

Cristina Ana Mazzeo

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Perú)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6006-6250>

Foreign Traders in South America and the Financing of the Independence Wars, 1820-1830

Abstract

Studying commerce and traders from a global perspective allows us to analyze the material and cultural exchanges that took place beyond national borders, which are often obscured by traditional historical perspectives centered on the nation. This wide terrain is explored here by addressing — and visualizing — the interrelations between the South American ports of Lima, Valparaíso and Buenos Aires, from the vantage point of independent Peru. To do so, we study the links among foreign merchants who were rooted or closely connected to such ports in the context of the South American wars of independence. War placed Peru in a disastrous economic situation, a circumstance that foreign merchants exploited by becoming the main lenders to the new State, which struggled to cover the expenses of the army to sustain the war. These businessmen created a mercantile network that bridged the boundaries of the recently created nation-states and testified to their great business skills as it broke the economic system of commercial control that had prevailed during three hundred years. Research in Peruvian Governmental, Notary, and Customs documentation unveils their ability to act as agents, negotiate loans and purchases, and take advantage of the wartime crisis to become the main providers of weaponry and military supplies and acquire a privileged position. Since South America was not prepared to reach its independence in the early 19th century without an army, without money, or without weaponry, the nascent states' economic and financial dependence on foreign traders that started during these times was in a sense inevitable.

Keywords: Wars of Independence; Pacific Ports; War Finance; Lima; Trade Networks; Peruvian Economy; Buenos Aires; Frederick Bergmann

Comerciantes extranjeros en Sudamérica y la financiación de las guerras de Independencia, 1820-1830

Resumen

El estudio del comercio y de los comerciantes desde una perspectiva global permite analizar los intercambios materiales y culturales que tuvieron lugar más allá de las fronteras, algo que resulta difícil mediante perspectivas históricas centradas en límites nacionales. Esta amplia perspectiva se explora en este artículo, analizando y visualizando las interrelaciones entre los puertos sudamericanos de Lima, Valparaíso y Buenos Aires, desde el punto de vista del Perú independiente. Para ello, el trabajo estudia los vínculos entre comerciantes extranjeros enraizados o estrechamente vinculados con dichos puertos, en el contexto de las guerras de Independencia en Sudamérica. La guerra situó a Perú en una situación económica desastrosa, circunstancia que los comerciantes extranjeros explotaron al convertirse en la principal fuente de préstamos del nuevo Estado, el cual luchaba para cubrir los gastos del ejército para el sostenimiento de la guerra. Estos negociantes crearon una red mercantil que atravesaba los límites de los estados-nación recientemente creados, aportando testimonio de sus excelentes habilidades negociadoras, y de su capacidad para transformar el sistema económico de control comercial que había dominado durante tres siglos en la región. La investigación en fuentes documentales del gobierno peruano, notarios y aduanas permite en este artículo descubrir la capacidad de estos negociantes para actuar como agentes, negociar préstamos y compras, y aprovechar una crisis de carácter bélico para convertirse en principales suministradores de armas y provisiones militares, lo que les hizo adquirir una posición privilegiada en la economía de la región. Dado que Sudamérica no estaba preparada para alcanzar su independencia a inicios del siglo XIX sin ejército, sin dinero, o sin armas, la dependencia financiera y económica de los nacientes Estados respecto a los comerciantes extranjeros que empezó en estos años fue, en algún sentido, inevitable.

Palabras clave: Guerras de Independencia; puertos del Pacífico; financiación bélica; Lima; redes de comercio; economía peruana; Buenos Aires; Frederick Bergmann

Comerciants estrangers a Sudamèrica i el finançament de les guerres d'Independència, 1820-1830

Resum

L'estudi del comerç i dels comerciants des d'una perspectiva global permet analitzar-ne els intercanvis materials i culturals que van tenir lloc més enllà de les fronteres, cosa que resulta difícil mitjançant perspectives històriques centrades en límits nacionals. Aquesta ampla perspectiva s'explora en aquest article, tot analitzant i visualitzant les interrelacions entre els ports sudamericans de Lima, Valparaíso i Buenos Aires, des del punt de vista del Perú independent. Per a tal fi, el treball estudia els vincles entre comerciants estrangers arrelats o estretament vinculats amb els ports mencionats, en el context de les guerres d'Independència a Sudamèrica. La guerra va situar el Perú en una situació econòmica desastrosa, circumstància que els comerciants estrangers van explotar quan van esdevenir la principal font de préstecs del nou Estat, el qual lluitava per cobrir les despeses de l'exèrcit per al sosteniment de la guerra. Aquests negociants van crear una xarxa mercantil que travessava els límits dels estats-nació tot just creats, aportant així testimoni de les seves excel·lents habilitats negociadores, i de la seva capacitat per transformar el sistema econòmic de control comercial que havia dominat durant tres segles a la regió. La recerca en fonts documentals del govern peruà, notaris i duanes permet en aquest article desentrellar la capacitat d'aquests negociants per actuar com a agents, negociar préstecs i compres, i aprofitar una crisi de caràcter bèl·lic per esdevenir els principals subministradors d'armes i provisions militars, el que els va fer adquirir una posició privilegiada a l'economia de la regió. Atès que Sudamèrica no estava preparada per assolir la independència a inicis del segle XIX sense exèrcit, sense diners, o sense armes, la dependència financera i econòmica dels naixents Estats respecte als comerciants estrangers que va començar durant aquells anys va ser, en algun sentit, inevitable.

Paraules clau: Guerres d'Independència; ports del Pacífic; finançament bèl·lic; Lima, xarxes de comerç; economia peruana; Buenos Aires; Frederick Bergmann

Corresponding author: e-mail: cmazzeo@pucp.pe

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1. Introduction

The independence of the Spanish American republics was consolidated after 1820, ending the period of Spanish domination and opening Latin American trade to the outside world. The Atlantic was the first to open itself up to foreign trade, even before the so-called United Provinces of South America formally declared their independence in mid-1816. Two years later, the Pacific was also opened to foreign trade through Valparaiso (Chilean independence was declared in 1818), when English traders settled in that port city and distributed goods across the coast to Guayaquil. The Peruvian port of Callao had to await the arrival of General José de San Martín for the establishment of foreign traders and the opening up of trade to all the nations of the world.

Studies on British trade in the Southern Cone is quite ample, from the classic studies of Desmond Christopher Martin Platt (1972) and Julio Irazusta (1984) for the Argentine case, Heraclio Bonilla for Peru, Eduardo Cavieres for Chile, to the new contributions by Mariano M. Schlez (2019) for Argentina, Manuel Llorca-Jaña (2012) for Chile, and Paul Gootenberg (1989) for Peru.

In the provinces of the Río de la Plata, free trade was championed since the beginning of the century (1806-1807) by its first statesmen (including Esteban Echevarría and Bartolomé Mitre), who considered the port of Buenos Aires as an ideal engine of development. Julio Irazusta (1984) argued that foreign traders hindered the development of the Río de la Plata by subordinating the region to foreign interests and therefore squandered the opportunity that opened up in 1810. According to Schlez (2019), the so-called English invasions of 1806-1807 stroke a mortal blow to the Spanish monopoly, although trade with Spain had begun to

deteriorate long before, and the ports of the Río de la Plata traded with non-Spanish ports since the very origin of its navigation.

For Desmond C.M. Platt (1972, 3), although it had been commercializing textiles since the colonial period, British trade in Latin America was not very significant, and it occupied a small percentage of the region's international markets except for those of Brazil and Argentina. Manuel Llorca-Jaña (2012) has recently argued that during the period after independence, British trade in Chile didn't differ much from that engaged by the British in the rest of the world. The exports from the United Kingdom to the world behaved largely as its exports to the Southern Cone, all of which increased dramatically in the second half of the nineteenth century across the globe (Llorca-Jaña 2012, 23). He also adds that, although the Spanish colonies traded with the English before independence, the volume of this commerce can only be quantified via the re-exports made by the Spanish metropolis to other parts of the empire.

Part of the traditional historiography on this subject has concluded that the region's dependence did not end when it reached independence, for the increase of the importance of British trade shifted dependence from Spain to Great Britain. This confirmed the so-called "dependence theory" developed by André Gunder Frank (1967) and Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto (1969). Heraclio Bonilla and Karen Spalding (1972) argued that in the Peruvian case, the weak state apparatus that emerged from independence never became strong enough to counter the informal dependence threaded by British trade, and so the latter continued throughout the entire nineteenth century.

This idea of subordination to the British via dependence on British trade encouraged the notion of an informal imperialism, a concept that has been revived during the last few years and that is defined as the indirect domination that Latin America became subject to when it joined the

global economy through the expansion and development of new forms of trading relations. According to Deborah Besseghini (2019, 2020b and 2021), this subjection was not based on explicit coercion, but upon an agreement between the parts. She describes informal imperialism as a new kind of indirect domination with political-strategic ends, a subtle and complex relationship that was carried out by official and officious agents who responded to the interests of imperial institutions. It was thus a relationship of mutual interests and benefits between the two poles, frequently in a context of unequal or asymmetrical negotiations, that was encouraged during the political-military juncture between 1810 and the early 1820s.

This article will not explore the notion of “informal imperialism,” which, on the one hand, has not been clearly defined, and, on the other, is not accepted by all scholars of Latin America as relevant during the post-independence period. Instead, we will look at the connections developed in the Southern Pacific by a group of foreign traders established in the three main ports of the Southern Cone — Callao, Valparaíso, and Buenos Aires — during the period of transition between the colonial system and the republic. It is well known that once independence was declared, foreigners settled in Spanish America to expand trade and trading relations on a global scale. The article seeks to contribute to the historiography of foreign trade in South America by focusing on the actions of a group of foreign traders using unpublished material, including customs records and private and notary archives, to show the extension of trading networks that connected the two main Pacific ports (Valparaíso and Callao) with Buenos Aires in the Atlantic. In the Peruvian case, the need to finance the fight for independence (which continued throughout 1824) allowed these traders not only to insert themselves in the regional markets, but to become the fledgling government’s main financiers. But this relationship was established between the State and foreign traders as individuals or as members of trading companies, not as representatives of their respective nations.

Paul Gootenberg (1998) points out that the Peruvian State — unlike that of Chile (Llorca-Jaña 2012) and Río de la Plata (Schlez 2019) — held on to a protectionist tradition that dominated the economy between 1820 and 1845, during which a corporative colonial mindset of nationalist tint was prevalent. He analyzes the difficulties that North American consuls found when trying to initiate mercantile activities. Lengthy representations and personal requests were not enough to overcome bureaucratic obstacles or to sway the Peruvian State into giving North American products favorable tariff rates. Indeed, the government imposed tariffs of 80% on imports of wool and cotton fabrics in order to protect those made in the country and issued a “law of prohibitions of foreign products” in 1829 (Dancuart 1902, 10). These policies provide evidence to Platt’s argument that the supposed British domination of Latin America in the post-independence era was a myth. In the Peruvian case, it was not until the guano period in the second half of the nineteenth century that a more intense penetration occurred.

However, the traders whose activities we will analyze — who were English, North American, and German, with Argentinean contacts — were skillful enough to conduct an intense trade in goods throughout the South Pacific, despite the resistance to “foreign penetration” displayed by Peru’s Spanish-Creole mercantile elite that had dominated trade in the country for more than 200 years but which, with the Independence Wars, was notably weakened. The vacuum left by these monopolistic merchants in Peru was filled by foreign traders who awaited San Martín’s arrival at Lima in 1821. These traders’ connections with their allies in the port of Valparaíso as well as in the port of Buenos Aires constituted a triangle of mercantile relations that kept the new republics’ economy active despite the political crisis and turmoil of the independence process.

This article goes beyond the frontiers of national history to analyze the links and exchanges¹ between foreign traders that settled in the Southern Cone's three main ports, following a line of inquiry that parallels this historical process. Second, it shows that foreign participation in trade was a fundamental element in the dynamization and even survival of the economy during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, as it allowed for the transportation and distribution of new and traditional goods (including weapons, necessary for the wars) and kept various regions in contact with each other and with the republican governments themselves. Third, it shows the mechanisms that foreign traders used to finance these governments. In exchange for certain tariff privileges, these men and their companies become the main creditors of weak and unconsolidated states that needed to maintain well-supplied military forces if they were to win the war and secure their independence. This did not differ much from the role Spanish traders had had during the viceroyalty — thus, we see that times had changed, but not timeworn ways. Thus, as each nation found itself struggling to finance the war effort, and foreign traders took advantage of this, an economic system of controlled trade that had been in place for three hundred years was substituted by one open to global trade, but the ways in which merchants related to each other and to the states was not entirely brand new.

2. The impact of the war on Peru's social and economic situation, 1820 to 1830

After crossing the Andes from Mendoza, General José de San Martín declared the independence of Chile and continued onto Peru. By 1821, he had proclaimed the independence of the greater part of the South American coast. However, royalist forces continued fighting the Peruvian republican forces until 1824 and the fort of El Callao was in Spanish hands until 1826.

¹ Sebastian Conrad (2017) argues that to understand history from a perspective that goes beyond the formation of nation-states—as it very well is—it is necessary to search for links and connections of material and cultural exchange.

One of the first measures adopted by San Martín upon his assuming command of the Peruvian republican government under the title of Protector, was opening up trade to all the nations of the world. Chile had obtained its independence in 1818 and had also launched the process of trade liberalization, while the River Plate had done the same thing in 1810, even before independence was declared and the Argentine State reorganized.

Peru's economic conditions substantially deteriorated during the war. Its silver mines would not recover the same levels of production of the last decade of the eighteenth century until 1830 (Seminario 2015, 414).² Labor shortages and loss of capital and livestock caused a severe agrarian crisis which made itself evident in rising prices. Table 1 compares the production value of different sectors of the Peruvian economy in 1808, the year that the Spanish monarchy fell into French hands, and 1826, the year that the Spanish finally left Peru after more than a decade of warfare.

TABLE 1. Impact of the Independence War on Peruvian economy: 1808 vs. 1826

Sector	1808	1826	DIFFERENCE	% DECLINE
Agriculture	25,841,159	21,874,842	3,966,317	-15 %
Mining	3,947,655	1,095,765	2,851,890	-72 %
Manufactures	3,232,970	802,630	2,430,340	-75 %
Commerce	4,820,945	993,327	3,827,618	-79 %
Transport	2,511,534	1,234,603	1,276,931	-51 %
Exports	7,694,945	247,633	7,447,312	-97 %
Imports	1,751,918	415,375	1,336,543	-76 %

Source: Seminario (2015, 410). The value is given in *pesos fuertes*.

As Table 1 shows, the value of Peru's mines, factories and commerce dropped more than 70%. And it is no wonder. Cerro de Pasco, the country's most important mining center, was alternatively occupied by the military of both sides (royalists and independentists) between

² Bruno Seminario makes an effort to measure Peruvian GDP between 1700 and the year 2000 through a sectoral analysis of the economy, distinguishing six stages of Peruvian economic growth: recovery from the crisis of independence 1824 -1840; initial phase of the guano era 1841-1849; guano era 1850-1878; invasion and collapse 1878-1881; recovery 1881-1895; new mining sector 1895-1929.

1820 and 1824. Livestock was expropriated, workers who had not been conscripted fled, and the machines that were used to drain the galleries were destroyed (Contreras 2010, 9). Many of the most important *haciendas* were also occupied, particularly around Lima. Thus, when the Marqués de Montemira was asked for 2,000 pesos by the Consulate of Commerce to aid the war effort, he explained that he could not comply because his *hacienda* in Aznapuquio (which produced sugar) had been taken by the royalist army while the one in Valle de Pisco had borne the costs of the occupation and maintenance of the pro-independence forces. Moreover, he had already handed over 3,000 pesos to the public purse (Mazzeo 2012, 196).

Trade was practically paralyzed. Regular shipments disappeared once the independentist forces took the central Pacific coast, an event that had been preceded by the constant capture or destruction of mercantile ships (Flores 1984, 195 and 212). Moreover, few shipments were sent from Cádiz. After the victory at Chacabuco and later at Maipú, which sealed Chile's independence in 1818, trade between Chile and the still Spanish Peru was considerably reduced. However, other ports, especially those under British or North American naval and commercial control, continued trading, not only with the exterior but across the South American coast.

Travelers who visited the region during this period eloquently described the difficult conditions that they encountered. The arrival of the so-called *ejército libertador* (liberating army) was (according to James Thomson, a traveler) anything but liberating, for “instead of bringing peace, it increased uncertainty, and the great businessmen, who typically believed that it was necessary to keep the old ways and to whom great promises had been made, lived as if in a nightmare because of the new exactions brought home to them every day by the nature of the crisis”(Nuñez 1971, 15).

The war ruined the established commercial elite, for Spaniards and Creoles were forced to make such extraordinary “contributions” to the war effort that their wealth was practically destroyed. In 1822, the republican government established a *Juzgado de Secuestro* (Court of Sequestration) under the direction of Bernardo de Monteagudo that requisitioned the goods and properties of several Spaniards. It confiscated, for instance, Manuel Gorbea’s landed properties; the houses, and stores of Matías de Elizalde in the *barrio* of San Francisco; and Pedro de Abadía’s *haciendas* and other real estate. Some of these properties were returned to those Spaniards who stayed in the country or came back after the war was over (Mazzeo 2012, 190). But since Spaniards who wanted to stay in Peru after independence had to become Peruvian citizens, many left never to return. Others, like Francisco Javier de Izcue, renounced their Spanish citizenship and adopted that of the new republic, which was not surprising, since he had loaned 8,000 pesos to the Viceroyalty in 1819 and 4,000 pesos to the independentist authorities in 1821 (Mazzeo 2017, 161-177; Mazzeo 2021).

The war, along with the food shortages and epidemics that it unleashed, caused great loss of life. Between 1824 and 1825, the death toll of Callao alone was of 4,300 people, who succumbed to disease and deprivation (Contreras 2010, 301). Moreover, the economic crisis was accompanied by an unprecedented political crisis that did nothing to advance stability. It is unsurprising that foreign traders found a space and a role to fill during this turbulent and difficult period, particularly the British merchants who had settled in the Río de la Plata and Chile after their independence was secured, and, to a lesser extent, in Peru.

Between the arrival of San Martín in September of 1820 and the arrival of Simón Bolívar in September of 1823, many attempts to govern republican Peru and its constitutional process failed, for various reasons, one of them being the division and militarization of the country.

More than half of the national territory was occupied by an army that integrated Peruvians, Chileans, Colombians, and Argentineans, while the remaining territory, up in the mountains, was still under the sway of the royalist army under Viceroy José de La Serna. Another reason was the republican government's lack of funds to pay the troops and government employees. Forced loans became harder to obtain, and coercion in the shape of threats (and acts) of confiscation and exile were necessary to secure them. Pressured by the military, the Constitutional Congress named José de la Riva Agüero first president of Peru, but he was in office for only four months.

In 1823, the government obtained 1,324,195 pesos from the briefly renamed Chamber of Commerce — an institution established during the colonial period under the name of the *Consulado de Comercio* — and with this money, new battalions were created and sent on an expedition to the so-called intermediate ports in southern Peru that were under Spanish control (Mazzeo 2012, 191). However, the expedition was a failure and desperation again gripped the country.

Unlike those in other regions in the continent, Peru's Chamber of Commerce or *Consulado* never ceased functioning. It maintained its traditional, conservative structure, which allowed the institution to manage the country's public debt. The system of assigned quotas and forced and voluntary loans that placed the responsibility of the armed forces' upkeep in the hands of merchants and businessmen during the war followed the same logic and system used by the Viceroyalty of Peru to obtain emergency funds during the colonial period. In fact, in the early part of the war it supported the Viceroyalty's war effort, and later, that of the republican government. The Chamber of Commerce served as the link between short-lived governments and the businessmen whose wealth was required and demanded to finance the war.

Foreign and Spanish traders coexisted in Lima after 1821: the former did not simply replace the latter. The activities of the foreign trading houses complemented the older Spanish houses. Foreigners became an additional financial resource for the emerging Republican states as early as the period of the Independence War and its changing and uncertain circumstances, which we will address in section 4. The following section elaborates a detailed analysis of the activities carried out by a particular group of businessmen that should help us understand the extensive network that connected cities and ports in South America during the period in question.

3. Commercial networks of Buenos Aires, Valparaíso, and Lima

The port of Buenos Aires was the main entry point to South America. But while many traders settled there, others continued on to Valparaíso, especially after the free trade policies established by Manuel Rengifo y Cárdenas, the country's Finance Minister during several governments (1831 to 1835 and 1841 to 1844). Rengifo set up warehouses in Valparaíso where, for a small fee, traders could keep their goods until they decided to export them to other ports, perhaps when prices met their profit expectations. These measures capitalized the geographic advantages of Valparaíso as an ideal stop for ships that circumnavigated the Pacific via Cape Horn. In the mid-1830s, 60% of goods imported to Peru had been in Valparaíso's public warehouses (Collier and Sater 1999, 64).

Commercial connections in the southern half of South America generally went from south to north. After ships arrived at Buenos Aires, their merchandise was either transported over the Andes through Mendoza or taken via ship around Cape Horn to Valparaíso and then Callao. The northern Pacific trade route went from its first stop at Panama, to Guayaquil and then Callao. Valparaíso was the central port in the southern route, midway between Buenos Aires and Callao, while Callao was the central port between Panama and Valparaíso in the northern

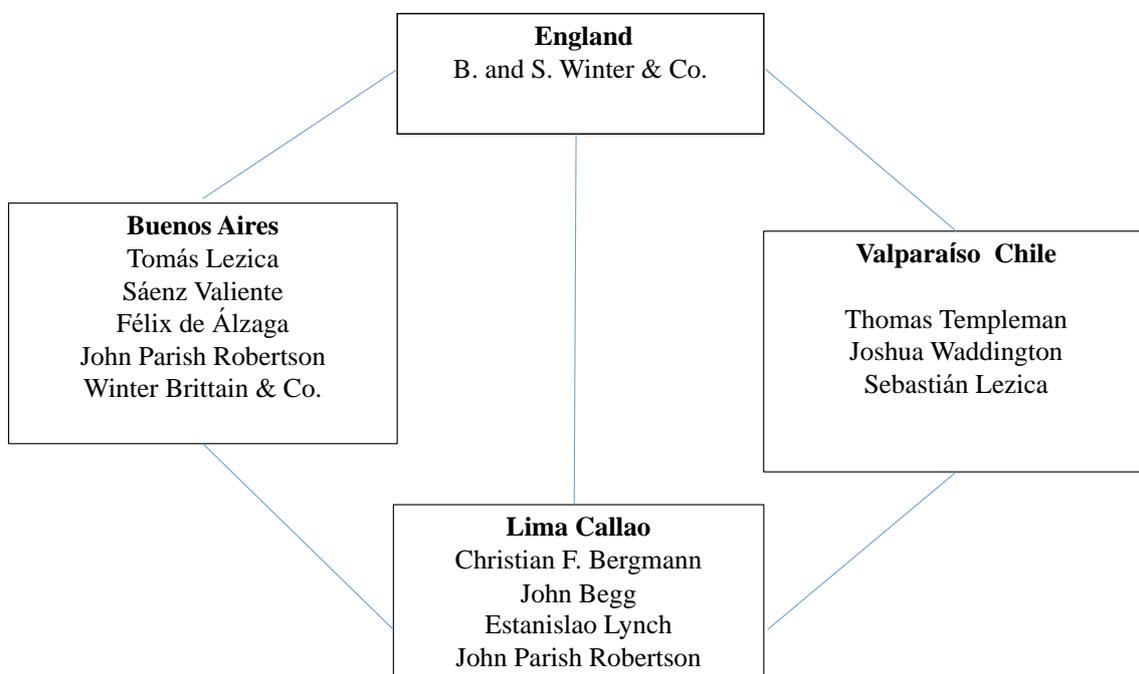
route. On the other hand, Buenos Aires was the first port, along with Rio de Janeiro in the southern Atlantic, to which ships from Europe arrived. In any case, trade expanded inland and onto other parts of the South American continent from the main ports of Buenos Aires, Valparaiso, and Callao, where foreign traders were settled and managed their trading networks.

To understand the workings of this type of trading network, we will look at one of the most active. Many of its traders were related one way or another with an English firm based on Leeds, B. and S. Winter & Co. These traders set up firms in several cities in the Southern Cone, including Winter, Brittain & Co. in Buenos Aires; Brittain, Waddington & Co. in Valparaíso; and Samuel Winter & Co. in Rio de Janeiro, as one or the other moved on to new cities or incorporated traders from different cities, affiancing the relations between them. Take Winter, Brittain & Co. This firm had an agent in Lima, Christian Friedrich Bergmann, one of whose partners was Thomas Templeman, who, for his part, was in the trading house Brittain, Waddington & Co., with Joshua Waddington in Valparaíso. Indeed, foreign traders were often loosely associated with a trading house headquartered in England, but they themselves came from different places. Among the many related traders whose activities we address, are British John Begg; Argentineans José Riglos and Estanislao Lynch; German Jew Christian F. Bergmann, Englishman Joshua Waddington, and North American Richard Alsop, who was from Middletown, Connecticut. Figure 1 shows how this trading network linked together the ports of Callao, Buenos Aires, and Valparaíso.

John Begg & Co. operated in Santiago de Chile since 1818 as a trading subsidiary of Liverpool's Brotherston Company (England). There, Begg began his trading activities, which expanded slowly from Coquimbo to Guayaquil. In 1820 he travelled to Monterrey, in Alta California, with agents from the McCulloch and Hart trading house, and he got in touch with

Spanish Governor Pablo Vicente de Solá and the prefect to promote a contract with the missions of the region and trade tallow and hides. This proved to be a very profitable business. Hides were destined for the English market, and they were priced at 1 peso (identical to their price in the Buenos Aires market) and tallow was sent to South America at 2 pesos per *arroba* (bushel) (Ogden 1927).

FIGURE 1. Connected traders in the ports of Buenos Aires, Valparaíso and Lima



Source: own elaboration.

John Begg had several connections in the Peruvian interior, such as Domingo Villarino, a merchant settled in Trujillo. Begg had also been one of the state's main creditors during the Independence War. He became the representative of the firm Waddington and Green when these decided to end their Lima operations and left him in charge of obtaining the payments that said firm was due.³ His trading enterprise was quite varied. In 1825, he received 4,000

³ AGN Lima Registro de notarios, Antonio López Escudero.

pesos for the sale of the brigantine *Cora*, which carried out the transit of goods between the ports of Guayaquil (rubber soles, agave, oil, and cacao), Pacasmayo (rice, sugar), Huanchaco (pouches for tobacco, husks, and rice), and Lambayeque (tobacco, rice, wine, vinegar, alfalfa, and soles), as well as Pisco (*aguardiente*, eau de vie) pitchers, wine, and flour. In 1825 and 1826, he introduced 7,720 *pesos fuertes* worth of soap, tallow, salted meat, wine, and beef tongue to Callao. But Begg's most high-value trade was the sale of cotton, wool and linen textiles and clothing (pants, shirts, and socks) in California.⁴

Born in York, Englishman Joshua Waddington settled in Valparaíso in 1817, having arrived there from Buenos Aires, and he stayed in that Chilean port-city until his death in 1876. Waddington became an agent of Winter, Brittain & Co., a firm established in Buenos Aires (Araya 2017, 98). Waddington eventually formed his own company in 1829, taking advantage of the conditions that Chile offered foreign firms. His firm followed the model established by other foreign trading companies, such as Antony Gibbs & Sons, Frederick Huth & Co., Alexander Fletcher & Co., Naylor & Co., Watson Thompson & Co., Robert Scott Fairlie & Co., and Alsop. & Co. (Araya 2017, 99).

The principal commodities Waddington worked with at that time were cotton cloth, so-called German bedding, muslin shawls, and Indian cottons, which were what Winter, Brittain & Co. originally traded in. Waddington's correspondence with Hugh Dallas & Co. in Buenos Aires⁵ reveals not only his connection with that port city, but also his connections with Rio de Janeiro, where he sent wheat and from where he imported sugar in the Pacific trade. In some letters, Waddington addresses the scarcity of "ships in the Pacific ports," a lack which he took

⁴ He exported to Callao 107,864 *pesos fuertes* worth of goods and imported 34,721 *pesos fuertes* worth of goods.

⁵ Archivo del Banco de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, *Correspondencia entre Waddington y Dallas*, 1820.

advantage of when he became an investor in a steam shipping company established by US businessman William Wheelwright (Alberdi 1876).

Argentine Estanislao Lynch participated in Argentina's Independence War as a naval officer, and he crossed the Andes to collaborate with the liberation of Chile. In 1821, Lynch arrived at Lima, where he asked the competent authorities, including the city's procurators, the municipality, and the trading guild, for an exclusivity contract of ten years for steam shipping trade. Evidently, he planned on settling in the city, at least for a time, and becoming a businessman. He was granted a six year exclusivity contract, with the explanation that an individual from "North America" could arrive "with a vessel of such type in order to direct it to these waters"(Tauro del Pino 1971, 137-138).⁶ By 1823, Lynch owed the Chamber of Commerce 11,327 pesos of unpaid customs duties (Tauro del Pino 1971, 356). However, he argued that the State owed him much more than that for breach of contract, since they had not paid the rations that he had delivered in war transports for 6,000 troops. Lynch also owed the Chamber a supply quota that had been requested from him on October 29, 1822 (Tauro del Pino 1971, 339). In October 1823, Lynch demanded the payment of 2,400 pesos for 100 barrels of wheat that had been delivered to the army.⁷ The State, for its part, demanded the payment of 15,892 pesos that he owed in customs duties. On another occasion, Lynch asked the Chamber of Commerce to pay him what he was owed for the copper he had delivered.

Estanislao Lynch was named consul to Peru of Río de la Plata in 1826.⁸ In 1827, he partnered with Juan José Sarratea, José Riglos, the firm Cochran, Robertson & Co., Cristóbal Armero,

⁶ This man was probably William Wheelwright, who introduced steamships to South America (Alberdi 1876).

⁷ AGN Lima, OL 71-115.

⁸ AGN Lima, *Protocolos Notariales* (hereafter PN) 38, 1822, f. 934; PN 44, 1827.

Samuel Price, and Manuel Castilla to buy a mine in Cerro de Pasco along with the lands around it. The group paid the State with credits that ascended to 438,969 pesos, with 24,409 deposited at 30%.⁹ He also partnered with Pedro Antonio de la Fuente, associated with Vicente Ovalle, in the eau de vie trade, and he invested in the purchase of mines in Chanca province in Cajamarquilla.¹⁰ The commercial transactions carried out by Estanislao Lynch in Peru in 1827 had a total value of 313,215 pesos. Wheat and tallow from Valparaíso constituted the largest percentage, but commodities traded also included arms (guns and sabers) from the port of Bremen, as well as blue cloths and buttons for the confection of military uniforms.¹¹ Lynch also exported 174,596 pesos worth of goods to other Pacific ports (Valparaíso and Guayaquil), of which the most important were wine, textiles, flour, and currency. In 1847, Lynch was selected as prior of the Consulate of Valparaíso.¹²

Another member of the group of traders under study was Juan José Sarratea, with whom Lynch was connected. Born in Buenos Aires, Sarratea moved to Chile in 1818 as general supplier of the Chilean army. Sarratea set up a trading house in Chile with Nicolás Rodríguez Peña that had operations in Valparaíso and Lima. Eventually, Sarratea relocated to Lima, where he collaborated closely with San Martín's liberation effort, so much so that the General described him as one of his closest friends (Cutolo 1968).

Another of the key traders in the network under study was the German Jew Christian Friedrich Bergmann, who arrived in Buenos Aires in mid-1812, and he got in touch with the firm Winter, Brittain & Co. He had important connections in Altona (Hamburg) in 1816 and in Amsterdam

⁹ AGN Lima, *Archivo Notarial Juan Cubillas, protocolo* 204, f. 271.

¹⁰ AGN Lima, PN 38, f. 934; PN 34, 1827 f. 42; PN 44 1827 f.85 v.

¹¹ Centro de Estudios Histórico-Militares del Perú: Archivo Militar, *Libro borrador* n. 13: n. 15.

¹² Archivo Nacional de Chile, *Archivo de la Intendencia de Valparaíso*. Vol. 2, 159.

in 1817. In 1820, he exchanged letters with Karl Frederick Schlutter, another global trader who was established in Rio de Janeiro. For political reasons, he decided to travel to Lima, but his long-term plans were to create a triangular trading setup between Buenos Aires, Valparaíso, and Lima.

During his trip across the Pacific, Bergmann visited several merchants at each port. While he was in Santiago waiting to depart for Lima in 1821, he exchanged several important letters with Joshua Waddington (on September 15, 19, and 28 and on October 16) and Winter (on the October 5, 9, and 10). Bergmann wanted to use Winter's name in the firm that he wanted to establish in Lima, but, for reasons that remain unknown, Winter did not allow it. He therefore decided to partner with Thomas Templeman in the firm Templeman, Bergmann & Co., with which Waddington was associated in Valparaíso.¹³

In 1822, Bergmann was established in Lima, and he received fine silks and cloths along with furs and other such commodities sent by Sebastián Lezica & Brothers in the English frigate *Elizabeth*. The Lezica brothers were spread out across South America, with one operating in Valparaíso, another in La Paz, Bolivia, with connections in Salta, and another in Buenos Aires (Olivero 2010, 94).¹⁴ As a representative of British and German traders, Bergmann & Templeman was a consignee of the firm Elberfeld, and it kept connections with traders such as Schmaling and the Antwerp firm Kreglinger.

¹³ *Colección Bergmann*, Biblioteca Central de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Templeman, who acted in synergy with Moens, Gibbs' agent, was Winter's nephew (Besseghini 2020a).

¹⁴ This commercial house was transformed into a bank. In 1825 Sebastián Lezica moved to Chile and Faustino Lezica became the director of the firm until his bankruptcy. Sebastián and Faustino were sons of Juan José Lezica, who in turn was related to the Anchorena family, of outstanding commercial activity in the port of Buenos Aires.

Bergmann's contact in Lima was Francisco Javier de Izcue, a Spanish trader who had arrived at the city in the late eighteenth century. For his part, Izcue had had connections with Nicolás de Chopitea in Valparaíso and Oleguer Reynals in Buenos Aires, and they all participated, among others, in the slave trade, bringing slaves from Buenos Aires, where they arrived, to Valparaíso across Mendoza (Mazzeo 2017 and 2021). Bergmann had been recommended to Francisco Izcue by Juan Pablo Sáenz Valiente. In his correspondence, Bergmann asked whether foreigners could engage in trade in that city, if the introduction of foreign commodities was legal, if foreign traders enjoyed personal safety, and if the country was contemplating opening up to trade with all nations, and whether this would happen soon after San Martín's pending arrival in August (this letter was written in June of 1821).

When Bergmann introduced himself to other foreign traders, he said:

Nine years of experience in the cited men's very respectable house in Buenos Aires demonstrate my capacity to direct with the utmost circumspection any business with which I am entrusted in the new establishment that I will open. By this means, it is my pleasure to humbly ask that they may contribute to the prosperity of the trade in which you yourselves may engage, as well as for the recommendation that your good will may move you to make to your friends and correspondents in favor of my trading house, with the complete guarantee that the business that you will confide in me will receive my utmost diligence and interest to secure a good result...¹⁵

This letter of introduction lets us imagine the activities that Bergmann sought to carry out in South America.

Bergmann also got in touch with the Spanish merchant Félix de Álzaga, in Buenos Aires,¹⁶ to whom he explained that if it were impossible for him to settle in Lima, he would continue on

¹⁵ *Colección Bergmann*, Biblioteca Central de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. The text has been translated in English from the Spanish original.

¹⁶ Son of Martín de Álzaga, a prominent figure during the British invasions of Río de la Plata.

to Guayaquil, telling Álzaga that he could count on him and to get in touch with Winter, Brittain & Co.¹⁷

Anxious to expand his business, Bergmann connected himself with trader José Joaquín Carvalho, of whom he received 15,000 pesos to create a company in which Templeman was also supposed to participate. In 1824, this society with Carvalho had been created, and Bergmann invested the sum of 5,000 pesos to buy wool and European silk and cotton to sell them for cash in Carvalho's store.¹⁸ Templeman & Bergmann's main line of business at this point was in textiles: they imported diverse kinds of cloth from Liverpool and London to the Prussian ports, as well as to the ports of Guayaquil, Islay and Cobija.

Another key trader connected with Bergmann and Templeman was Richard Alsop, who carried out his activities in the northern Pacific. According to researcher Bill Bollinger (nd), Alsop was sent to Peru as a representative of the family firm. He established important trading relations in the ports of Valparaíso and Arica, from which he transported flours and textiles as his main lines of business.

Alsop & Co. was the most important US trading house in the South American western coast, and it was the only US trading house at least established there during the 1821 and 1822. Compared to other import and shipping companies in Lima, Alsop's was not among the top, but he was a pioneer in the sale of US light industry commodities in Peru, including wheat flour

¹⁷ *Colección Bergmann*, letter of March 18, 1821, to Álzaga.

¹⁸ Bergmann's business in Lima extended throughout the nineteenth century—a subject beyond the scope of this article. Let us, however, cite some significant data. In 1860, his sons Cristóbal and Carlos created a partnership with equal shares with Joseph Rodgers Templeman from London and Charles Brownell from Liverpool under the name of Templeman & Bergmann. Subsequently, in 1862, a new company was formed with Joseph Templeman, Juan Federico Bergmann and Carlos Diego Bergmann with the participation of 3/5 each. In 1867 the partnership continued with Percy Davies and Alfred Miles Speer, nephews and heirs of the late Joseph Templeman. Bergmann's sons were granted usage of the pier, dock, and boardwalk, their partners being Francisco de Paula and José Gaspar Rivadeneira, both Chilean.

and thick cotton cloth (*tocuyos*), both produced using waterpower. As a result, his commercial enterprise was frequently in conflict with protectionist politicians and Peruvian producers who sought to protect local production from foreign competition, and who preferred to do business with Chile.¹⁹

Alsop was also in the business of exporting commodities from Pisco, Arica and Valparaíso. From Pisco, he bought flour, eau de vie, wine, vicuña wool, and alfalfa seeds; from Arica, lard, dry beef, tobacco, and tea — staples in soldiers' diets —; and from Valparaíso, flours, textiles, tallow, medicine, tobacco, mercury, ham, etc. In 1828, Alsop imported a total of 581 barrels of flour for a total FOB value of 15,372 pesos.²⁰ His cloth imports between 1825 and 1827 were worth 94,246 pesos, while those of 1828 alone reached 70,406 *pesos fuertes*.²¹

Traders were allowed by the Peruvian state to pay part of a shipment's customs duties in advance. In 1822, our group of traders took advantage of this opportunity to insert themselves in the market, advancing 80,000 pesos. However, this sum turned out to be only 5.25% of the total duties associated with the shipment, and was thus well below the legal requirement of 15% advance stipulated by the State's commercial legislation. On another occasion, the same traders loaned the Peruvian government 200,000 pesos, of which 50,000 were paid in cash and the rest in goods. For this operation, they eventually received 300,000 pesos — 100,000 in interest and 200,000 for the loan. As we can see, the interest on the loan was 50% (Mazzeo 2006, 63-84).

¹⁹ See Bollinger, nd, chapters 19-21.

²⁰ AGN Lima, *Libros de Aduana Mares del sur*: 1825: 7,218 pesos; 1826: 15,586 pesos; 1827: 1,036 pesos.

²¹ AGN Lima, *Libros de Aduana de Mares del Sur*, 1828.

4. Financing the War of Independence

Foreign traders acquired a very important role by providing loans to the republican governments during the Independence Wars, which in Peru's case lasted until 1824. After San Martín left Peru in 1822 and until Bolívar arrived in 1823, the population was forced to contribute to the army's upkeep providing loans and donations (Mazzeo 2012). In 1823, Bolívar's government needed money urgently, and a group of foreign traders lent it 72,900 pesos. Among those who contributed were John Begg & Co. (12,000 pesos), Templeman & Bergmann (7,000 pesos) and John Parish Robertson (6,000 pesos). The creditors were reimbursed by customs vouchers that they could use to pay their customs duties in Callao when their goods arrived.

Special arrangements were also made to collaborate with the republican governments by getting provisions for the army. Thus, again in the year 1823, the same group of merchants (John Begg, José Riglos and John Parish Robertson, among others) committed themselves to providing food and transport to 2,000 men for four months and for 4,000 men for two months, for an estimated value of 420,000 pesos. The Peruvian government paid this sum using two bills of exchange, one drawn in Chile and the other in London, but the bills issued by the Peruvian government on the Chilean loan could not be cashed because the representative of the Chilean government protested against them, arguing that they "did not conform to the official copy."²² This means that a formalistic detail delayed the payment of the loan, and it was only one of several episodes that show that business with a State in times of war and in constant need of cash was very complicated and did not always prove profitable. Begg and Robertson complained to the

²² Archivo General de la Nación, Lima (hereafter AGN Lima), *Documentos republicanos*, OL 90 4ta. This was a Chilean loan to Peru.

president of the Republic that the Peruvian government had already signed several such contracts that it had not yet paid, and to please pay for at least part of this one.²³

In times of war, arms were in great demand. The history of the arms that entered Peru through Callao, whether via Valparaíso or Panama, is evidenced in the customs records that reveal, for example, the imports procured by Estanislao Lynch in 1821 from Bremen in the US frigate *Mercurio*.

TABLE 2. Estanislao Lynch's arms imports on October 2, 1821

Date	Ship	Consignee	Origin	Item	Units	Pesos Fuertes
02/10/1821	US frigate <i>Mercurio</i>	Estanislao Lynch	Bremen	Muskets	10,848	65,088
02/10/1821	US frigate <i>Mercurio</i>	Estanislao Lynch	Bremen	Carbines	570	4,560
02/10/1821	US frigate <i>Mercurio</i>	Estanislao Lynch	Bremen	Sabers	4,650	13,950
02/10/1821	US frigate <i>Mercurio</i>	Estanislao Lynch	Bremen	Gun powder	32 (barrels)	64

Source: AGN Lima, Libros de Aduana Mares del Sur.

Lynch, as well as Frederick Pfeiffer and Templeman & Bergmann, also introduced arms via Valparaíso, Panama, and Guayaquil between 1821 and 1826, as seen in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Arms imports, 1821 and 1826

Date	Ship	Consignee	Origin	Item	Units	Pesos Fuertes
27/10/1821	Frigate <i>Fama</i>	Estanislao Lynch	Valparaíso	Muskets	1,200	9,600
04/07/1825	Brig <i>Zodiaco</i>	Templeman & Bergmann	Guayaquil	Sabers	37	185
15/07/1826	Brig <i>Rímac</i>	Pfeiffer & Hesterberg	Panama	Sabers	28	252

Source: AGN Lima, Libros de Aduana Mares del Sur.

Pfeiffer & Hesterberg also imported sabers in the Brig *Rímac* in 1826 at 28 pesos each, and 70 pairs of pistols from Bordeaux in the French frigate *Danae* (Witt 1992, 163). Frederick Pfeiffer had arrived at Lima sometime in 1821 with a modest capital, and Hesterberg convinced him to

²³ AGN Lima, *Documentos republicanos*, O.L. 90-13. José Riglos, Manuel Castilla, and Juan José Sarratea also appear in this contract.

accept French shipments. After this period, there are no records of this firm in Callao (Witt 1992, 163).

These foreign traders found an important line of business in Latin America, and they were able to adapt to the necessities of the moment. Several of their firms lasted throughout the nineteenth century, and even today, there are businessmen whose surnames clearly reveal their origin in this period (Bergmann, Winter...). And thanks to the creation of the Pacific steamship line established by William Wheelwright, many of the traders who resided in Lima invested their capital in the business of steamship navigation in October of 1841 with the following firms: Gibbs, Crawley & Co.; MacLean, Rowe & Co.; Alsop & Co.; Templeman & Bergmann; Frederick Huth, Gruning & Co.; John Mackie; Swayne, Reid & Co.; Dickson Price & Co.; William Hodgson; Lang, Smith & Co.; Naylor, Bourdman & Owley; Peter Conroy; Green, Nelson & Co.; Henry Severin; Ad. Zachariese & Co.; Henry Real & Co.; Wheelvek, Daliddon & Labbabure; Hegan, Hall & Co.; and A. Roux (Alberdi 1876, 91). This group included the most prestigious foreign traders established in Lima.

We can infer that, just like the trading connections in South America were global in their scale, with strong links between Valparaíso, Buenos Aires, and Lima, the loans acquired by the respective nations in which these cities were located were underwritten by an equally global structure. The Scotsman John Parish Robertson is himself a great example. Trading and traveling in the region since 1809, he had made a name for himself as a trader in Buenos Aires, but he later incorporated financial operations to his business, after having returned to Great Britain to establish connections with several institutions and businesses in various cities. He was engaged in febrile economic activity in Argentina during the government of Rivadavia

(1826-1827), and he was related to Woodbine Parish,²⁴ the first official British consul to Río de la Plata.

In 1822, Juan García del Río and James Paroissien negotiated a 6 million pesos loan for the Peruvian state floated by the London firm Thomas Kinder, which was guaranteed by Peru's future customs duties. Juan García del Río and James Paroissien had arrived in Peru with San Martín, who regarded the latter, a physician by trade, as a personal friend, and had gone to London at San Martín's request. But the deal that they obtained was plagued with irregularities and was less useful than it might have been, for 5 million pesos were issued in letters and money orders and only 1 million was immediately available for covering the military's expenses and paying public employees (Tantaleán 1983, 42). In 1825, acting as a Peruvian government agent in Great Britain, John Parish Robertson obtained a second loan for the Peruvian state, this one of 660,000 pounds sterling.²⁵

Even though he was acting as a government agent, Robertson was also acting in his own interest when in Great Britain, as partner in the firm Cochran, Robertson & Co. This firm sent a shipment of rifles and rifle flints the same year that Robertson brokered Peru's second loan, in the ship *Isabella*. He also sent a cargo of 6,000 rifles in a ship called *Océano*.²⁶ In a letter to the Peruvian government, Robertson asked about a third shipment of 1,200 rifles and 30 barrels of

²⁴ Woodbine Parish wrote a detailed traveler's report on Buenos Aires and the Río de la Plata describing the geographical and economic conditions of the country since the Spanish arrival and up to 1820. It was not published until 1958

²⁵ AGN Lima, OL 120-117: copy of the instructions given to John Parish Robertson as agent of Peru sent to London to demand compliance with the loan contracted by García del Río and Diego Paroissien with Mr. Tomas Kinder or to raise another.

²⁶ AGN Lima, Archivo Histórico del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (hereafter MRE) *Correspondencia de los representantes del Perú en Londres*, caja 12, carpeta 2, código 5-17, 1826, note addressed to the plenipotentiary ministers of Peru, Gregorio Paredes and José Joaquín Olmedo. Regarding the *Isabella* weapons shipment, Robertson explains that the cargo's documents did not travel in the same ship "to avoid any risk of being captured by Spanish pirates and ships."

flint, wanting to know if they were satisfied with the deal, and whether it was to be consigned directly to the Ministry of State, or if the war between Brazil and Buenos Aires made it necessary to secure more guarantees.²⁷

London's loan letters were used to pay soldiers' salaries, and they were exchanged through the commercial firms set up by Waddington, Templeman, and Bergmann.²⁸ Daniel Florence O'Leary, Simón Bolívar's personal secretary, had been part of the delegation sent to cash the letters of credit that backed the London debt used to raise and transport the final liberating army during Bolívar's government (1823-1826). As plenipotentiary minister of Peru, Juan Salazar paid O'Leary 180,000 pesos and John Parish Robertson 40,157 pesos "for your favors," which seemed to be a commission for having brokered the loan.

5. Conclusions

The Peruvian political historiography of the 1820s and 1830s shows that the country's productive system was destroyed by the war, while the economic and business historiographies show that foreign traders took advantage of their international connections to broker profitable trading and financial agreements. In this paper, we have seen how these traders operated in Lima, Valparaíso, and Buenos Aires, forming a global network structured around these regional linkages. To better understand the history of the country in this period, we must put together these two historiographies, for they are like two sides of the same historical coin, and the coin is the Independence War.

²⁷ Ibid., London, February 11, 1826.

²⁸ AGN Lima, *Ministerio de Hacienda*, caja 10, carpeta 11, código 2-5, 1826. In 1826, General Echenique received the wages that were due to him in this same fashion.

Peru's political crisis was also an economic crisis, as the first section shows. After San Martín's arrival in 1820, until the last of the Spanish forces, stationed in Callao, left the country in 1826, the scarcity of food, medicine, arms, transportation means, etc., is evidenced daily in official documentation. And scarcity affected not only the soldiers but the population at large. The foreign traders settled in Lima found ways to cover the population's and the armies' necessities, using their connections with the ports of Valparaíso and Buenos Aires, as well as with England, whose banks and firms became the Peruvian government's main financiers in its war effort. Benefit was not always guaranteed to traders and lenders, for in times of war and during such a profound economic crisis, the Peruvian government did not always pay the debts it contracted with its foreign providers.

Clearly, independence would not have been won the way it was without the resources provided by foreign loans. And such loans established and/or strengthened ties with the foreign traders — Argentine, English, Scottish, German, North Americans — that brokered them. These men, however, acted independently and not as agents of their governments. In fact, even though some of them acted as consuls of their respective states in the early years of independence (or incomplete independence, for it was not achieved in the entirety of the Peruvian territory until 1826), and others went to England to negotiate the Peruvian state's loans, there is no evidence that the traders analyzed here were imperial agents.

The strategy used by these foreign traders did not differ much from the one used by Spanish and Creole traders in the last decades of the viceroyalty: acting in concert based on high levels of trust between them. This worked for them even though they did not share a common national origin, as the Spaniards settled in America were supposed to share despite their diverse regional and ethnic backgrounds (Lamikiz 2010). Foreigners vouched for each other and supported each

other during the first years of the republic, as evidenced in a letter sent by a Buenos Aires trader (Sáenz Valiente) to Francisco Izcue asking him to help Christian Friedrich Bergmann settle in Lima.

The North American businessmen who arrived and settled during this period in Peru were mostly dedicated to shipping and transportation, even though their trading connections with Spanish America preceded independence, and had been especially cemented during the neutral trading years of 1796-1810. During this period, Spaniards and Creoles made no distinction between them and other foreign traders. Moreover, Spanish and Creole businessmen in Peru were often allies or investors in foreign firms, such as in Brittain & Waddington, or in Wheelwright's shipping company, which extended communication routes with steamships and transpacific railways.

During the War of Independence, Peru was afflicted by the destruction of its means of production, economic and political instability, scarcity of products, and the absence of fiscal revenues. This situation was alleviated by the commercial activity developed by foreign traders settled in the Pacific's main trading ports and connected to the Atlantic via Buenos Aires, and by the arrival of foreign monies in the shape of loans brokered by the very same traders with English firms. As we saw in the article, part of the loans were transformed into bills of exchange used to pay providers (the same foreign traders) as well as the army.

The traders that we have looked at created trading networks that went beyond national states and evidenced their negotiating abilities. Their connections with the rest of the world gave them a privileged position at the time of garnering loans, purchases, or representations during a period when Spanish America was opening itself up to global trade. They took advantage of the Independence Wars, becoming the main providers of both rations and arms without which the

war effort would not have been possible. The nascent Spanish American republics' economic and financial dependence upon them was practically inevitable, because obtaining independence without money, weapons, or armies was impossible. Throughout the nineteenth century, the importance of these foreign-origin firms continued to grow, as they took charge of extending railroads and steam navigation, which increased their profits and benefited their concerns, but also contributed to the countries' economic growth.

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