South German paradigm, or

central place theory (Christaller 1933), involved a closed economic system centered on agricultural surplus for export to the surrounding towns. This system of central place theory was established during the Middle Ages and involved the hierarchy of place in relation to rural agricultural lands. The walled central market town was established during the age of feudalism and was equidistant to the surrounding villages which developed on the geometric, patterned landscape (Vance 1971). The settlement of multiple Massachusetts Bay colony towns in the seventeenth century replicated the East Anglican parish onto the New England coastline (Morison 1961). These multiple nodes functioned as merchant wholesaling centers between the cities of Europe and the North American frontier. These port cities possessed great geographic importance with their locations being referred to as major control points (Borchert 1978)

The mercantile model of wholesaling is dependent on schedule and tradition with the establishment of economic interdependencies that expand over great distances. The two qualities that must exist that are not present in central place theory are (1) the ability to handle both external support and change common in all open systems and (2) be able to research historical data regarding economic interdependencies and trade relationships (Vance 1971). Settlement occurs and population expands in direct proportion to commercial opportunities, which did not occur in medieval Europe due to plagues and wars. European agricultural surplus caused the birth of the modern world economy and the expansion through colonialism (Wallerstein 1973). Christaller focused on local retail trade and local services, while Vance emphasized the role of the global merchant wholesaler. Christaller and Adam Smith did not understand the geography of

wholesaling because Europe never experienced the pioneer economy of North America (Vance 1971).

### **The Geography of Wholesaling**

The geography of wholesaling involved the *mercantile model*, which was the addendum to *central place theory* involving an external trade system beyond the traditional parochial trade network, established during the pioneer economy of North America (Vance 1971). The mercantile model described the integration of the manufacturer, wholesaler, and retailer with the physical transfer of goods along great geographical distances. This was the new economy of the modern world system of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and shaped by external forces in Europe and projected across the North Atlantic and throughout the world over time. These networks and flows changed over time with population and commercial shifts into the North American interior. The history of gateway cities in North America show modification of new market centers through the advancement of frontier settlements (Burghardt 1971). This example is portrayed within the settlement of New England with the economic shift of importance from seaports like Salem and New Haven to interior river settlements at Hartford and Springfield.

Initial wholesalers or agents of trade were located in these ports of the Massachusetts Bay area. Wholesaling is defined as the sale of commodities through a central merchant for the purpose of resale. This agent is the intermediary between manufacturer and consumer, transferring commodities and currency on a very large economic scale. Wholesaling involved large economies of scale in distribution, with the

middleman acting as agent between producer and consumer in categories which include groceries, drugs, jewelry, hardware, liquor, furniture, and dry goods (Porter 1971).

New England frontier towns remained connected to particular gateway ports, where Yankee merchants delivered a vast array of commodities through the circularity of global trade networks. Yankee merchant ships made wholesale trade a national obsession with their motto, "Try all ports and risk all freights!", creating a unique material culture in North America (Varg 1983 Pg 3). Their trade networks were modified through time by geopolitics, economics, and technology. New England merchants maintained strong commercial linkages through family ties with the abundant, wealthy merchant houses of greater London. Trade would shift through time from the smaller towns of Newburyport and Salem to the largest city of Boston, eventually being absorbed by the ample wharves of Brooklyn (New York).

"The oceans function as the social and political highways of the world, and the commercial success of a nation is dependent on its connectivity with the interior." (Mahan 1908 Pg 25). Mahan used the province of Holland with its commercial entrepot of Amsterdam as the perfect example of a nation's economic success based on its access by way of the Rhine River into the German hinterland. The characteristics of sea power nations include (1) geographical position, (2) physical geography, (3) extent of territory, (4) population, (5) culture, and (6) government (Mahan 1908 Pg 28). The colony of Massachusetts Bay with its inception at Salem in 1629 and at Charlestown (Boston) in 1630 possessed all of the characteristics of Admiral Thayer Mahan's qualifications to become a major global sea power nation.

### **New England Topography: Physical Geography of the Region**

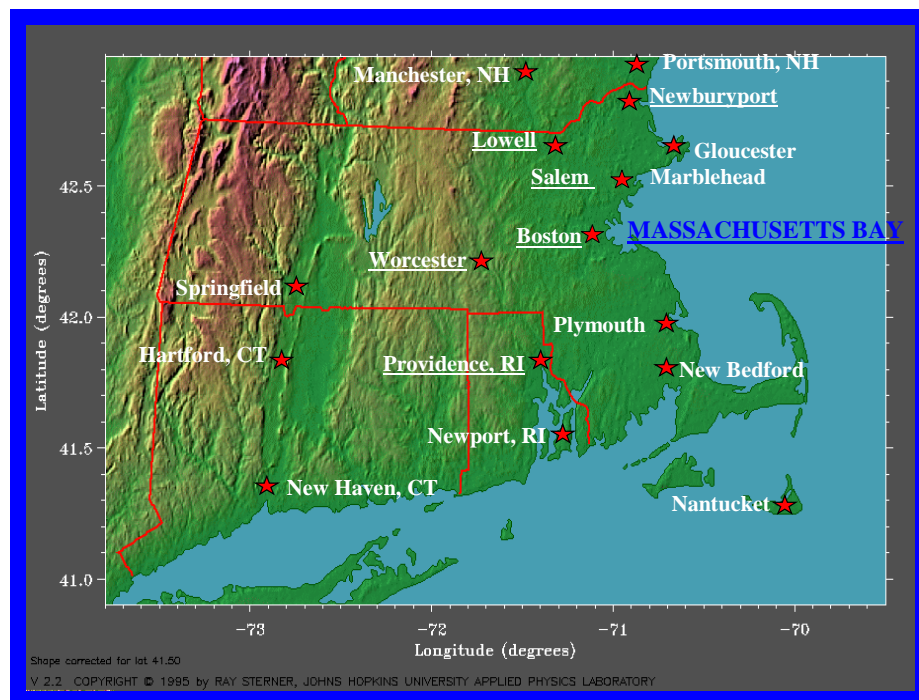
The topography of the Massachusetts Bay area and the New England region is very diverse because of the ancient glaciers, which occurred during the last ice age. These glaciers sculpted New England's landscape through several series of advances and retreats, which left the imprint of moraines, drumlins, kettle ponds, monadnocks, and glacial erratics upon the physical landscape. This arctic phenomena created perfectly sheltered harbors surrounded by granite outcrops that provided numerous protective anchorages along the volatile North Atlantic coast. The ice sheets also created abundant alluvial plains, situated in present day river valleys which possess freshwater meadows composed of rich, fertile soil. These fields are referred to in the New England region as glaciated meadows or intervalles, the perfect natural location for the opportunity to produce an agriculture surplus for human settlement and export (Wilkie 1990).

Boston maintained the largest harbor in the New England region due to the location of the convergence of two rivers into a large, deep water harbor. The harbor had multiple peninsulas and contained abundant small islands, which were formed of glacial till and called drumlins (Jorgenson 1977). The Charles River meanders into the western hinterland, where waterfalls prohibited the navigation beyond Watertown. The Mystic River ran northwest of Boston to Medford, where merchants constructed the Middlesex Canal in 1808 which connected Boston Harbor to the Merrimack River, the second longest river in the region.

Salem located on Boston's North Shore was the second largest seaport, controlling the coastal trade between neighboring Marblehead and Gloucester located

on Cape Ann. Newburyport was the third largest port in Massachusetts located strategically at the mouth of the Merrimack River, which descends from the White Mountains of New Hampshire and broadens between Amesbury and Newburyport. The protective dunes of Plum Island, the barrier island which guards the town from the North Atlantic, resembled a giant sea serpent to incoming ships. The view from one of the many tall church steeples enables one to see an abundance of white sails, dotting the Merrimack River delta causing Newburyport Harbor to resemble a large inland sea (Thoreau 2001). Other important seaports in New England of equal economic significance include Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Newport, Rhode Island, and New Haven, Connecticut. The Connecticut River Valley of Western Massachusetts near Springfield was known as the breadbasket of New England (Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2 Topographical Map of Southern New England**



Source: Template - Sterner 1995, Map Features - Author

New England is blessed by its proximity to the series of fishing banks located where the arctic waters of the Labrador Current mix with the tropical waters of the Gulf Stream. Here cod spawn in these nutrient rich waters located forty to fifty degrees north latitude, feeding on the rich plankton in the shallow waters of George's Banks, 100 miles off the Cape Cod peninsula. Massachusetts Bay experiences colder water temperatures than Buzzards Bay due to the Gulf Stream and the Cape Cod barrier (Schneider 2000). Another ocean phenomena is the range between the high and low tide marks on the New England coastline, which measures three feet at New London, CT and twenty feet near Eastport, ME (Audubon Society 1998).

The Piedmont does not exist within the New England states, thus there is no consistent Fall Line, which runs from New Jersey southward to Georgia and westward to Mississippi. Rivers cascade over waterfalls at various points within the New England hinterland, where large glacial lakes transformed into abundant rivers that connected the Appalachian mountains to the ocean. Lake Concord and Lake Sudbury were ancient glacial lakes which today are minor rivers which flow into the Merrimack River, the second longest river in Massachusetts running from the Appalachians to the Atlantic. The richest farmland in New England is located in these glacial meadows situated along these fertile alluvial plains. The frontier towns of Concord, Chelmsford, Framingham, and Sudbury were all established before 1700(Wood 1997).

### **The New England Confederation: A Historical Geography**

John Smith sailed from Virginia in 1614 and mapped over 3,000 miles of coastline from the Chesapeake Bay to Penobscot Bay, identifying over 25 protected harbors ideal for safe anchorage from the gales of the North Atlantic (Kurlansky 1997) .

The Pilgrims accidentally landed at Plymouth in 1620, establishing the second permanent English settlement in North America. London merchants established the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1622 and financed Puritan congregations from East Anglia to establish settlements in North America. English colonists established Salem in 1629 at the location known as Naumkeag, which translated into fishing place in Algonquin. John Winthrop landed on Boston's Shawmut Peninsula and established their first settlement across the rivers at Charlestown in 1630 (Whitehill 1959).

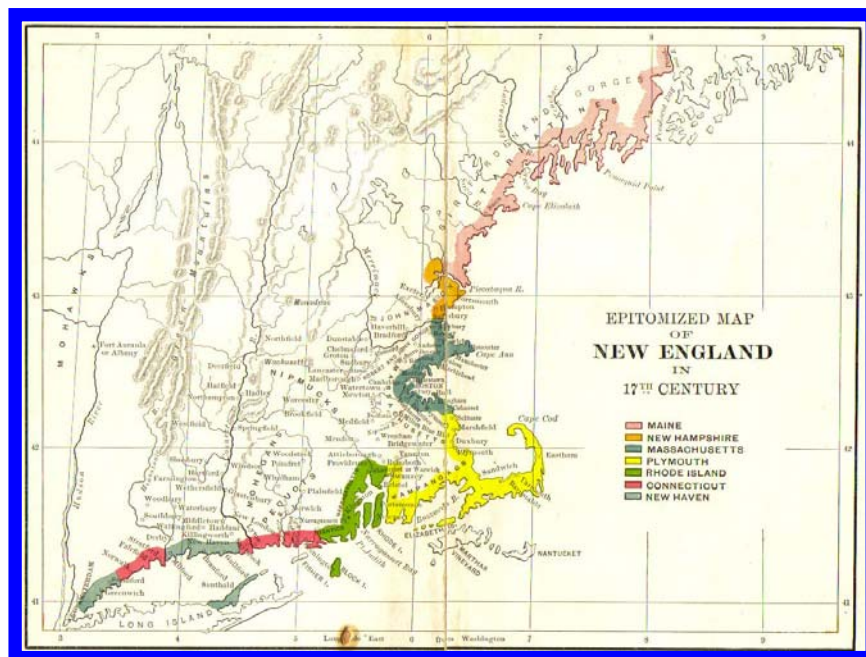
Massachusetts is the Algonquin word which translates into the place near the great hill, the reference to Great Blue Hill near present day Milton.

Puritans replicated their English parish in Massachusetts towns with the central meeting house and town common geometrically located at the center of the settlements (Morison 1961). The Massachusetts Bay colony stretched from Penobscot Bay to Boston Harbor with the early settlements of Newburyport, Gloucester, Salem, Marblehead, and Boston emerging as the largest commercial towns. Fishing became the primary industry within New England due to abundant cod located in the waters of Georges Banks, 100 miles from Cape Cod. The great migration occurred after the commencement of the English Civil War in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, which brought an influx of religious dissidents from all regions of England: the West End, the Midlands, East Anglia, and greater London (Hornsby 2005). The seven early colonies of New England were a microcosm of England yet developed their own distinct accent and vernacular style of architecture, which was the perfect blend of all English in a New ENGLAND (Wood 1997).



The colonies of Connecticut, New Haven, Rhode Island, Providence Plantations, Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and New Hampshire established the New England Confederation in 1643 for the purpose of an alliance against Indians, the Dutch, and the French. Each of these seven colonies, including Massachusetts Bay's province of Maine, possessed multiple coastal communities with vast hinterlands. These ample anchorages provided safe havens for fleets of fishermen and merchants. The following historical map of New England portrays numerous coastal towns and interior hamlets. It is color coded to show the eight settlements which would inevitably become the six states of New England (Figure 2.3)

**Figure 2.3 Map of the New England Confederation 17<sup>th</sup> Century**



Source: Fiske 1889, Pg. i

Later in the seventeenth century Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Old Colony (Plymouth) united to form the united colony of Massachusetts, the colonies of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations merged to form the united colony of Rhode Island,

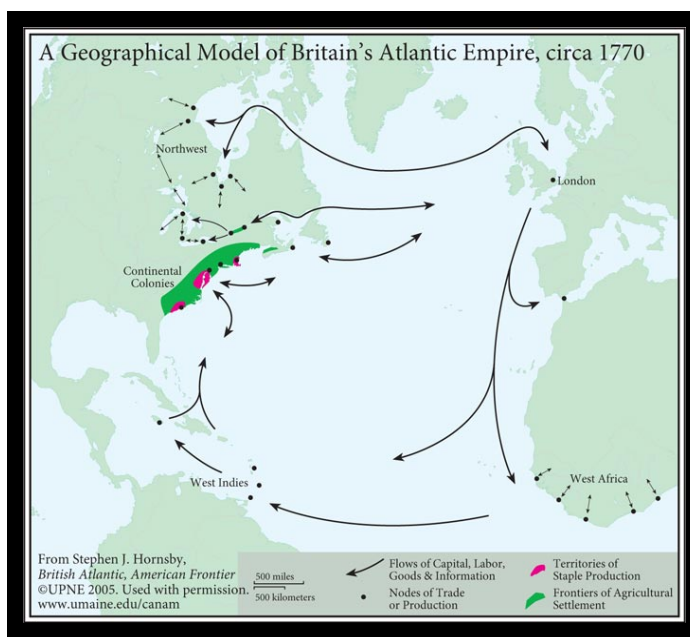
and the Connecticut and New Haven colonies combined to form the united colony of Connecticut. The 18<sup>th</sup> century gave rise to the three Massachusetts Bay entrepots of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport with competition from the other New England seaports of New Haven, Newport, Providence, and Portsmouth. These gateway centers controlled commerce between European markets and their own respective hinterland towns through the connectivity of turnpike, coastal trade, or interior river.

Boston was the largest town in New England with the largest harbor, two interior rivers, and an extensive turnpike network which connected the hinterland communities of Concord, Sudbury, Dedham, Framingham, and Worcester to the world economy. Salem was the second largest town in Massachusetts and controlled the North Shore coastal trade between Lynn, Marblehead, Beverly and Gloucester. Newburyport became the third largest town in Massachusetts and possessed an excellent geographic location situated at the mouth of the Merrimack River. Ample lumber flowed from the Massachusetts and New Hampshire hinterland to the multiple ship yards located near the river's delta. This harbor maintained the perfect anchorage with Plum Island serving as barrier island which protected the Newburyport fleet and wharves from the harsh gales of the North Atlantic Ocean.

The seven gateway ports of New England prospered in the eighteenth century from their strategic location on the Atlantic rim. A series of three point trade developed which historians refer to as the colonial North Atlantic Triangle Trade. Cod became the staple crop of New England which funded the lumber, rum distilling, and shipbuilding industries of New England (Vance 1971). Rum distilleries were located in most of these seaports since molasses was the staple export of the Caribbean. Cod was dried and

salted for export to Europe, West Africa, and the Caribbean in exchange for molasses, rice, tobacco, indigo, wine, fruit, slaves, and manufactured goods. Madeira located 100 miles west of Casablanca produced wine which became the preferred beverage of the gentry. This sweet wine mellowed and gained flavor during long voyages due to storage in wooden casks, used as ballast in the hull of a merchant ships (Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4 North Atlantic Triangle Trade 1770**



(Hornsby 2005 Pg. 224 )

The thirteen North American colonies declared war against England in 1775, thus cutting themselves off from their major commercial link to the North Atlantic trade circuit. The British Navy and militia occupied Boston between 1773 and 1776, which gave Salem the distinction of wealthiest port in Massachusetts. North American merchants entered the revolution as privateers, which was legalized piracy against the British merchant fleet. New economic interdependencies were sealed with Iberia, Brazil, and the Caribbean. The New England staples of dried cod, rum, and lumber were

desired throughout the Atlantic rim. The Caribbean trade now centered on Surinam versus Barbados for necessary imports: molasses, exotic woods, spices, rice, and sugar. Dunfish was dried salt cod from Massachusetts Bay and considered to be the best in world. The innovative process of alternately burying and drying out larger sized cod, allowed the taste of the fish to mellow for the Catholic market in Southern Europe (Morison 1961). Massachusetts Bay merchants dominated the Iberian trade by exchanging dried cod and rum for Basque iron, Valencia oranges, Lisbon Olives, Malaga grapes, and Madeira

The American Revolution ended in 1781 and peace was attained in 1783 yet the British Empire closed all ports to US vessels throughout it's global empire. New trade routes were established, Boston merchants followed Spain and the navigational routes of Magellan around the straights between South America and Antarctica, the roughest waters in the world. Salem merchants took the path of less resistance, which followed Portugal and the navigational routes of Vasco de Gama around the Cape of Good Hope of Africa (Morison 1961). The town of Newburyport maintained its status as center of the 18<sup>th</sup> century shipbuilding industry and dominated the former Hanseatic League ports of the Baltic, centered on Saint Petersburg. Newburyport *Russiamen* exchanged cod and rum for duck (sail cloth) and hemp (rope), as well as vodka, gin, lace, and iron. Newburyport merchants constructed the Pawtucket Canal in 1797 on the Merrimack River so their ample supply of lumber could bypass the waterfalls and freely flow to the many shipyards located near the delta.

Salem's *Grand Turk* became the first New England ship to reach China in 1785, establishing its entrepot at Mauritius, which was central to the East Indies Spice trade

and the luxuries of India. Salem was located only 16 miles northeast of Boston and was the 6<sup>th</sup> largest city in the U.S. according to the 1790 census. “Salem mariners were more likely to set foot in Bombay, Calcutta, or Lisbon before setting foot in Boston” (Morison 1961 pg 80). Salem became the center of the spice trade for North America in 1804, gaining it the nickname of “Pepper capital of the world”. The Salem merchant fleet became known as *East Indiamen* with Mauritius as their gateway to the Indian Ocean basin and Sumatra as the center of their newly acquired merchant wealth (Morison 1961).

Captain Robert Gray’s ship *Columbia* was the first American ship to circumnavigate the globe, logging 42,000 miles in three years (Morison 1961). Gray discovered the Columbia River in 1792, fifteen years before the arrival of Lewis and Clark, when he observed a large surge of fresh water when sailing off the Oregon coast in search of furs (Philbrick 2003). They established trade with the Chinook, Tillamook, and Clatsop nations of the Pacific Northwest and departed for Hawaii with hundreds of valuable pelts from sea otters, seals, and foxes. Gray purchased sandalwood in Hawaii and successfully established a monopoly with Cantonese merchants of Canton (Guangzhou) in 1792 through the exchange of exotic furs and woods for the luxuries of China: Tea, porcelain, silk, and furniture. Boston merchant fleet became known as *Nor’westermen* with Honolulu becoming their entrepot of the Pacific rim and Vancouver becoming their primary source of wealth (Morison 1961).

#### **Atlantic America and the North Atlantic Basin (Meinig 1986)**

Meinig’s research in his excellent four volume series on the historical geography of the United States was commendable. He wrote similar to Morison yet added the

necessary geographic context of human settlement to Morison's brilliant maritime history of Massachusetts and New England. He paralleled Vance and Morison on economic hegemony and their lucrative linkages of world commerce. Genoa, Pisa, and Venice dominated global trade in the Mediterranean Sea basin and the German and Russian Hanseatic League ports controlled the Baltic Sea basin. Merchant capital transferred to the merchants of Lisbon, Sevilla, and Amsterdam in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and led to the commencement of the modern world economy (Wallerstein 1974).

Spain and Portugal brought Europe into the Age of Discovery with explorations and the Pope's ratification of the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1497. The entrepôts or gateways of the 16<sup>th</sup> century included the Basque port of Bilboa, the French port of Rochelle, the Spanish ports of Vigo, Cadiz, Valencia, and Barcelona, and the Portuguese primate city of Lisbon. They utilized the commercial opportunity to colonize the first series of tropical islands: the Azores, Cape Verde Islands, Madeiras, and Canary Islands. The first staple crops were grown for European consumption on these islands with the diffusion of staple crop agriculture and slavery to Brazil and the Caribbean. Meinig divides this new Atlantic world into two categories: the Northern fisheries and the Sugar islands, or carbohydrate frontier (Meinig 1986). The Vikings first fished the nutrient rich waters of the North Atlantic colonizing Iceland and Greenland in 1000 AD. They were followed by the Basques, the Bretons, and Galicians around 1500 with their geographical advantage of human settlement in the abundant harbors that line Europe's Atlantic coastline.

The transfer of capital from Sevilla and Lisbon to Amsterdam and London commenced in the early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the era of the European exploration and

settlement of the North American continent: New England with its domination of the Northern fisheries and Virginia plantations production of tobacco, the lucrative staple crop export. The demographics of New England drastically differed from the characteristics of the Chesapeake, split between New England Yankees and Virginia Cavaliers (Meinig 1986). He divided Europe into the two spheres of Catholic imperial Europe (south) the Calvinist commercial Europe (north) which became direct extensions of the larger trade circuits of the North Atlantic basin. This translates into NW Europe and Protestantism in North America and SW Europe and Catholicism in Latin America.

The world system now included four continents, three races and several cultural systems that further complicated the process of extension and transfer. The North Atlantic basin became the inland sea of Western Civilization: seafaring, conquering, and planting (Meinig 1986). The Americas and West Africa were part of the new periphery of the emergent core, now located in Holland, East Anglia, Zeeland & Normandy. This configuration of North Atlantic entrepots heralded the birth of the modern world system of the capitalist economy and the function of wholesaling (Wallerstein 1974). The cities of Amsterdam, London, Antwerp, and Paris became cities on the emergent core of the world system. East Anglican Puritans migrated across the Atlantic to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 and replicated the English landscape and economy in New England. These bourgeoning seaport towns quickly became intermediaries in the North Atlantic trade circuit, profiting on dried cod, lumber, and rum.

The Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay colony formed multiple close-knit towns that centered around a village green or town common and their plain white church (Meinig 1986). This geographic settlement pattern exemplifies central place theory at its core. Entire congregations emigrated to Massachusetts Bay because they were Puritans, those Englishmen who wanted to purify the Anglican church of the evils of Catholicism. Boston, Salem, Sudbury, Newburyport, and Concord were some of the towns Meinig mentions within his text.

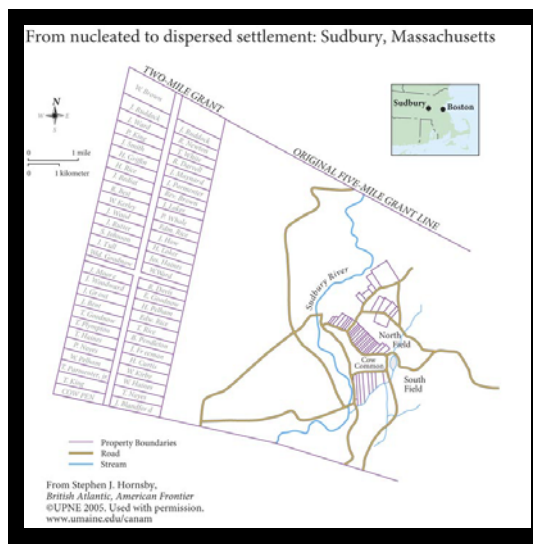
### **The New England Town versus American County (Wood 1997)**

Wood (1997) proposed that the town centre became the center of commerce or exchange, the central node of the New England town, the supreme political unit of the region. Each town settlement occurred at various times and locations which differentiated one community from another. The one commonality comparing one settlement to the adjacent township was the town center, where a common green space was established. The area was called the village green in New Haven and Newport, while it was called the town common in Massachusetts Bay and the Connecticut River Valley. This was a true depiction of central place theory in New England where the meeting house, tavern, and shoppes were situated. The town was responsible for government, roads, and schools making the county an insignificant political unit. Entire congregations migrated across the Atlantic to New England and reestablished their English parish on the New England landscape. Each town was connected by river or road to the ocean seaport in closest proximity, where the centers of exchange existed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



Concord became the first English settlement in Boston's agricultural hinterland, followed by Dedham, Chelmsford, and Sudbury (Wayland). The following figure portrays Sudbury, Massachusetts located 20 miles west of Boston and connected to the North Atlantic by way of the Boston Post Road. The nucleated settlements occurred around the town common, where the meeting house, tavern, and shoppes were located. Dispersed homesteads occurred along the agriculturally rich glaciated meadows, located along the Sudbury River which flowed into the Concord River, the Merrimack River, and the North Atlantic. Settlers in Sudbury, Massachusetts came from many different areas in England where strong manorial control had occurred, with open field systems which recreated the English manorial system in the Massachusetts Bay hinterland (Figure 2.5)(Cronon 1983).

**Figure 2.5 Sudbury, Massachusetts (Wayland)**



(Source: Hornsby 2005 Pg. 133)

Wood reiterates what Morison and Meinig established regarding the population dissemination from the various regions of England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, emphasizing that most Puritan congregations immigrated from parishes in East Anglia. These religious

dissidents portrayed English Calvinism by replicating their English parish as a New England town (Morison 1961). Settlements were first established on the coast with new settlements developing into the interior once coastal population growth and density increased. The human imprint located in East Anglia known as land reclamation in the area called the Fens was practiced in Massachusetts. Today there is a swampy park near the infamous Fenway Park in Boston's Back Bay, the largest section of Boston reclaimed from the sea in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century (Whitehill 1959).

Framingham Centre emerged as the transit center on the Boston – Worcester turnpike in 1800, where the daily stage coach stopped at this equidistant point between Boston. The diffusion of information and exchange of goods occurred, usually at the village tavern or meetinghouse. The turnpike system in southern New England occurred in 1792 with a spoke and wheel system being established with tolls. The towns of the New England were connected through multiple nodes of commerce and there were 100 banks in New England in 1799 (Wood 1997)

### **The Atlantic Paradigm (Hornsby 2005)**

*The Atlantic Paradigm* reconceptualizes North American historical geography by shedding the traditional boundaries of the modern day nation-state and focuses on three specific geographic themes: (1) the colonial economy, (2) trans-Atlantic migration, and (3) early industrialization and urbanization (Hornsby 2005). This philosophy blends *the mercantile model* (Vance 1971), *world system theory* (Wallerstein 1974), and *North Atlantic basin* (Meinig 1986) with *the Atlantic Paradigm* (Hornsby 2005). European settlement occurred along multiple points of attachment along the eastern seaboard of North America. These coastal communities accumulated

vast merchant wealth through intricate commercial networks across long distances of trade. North American staples included fur in Canada, cod and lumber in New England, wheat and corn in the Mid Atlantic, tobacco in the Chesapeake, rice and indigo in the Carolinas, and sugar in the Caribbean. These staples were exchanged for manufactured and luxury goods from Europe (Hornsby 2005). These commercial towns accrued merchant wealth due to their location on the semi-periphery of the world system.

Fishing settlements developed differently in New England than the Maritime Provinces of Canada during the seventeenth centuries. London merchant houses funded the Great Migration of English Puritans to the towns of Massachusetts Bay between 1629 and 1650, when entire congregations of religious dissidents migrated across the North Atlantic to duplicate their English parish in New England (Morison 1961). The towns of Gloucester and Marblehead developed huge fishing fleets with economic linkage to the merchant fleets of Newburyport, Salem, and Boston. Merchants houses in Bristol and Plymouth, located in the provinces of England known as the West End, established fishing stations during summer months along the coasts of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. St. John's and Halifax became seasonal settlements during the summer months occupied by Irish and Welsh fishermen.

Massachusetts Bay became known as the codfish aristocracy due to the wealth established through the annual catches of the multiple port fleets (Morison 1961). Cod became the staple of the New England diet and created extensive trade within the North Atlantic basin. Their mercantile empire became capital intensive and hierarchical, thus the annual catch of cod was crucial to the Massachusetts economy, responsible for the success of the lumber, rum, and shipbuilding industries (Vance 1971). Cod and rum

became the medium of exchange for New England merchants involved in the three pointed triangle trade of the British North Atlantic basin.

**Conclusion:**

The geographic location theory of the European settlement of the New England region is best explained by the Mercantile Model (Vance 1971), which best describes colonial settlement patterns of the Massachusetts Bay colony. Settlement took place at multiple points of attachment, where lucrative commercial merchant towns developed at Boston, Salem, and Newburyport. These coastal towns served as entrepôts, the commercial intermediaries between the European marketplace and their own respective hinterlands, located on the periphery of the 17<sup>th</sup> century world system (Wallerstein 1973). Cod became the New England staple export and huge fishing fleets developed in the communities of Marblehead and Gloucester. Dried cod, rum, and lumber became the principle exports that launched New England merchants into the lucrative North Atlantic Triangle Trade.

The American Revolution forced Massachusetts merchants to seek new trade routes and partners. Boston merchants dominated the Pacific Northwest fur trade and the China trade, Salem merchants dominated the Sumatran pepper trade centered on Mauritius, and Newburyport remained the ship-building center of North America and dominated the Baltic trade centered on St. Petersburg. The Embargo of 1807 devastated the coastal economy of New England. Merchant acumen, maritime venture capital, and British technology launched Massachusetts from wharf to waterfall in 1821. Political legislation became the catalyst for economic transition from shipping to manufacturing with the population shift from coastal ports to hinterland towns.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

What were the catalysts that transformed the political economy of Massachusetts between 1763 and 1825, resulting in the economic transition from shipping to manufacturing and accompanied by migration into the interior? My hypothesis theorizes that geopolitics and sectionalism, which is politics motivated by local economic interests, created the federal legislation of the Embargo of 1807. This law served as the catalyst for economic transition and population shifts from Atlantic Ocean ports involved in global maritime commerce during the golden age of shipping to hinterland riverside mill towns where they manufactured huge quantities of textiles, launching the new republic into the Industrial Revolution.

#### **Vance: The Mercantile Model & the Geography of Wholesaling**

The mercantile model developed in the text, *The Geography of Wholesaling* (Vance 1971) and the modern *world system* (Wallerstein 1973) were cited consistently in academic texts written by historical geographers: Meinig 1986, Hugill 1994, Wood 1997, Meyer 2003, and Hornsby 2005. Dr. Vance was a resident of Natick, Massachusetts, located in Boston's western suburbs, and wrote his dissertation at Clark University on the growth of Boston's western suburbs in the 1960's during the commencement of Boston's *Route 128* high tech corridor. Boston always has maintained the status of the region's largest city, exerting the most economic and political influence over the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and New England.

However, the region has always been multi-nodal with numerous cities and towns maintaining commercial importance of various degrees.

The New England town form of government historically dominated the county unit system, which is prevalent in most parts of the United States. The New England region historically developed with multiple coastal settlements located along the intricate and extensive coastline of the Cape Cod Bay, the Gulf of Maine, Long Island Sound, Narragansett Bay, and Massachusetts Bay. These oceanic market towns served as agents or intermediaries which connected the agricultural communities of the frontier with the commercial cities of Western Europe. Market centers will change over time due to economic change and population shifts into the North American interior. The text explained the role of the merchant wholesaler in the New England economy and emphasized the range of goods, distance of trade, and commercial networks.

*The Geography of Wholesaling* concludes with early U.S. census data, which exhibited the major population shift between the coastal regions of Massachusetts to the interior of New England. The U.S. census in 1800 listed four Massachusetts cities above 5,000 inhabitants and all were located on the North Atlantic coast. The U.S. census in 1830 listed ten Massachusetts cities above 5,000 inhabitants, five were located on the coast and five were located in the interior, establishing the major shift in population and industries. Boston emerged as the coastal hub of Massachusetts and New England commerce in 1825 with increased connectivity to the emergent wholesale and industrial satellite centers of Providence, Worcester, and Springfield. These new economic centers emerged within the geography of wholesaling with population and commercial shifts into the North American interior.

## Data Sources

*The Maritime History of Massachusetts* (Morison 1961) consistently cited the Peabody - Essex Museum (PEM) within his sources. His data was substantial to my research with micro level data and descriptions on Massachusetts port activity, trade partners, and the political economy. His text inspired me to travel to Salem to visit the PEM, located sixteen miles northeast of Boston in June 2004. The museum is a short walk from the old wharves of Salem, now administered by the Salem Maritime National Historic Site (SMNHS), which is part of the United States National Park Service (NPS). The exhibit showed merchant trade circa 1800, which was during the height of the golden age of shipping. This exhibit portraying old ships and their exotic cargoes at the SMNHS, the extensive maritime art galleries at the PEM, and the abundant literature which described Salem wharves by native son Nathaniel Hawthorne motivated me to return to the Phillips Library of the PEM during March 2005 to do archival research.

The Peabody – Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts was established by Salem merchants in 1799 as the East India Marine Society. It is considered to be the oldest continuing museum in the United States and its archives and collections are unsurpassed in North America. The East India Marine Society hall was erected in 1825 and membership was restricted to captains and supercargoes who circumnavigated the globe. Elias Haskett Derby, the first millionaire in the U. S. and Nathaniel Bowditch, author of *The New American Practical Navigator*, were founding members of this marine society and precursor to the Peabody Essex Museum. The PEM is the oldest museum in the U.S., where Salem mariners displayed art and artifacts obtained in exotic places which surround the globe. They were among the first Americans to recognize the

remarkable diversity of people in the world and their extraordinary objects of their creativity (Morrison 1961). The wall inscription at East India Marine Hall of the PEM commemorates these nautical, distant voyages of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, “Let this be your launching point of your journey into world art”

The Phillips Library at the PEM is a phenomenal library with abundant resources which aided me in my extensive research. The archives at the Phillips Library contained microfilm of original manuscripts which included nautical journals called ship logbooks, biographies or Essex County family genealogy, and periodicals. The East India Marine Society Papers, composed between 1790 and 1959, assisted one’s understanding of what it would have been like to sail on a global merchant voyage in 1800. These manuscripts identified specific data including imports/exports, ports of call, geographic phenomena, and economic interdependencies at the commencement of the United States role in the world economy. What were the common economic and political linkages between the ports of Massachusetts Bay and the ports of the British and French Colonial Empires. How did the merchants from the port towns of Massachusetts Bay introduce and finance the industrial revolution in North America? What methods and means did they use to obtain both commercial and industrial insight, obtained through Britain colleagues, and introducing it to the North American interior despite hostile U.S. bipartisan politics.

Four ship logs utilized within this research include specific maritime voyages of the following Massachusetts vessels: *The Astrea* of Salem, the *Concord* of Boston, the *Grand Turk* of Salem, and the ship *Margaret* of Boston. The purpose of this research was to find economic linkages within the 19<sup>th</sup> century world system at both micro and



macro levels to prove the connectivity regarding the networks and flows between merchants and manufacturers in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Shiplogs are nautical journals written by the ship's supercargo, who is the agent of the vessel's principal owner and investor and sails on board the ship for the duration of the entire global maritime voyage. The data from these oceanic voyages was "mind boggling", each journal (ship logbook) could be utilized to write a screen play.

The research focused on particular ship names, owners, and supercargoes which could portray pertinent economic linkages necessary to prove the hypothesis. The written accounts also provided valuable insight into weather and geographic phenomena, world economic and political hegemony, exotic luxury commodities, and global ports of commerce. Pertinent journal findings included merchant economic linkages, conflicts (piracy and war), international competition, indigenous encounters, and harsh living conditions due to the risk of long distance voyages. The insurance industry was founded in Massachusetts through merchant investors due to the economic interdependencies with London financiers and the monetary risks involved with the funding of maritime voyages.

Much of the data has been obtained through historical geographers cited in the academic texts used in this thesis. Morison, Meinig, Huggill, Wood, Meyer, and Hornsby effectively cite statistical data from their research. Most of the results will be divulged in the analysis and conclusion of this paper. Two volume statistical archives of United States commerce between 1700 and 1975, *The Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970 (Volume I & II)*, published by the Bureau of the Census through the U.S. Department of Commerce, provided little results or insight within this research.

Massachusetts state data provided greater accuracy and accuracy which will be taken into further account for future dissertation research. Morrison also rebuked his retained historical data from these federal sources in his text, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*. The records during this period were probably inaccurate due to poor record keeping with the possibility of falsification through bipartisan politics and economic sectionalism which frequently occurred in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The two political legislations enacted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Embargo of 1807 and the War of 1812, were petitioned by Virginians: Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Federal port tonnage data was recorded by Virginians, James Madison in 1800 through 1808 and James Monroe between 1808 and 1816. Massachusetts data regarding port tonnage lost from both Southern inspired political economic legislation was not in sync with United States records obtained through the US Census. Regardless of which data is correct, 1794 to 1837 represented an unprecedented era of economic sectionalism which would be the precursor to American Civil War of 1861.

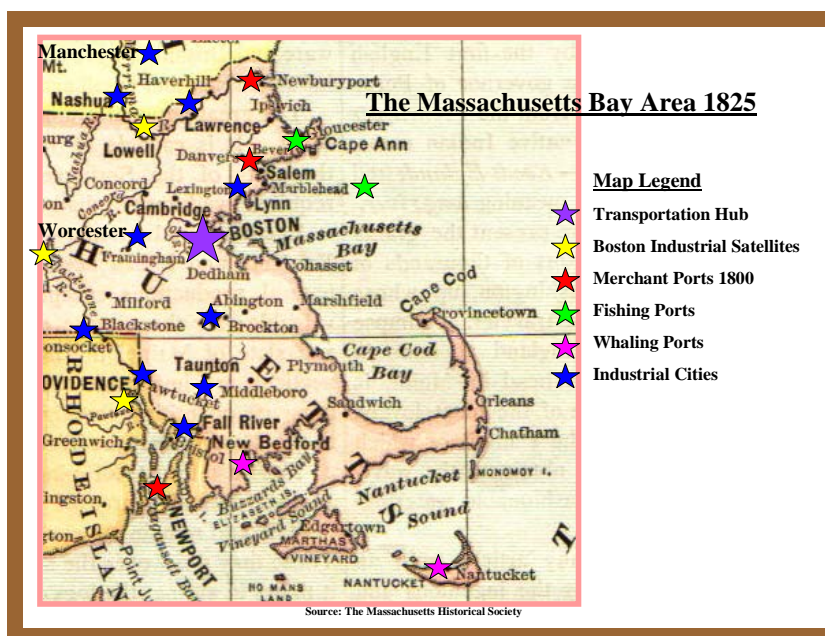
## **Conclusion**

The ports of Massachusetts Bay were the intermediaries of the North Atlantic Triangle trade from 1763 to 1825, where they served as entrepôts of wholesaling between Western Europe and the New England hinterland. Vance's mercantile model describes settlement patterns in New England and their commercial role in the world system. The transition of merchant capital investment from lucrative coastal shipping to interior textile manufacturing occurred in 1814, after the enactment of the Embargo of 1807 prohibiting all international maritime commerce by Thomas Jefferson. This

proved that Massachusetts merchants were North America's first venture capitalists with the assistance of British merchant colleagues and the diffusion of technology.

Population shifted from coastal communities to hinterland towns with the shift in commerce and improved connectivity through transportation and communication (Wood 1997). The New England town was the supreme political unit with the county remaining relatively insignificant. Each town maintained their own autonomy with the predominate multiple market centers shifting over time from coastal to hinterland and smaller ports to Boston. Transportation improvements and economic transitions were the catalysts to shift the population from the coast to the interior. Central place theory did not exist and market centers evolved the populations shifted inland due to economic change mercantilism to industrialization (Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.1 Massachusetts Bay Area 1825**



Source: The Massachusetts Historical Society

Nathaniel Bowditch was the supercargo on several Massachusetts ships and eventually became Captain on many voyages. His journals were well written, precise, scientific, and creative. He published *The New American Practical Navigator* in 1802 after finding over 100 errors in British navigational material. This book became called the midshipman's bible, and carried by all sailors in the US Navy. Bowditch completed many voyages, became a founding member of the infamous marine society, founded Essex Fire and Marine Insurance Company in Salem, then moved to Boston around 1815 with other Massachusetts merchant capitalists. Bowditch became president of the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, the second oldest insurance corporation in the U.S. and the primary venture capital firm to invest in Francis Cabot Lowell's mill in Waltham and the abundant textile mills of Lowell. Nathaniel Bowditch was the crucial linkage which connected merchants to manufacturers. The merchants of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport became the nation's first venture capitalists, who invested in the textile cities of Lowell, Lawrence, Nashua, Taunton, and Framingham. The data obtained through the maritime journals of four unique nautical voyages of specific Massachusetts vessels at the PEM, along with rare bibliographies and historical academic texts, confirmed the economic linkages between the merchants from the three principal ports of Massachusetts Bay and the industrial revolution in North America.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS

#### **Introduction: Political Economy of Massachusetts (1763 – 1825)**

This chapter describes the international political economy of the Massachusetts Bay area, the commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the New England region between 1763 and 1825. The research explains how political legislation through local economic interests (sectionalism) and international politics (geo-politics) served as the catalyst for economic transition and shifts in population from coastal ports to the hinterland towns. Massachusetts transformed through four specific economic transition stages between 1763 and 1825. This research scrutinizes the final two economic transition stages with the shift in commercial activity from “wharf to waterfall”, or the golden age of shipping to the Industrial Revolution.

The analysis of the data obtained through academic texts, the U.S. Census, and on-site research at the Peabody Essex Museum is divided into five sections. Each begins with a specific political event, which acted as the catalyst for economic transition. The economic stages include: (1) colonial economy, (2) American Revolution, (3) the golden age of shipping, (4) bipartisan politics and sectionalism, and (5) merchant venture capital financing the Industrial Revolution. The central theme in this research comes from Massachusetts’ experience of four economic stages between 1763 and 1825 that were caused by specific political events. These events include (1) The Seven Year War 1757 - 1763, (2) The American Revolution 1775 - 1781, (3) The Peace of Paris 1783, (4) The Embargo of 1807 and the War of 1812, and (5) The Missouri Compromise of 1820 when Maine joined the Union as an independent state.

## **The Colonial Economy**

The Seven Year War occurred in Europe and North America, involving all of the great powers of Europe, European colonists in North America, and the eastern Native American tribes. The war ended in 1763 with the British domination of the North American continent. The British Crown incurred an enormous war debt from this conflict. Armistice led to the imposition of a series of taxation acts upon the colonists: the Stamps Act, Townsend Acts, Tea Act, and Port Bill. The political issue was taxation without representation in Parliament and resulted with the Boston Tea Party, leading to the closing of the lucrative port of Boston and forcing the shift in maritime commerce north to the ports of Salem and Newburyport.

The commerce of Massachusetts Bay ports involved fishing the banks for cod, distilling Caribbean molasses into rum, extracting abundant timber (pine and oak), shipbuilding, and merchant trade within the North Atlantic basin. The first economic transition stage of the Massachusetts economy was resource extraction, where merchant wholesalers exchanged raw materials (lumber) and agricultural surplus for export (corn) from their own respective hinterlands for imported manufactured European goods. The world system included the entire North Atlantic basin referred to as the North Atlantic Triangle Trade circuit. Manufactured goods were imported from Britain and the European continent for over a century creating a huge demand among New England colonists for European manufactured goods. Newburyport dry-goods merchant house, Jackson and Bromfield stocked a wide array of multi-colored silk, cotton, and wool material in 1760, which proved the increase in demand for European luxuries in coastal Massachusetts (Breen 2004)

## **The American Revolution**

The thirteen colonies sent representatives to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia where the war time act of privateering (legalized piracy) was reinstated. Merchant ships from the multiple ports of Massachusetts Bay frequently engaged in privateering. Salem in particular possessed the largest merchant fleet and was not occupied by the British Navy, so it was able to engage in the wartime occupation of privateering. Salem mariners captured 445 British merchant vessels between 1775 and 1783 through privateering and inherited large quantities of luxuries (NPS 126). Wartime profits encouraged Massachusetts merchants to venture out beyond the North Atlantic for the wealth of Asia.

The Canadian Maritime Provinces and the New England States are located within the same region which form one of the nine nations of North America (Garreau 2000). Both regions share a similar culture of maritime occupations, diverse British heritage, and vernacular architecture. The rift between Canadians and New Englanders occurred during the American Revolution between 1775 – 1781, when the 13 British Colonies to the south of the Maritimes declared independence from the British crown and immense British Colonial Empire. The American Revolution was North America's first Civil War (Hornsby 2005). Massachusetts merchants were independent and developed trade relationships on their own, cutting out their British middleman as early as 1770 (Hornsby 2005). Despite the provinces of Canada remaining loyal to the British crown, strong economic and cultural interdependencies remained between Yankee New Englanders and Canadians through the coastal trade (Meinig 1986).

## The Golden Age of Shipping

The American Revolution ended with the Peace of Paris in 1783, when the British prohibited American merchant vessels from entering any port within the immense British Empire. Massachusetts merchants had to find new trade partners involved in the competitive arena of world commerce, thus followed their European mentors: The Hanseatic League, the Portuguese, and the Spanish.

Newburyport's merchants were referred to as *Russiamen* because they specialized in the Baltic Sea trade centered on Saint Petersburg. Their abundant lumber supply from the Merrimack Valley and the quantities of Russian duck, hemp, and iron secured their status as a ship-building center. Newburyport was the shipbuilding center of the United States in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, providing Britain with one third of its naval ships and an abundant supply of lumber (Hugill, 1993, Pg. 27).

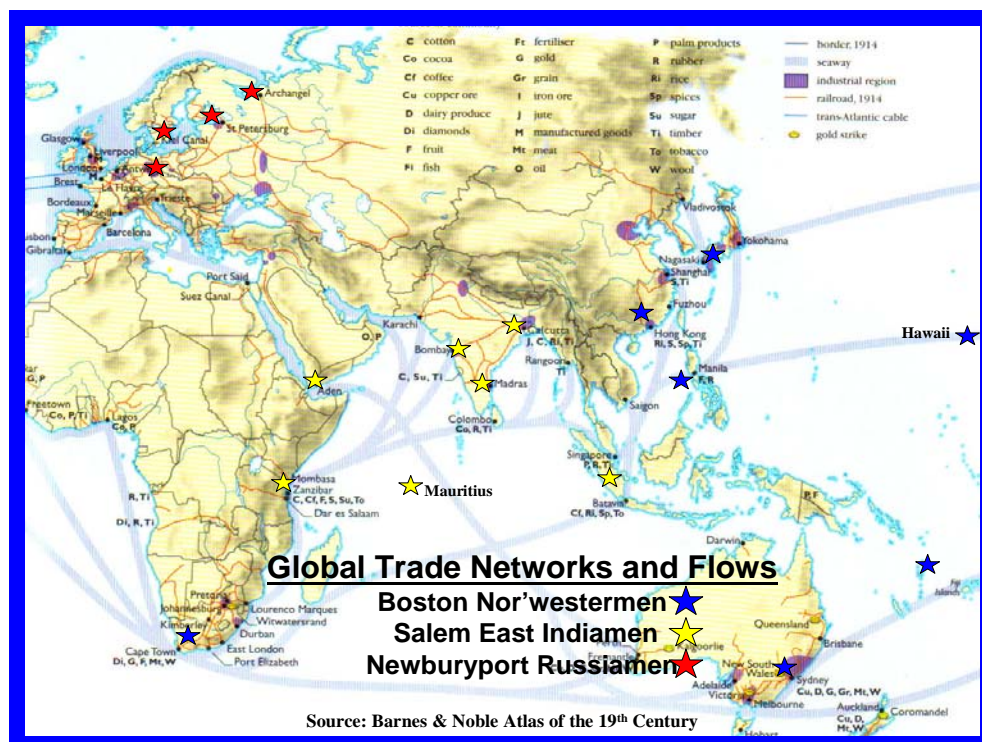
Salem merchants were called *East Indiamen* because they specialized in the lucrative pepper trade of Sumatra and maintained their Indian Ocean basin entrepot at Mauritius. Elias Hasket Derby was a successful merchant who became the first millionaire in the United States. His ship, *The Grand Turk* became the first Massachusetts merchant ship to trade with China in May of 1785 and Derby's son sailed to Mauritius, where he established the first merchant house on the Isle de France.

Boston merchants were called *Nor'westermen* because they specialized in the Pacific Northwest fur trade, securing their commercial success in China. Captain Robert Gray of Boston and his ship the *Columbia Rediviva* entered Boston harbor in 1790 after a three year voyage, becoming the first American ship to circumnavigate the globe (Morison 1961). The *Columbia* and *Lady Washington* departed Boston in 1787 and



discovered the Columbia River, which Robert Gray named after his ship and claimed the Oregon Territory for the U. S. fifteen years prior to the arrival of Lewis and Clark. (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1 Massachusetts' Economic Linkages**



Source: Map Template - Barnes & Noble, Map Symbols - Author

Trade data obtained through Massachusetts customs list John Derby (Salem), Bullfinch (Boston), and Pintard (New York) as the principal investors in the voyage of Robert Gray's *Columbia* in 1790 (Morison 1961). The *Astrea* was owned by Elias Hasket Derby of Salem and commanded by James Magee and maintained the diligent supercargo T.H. Perkins, both men from Boston. The supercargo was the financial agent of the principal investor or ship owner and kept a journal or ship log during the entire duration of the maritime voyage. The *Astrea* and *Light Ship* returned to Salem carrying Chinese luxuries in excess of \$40,000.00, including tea, silk, and porcelain. Boston

merchants purchased ten million pounds of tea in the years 1806 to 1807 and surpassed all British tea imports occurring that same year (Morison 1961). Perkins maintained a thirty year reign as Boston's principle China merchant house (Morison 1961) The following map portrays the economic linkages between the Massachusetts Bay ports of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport and their own respective global maritime networks in a unique geographic location. Each entrepot is color coded to show their trade circuits and range of goods between Massachusetts and the world in 1805

### **Bipartisan Politics and Sectionalism**

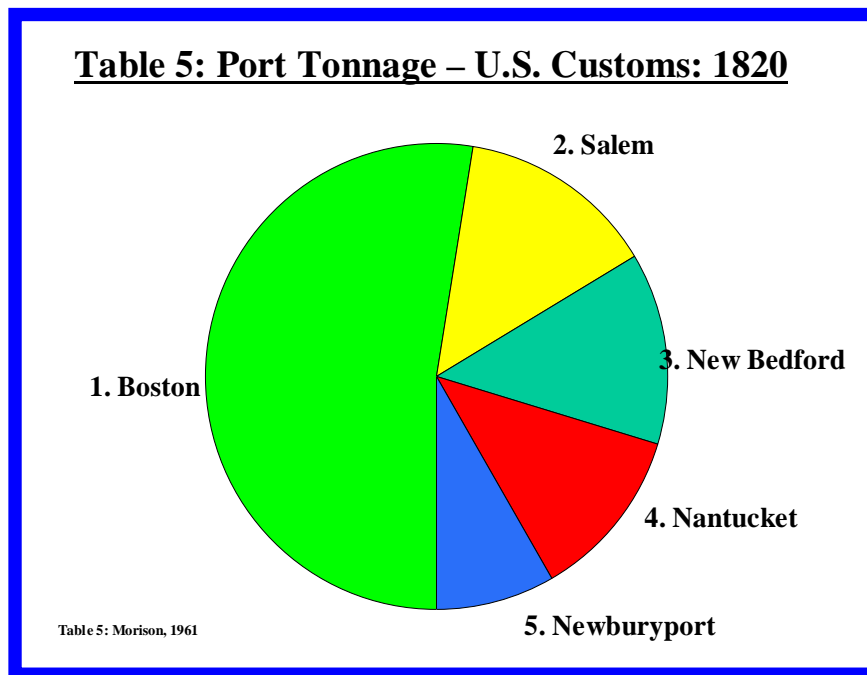
The ratification of the United States Constitution divided the new republic into two factions, the Federalists under Alexander Hamilton and the Republicans under Thomas Jefferson, the party formally known as Democratic Republicans (Remini 2002). This was the birth of bipartisan politics in the United States with the ideology of sectionalism or the emphasis of regional political-economic interests. The schism between agrarian Democrats located in the nation's hinterland and commercial Federalists located in port cities on the North Atlantic rim. The Federalists were located along the North Atlantic basin, traded within the global economy, supported a strong federal government, and were married to England (Varg 1983). These seaports were direct extensions of the European urban system and world economy with little interest in expansionism (Porter 1973). Sectionalism became the political divide within the new republic, commercial Federalists versus agricultural Republicans. "The planter class of Virginia was just as much the minority elite as the merchant class of New England (Ellis 2000 Pg 65).

Thomas Jefferson was quoted during a speech to southern constituents in 1787, "We are completely under the economic saddle of the merchants of Massachusetts and Connecticut, they ride us very hard, insulting our feelings, and exhausting our strengths and our substance." (Meinig 1993 pg 461). Southern politicians referred to the elite merchant class of New England as the *Essex Junto and Connecticut River Gods*. This was the stronghold of the Federalist Party, composed of merchants and farmers in Essex County on Boston's North Shore and Hampshire County located in the Connecticut River Valley of Western Massachusetts (Banner 1973). The commercial strength remained within the network of merchant colleagues from the leading families of Massachusetts Bay entrepots. These elite families of the Commonwealth included the Appleton, Cabot, Derby, Jackson, Lawrence, Lowell, Pickering, and Tracy families and members of an extreme wing of the Federalist Party.

The political economy of the New England ports were interconnected culturally, economically, and politically with the ports of Western Europe. The North Atlantic basin was the highway of commerce which facilitated the transfer of innovation, knowledge, and philosophy. Jefferson's Embargo between 1807 – 1809 and President Madison's second war against Great Britain in 1812 devastated the coastal New England economy. These ports were dependent on revenue from fishing, maritime commerce, rum distilleries, and ship-building. The Embargo was the catalyst which forced Massachusetts merchant capitalists to invest their accumulated merchant wealth into new ventures. The War of 1812 was less of a hardship than the American Revolution. The pirates off the coasts of North Africa and Sumatra with the fourteen

months of Jefferson's ridiculous embargo deeply transformed the economy of Massachusetts (Vickers 2006) (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2 Massachusetts Port Tonnage 1820**



(Source: Morrison 1961)

The Federalists of the New England States met discretely in 1815 at Hartford, Connecticut to discuss the possibility of secession from the United States of America. The coastal economy of New England, stretching from the port cities of Boston, Nantucket, Newburyport, New Haven, Newport, Portsmouth, Providence, and Salem were the recipients of devastating economic hardships. These orators forced these commercial Federalists to threaten secession and believed New York and Pennsylvania would become allies with New England since these states shared similar philosophies and vocations. New England had lost influence in the new republic with the burgeoning nation becoming evermore expansionist in nature. Frontier farmers, admired by Jefferson, shared an entirely different vision from Yankee New Englanders and New

Yorkers (Meinig 1993). The Treaty of Ghent made peace with the British, compromises were made between the states with much humor at the expense of the New England Federalists (Morison 1961). The convention was ridiculed as treason and marked the death of the Federalist party and most merchants of Massachusetts became Whigs, the new party of manufacturing (Remini 2002).

Boston would have inevitably absorbed port tonnage or trade volume from smaller Massachusetts ports due its geography. It possessed the largest harbor with two rivers and abundant islands, which provided ample space for docks, wharves, and warehouses. Boston emerged as the distribution, financial, and transportation centers of the New England region. Ship technology enabled shipyards to build mammoth vessels, which became too large for the smaller ports of Salem and Newburyport to handle. The island port of Nantucket was the energy center of North America with its whaling fleet. The mainland port of New Bedford eventually out produced Nantucket in tonnage with its transportation connectivity to railroads.

### **Merchant Capital and the Industrial Revolution**

The textile industry developed in 18th century New England with George Cabot's cotton spinning factory in Beverly in 1786, Samuel Slater's textile mill in Pawtucket, RI in 1790, the innovative Lynn shoe industry, and the Pawtucket and Middlesex Canals. These milestones were established with merchant venture capital and technology, which brought innovation to New England. The Middlesex Canal connected Boston and the Mystic River to the Merrimack River Valley near present day Lowell. Boston developed the regional advantage over the other merchant port cities of New England. The shipbuilding industry moved from Newburyport to the deeper water

ports of Maine. Brigg's Ship Yard, located at Stage Point in Salem, Massachusetts, constructed the finest ships in the Americas for that period (Morison 1961). Briggs relocated his shipyard to Medford, located on the Mystic River near the Middlesex Canal. The Naumkeag Cotton Mill replaced Brigg's Shipyard after the War of 1812 emphasizing the regional economic transition in Salem and other Massachusetts port cities from shipping to manufacturing.

Francis Cabot Lowell left Boston in 1810 with several merchant colleagues, the Jackson family and the Appleton family, due to the economic stagnation of the coastal New England economy incurred through Jefferson's Embargo of 1807. These Massachusetts merchants toured textiles factories in Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool, and Manchester. He returned from Lancashire, England in 1812 just before President Madison declared war on Great Britain. Lowell retained this new technology from memory and purchased land along the Charles River in Waltham, Massachusetts. The first completely integrated cotton textile factory in North America was established by Lowell in 1814, ten miles west of Boston. The technology was committed to memory, diffusion from his merchant colleagues in the UK. The Boston Manufacturing Company was established in 1814 with a capital investment of \$400,000.00 from many of his close merchant colleagues, including Appleton, Cabot and Jackson family members who accompanied Lowell to Lancashire in 1810 (Tharp 1973).

Lowell also instituted the nation's first tariff in 1817 and set America on a course for protectionism, the legislation to protect US manufacturers from imported goods. Lowell died that same year and his merchant colleagues, Jackson and Appleton, continued Lowell's legacy with other members of the Waltham venture, known as the

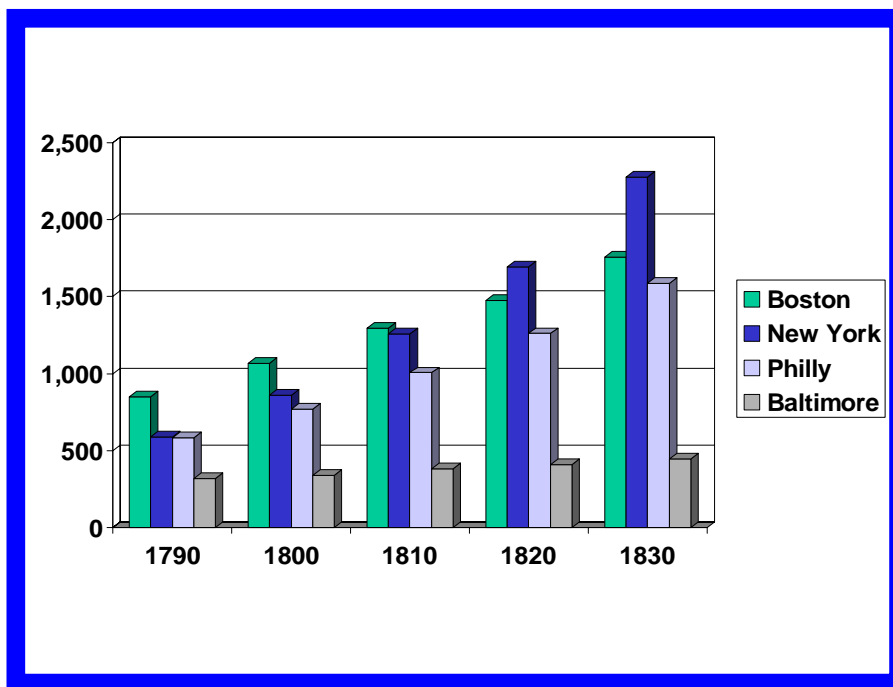
Boston Associates. They established a new textile mill in 1821 designed on the Waltham textile model at the Pawtucket Falls on the Merrimack River, the site of the 1796 canal built by Newburyport merchants. Massachusetts merchants re-directed their accumulated merchant capital and abundant dockside cargoes to promoting the burgeoning textile industry located in the Commonwealth's hinterland. Valuable cargoes of imported cotton, silk and wool were manufactured into fashionable clothing in the abundant mill towns of Middlesex County.

Merchant capital, Yankee ingenuity, and water power from New England's abundant rivers and waterfalls resulted in the agglomeration of the textile industry in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Lowell had 16 mills by 1831, becoming the growth pole of the emerging textile industry in North America. The Waltham – Lowell textile model diffused throughout the New England hinterland to the riverside towns of Lawrence, Nashua, Taunton, Chicopee, Manchester, Fall River, and Framingham. The planned textile city of Lowell by 1830 bypassed both Salem and Newburyport, becoming Massachusetts second largest city with 33,000 inhabitants (Dublin, 1992). New York bypassed Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore in 1825 as entrepot of North America with the completion of the Erie Canal, which bisected the Appalachian Mountain barrier and connected the Atlantic coastline to the North American interior.

The Boston metropolitan area at 1.45 million inhabitants remained second in population to the New York metropolitan area at 1.7 million inhabitants (Meyer 2003). The Salem Gazette moved to State Street in Boston, which was the center of mercantilism and finance by 1800 and changed its name to the Massachusetts Gazette (PEM). New York was the largest port on the eastern seaboard with Baltimore a close

second. Both possessed the geographical advantage of location and topography. Boston and Philadelphia remained regional centers of distribution and transportation. The industrial satellites of Boston were autonomous and maintained their own unique culture, economy, industries, and politics (Figure 4.3).

**Figure 4.3 Population of Eastern U.S. Metropolitan Areas 1790 -1830**



Source: Data – Meyer, Graph - Author

## Conclusion

The mercantile theory (Vance 1971) best explains human settlement patterns in the Massachusetts Bay area of the New England region, which occurred along multiple points of attachment. Boston, Salem, and Newburyport evolved into the three largest market towns due to their geographic location and topography. These Massachusetts Bay seaports served as the financial intermediaries between the commercial cities of Europe and their own respective hinterlands. The New England frontier produced



surplus agriculture and resources (lumber), transported by river or colonial road to their gateway port for export to the markets of Europe in exchange for manufactured goods.

The Massachusetts economy transitioned from resource extractors to wartime privateers during the American Revolution. Massachusetts Bay merchants followed the trade routes of Spain, Portugal, and the Hanseatic League and entered the golden era of shipping in 1785. Boston merchant houses dominated the fur trade in the Pacific Northwest, which enabled them to control the China trade (Tea and silk) centered on Canton (Guangzhou). Salem merchants dominated the pepper and spice trade in Sumatra, which enabled them to control the India trade with their entrepot established at Isle de France (Mauritius). Newburyport merchants dominated the Baltic trade which centered on Saint Petersburg, where they obtained necessary commodities to secure their position as ship-building center of North America.

Bipartisan politics led to the Embargo of 1807, which closed all U.S. seaports to maritime commerce and devastated the coastal economy of the nation. Sectionalism did not occur along north – south lines but along the coastal – hinterland divide. The political issue or great divide was agrarian versus commercial sources of wealth (Ellis 2000). The Whiskey Rebellion and Shay's Rebellion occurred in agricultural Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, which proved that farmers in these geographic areas did not share the same political vision as those merchants in Philadelphia and Boston. Federalists were located along the Connecticut River due to their connectivity to the seaboard (Banner 1973). The Embargo of 1807 was the catalyst which caused Massachusetts merchants to invest their lucrative wealth obtained through maritime trade into the burgeoning textile industry in the New England hinterland. These

merchants were the nation's first venture capitalists that launched the new republic into the world's first global economy.

Bipartisan politics in the early 19th century were not unlike those today in the early 21st century. Thomas Jefferson sympathized with Bostonians in his *Rights of British America* after the port of Boston was closed by the British Navy in 1773. He wrote, "This large and prosperous town whose trade was its sole subsistence was deprived of trade and in utter ruin.". Political rhetoric or genuine sympathy? President Jefferson became an isolationist, forbidding trade with Britain, France, and all nations with the creation of the Embargo of 1807. "Manufacturing should be out of necessity not by choice, those who labor the earth are the chosen people of God.". (Jefferson 1984 Pg 290). Jefferson used the analogy of cities to the United States are like sores on the human body (Jefferson 1984 Pg 291). He was a brilliant man, America's first geography, yet lacked commercial acumen.

Massachusetts' final economic transition occurred in 1814 with the shift from global maritime commerce to textile manufacturing, resulting in the population shifting from Atlantic seaports to hinterland riverside towns. Boston had the largest harbor and population, making it the distribution and transportation center of the New England region. Boston evolved into the nation's first railroad hub-in-spoke system in 1835, connecting the industrial satellite cities of Lowell, Worcester and Providence (Meinig 1994 pg 324 ). Boston was the largest city and regional transportation hub of New England yet each satellite city maintained it's own unique identity in regard to culture, industry, and politics. Providence for example was the capital and largest city in

Rhode Island, the jewelry center of the U.S., and home to its own ivy league institution Brown University.

Ten cities in Massachusetts exceeded 5,000 inhabitants according to the 1830 census. These cities were equally dispersed between locations along the North Atlantic coast and the Massachusetts interior (Vance 1970). Only Boston, Gloucester, Newburyport, and Salem had exceeded 5,000 inhabitants according to the 1800 census, while Cambridge, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Taunton, and Worcester exceeded 5,000 inhabitants according to the 1830 census. Gloucester became the fishing center of New England while New Bedford dominated the whaling industry until the usage of kerosene in the 1870's. The cities of Lowell, Lynn, Taunton, and Worcester became thriving centers of profitable, diverse industry with connectivity to Boston.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **Introduction**

This research addresses the particular catalysts which transformed the political economy of the Massachusetts Bay area and the New England region between 1763 and 1825. The economy transitioned through four specific economic stages during this timeline: resource extraction, privateering, maritime commerce, and manufacturing. This paper focuses on the last shift in the economic transition of the Massachusetts economy, which resulted in the migration of commercial activity and population from the North Atlantic coastal ports to hinterland riverside towns. Why did Massachusetts Bay merchants abandon their maritime quests of fishing, ship-building, and global commerce and invest their lucrative merchant capital into the burgeoning textile industry evolving within the Southern New England hinterland?

#### **Analysis**

The hypothesis suggested that geopolitics and bipartisan politics (Sectionalism) created federal political legislation which acted as the catalysts for economic change and population relocation. The ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1787 marked the commencement of bipartisan politics in the new republic, dividing the nation into two political factions, the Federalists and Democrats. Alexander Hamilton of New York was leader of the Federalist Party (The Federalists), the faction which favored a strong federal government, British diplomacy, and commercial ventures. Thomas Jefferson of Virginia was the leader of the Democratic-Republican Party (The Democrats), the faction which favored strong states' rights, French diplomacy, and agricultural

expansion; The Democrats were the political party of the South and the Federalists were the political party of the North. The Embargo of 1807 closed all U.S. ports to international commerce, devastated the economy of coastal New England, and was the federal legislation which acted as the final catalyst to shift the Massachusetts economy from shipping to manufacturing. This hypothesis is correct yet my assumption that bipartisan politics were drawn by lines of latitude was erroneous. The Federalist Party maintained its majority in Boston, Salem, and Newburyport yet had rival Democrats in the adjacent communities of Cambridge, Marblehead, and Dover. The Democratic-Republican Party maintained its majority in the agricultural interior yet had rival Federalist farmers in Hadley and Northampton towns of the Connecticut River Valley. Party lines of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century varied county to county and state to state versus North, South, and West. Jeffersonian dominance occurred in Berkshire, Middlesex, Bristol, Norfolk, and Barnstable Counties which were all in Massachusetts.

Theoretical approaches focused on *the mercantile model* (Vance 1971) and *world system theory* (Wallerstein 1974). Settlements in the Massachusetts Bay Colony developed in multiple points of attachment along the North Atlantic coastline, stretching from the Merrimack River Valley to Boston Harbor. Boston, Salem, and Newburyport evolved into the largest market centers of the Massachusetts Bay area in population and port tonnage. These seaports served as the financial intermediaries between Europe and their own respective hinterlands. Boston's *Nor'westermen* monopolized the fur trade in the Pacific Northwest and dominated the China trade centered on Canton (Guangzhou). Salem's *East Indiamen* monopolized the pepper and spice trade in Sumatra, dominating the Indian Ocean basin trade centered on Mauritius. Newburyport's *Russiamen*

controlled the Baltic Sea trade centered on Saint Petersburg and their capacious, protected harbor evolved into the largest shipbuilding center in North America.

Port tonnage reached its pinnacle in 1804 and rapidly declined between 1807 through 1812 due to the hostile federal legislation enacted by the *Virginia Dynasty*: President Thomas Jefferson's Embargo of 1807 and President James Madison's War of 1812. Merchants created the economic linkage between maritime trade and textile manufacturing in 1785 when George Cabot, a wealthy merchant from Beverly which was an adjacent port of Salem, established the first cotton spinning factory in the U.S. Samuel Slater and Robert Moses, Providence merchants, established the first textile mill in the U.S. in 1792. Francis Cabot Lowell and several other merchant families from the ports of Massachusetts Bay departed Boston in 1810 for the textile towns of Lancashire, England and Edinburgh, Scotland.

Lowell returned to Boston with Paul Moody, British mechanic and colleague, and reconstructed British textile technology from memory to create the first completely integrated cotton factory in the U.S. at Waltham in 1814. This was called the Boston Manufacturing Company, which was established through venture capital invested by twelve Massachusetts Bay merchants. These men were referred to as the Boston Associates by historians and established the Merrimack Manufacturing Company at the convergence of the Merrimack and Concord Rivers in 1821. This located became the textile growth pole of Lowell, which Charles Dickens described as a dream city and the Manchester of the Americas. The diffusion of technology disseminated from the agglomeration of the textile industry at Lowell to riverside mill towns throughout

southern New England: Chicopee, Fall River, Framingham, Lawrence, Lynn, Manchester, Nashua, Pawtucket, Providence, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester.

The following image is a painting done by a graduate colleague (Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1** *Wharves to Waterfalls*



Source: Waldemer

## **Results**

The hypothesis of this research is that geo-politics and sectionalism created the impetus for the federal political legislation which acted as the catalyst for transition of the regional economy and population shifts to the interior. The Embargo of 1807 devastated the economy of coastal New England, previously dependent on fishing, maritime commerce, rum distilling, and ship-building, and was the catalyst for the economic transition to manufacturing and urbanization. Massachusetts merchants possessed keen acumen and the application of British technology to become North America's first venture capitalists, launching the 19<sup>th</sup> century economy into the Industrial Revolution. The main contribution of this research, which developed through

the examination of original manuscripts (nautical journals) in the archives of the Phillip's Library at the Peabody - Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, is to establish the connectivity between merchants of Boston, Salem, and Newburyport with their lucrative venture capital obtained through vast global networks and funds invested in the entrepreneurial launch of textile manufacturing in the New England hinterland.

The geography of wholesaling involved the *mercantile model*, which was the addendum to *central place theory* involving an external trade system beyond the traditional parochial trade network and established during the pioneer economy of North America (Vance 1971). This involved the integration of the manufacturer, wholesaler, and retailer with the physical transfer of goods along great geographical distances. This was an important new feature of the modern world economy of the 17th and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries during the European colonization of the Americas. Wholesalers established merchant houses in the largest gateway centers; there were three of these commercial ports situated within the Massachusetts Bay area.

Initial research findings included invaluable texts from historical geographers such as Morison, Meinig, and Hornsby. The extensive analysis of archives located the Phillip's Library at the Peabody Essex - Museum in Salem, Massachusetts validated my hypothesis involving the role of political legislation acting as catalysts for economic transition and human migration, and explained economic linkages and the geography of wholesaling in the modern world system of 1800. The East India Marine Papers include thousands of manifests or nautical logbooks, which recorded numerous maritime voyages between 1785 and 1810. Preserved in microfilm in the reading room of the Phillip's Library, these nautical journals provided valuable insight and a greater



understanding of global commerce during the early years of the new republic. Logbooks recorded commodities of exchange, ports of call, economic interdependencies, and unusual geographic phenomena. The research was crucial since it supported historical data written on the period and cited within this thesis.

I selected four specific nautical journals based upon the ship's owner, captain, and supercargo in order to explain the economic linkages between merchants and manufacturers. The four logbooks were obtained from one maritime voyage of the following ships: The *Grand Turk* of Salem, the *Margaret* of Boston, the *Concord* of Boston, and the *Astrea* of Salem. The voyage of the *Astrea* to Canton and Mauritius was owned by Elias Hasket Derby of Salem, commanded by Captain James Magee of Boston, and the maritime logbook maintained by supercargo T.H. Perkins of Boston. The supercargo was the financial agent of the principal investor or ship owner and kept a journal or ship log during the entire duration of the maritime voyage.

T. H. Perkins became Boston's largest merchant house, which dominated the China trade in tea and silk for over 30 years. Nathaniel Bowditch was the supercargo on one voyage and the captain on another Asian voyage of the *Grand Turk*. Bowditch became president of Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, which was principal investor of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company, the founding textile corporation in Lowell. Captain Magee commanded the ship *Concord* on a voyage to the Pacific Northwest and China and recorded the number of US and European ships off the Oregon coast in 1803. This proved Boston dominance of the Oregon fur trade and its necessity as a viable commodity in the lucrative China trade. It also established Yankee presence in Oregon fifteen years prior to Jefferson's Lewis & Clark expedition.

I located a rare family biography of Boston's Appleton family in the archives of the Phillip's Library at the Peabody- Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. *The Appleton's of Beacon Hill* , brilliantly described Francis Cabot Lowell's voyage to Lancashire in 1810. The biography established economic and family linkages between merchants of Boston and Newburyport which included the Jacksons, Cabots, Lowells, and Traceys. These Newburyport merchants with the Appletons and other prominent Boston families traveled to Northern England and Scotland in 1810 to tour the textile mills. Economic linkages between merchants along with their networks and flows in Great Britain, allowed the diffusion of technology and the transfer of capital to establish the textile industry in the Massachusetts hinterland.

This economic transition occurred between the Embargo of 1807 and the War of 1812, sparked by the two hostile acts of legislation instituted by the Virginia Dynasty yet propelled New England into their rival economic commercial development and vanguard of the emergent United States of America. Most Virginia planters were commercially in debt to British creditors who supported the New England merchant elite, yet both elite parties represented the minority in North American population (Banner 1973). Thomas Jefferson died in debt which exceeded \$100,000.00 to British bankers (McCullough 2001). Massachusetts' John Quincy Adams supported the Embargo and earned the label of *Judas* by the Federalist party (Remini 2002 Pg 38). The economic ties remained strong between Yankee merchants and Great Britain, proven by the fact that the 1812 British naval blockade did not reach Boston until May of 1814 (Adams 1943). Boston emerged as the first railroad hub in the U. S. connecting the major seaport to the industrial satellite cities of Lowell, Worcester, and Providence.

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